

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register Listed
July 17, 2013
REDACTED COPY

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Santa Fe Trail – Grant County Segment 1

other names/site number Klein's Ruts; KHRI #067-13

2. Location

street & number Address Restricted. not for publication

city or town Ulysses vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Grant code 067 zip code 67880

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

 X national statewide local

See file _____
Signature of certifying official _____ Date _____
Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____
Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- other (explain:) _____
- determined eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
 (Check only **one** box)

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	district
1	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail (2012)

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

AGRICULTURE/agricultural field

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

foundation: N/A

walls: N/A

roof: N/A

other: N/A

Narrative Description

Summary

The Santa Fe Trail - Grant County Segment 1, also known as Klein's Ruts, is located within Grant County, in the southwestern portion of Kansas. [REDACTED] The approximately 440 meter (1444 feet) long segment contains multiple shallow swales that converge into four pronounced parallel swales. The Santa Fe Trail – Grant County Segment 1 includes one property type as defined in the *Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail* revised multiple property nomination: a Transportation Site (Trail Segment subtype) in the form of swales. This resource and its contributing land area constitute 55.99 acres.

Elaboration

The Santa Fe Trail – Grant County Segment 1 is a remnant of the branched north-south route that connected the Mountain Route (at the Upper Crossing of the Arkansas River) with the Cimarron Route (at and near Lower Cimarron Spring). This site [REDACTED] is part of the west branch of this connector route (Figure 1).¹

Landscape²

Grant County is located within the High Plains section of the Great Plains province of the Interior Plains division of North America.³ The High Plains section consists of a relatively featureless plain that covers most of the western quarter of the state and extends in a peninsula-like projection into south central Kansas as far as Kingman and Reno counties. Although heavily dissected along its eastern periphery, the High Plains is essentially a plateau with broad reaches of flat uplands and poorly developed surface drainage. The major river valleys – mainly the Smoky Hill, Arkansas, and Cimarron – are broad and have gentle side slopes, which extend downward to relatively narrow flats. Minor valleys are also present, often in the form of short, steep-sided, narrow canyons leading into the larger river valleys, and numerous shallow depressions or basins of various shapes and sizes can be found scattered throughout the uplands. Overall, however, the landscape is one of "...phenomenal flatness and uniformity."⁴ Geologically, the High Plains consist of Pleistocene-aged loess (wind-blown silt deposits) overlying the sands and gravels of the widespread Ogallala formation. The loess ranges up to 100 feet or more in thickness; nevertheless, it is only a surface veneer in comparison to the massive and much thicker Ogallala formation, which underlies it. Because of the loess, surface exposures of the Ogallala are confined to dissected or otherwise eroded areas, mainly along the edges of the major stream courses. In those locations, seeps and springs are common.

The natural vegetation of the High Plains consists of a vast expanse of prairie cut through by narrow, discontinuous ribbons of riverine forest. The potential natural vegetation of the region includes short grass prairie and floodplain forest or savanna.⁵ The prairie contains a growth of blue grama and buffalograss along with a few other grasses and forbs. The forbs are most common in the southern part of the state. The overall terrain surrounding this site in Grant County is prairie, having intermittent patches of yucca (*Yucca spp.*) and buffalograss (*Buchloë dactyloides*) throughout the area. Vegetation in this area also includes sand sagebrush (*Artemisia filifolia*), grama grass (*Bouteloua curtipendula*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), and musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*).

This site – and the surrounding landscape – is generally flat. Starting at an elevation of 944.5 meters (3099 feet) at the northern boundary, the ground imperceptibly slopes south to an elevation of approximately 942 m (3090 feet) at the southern boundary. Beyond the site's boundaries to the south is an intermittent creek.

¹ [REDACTED]

² The following two paragraphs are adapted from standard language used in reports written by Kansas State Historical Society, Cultural Resources Division, Archeology Department.

³ W.E. Schoewe, "The Geography of Kansas, Part II: Physical Geography," *Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science* 52, no. 3 (1949): 280, 311-330.

⁴ Waldo R. Wedel, "An introduction to Kansas archeology," *Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin* (1959): 8.

⁵ A.W. Kuchler, "A New Vegetation Map of Kansas," *Ecology* 55, no. 3 (1974): 586-604.

The vistas impart a steadfast horizontality with spotty vegetation. The segment is located in a rural area of Grant County dominated by cultivated fields (Figure 2); however, the viewshed from the nominated site shows minimal visual intrusions. The rural nature of this area helps to maintain the historic visual integrity of the site. Currently, this site is used for grazing.

A barbed wire fence surrounds the property in which the boundaries for this Santa Fe Trail site are located. A fence line hugs the northern boundary of the site along the county road. The site is approximately 440 meters x 440 meters (1443.5 feet x 1443.5 feet). [REDACTED]

Trail Segment

The swales present in the Santa Fe Trail – Grant County Segment 1 are an example of the Transportation Site subtype: Trail Segment, as defined by the revised multiple property nomination. [REDACTED] at least 20 shallow ruts converge to form four main arterial ruts (Figure 3), which supports the fact that west of Council Grove, the caravans adopted a four-abreast formation. The corridor in which these shallow swales are located measures approximately 385 meters (1263 feet) wide and 165 meters (541 feet) long until they converge to form the four visibly pronounced swales. These four swales each measure approximately 25 meters (82 feet) wide and 275 meters (902 feet) long.

The swales [REDACTED] are pronounced because more vegetation is located within them compared to the undisturbed land near where the swales lie. As the swales developed they would have formed natural shallow drainage canals for running water; this running water could have caused erosion within the swales.

This 55.99-acre site is one of the few remaining examples of evidence of the connecting route between the Mountain and Cimarron routes.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation

Commerce

Period of Significance

c1825-1868

Significant Dates

N/A

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Period of Significance (justification)

George Sibley's survey in 1825 is the first record of a path from the Upper Crossing of the Arkansas River to the Cimarron; this section of the trail was abandoned by June 1868 when the Union Pacific Eastern Division Railroad arrived at the town of Sheridan, Kansas, ending travel along the Cimarron Route in Kansas.

Criteria Considerations (justification)

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

The Santa Fe Trail – Grant County Segment 1 (Klein's Ruts) is nationally significant as part of the *Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail* revised multiple property nomination under Criteria A and D for its association with transportation and commerce along the Cimarron Route of the Santa Fe Trail and for its potential to yield important information about this route. Located within *La Jornada*, this site retains a good degree of integrity in terms of location, setting, feeling, and association required for registration. Its period of significance begins with George Sibley's survey of the route from the Upper Crossing of the Arkansas River in 1825 and ends with the arrival of the Union Pacific Eastern Division Railroad at the town of Sheridan, Kansas in June 1868. This site materially reflects important historic events outlined in the historic contexts: International Trade on the Mexican Road, 1821-1846; The Mexican-American War and the Santa Fe Trail, 1846-1848; Expanding National Trade on the Santa Fe Trail, 1848-1861; The Effects of the Civil War on the Santa Fe Trail, 1861-1865; and The Santa Fe Trail and the Railroad, 1865-1880, as well as the Santa Fe Trail in Kansas.

Elaboration

The Santa Fe Trail – Grant County Segment 1 (Klein's Ruts) is a site that contains remnants from the Santa Fe Trail, which was active from 1821 until 1880. Specifically, this segment is part of an approximately 40-mile branch of the Cimarron Route that was located entirely within the waterless area known as *La Jornada* and connected the Mountain Route at the Upper Crossings of the Arkansas River near Lakin, Kansas with the Cimarron Route.

In Kansas, two rivers played significant navigational roles for Santa Fe Trail traffic: the Arkansas and the Cimarron. The trail followed the Arkansas River from present-day Great Bend in Barton County, Kansas to La Junta, Colorado. A few miles southwest of Great Bend, the main trail split into what became known as the Wet (or River) and Dry routes. As the name implies, the Wet Route followed the Arkansas River and was characterized by the presence of more water than was available on the Dry Route. A short distance east of Fort Dodge, the Wet and Dry routes converged and continued following the Arkansas River to La Junta on the Mountain Route. The Cimarron River, whose water was mostly subsurface, was encountered along the Cimarron Route (which was the primary route of the trail until the Mexican-American War) from Lower Cimarron Spring south of Ulysses, Kansas to Willow Bar just inside the Oklahoma panhandle, northeast of Boise City.

For travelers heading to Santa Fe via the Cimarron Route, the Arkansas River had to be crossed. Several crossing choices were available (Figure 4). The easternmost was the Lower Arkansas Crossing (also known as Mulberry Creek Crossing), where Mulberry Creek enters the Arkansas River east of Fort Dodge, near Ford, Kansas. The second and most popular choice was actually a series of at least six crossings known as the Middle Arkansas Crossings. The two easternmost of these were about nine miles west of Dodge City near the locations of the Caches and Fort Mann. Forty miles west of the Lower Crossing, near the present-day town of Cimarron, a third Middle Crossing was encountered. West of this location were three more crossings.⁶

Two of the last known Arkansas River crossing options for travelers bound for Santa Fe were the Upper Arkansas Crossings near present-day Lakin in Kearny County.⁷ The lesser used of these two crossings was located just east of this town. Upon crossing the river, the route from this location headed west to Chouteau's Island just west of Lakin where it connected with the main trunk of the route taken from the Upper Arkansas

⁶ Leo E. Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail*. Norman (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 17; Christine Whitacre, Steven De Vore, and Patty Henry ed., *Lower Cimarron Spring National Historic Landmark Nomination (Revised)*, 17 March 1997: 17.

⁷ The westernmost crossing of the Arkansas River in Kansas was the Aubry Crossing near Syracuse, Hamilton County, Kansas.

Crossing near the island. The route then headed south-southwest for about 12 miles where it then split into two branches. The easternmost branch continued south to terminate at Lower Cimarron Spring; the westernmost branch (of which the Santa Fe Trail – Grant County Segment 1 is a remnant) headed southwest for about four miles before turning south. This western branch connected with the Cimarron Route about five miles southwest of Lower Cimarron Spring.

The roughly 40-mile connecting route, with its two branches, taken south from the Upper Arkansas Crossings was the most direct path to the Cimarron Route; however, this route passed through one of the most dangerous stretches of the Santa Fe Trail. The area between the Arkansas and Cimarron rivers, known as *La Jornada*, was a waterless desert-like environment where temperatures ranged from very hot during the day to cold at night. The climate also contributed to the possibility of travelers losing their way, as Josiah Gregg described in his 1844 *Commerce of the Prairies*. The harsh winds on the relatively level and arid terrain likely contributed (and continue to contribute) to the erosion of the road profiles, so that travelers often mistook buffalo paths for the road.⁸ Because of the physical hardships of this region, travelers rested for a few days before leaving the Arkansas River, in order to gather as much water as possible and mentally prepare for the journey.⁹ Lower Cimarron Spring provided a reliable water source for travelers exiting *La Jornada*, and because of this, the spring was the destination for the majority of the crossing routes from the Arkansas to the Cimarron. The major exception is the westernmost branch of the Upper Arkansas River Crossing route that converges with the Cimarron Route southwest of Lower Cimarron Spring and therefore well away from a reliable water source.

The first known use of the Upper Crossing of the Arkansas River in relation to the trail was during the Sibley Survey in 1825. George Sibley, Joseph Brown, and the rest of the survey expedition were to survey the Santa Fe Trail to the 100th meridian, which marked the boundary between the United States and Mexico prior to the Mexican-American War in the 1840s.¹⁰ In this area of present-day Kansas, the Arkansas River served as the boundary between the two countries at the 100th meridian. Eventually, the survey expedition crossed the river near Chouteau's Island (no longer extant) and headed south to Taos.¹¹

Chouteau's Island was known by that name since 1816 when Auguste Chouteau and other fur-trappers sought this island's refuge during an encounter with Pawnee and Otoe Indians.¹² Surveyor Joseph Brown designated Chouteau's Island as the point to turn south into Mexico. His reasoning was that "the place would be recognized easily as north of the river was a conspicuous hill topped by a mound [Indian Mound] visible for many miles and the course of the river was more south at this point."¹³ This southerly route would lead future travelers directly to Lower Cimarron Spring. According to Sibley and Brown's maps, their route followed modern-day K-25 Highway, [REDACTED] east of the Santa Fe Trail – Grant County Segment 1 (Figure 5).

Despite the promotion of the route from the Upper Arkansas Crossing to the Cimarron River by Sibley's survey, this branch was not frequently used. As previously stated, the principal crossings were the Middle Arkansas crossings, as travelers usually preferred to follow one side of the triangle (southwest) rather than two sides (west then south). Though documentation exists that traveling parties entered *La Jornada* from the Upper Arkansas Crossing, exact routes taken from the Arkansas to the Cimarron Route are generally unknown.

⁸ Josiah Gregg, *The Commerce of the Prairies*, Milo Milton Quaife, ed. (Chicago: R.R. Donnelley & Sons Co., 1926), 66-69, 82.

⁹ Whitacre, De Vore, and Henry, *Lower Cimarron Spring NHL*, 19.

¹⁰ Louise Barry, *The Beginning of the West: Annals of the Kansas Gateway to the American West, 1540-1854* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972), 123.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, 76.

¹³ Virginia Pierce Hicks, "Historic Spots on Old Santa Fe Trail," *History of Kearny County Kansas*, volume 1 (1964): 25-26; William Y. Chalfant, *Cheyennes and Horse Soldiers: The 1857 Expedition and the Battle of Solomon's Fork* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 88.

The mere fact that the swales in this segment still exist is a testament to the amount of traffic they must have carried in the years between 1825 and 1868 – the latter being the year the Union Pacific Eastern Division reached the short-lived town of Sheridan, Kansas. If this branch road had been used infrequently, the swales would be either less pronounced or not evident at all, as frequent use of heavy freight wagons were needed to leave an impression in the landscape. The swales comprising the Santa Fe Trail – Grant County Segment 1 are one of the few remaining examples of this western branch of the Upper Crossing route.

Because so little is known about this branch road, this segment may have the potential to yield important archeological information. Archeological prospection, geophysical survey, and metal detector survey of similar trail segments have been shown to reveal associated artifact assemblages, sometimes buried and sometimes not, that can inform on the use of the trail during its period of significance. Though no such surveys have been undertaken on this trail segment, there is every reason to believe that the presence of such an assemblage is possible. These swales and their contributing land area have the potential to yield important information to understanding the use and nature of this branch road of the Cimarron Route, including patterns of use and change over time, evolving trade patterns, and cultural interactions. Study of both the remnant trail segment and adjacent archeological features can provide valuable insight into the evolving patterns of historic development in this region. This site likely contains data which may be vital to any wider study of the 19th-century trade and economic development. Further investigation could address key questions regarding trade and transportation variability and change and may illuminate why travelers chose to avoid the water offered at Lower Cimarron Spring by using this route. Excavation could also provide additional social data including better estimates of the frequency of use during various phases of history, the role played by various ethnic and social groups, and the nature of trail users, material culture and the production, distribution, and consumption of commodities.¹⁴

The Santa Fe Trail – Grant County Segment 1 is an anomaly within its surrounding environmental context, as it is one of the remaining examples of the Santa Fe Trail in this cultivated area of southwestern Kansas. This segment is significant for its connection with the trail through transportation and commerce and for its potential to yield information that will illuminate the study of this 40-mile branch road between the Arkansas and Cimarron rivers.

¹⁴ Kansas State Historical Society, *Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail Multiple Property Documentation Form (Revised)*. August 2012, F116. Citation covers paragraph.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Barry, Louise. *The Beginning of the West: Annals of the Kansas Gateway to the American West, 1540-1854*. Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972.

Chalfant, William Y. *Cheyennes and Horse Soldiers: The 1857 Expedition and the Battle of Solomon's Fork*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989.

Gregg, Josiah. *The Commerce of the Prairies*, Milo Milton Quaife, ed. Chicago: R.R. Donnelley & Sons Co., 1926.

Hicks, Virginia Pierce. "Historic Spots on Old Santa Fe Trail." *History of Kearny County Kansas*, Volume 1. (1964): 24-32.

Kansas State Historical Society. *Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail*, revised multiple property documentation form (August 2012).

Kuchler, A.W. "A New Vegetation Map of Kansas," *Ecology* 55, no. 3 (1974): 586-604.

Oliva, Leo E. *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967.

Schoewe, W.E. "The Geography of Kansas, Part II: Physical Geography." *Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science* 52, no. 3 (1949): 280, 311-330.

Wedel, Waldo R. "An introduction to Kansas archeology." *Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin* (1959): 8.

Whitacre, Christine, Steven De Vore, and Patty Henry ed. *Lower Cimarron Spring National Historic Landmark Nomination (Revised)*, 17 March 1997.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been Requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: **Kansas Historical Society**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____ N/A _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 55.99
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Datum = WGS84

[REDACTED]

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)
[REDACTED]

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)
[REDACTED]

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Amanda K. Loughlin & Laura Groves
organization Kansas State Historical Society date July 2012
street & number 6425 SW 6th Ave telephone (785)272-8681
city or town Topeka state KS zip code 66615-1099

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Historic images, maps, etc.)

Photographs:

Name of Property: Santa Fe Trail – Grant County Segment 1 (Klein's Ruts)
City or Vicinity: Ulysses, vicinity
County/State: Grant County, Kansas
Photographer: Laura Groves
Date of Photos: 12 October 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 6:** View looking SE at landscape. Shallow swale evident in dark band.
- 2 of 6:** View looking SW, showing trail swales.
- 3 of 6:** View looking NNE toward county road. Swales evident in dark bands.
- 4 of 6:** View just outside northern site boundary, looking SE across swales.
- 5 of 6:** View just inside northern site boundary, looking west across swales.
- 6 of 6:** View just inside northern site boundary, looking east across swales.

Property Owner:

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name On file with SHPO.
street & number _____ telephone _____
city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Figure 1.
[REDACTED]

Figure 2.
[REDACTED]

Figure 3.
[REDACTED]

Figure 4.
[REDACTED]

Figure 5.
[REDACTED]

Photo Key Plan.
[REDACTED]

Boundary Map.
[REDACTED]

Context Map.
[REDACTED]