United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>historic name</th>
<th>Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>other names/site number</td>
<td>Donahue Ruts; KHRI #115-900</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>street &amp; number</th>
<th>REDACTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>city or town</td>
<td>Durham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state</td>
<td>Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>county</td>
<td>Marion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zip code</td>
<td>67438</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

- [ ] 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 eligible for the National Register
- [ ] determined not eligible for the National Register
- [ ] removed from the National Register
- [ ] other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action
------------------------|---------------------

Listed in the National Register 10/11/2016
### 5. Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership of Property</th>
<th>Category of Property</th>
<th>Number of Resources within Property</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Check as many boxes as apply)</td>
<td>(Check only one box)</td>
<td>(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X private</td>
<td>building(s)</td>
<td>Contributing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public - Local</td>
<td>district</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public - State</td>
<td>site</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public - Federal</td>
<td>structure</td>
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<tr>
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<td>object</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### 6. Function or Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historic Functions</th>
<th>Current Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Enter categories from instructions)</td>
<td>(Enter categories from instructions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRANSPORTATION/road-related</td>
<td>AGRICULTURE/agricultural field</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7. Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Architectural Classification</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Enter categories from instructions)</td>
<td>(Enter categories from instructions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>foundation: N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>walls: N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>roof: N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>other:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail (2012)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0
Narrative Description

Summary

Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment is located northwest of Durham in Marion County, in central Kansas [REDACTED]. There are two areas of intact trail remains. The southern portion contains at least 4 visible swales that are approximately 30.48 m (100 ft) in length, while the northern portion consists of a single swale/depression approximately 60.96 m (200 ft) in length within a corridor that ranges in width from 45.72 m (150 ft) at the north to 39.62 m (130 ft) at the south end of the segment. This Santa Fe Trail remnant follows a northeast-southwest path, connecting the Cottonwood River Crossing ([REDACTED]to the southwest) and Lost Spring ([REDACTED]east-northeast) along the main route of the Santa Fe Trail (Figure 1). Donahue’s Trail Segment includes one property type, Transportation Site (Trail Segment subtype) in the form of swales as outlined in the Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail revised multiple property nomination. Together this resource and its contributing land area constitute approximately five acres [REDACTED].

Narrative Description

Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment generally follows the General Land Office (GLO) survey lines marked in Marion County between 1857 and 1876. While there are other intact trail sections (especially southwest of this site), much of the trail has been almost obliterated in Marion County by farming operations.

Landscape

Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment is located on the eastern edge of the Smoky Hills division of the Dissected High Plains section of the Great Plains province of the Interior Plains division of North America. The Dissected High Plains section essentially constitutes the heavily dissected eastern front of the High Plains of western Kansas. The region under consideration is characterized by “…a broken landscape of high plateau like uplands, prominent and often sharply indented east-facing sandstone or limestone escarpments, conspicuous headlands, isolated buttes, hills, and rolling lowland plains.” Located north of the Arkansas River and covering most of north central Kansas, this portion of the Dissected High Plains is made up of two distinct ranges of upland which parallel each other in a northeast-southwest irregularly trending fashion. Bedrock is of Cretaceous age. The eastern range (and sometimes the entire Dissected High Plains area) is commonly referred to as the Smoky Hills; it is formed mainly in thick beds of Dakota sandstone. The western range is referred to as the Blue Hills; the bedrock there consists mainly of limestones and shales.

Donahue’s segment is located within the eastern, Smoky Hills division of the Dissected High Plains. Some of the major cities within the Smoky Hills are Washington, Minneapolis, Salina, Lyons, and Larned. Notable Smoky Hills landmarks include Coronado Heights and Pawnee Rock, which are singularly large outcrops of Dakota sandstone, and Rock City, an area of numerous large sandstone concretions. Ranging from 20 to 40 miles wide, the Smoky Hills region is a maturely dissected broad hilly belt having a relief in places of up to 200-300 feet. In general, however, the relief is much less. Topographically, the region consists mainly of largely indistinct terraces and dissected escarpments, with numerous outlying hills and mounds. The major rivers of the region – the Republican, Solomon, Saline, and Smoky Hill – flow in an easterly or southeasterly direction through flat-bottomed valleys ranging up to two or three miles wide. Numerous spring-fed tributaries indent the valley margins: like the larger streams and rivers, their courses are commonly terraced lined. The bottomland soils are usually deep, well drained, and fertile.

The vegetation of the region prior to modern encroachment and change apparently consisted of prairie penetrated by riverine forest, with a few small patches of trees occupying sheltered locations on the prairie.

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


mainly on steep escarpments and butte tops. The potential natural vegetation of the region consists of tallgrass prairie and mixed prairie dominated by bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii* and *Schizachyrium scoparium*) and grama grasses (*Bouteloua spp.*), combined with floodplain forest or savanna vegetation consisting of tall, medium tall, and low broadleaf deciduous scattered trees and shrubs. Moving from east to west, the forests become narrower and lower, and often less dense. Dominant trees include hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), cottonwood (*Populus deltoids*), willow (*Salix spp.*), and elm (*Ulmus spp.*). A variety of fruit and berry-producing shrubs such as chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*), currant (*Ribes odoratum*), gooseberry (*Ribes grossularia*), plum (*Prunus spp.*), and grape (*Ampelopsis cordata*) were also present in the forested areas.

At the Donahue trail segment, trees are much more abundant than during trail days. While control of prairie fires during the early settlement period was certainly a factor, another element was the Timber Culture Act (1873), which encouraged the planting of trees. This act, authored by US Senator Phineas W. Hitchcock of Nebraska, was a follow-up to the Homestead Act (1862), which gave an applicant freehold title to an area called a "homestead" (160 acres) of surveyed federal land. The Timber Culture Act allowed homesteaders to acquire another 160 acres of land if they planted trees on at least 10 acres of the quarter section. It was thought that the timber would be beneficial for use as building materials, as fuel for fires, and as windbreaks on the plains. This Act was repealed in 1891, but evidence remains in the form of existing trees, including ash (*Fraxinus spp.*), Osage orange (*Maclura pomifera*), black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), locust (*Gleditlia spp.* and *Robinia spp.*), some catalpa (*Catalpa spp.*). Willow and cottonwood are also found here.

This five-acre site is gently sloping and is intersected in the middle by an unnamed tributary of the Cottonwood River. Along the northern boundary, the topography begins at 435.9 m (1430 ft) and slopes southwest to an elevation of 432.8 m (1420 ft) south of the creek (*Figures 2 through 5*). The southern boundary is formed by an east-west fence marking the center of Section 5. Runoff from the swales (especially those south of the creek) has likely influenced the varying widths and the course of the creek, though the general location within the landscape appears to be the same as in trail days. Some concentrated erosion has occurred during this time.

Located in a rural area of Marion County, this site's views and vistas out of the landscape are minimally obstructed. To the southwest of the site across a barbed wire fence are additional swales owned by another individual, while cultivated areas are visible to the northeast. The landscape gently slopes toward the creek from both the northeast and the southwest. The property is used for grazing, with no cultivation in the immediate vicinity.

**Trail Segment**

Donahue's Santa Fe Trail Segment is an example of a trail segment subtype of transportation sites defined in the revised multiple property nomination. It is located [REDACTED] south-southwest of Lost Spring, a well-known reliable water source and regular stop for trail travelers. Ahead [REDACTED] lies the Cottonwood River crossing. The nominated property is also situated northeast of the National Register-listed Durham Ruts, which are clearly visible from a number of vantage points.

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7 Lost Spring was listed in the National Register on December 8, 1975. A revised nomination (with expanded boundaries) was completed in 2014. See National Register nomination forms on file with the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office for more information.

8 The crossing itself has been heavily modified through cultivation (especially on the south side) and is not listed in the National Register. However, the Santa Fe Trail Association has placed a series of markers near the highway commemorating the crossing and the well-known adjacent campsite. The campsite (recorded as archeological site
The Donahue Ruts follow the topography as it gently slopes to the creek from both the southwest and the northeast. The crisscrossing course of these swales indicate that over the active years of the trail through this section, travelers chose different routes to cross the creek, which interrupts the swales in the middle of the site.

The exact depths of the individual swales vary along the length of the segment. Given the sloping character of this site, rainwater runoff, which tends to collect at the bottom of the depressions, has made them slightly larger depressions than they were in trail days.

14MN1309 was situated on both sides of the crossing, though many wagon trains preferred to camp on the south side after crossing the river. There, a broad relatively level terrace allowed a convenient place to camp and easy access to the river. In the early 1990s, a road relocation project allowed an opportunity for archeological investigations. The plow zone within the new road right-of-way was removed with heavy machinery, and test excavations were conducted. However, while trail-period artifacts were recovered, no intact cultural features (such as fire hearths, pits, or dump areas) were found, perhaps reflecting the temporary nature of trail campsites. Marsha K. King, Phase III Archeological Investigations at the Cottonwood Creek Crossing Santa Fe Trail Campground (57 C-3266-02), Marion County, Kansas. (1996) Report submitted to the Kansas Department of Transportation. Copies available from the Kansas Historic Preservation Office.

The Santa Fe Trail – Marion County Trail Segments (or Durham Ruts, as they are known locally) were listed in the National Register on May 11, 1995. See National Register nomination form on file with the Kansas State Historic Preservation Office for more information.
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)

- **X** 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.
- **X** D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**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.

**Areas of Significance**
(Enter categories from instructions)

- Transportation
- Commerce
- Archaeology (Historic—Non-Aboriginal)

**Period of Significance**
1821-1866

**Significant Dates**
1821
1866

**Significant Person**
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**
N/A

**Architect/Builder**
Not applicable.

**Period of Significance (justification)**
The period of significance encompasses the years the trail was active in Marion County.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**
N/A
8. Statement of Significance

Summary Paragraph (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment is nationally significant as part of the Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail revised multiple property nomination under Criterion A for its association with transportation and commerce along the Santa Fe Trail and under Criterion D for its potential to yield information about this route through central Kansas. The site, together with the surrounding landscape, retains a good degree of integrity in terms of location, setting, feeling, and association required for registration. Its period of significance begins with the initiation of commercial traffic over this segment of the trail in 1821 and ends with the cessation of long-distance trail traffic in Marion County in 1866 with the arrival of the railroad. 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Donahue Ruts are remnants from the Santa Fe Trail, which was active from 1821 until 1880. In Marion County, the trail’s years of use began with William Becknell’s first expedition to Santa Fe in 1821 and ended in 1866 with the arrival of the railroad. This trail segment was part of the primary route of the Santa Fe Trail before it split between the Mountain and Cimarron routes farther west. This land saw the majority of travelers and traders who traveled between Santa Fe and Missouri. Specifically, this segment was part of the route connecting two major campsites: Lost Spring and Cottonwood Creek (Figure 1).

Besides Becknell, one of the earliest travelers through this area was George Sibley’s Santa Fe Trail survey expedition. The surveyors crossed close to this land in August 1825; although, according to available maps, they marked a route parallel to the active trail (Figure 6). By 1842 when famed traveler Josiah Gregg passed between Lost Spring and Cottonwood Creek, the route was established through what is now the Donahue property.

On June 24, 1846 noted traveler Susan Shelby Magoffin’s caravan left camp at Lost Spring at 7 A.M., intending to reach Cottonwood Creek before nightfall – a drive of over 15 miles. Because of heavy rains the preceding day, the caravan made very slow progress, traveling approximately seven miles before stopping to rest at 3 P.M. The wagons made only a few extra miles that day before stopping to camp on the open prairie. Magoffin reached camp at Cottonwood Creek mid-day of June 25; the remainder of the caravan did not arrive until late in the evening, all having crossed the Donahue property on their way to the camp.10 Following close behind Magoffin’s caravan was Brigadier General Stephen Watts Kearny and his Army of the West. In early July, this group of approximately 1600 men crossed the Donahue land on their way to occupy Santa Fe during the Mexican-American War.11

The trail was still in active use in 1859 when Captain Randolph Marcy recorded his itinerary from Fort Leavenworth to Santa Fe. Marcy’s journey, commissioned by the US War Department as a travel manual, was published as The Prairie Traveler and included a number of “itineraries of most of the principal routes that have

been traveled across the plains....

Marcy traveled across Donahue’s Segment between Lost Spring and Cottonwood Creek.

Possibly one of the last recorded uses of the overland trail through Marion County is from August 1865. Kansas settler, Frank Stahl, was employed by Leavenworth contractor James Kerr to drive over 1100 head of cattle to Fort Union, New Mexico for the US military. Stahl watered his cattle at Lost Spring on August 21 and encamped on a creek about six miles beyond Lost Spring. He arrived at and crossed Cottonwood Creek the following day, having crossed the Donohue Segment.

In 1866, the Kansas Pacific Railroad arrived in Junction City, 40 miles northeast of this site. Junction City briefly became the eastern terminus of the trail until the Kansas Pacific reached Salina in 1867. As was common in the years immediately following the active trail days, the Santa Fe Trail was used as a local road in this area until the section line roads were established, between 1882 and 1892.

**Archeological Potential**

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 road, including patterns of use and change over time, evolving trade patterns, cultural interactions, and possibly even be able to narrow the dates of use. 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. 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.

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16 Kansas Historical Society, *Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail Multiple Property Documentation Form (Revised)*. August 2012, F116. Citation covers paragraph.
9. Major Bibliographical References


Kansas Historical Society. *Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail Multiple Property Documentation Form (Revised)*. August 2012.

King, Marsha K. *Phase III Archeological Investigations at the Cottonwood Creek Crossing Santa Fe Trail Campground (57 C-3266-02), Marion County, Kansas*. (1996).


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**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:**

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Kansas Historical Society

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): n/a
10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property  5
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates
Map Datum: WGS84

[REDACTED]

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

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)
The area encompasses the visible resources and their immediate environs.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title  Amanda K. Loughlin, Richard Anderson, Timothy Weston
organization  Kansas Historical Society  date  Spring 2016
street & number  6425 SW 6th Ave  telephone  (785) 272-8681
city or town  Topeka  state  KS  zip code  66615-1099
e-mail  cultural_resources@kshs.org

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.
Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment
Marion County, Kansas

Name of Property: Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment
City or Vicinity: Durham vicinity
County/State: Marion County, Kansas
Photographer: Richard Anderson (RA) & Timothy Weston (TW)
Date: October 21, 2015

Description of Photograph(s) and number:
01 of 05: Viewed looking NNE from the center of one of the southernmost swales on the property. (RA)
02 of 05: Viewed looking NE from the west edge of the swale. (RA)
03 of 05: Viewed looking SSW from the center of the northernmost swale on the property. Edges of the swale are seen on the left and right sides, center of the photo. (TW)
04 of 05: Viewed looking SSW from the bottom, east side of the swale. (TW)
05 of 05: Viewed looking SSW from the center of the swale towards the southern end of the existing swale. (TW)

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A Lat.,Long. map indicating the property's location. Datum used: WGS84.

  A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:
Figure 1.
REDACTED.

Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment.
Santa Fe National Historic Trail brochure, National Park Service Official Map and Guide.
Arrow indicates approximate location of segment.

Figure 2.
REDACTED.

Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment.

Figure 3.
REDACTED.

Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment.
Showing location of intact trail swales within dotted area.
Nomination boundary shown by heavy dashed line.

Figure 4.
REDACTED.

Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment.
Showing location of intact trail swales within dotted area.
Nomination boundary shown by heavy dashed line.
The trail segment continues to the south of the property line.
LiDar Imagery

Figure 5.
REDACTED.

Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment.
Mapped GLO Route In Relation to Intact Trail Swales
LiDar Imagery

Figure 6.
REDACTED.

Donahue’s Santa Fe Trail Segment.
Map showing Sibley’s Survey (in blue) overlaid with the 1857 General Land Office survey of the trail (in red) through the area where the Donahue Ruts are located.

Boundary Map. (North is up; no scale)

REDACTED.