# National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form

## 1. NAME

- **Common:** Pawnee Rock
- **And/or Historic:**

## 2. LOCATION

- **Street and Number:** Two-tenths mile north of the town of Pawnee Rock, off US-56
- **City or Town:** Pawnee Rock
- **State:** Kansas

## 3. CLASSIFICATION

- **Category (Check One):** Site
- **Ownership:** Public
- **Status:**
  - Public Acquisition: In Process
  - Preservation Work in Progress
  - Yes: Unrestricted

## 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

- **Owner’s Name:** State of Kansas
- **Street and Number:** State Capitol
- **City or Town:** Topeka

## 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

- **Courthouse, Registry of Deeds, etc.:** Register of Deeds
- **Street and Number:** Barton County Courthouse
- **City or Town:** Great Bend

## 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

- **Title of Survey:** National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings
- **Date of Survey:**
- **Depository for Survey Records:**
  - Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
- **Street and Number:** 801 19th St., N. W.
- **City or Town:** Washington
- **State:** D.C.
Pawnee Rock is located in the southwest corner of Barton county, about 100 yards from the old Santa Fe trail. The rock is today a prominence rising some 50 or 60 feet high. Originally it is said to have been twice that height and much the highest ground for miles. Matt Field, who traveled the Santa Fe trail in 1840, later wrote, "Pawnee Rock springs like a huge wart from the carpeted green of the prairie."

Traders, soldiers, emigrants, and others passing the site carved or chiseled their names into the front of the rugged mass of brown sandstone. Some of these names are still discernible among the graffiti and names of more recent visitors.

A considerable portion of the rock was removed by homesteaders to use in buildings and by the Santa Fe railroad to lay its roadbed along the route of the old trail.

Atop the rock at the present time is a memorial monument, picnic area, and a pergola, from the top of which visitors can view the Arkansas river valley and the route of the Santa Fe trail.
Pawnee Rock was for many years a place where Comanche, Kiowa, Arapahoe, Cheyenne, and Pawnee tribes held their councils of war and peace. Many Indian battles were fought nearby in the days before the white men came to Kansas.

Pawnee Rock was a landmark on the Santa Fe trail, serving as a lookout place for both white men and Indians, as well as a rendezvous and ambush for the Indians. It was a favorite camping spot for caravans bound for Santa Fe because once camped there, the rock afforded some protection against hostile Indians.

Many travelers and traders on the Santa Fe trail considered Pawnee Rock the most dangerous place on the Central Plains for encounters with the Indians.
Biographical History of Barton County, Kansas (Great Bend, Kansas, Tribune Publishing Co., 1912), p. 145.


10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 5

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

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<th>STATE</th>
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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Richard D. Fankratz, Planner

ORGANIZATION: Kansas State Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER: 120 West 10th St.

CITY OR TOWN: Topeka

STATE: Kansas 66622

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

- National [X]
- State [ ]
- Local [ ]

Name: Kyle H. Miller
Title: Executive Secretary, Kansas State Historical Society, and State Liaison Officer for Kansas
Date: October 12, 1970

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest A. Cassady
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
Date: DEC 29 1970

ATTEST:

William Schuyler
Keeper of the National Register
Date: DEC 7 1970
6. Survey of Historic Sites and Structures in Kansas (state) 1957
Kansas State Historical Society
120 West 10th St.
Topeka, Kansas 66612  Code: 20

Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration
1939  Federal

Records destroyed. A guide book, Kansas, was published in 1939.
NAME: Pawnee Rock

LOCATION:

STREET AND NUMBER: Two-tenths mile north of the town of Pawnee Rock, off US-56

CITY OR TOWN: Pawnee Rock

STATE: Kansas 67567

CODE: 20

COUNTY: Barton

CODE: 000

MAP REFERENCE:

SOURCE: U. S. G. S. 7 1/2' Quadrangle, Pawnee Rock, Kansas

SCALE: 1:24,000

DATE: 1960

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Property boundaries where required.
2. North arrow.
3. Latitude and longitude reference.