

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 – Rice County Segment 3

other names/site number Swanson Swales; KHRI #159-114

2. Location

street & number Address restricted.

X

 not for publication

city or town Windom

X

 vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Rice code 159 zip code 67491

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/Title _____ Date _____

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 _____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
1	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
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.)

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

LANDSCAPE/unoccupied land

7. Description

Architectural Classification
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

N/A

Materials
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: N/A
 walls: N/A

 roof: N/A
 other: N/A

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 3, also known as the Swanson Swales after the family who owns them, is located in eastern Rice County in central Kansas, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This segment is situated [REDACTED] of the Little Arkansas River Crossing and Station Little Arkansas (Figure 3). The site contains one contributing resource, 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. The nominated site comprises 7.52 acres.

Narrative Description

The Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 3 is located along the main route of the Santa Fe Trail, whose location in Rice County was approximated by the General Land Office (GLO) survey in the summer of 1866 (Figure 4). Specifically, this segment is part of the route that led to the upper Little Arkansas River Crossing, [REDACTED].

Landscape¹

This site lies within the Great Bend Lowland division of the Arkansas River Lowlands section of the Central Lowland province of the Interior Plains of North America.² The Great Bend Lowland is an undulating plain of little relief extending in a 10-40 mile wide band along the great northerly bend of the Arkansas River from around Dodge City on the west through Great Bend and Wichita to Arkansas City on the east. It is a poorly drained area of sand dunes and sandy plains, among which are found salt marshes, ponds, and sloughs. The surface materials consist almost entirely of sands and gravels eroded from the Rocky Mountains during the Pleistocene and carried downstream by alluvial action of the Arkansas River, which flows through the area and to the east in a shallow channel bounded by a wide, flat, poorly drained river valley. The river is not confined to a single channel, but instead has a number of channels with intervening islands, which is a braided pattern characteristic of an aggrading or depositing stream. The Little Arkansas River is a tributary of the Arkansas River. Most of the stream flow of the Arkansas is underground; water is usually only barely visible on the surface except during times of flooding.

The vegetation of the Great Bend Lowland in prehistoric and early historic times apparently consisted of sand prairie cut through by a thin band of floodplain forest or savanna along the Arkansas River and a few of its tributaries. Archeologist Waldo Wedel noted that the "low grass-grown banks" of the Arkansas upstream of the Little Arkansas seem to have been "largely treeless except for occasional cottonwoods" and in his view this was probably true for most of the region west and south of the main stream.³ The potential natural vegetation of the prairie mainly included big and little bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii* and *Schizachyrium scoparium*), sandreed (*Calamovilfa longifolia*), and switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum* L.), with the forested areas containing hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), cottonwood (*Populus deltoids*), willow (*Salix spp.*), and elm (*Ulmus spp.*) along with various shrubs and bushes.⁴ The trees declined markedly in terms of numbers of species and overall abundance as one moved from east to west. Tall trees, dense undergrowth, and many lianas were present in the extreme east, but the forests became narrower and lower westward, and often less dense, the ground covered by an impoverished version of bluestem prairie, creating a savanna effect. And due to the shifting

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

² W.E. Schoewe, "The Geography of Kansas, Part II: Physical Geography," *Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science* 52, no. 3 (1949): 292-296.

³ Waldo R. Wedel, "An Introduction to Kansas Archeology," *Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin* (1959): 12.

⁴ A.W. Kuchler, "A New Vegetation Map of Kansas," *Ecology* 55, no. 3 (1974): 597.

sand bottom of the Arkansas River channel, timber was often absent for long stretches. When [REDACTED] was surveyed in 1866, the surveyors described the landscape thus:

The land in this Township, with the exception of the extreme Southern portion, which is sandy and barren, is of good quality and well suited to farming or grazing. The Township is watered by Little Arkansas river, a stream about fifty links wide, running South Easterly through the Eastern portion; and along the banks of which, timber of a poor quality is found. The varieties of Timber are Box Elder, Elm, and Cottonwood.⁵

Cottonwoods are still prevalent along this portion of the Little Arkansas River.

The Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 3 is part of the main Santa Fe Trail route through central Kansas. Located [REDACTED] of the Little Arkansas River, the swales are directly associated with the Little Arkansas River Crossing, particularly the upper crossing. Running in a northeast to southwest direction, the swales fall in line with the GLO survey line as it leads to the upper Little Arkansas Crossing (Figure 4). Entering the site from the northeast, travelers would have followed this path down to the river and in other cases to the northeast after crossing in the opposite direction.

Currently, the trail segment is preserved by the land owners. The site is surrounded by cultivated areas, but it has never been cultivated itself. A fence and hedge row separates the trail segment site from the cultivated areas on portions of the north and all of the east and south sides. The western boundary is comprised of a tree line, which separates the trail segment from a retention pond. To the north of the segment is a home site.

The land gently slopes toward the Little Arkansas River. The site starts at an elevation of approximately 475.5 meters (1560 feet) at the northeast corner and slopes to the southwest to an approximate elevation of 466 meters (1530 feet) at the western tree line.

Trail Segment

The Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 3 is an example of a Transportation Site (Trail Segment subtype), as defined in the revised multiple property nomination. Entering from the northeast and heading southwesterly, at least six parallel swales are evident. Spanning a corridor of approximately 58 meters (190 feet) in width, the segment maintains a relatively straight course for approximately 286 meters (938 feet).

8. Statement of Significance

⁵ "Field Notes for [REDACTED]." (Leavenworth: General Land Office, 1866), Kansas Historical Society (Topeka): Florence McGlasson Gabelmann Memorial Library, microfilm, [REDACTED].

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.

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.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins with the initiation of trail traffic by William Becknell in 1821 and ends with the arrival of the railroad in Junction City in 1866, which spelled the end of trail traffic east of Great Bend, as trail traffic then continued southwest from Junction City along the Butterfield Overland Despatch route to Fort Zarah.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Transportation

Commerce

Period of Significance

1821-1866

Significant Dates

n/a

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

n/a

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 3 (also known as the Swanson Swales, after the current owner) 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 from 1821 to 1866. This site is also nationally significant under Criterion D for its potential to yield information about this route. The segment retains a good degree of integrity in terms of location, setting, feeling, and association required for registration. 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 (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 3 is a site that contains remnants from the main route of the Santa Fe Trail, which was active from 1821 until 1880, though the association of this site with the Santa Fe Trail ends in 1866 with the coming of the railroad.

This site is directly related to the upper crossing of the Little Arkansas River (not part of this nomination), as travelers headed for this crossing would have traveled this segment (Figure 4). As the trail approached the Little Arkansas, it split into two routes. Coming from Council Grove (approximately 90 miles east), the route to the upper crossing diverged from the route to the lower crossing about four miles from the river. The two routes rejoin about one mile west of the Little Arkansas.

The reason for the two routes is most likely due to the condition of the crossings at the time of travel. When approaching the crossing the scout leading the wagon train needed to determine which crossing was best to use at the time (generally based on water flow and the weather).⁶ The scout would then direct the wagon train to whichever crossing was safest and least difficult to cross. The two crossings were one quarter mile apart.

William Becknell initiated trade with Santa Fe in 1821 and most likely crossed the Little Arkansas River that year. Certainly, though, the Little Arkansas River was crossed from the initiation of wagon traffic over the trail in 1822 to the advancement of the railroad to Junction City in 1866. Travelers bound for Santa Fe would take the train to Junction City then continue southwest along the Butterfield Overland Despatch route to Fort Ellsworth, then southwest on a connecting road to Fort Zarah, where they resumed the main trail. This new route from Junction City spelled the end of long-distance trail traffic east of Fort Zarah (near present-day Great Bend). The Little Arkansas, at least at the beginning of the Santa Fe trade, was a fairly reliable source of water, grass, and wood, as Sibley Expedition surveyor Joseph C. Brown noted in his 1825 journal.⁷ Famed Santa Fe Trail traveler, Josiah Gregg crossed the Little Arkansas in the 1830s.⁸ During the Mexican-American War in the mid-1840s, the Army of the West crossed the river and encamped there.⁹ The gold “fever” of the late 1850s saw several travelers crossing the Little Arkansas on their way to Colorado. By this time, there was “little timber on the river and but little watter [sic].”¹⁰

⁶ Marc Simmons, *Following the Santa Fe Trail: A Guide for Modern Travelers*, 3rd ed. (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 2001), 111.

⁷ William E. Connelley, *A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans, Volume 1* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1918), 97.

⁸ Josiah Gregg, ed. Milo Milton Quaife, *Commerce of the Prairies* (Chicago: The Lakeside Press, 1926), 44-45.

⁹ Abraham Robinson Johnston, Marcellus Ball Edwards, and Phillip Gooch Ferguson, *Marching with the Army of the West 1846-1848*, Ralph P. Bieber, ed. (Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1936), 126-127, 302; and William E. Connelley, *Doniphan's Expedition and the Conquest of New Mexico and California* (Topeka: Wm. E. Connelley, 1907), 158-159.

¹⁰ Louise Barry, “The Ranch at Little Arkansas Crossing,” *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 38 (Autumn, 1972): 288.

Though ample records are available that document the use of the Little Arkansas Crossing throughout its period of significance, no known records exist that illuminate who traversed which crossing route. The earliest map available, Brown's 1825 map, does indicate that the Sibley Expedition crossed at the lower crossing. Regardless, the prominence of these nominated swales indicates that the upper crossing was used frequently.

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.¹¹

Summary

The Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 3 is one of the remaining examples of the route taken by Santa Fe Trail traffic heading to the upper crossing of the Little Arkansas River. The route was documented by the General Land Office surveyors in 1866—the year the Santa Fe Trail in this part of Rice County ceased to be used for overland transportation to New Mexico. This segment is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places because of its association with the commerce and transportation of the Santa Fe Trail and for its potential to yield information about the trail's use.

¹¹ 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

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Barry, Louise. "The Ranch at Little Arkansas Crossing," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 38 (Autumn, 1972): 287-294.

Connelley, William E. *A Standard History of Kansas and Kansans, Volume 1*. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1918.

Connelley, William E. *Doniphan's Expedition and the Conquest of New Mexico and California*. Topeka: Wm. E. Connelley, 1907.

"Field Notes for [REDACTED]" Leavenworth: General Land Office, 1866. Kansas Historical Society (Topeka): Florence McGlasson Gabelmann Memorial Library, microfilm, [REDACTED].

Gregg, Josiah. *Commerce of the Prairies*. Milo Milton Quaife, editor. Chicago: The Lakeside Press, 1926.

Johnston, Abraham Robinson; Marcellus Ball Edwards; and Phillip Gooch Ferguson. *Marching with the Army of the West 1846-1848*. Ralph P. Bieber, editor. Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Co., 1936.

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

Kuchler, A.W. "A New Vegetation Map of Kansas," *Ecology* 55, no. 3 (1974): 597.

Schoewe, W.E. "The Geography of Kansas, Part II: Physical Geography," *Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science* 52, no. 3 (1949): 292-296.

Simmons, Marc. *Following the Santa Fe Trail: A Guide for Modern Travelers*. 3rd ed. Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 2001.

Wedel, Waldo R. "An Introduction to Kansas Archeology." *Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin* (1959): 12.

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 # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

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 7.52 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum = WGS84

See attached map.

A
Latitude Longitude

C
Latitude Longitude

B
Latitude Longitude

D
Latitude Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary for this site was selected to include all the visible swales, as well as the relatively undisturbed area surrounding the trail segment. Natural boundary markers separate the protected segment from surrounding cultivation.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John R. Barry, Tim Weston, & Amanda Loughlin
organization Kansas Historical Society date August 2012
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

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

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 3 (Swanson Swales)
City or Vicinity: Windom vicinity
County/State: Rice County, Kansas
Photographer: John Barry
Date Photographed: 29 June 2012

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

- 1 of 8.** Looking SE across swales in mown area.
- 2 of 8.** Looking WSW along swales in mown area.
- 3 of 8.** Start of swale in foreground, looking S along east treeline boundary.
- 4 of 8.** Looking NE toward treeline along north and east boundary, showing swales.
- 5 of 8.** Looking SW toward creek, showing large swale between trees in background as trail continues to SW.
- 6 of 8.** Looking N at reservoir (on hill with cottonwood grove), looking across swales.
- 7 of 8.** Looking WNW across deep swale in center of photo.
- 8 of 8.** Looking NE looking uphill along swales toward mown area, showing swales as they descend the hill.

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.

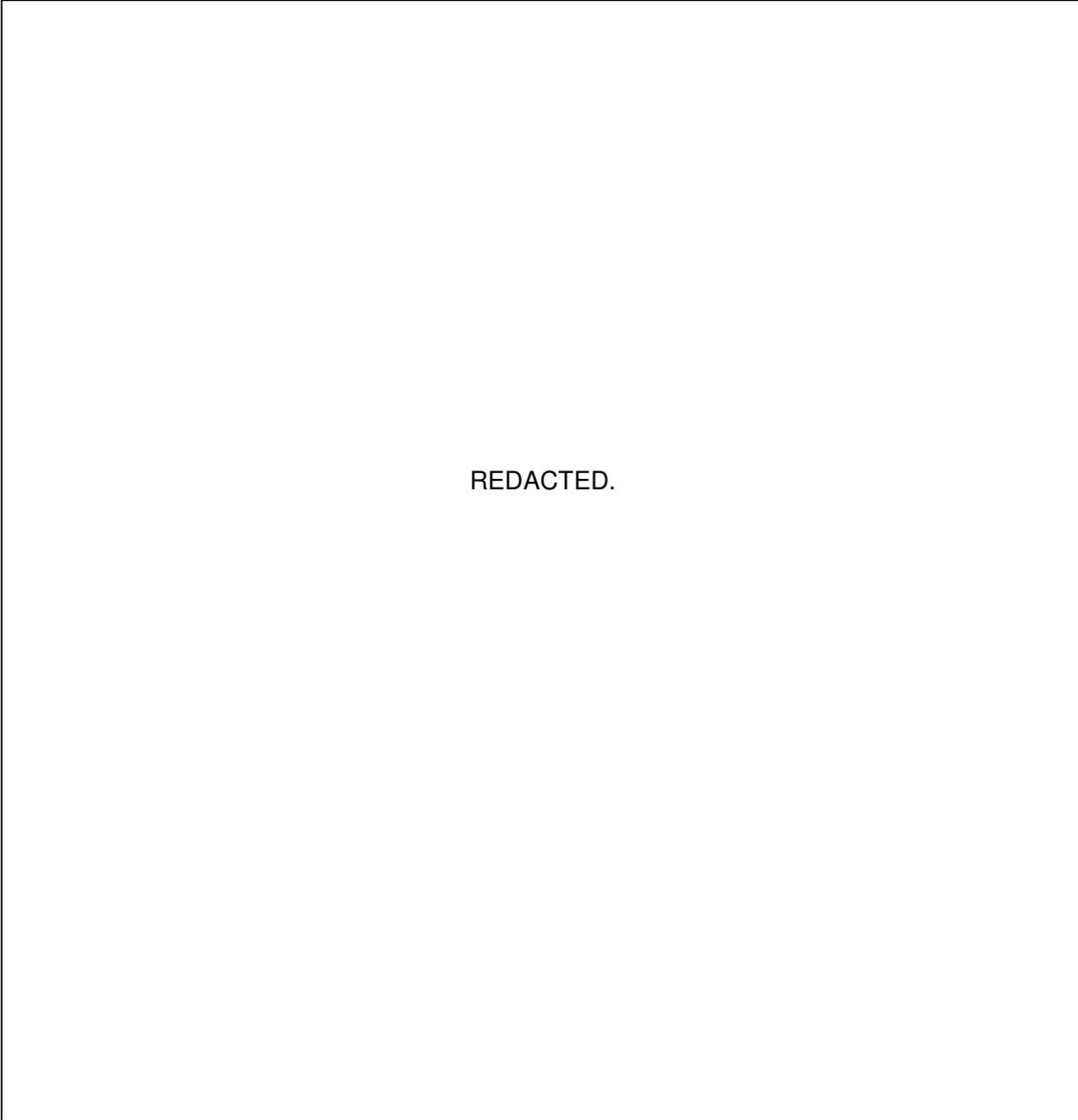


Figure 2.

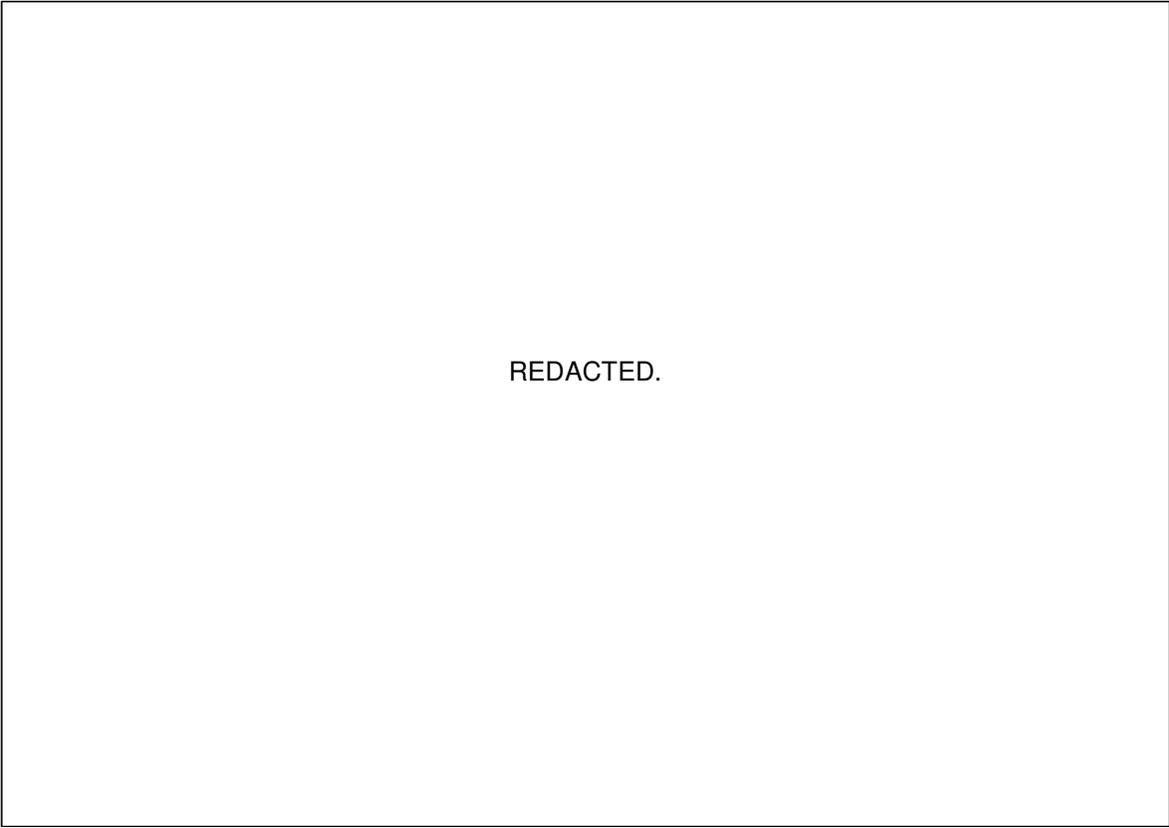


Figure 3.

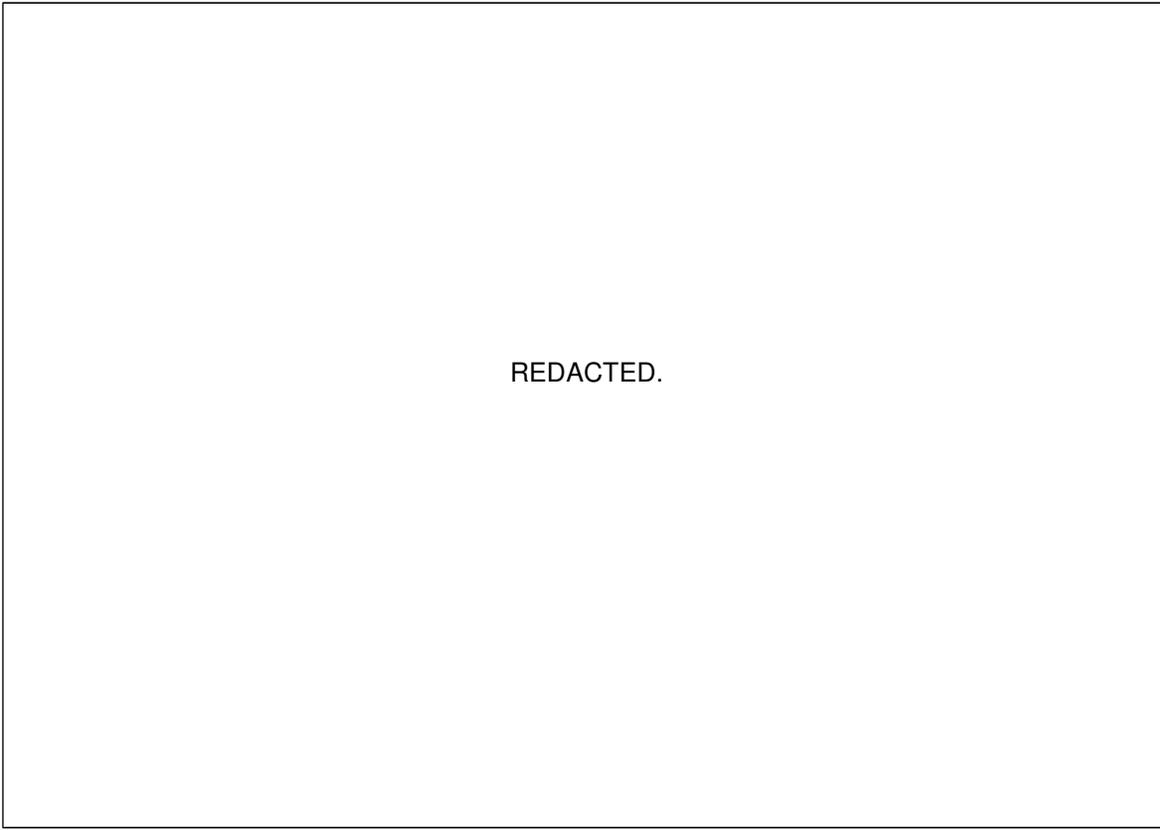
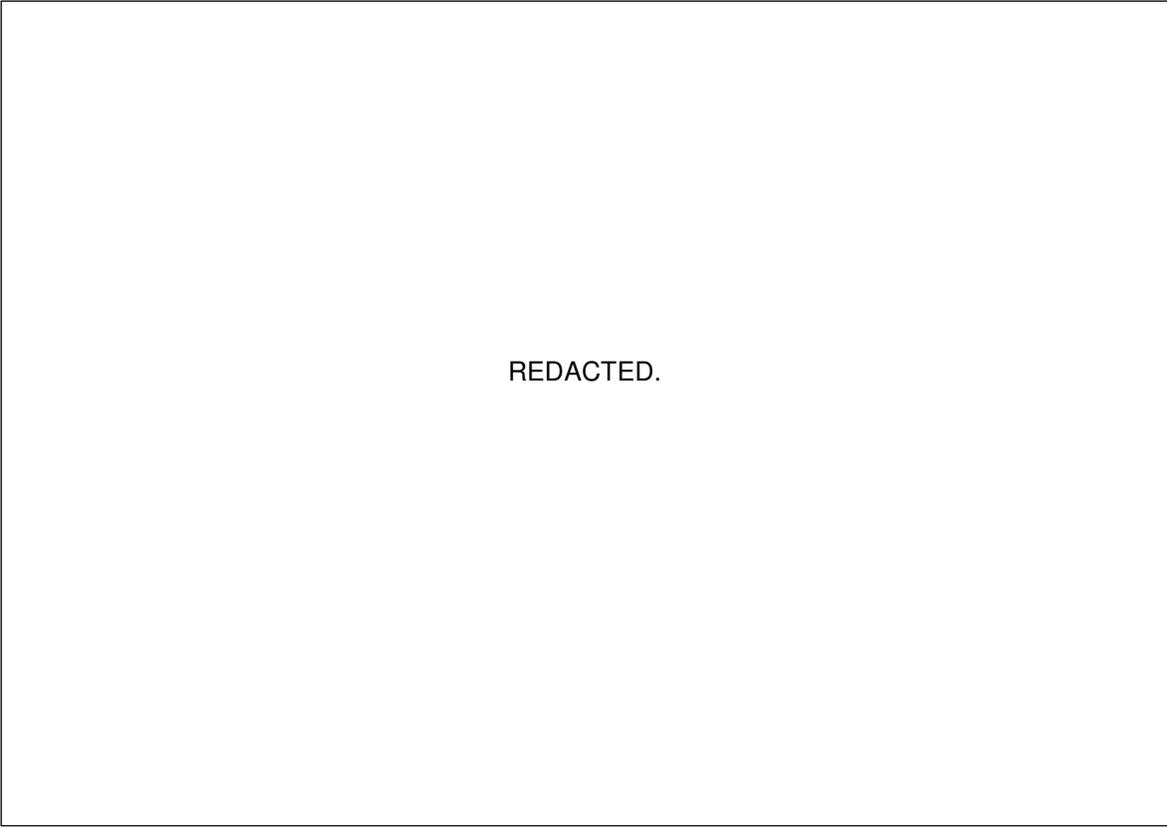
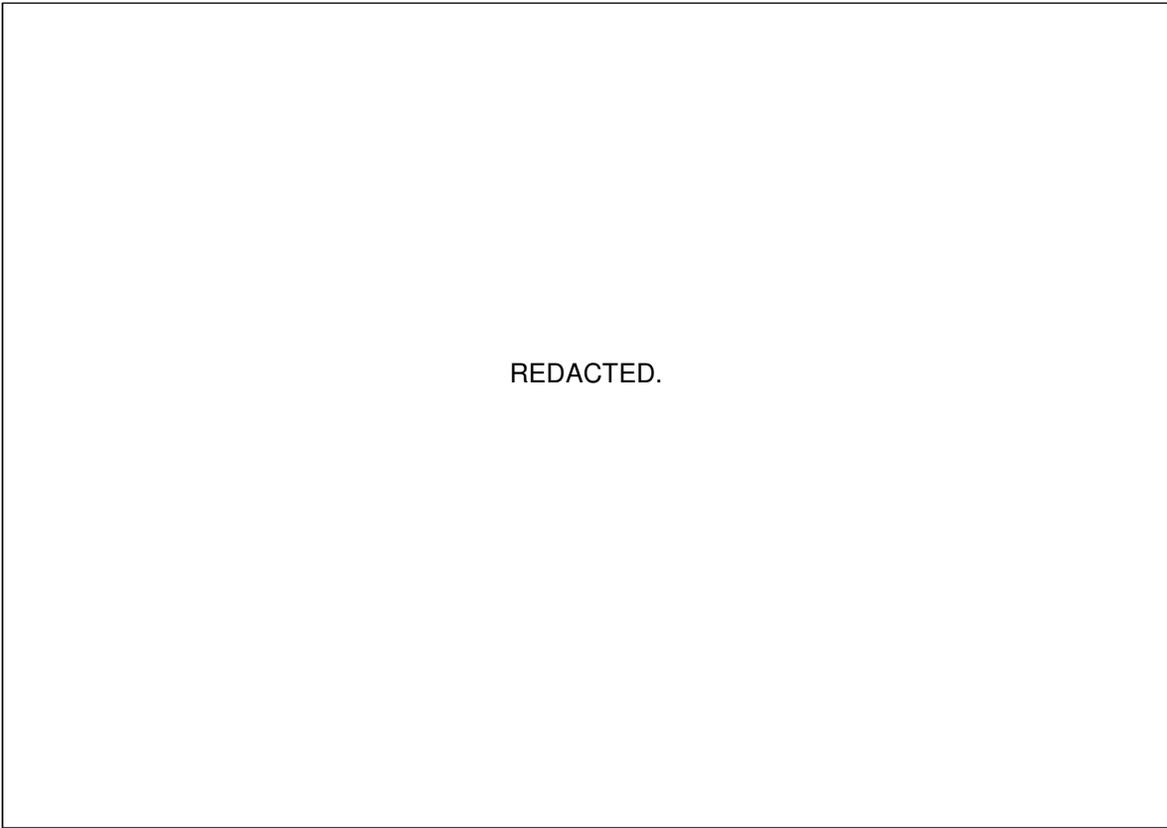


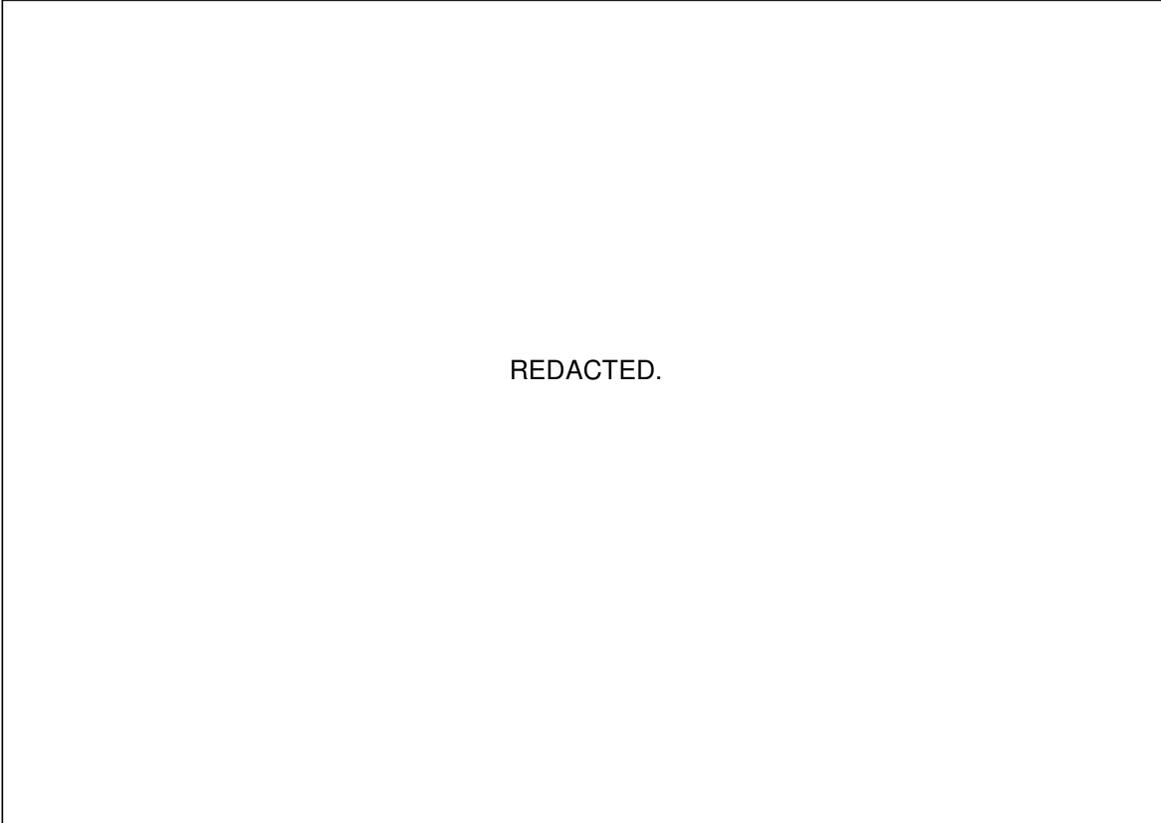
Figure 4.



Photograph Key.



Boundary Map.



Contextual Map.

