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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

historic name Lower Cimarron Spring

other names/site number Wagon Bed Spring(s), Lower Cimarron Springs, 14GT101, KHRI# 067-0000-00001

2. Location

street & number Approximately 12 miles south of Ulysses, Kansas, West side of US-270 ☐ not for publication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 ☒ 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

Patrick Zetter
Signature of certifying official

6-7-13
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:)

Alexis Obermeyer
Signature of the Keeper

9/25/2013
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
0	0	district
2	0	site
0	0	structure
1	1	object
3	1	Total

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

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

DOMESTIC/camp

LANDSCAPE/natural feature

RECREATION AND CULTURE/marker

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE/agricultural field

LANDSCAPE/natural feature

RECREATION AND CULTURE/marker

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: Stone (DAR marker)

Narrative Description

Summary

Lower Cimarron Spring (14GT101) was designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) on December 19, 1960 under the name Wagon Bed Springs and was subsequently listed in the National Register, under the same name, on October 15, 1966. On August 6, 1998, Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt approved changing the name of the National Historic Landmark to "Lower Cimarron Spring." He also approved the changes to the original NHL that included: the historic location of the actual spring, the expansion of the boundary from 4 to 195 acres to include the historic campground associated with the spring and extant trail swales to the east of the spring; and the updating of the nomination to include recent scholarship. Because the National Register nomination was not updated concurrently with the revision to the NHL nomination, this National Register nomination seeks to incorporate all of the changes from the 1998 NHL, as well as add the Wagonbed [sic] Springs DAR marker and a 45.43-acre linear site to the northeast of the NHL boundary that includes several parallel swales as contributing resources. The total acreage of the Lower Cimarron Spring National Register Nomination boundary is 240.43 acres.

Lower Cimarron Spring is a historical archeological site that includes the spring, which is dry now, its associated campground, several remnants of the Santa Fe Trail, and the Wagonbed Springs DAR marker. The Cimarron River formed a natural boundary for the historic camping area associated with the spring, and archeological investigations have revealed a high concentration of Santa Fe Trail-related resources. The spring and associated campground are examples of Travel and Trade Sites (Natural Amenity subtype); the swales are an example of a Transportation Site (Trail Segment subtype); and the Wagonbed Springs DAR marker is an example of a Monument and Memorial property type, all of which are defined in *the Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail* revised multiple property nomination.

Elaboration

Unless otherwise noted, the following information, including citations, is taken directly from the 1997-1998 National Historic Landmark Nomination written by Christine Whitacre and Steven De Vore and edited by Patty Henry. Specific editorial changes are noted in brackets.

This nomination establishes a [revised] boundary for the [National Register nomination] for Lower Cimarron Spring and clarifies the historic location of the spring. The original four-acre boundary has also been expanded to include the historic campground associated with the spring, [several trail swales, and a DAR marker]. In addition, this nomination changes the name of the National Register resource to "Lower Cimarron Spring" which, during the period of the Santa Fe Trail, was the historic name of the spring site. The label "Wagon Bed Springs," which refers to a later incident when a wagon bed was placed in the spring to serve as a water collector, remains as the secondary name, since the [property] is popularly known by that designation.

Located in southwestern Kansas, Lower Cimarron Spring is a historical archeological site that encompasses approximately [240.43] acres in an agricultural area about 12 miles south of the farming community of Ulysses in Grant County. The boundary includes Lower Cimarron Spring, which is now dry, its associated campground, several remnants of the Santa Fe Trail, [and the Wagonbed Springs DAR marker]. The [boundary] also includes the depression at the site of an ice house that was constructed in 1886 and was associated with the spring during the area's homesteading era; the depression was used to help identify the location of the spring. Also within the boundary is an interpretive display of Lower Cimarron Spring that was constructed by the Wagon Bed Springs chapter of the Santa Fe Trail Association (SFTA); the display is northwest of the historic location of Lower Cimarron Spring and is a non-contributing object. The [site] is on private land, and is accessible by a dirt road that leads west off of Highway 25.

The Cimarron River is the site's predominant landscape feature. Over the years, a series of floods, as well as changes to the Cimarron River, have affected Lower Cimarron Spring. Once on the banks of the Cimarron River, the spring site is now on the river's bed. Until the late 1970s, the entire site was utilized for pasture to graze cattle. In the 1960s, the western quarter of the site was impacted by two 40-acre pivot irrigation plots, which lowered the water table and eliminated the possibility of Lower Cimarron Spring having

running water. With the exception of changes to the spring itself, aerial photographs from 1939, 1953, 1960, 1967, 1973, 1981, and 1991 indicate that the overall site integrity is extremely high. The Cimarron River formed a natural boundary for the historic camping area associated with the spring, and archeological investigations have revealed a high concentration of Santa Fe Trail-related artifacts. Based on metal detector surveys, the archeological resources buried on the alluvial fans, terraces, and side slopes range in depth from surface to approximately four inches below the surface, while the materials recovered from the floodplain may be buried to a depth of 14 inches.

Background of the Update to the NHL

In 1993, the Southwest Regional Office of the National Park Service requested the Rocky Mountain Regional Office undertake a boundary study of the Wagon Bed Springs National Historic Landmark. In recent years, the NHL had become a source of considerable controversy, as the local chapter of the Santa Fe Trail Association disagreed with the landmark boundary designated in 1960. In 1989, the Wagon Bed Springs chapter relocated the NHL plaque to a new location approximately 1/4 mile north of the NPS-designated site. The Southwest Regional Office of the National Park Service, which is responsible for managing the Santa Fe Trail National Historic Trail, funded the NHL study in an effort to ascertain the actual location of the spring, to resolve the boundary controversy and to consider, in light of recent archeological discoveries in the area, the expansion of the NHL boundary to include the historic camp site associated with the spring. Congress designated the Santa Fe Trail, including both the Mountain and Cimarron Routes, as a National Historic Trail in 1987.

The locations of historic trails and trail-related sites often prove elusive to modern researchers. Trails that once may have been well-defined paths become obliterated through erosion, highway and building construction, and crop cultivation. Rivers change course, flooding alters the landscape, and natural and cultural landmarks that once marked the trails disappear. Also, trail travelers never followed just one path. Depending on weather and soil conditions, the formation of the wagon caravans, the need to find water and forage, and the ever-present desire to find a better or shorter path, Santa Fe Trail travelers created numerous trail routes and variations, which could be several yards or even miles apart. In addition, the journals and diaries of Santa Fe Trail travelers often provide only sketchy and/or contradictory information regarding the locations of trails and camping sites.

In the case of Lower Cimarron Spring, the task of finding the historic location was made all the more difficult because it is no longer a running spring. In 1914, a flood destroyed the spring site and greatly altered the Cimarron River channel bed in the vicinity of the spring. In addition, deepwell pump irrigation had dramatically lowered the water table and eliminated all possibility of the spring running again. Since the spring is no longer extant, the National Park Service drew upon a variety of sources for information relating to the spring's historic location. These sources included published histories of the trail, the accounts of Santa Fe Trail travelers and early Grant County residents, historic maps, aerial photographs, interviews with long-time residents, early newspaper accounts, and an analysis of the geological and hydrological characteristics of the area. The National Park Service also examined archeological artifacts that were found in the vicinity of the spring site, and which illustrate the area's use as a camp site for Santa Fe Trail travelers. For an overview of historic descriptions of the site, and their comparison with the results of the hydrological and archeological studies, see Section 8.

Environmental Description

Walter Prescott Webb, in his classic history of western settlement, *The Great Plains*, observed that practically every institution that was carried across the Great Plains "was either broken and remade or else greatly altered. The ways of travel, the weapons, the method of tilling the soil...and even the laws themselves were modified."¹ It was the arid environment of the western plains that forced these changes. Westbound travelers following the Santa Fe Trail were physically and psychologically affected once they entered the High Plains. To many Santa Fe traders, the treeless, flat, windswept plains of southwestern Kansas were more an obstacle to progress than any imagined or real Indian threat. In 1848, a Santa Fe Trail traveler described the

¹ Walter Prescott Webb, *The Great Plains* (New York: Ginn and Company, 1931), 8-9.

route between the Arkansas and Cimarron rivers as "the most desolate part of the whole Santa Fe Road." Adolphus Wislizenus also observed that, "The soil is generally dry and hard: the vegetation poor, scarcely anything grows there but short and parched buffalo grass and some cacti. Though the horizon is very distant, there is no shrub or tree to fix your eye upon...."² Today, although a few more cottonwood trees line the banks of the Cimarron River, the area surrounding the Lower Cimarron Spring site still generally matches Wislizenus's description.

The Cimarron River originates in New Mexico near Raton. From the New Mexico tablelands, the river flows east into Oklahoma, north into Colorado and Kansas, then back into Oklahoma where it discharges into the Arkansas River and, finally, the Mississippi River. In the vicinity of Lower Cimarron Spring, the Cimarron River is an intermittent stream, historically prone to flooding. In the vicinity of the spring, the river valley has sloping walls and the gently undulating river bed is nearly level. Elevation of the valley ranges from approximately 2080 feet above mean sea level (amsl) along the river to 3100 feet amsl on the uplands. Located within the rain-shadow of the Rocky Mountains, the climate is semi-arid.³ The region has little precipitation, abundant sunshine, moderate winds, and low humidity. The summers tend to be hot; the winters are cold. Both daily and annual temperatures exhibit wide variation.

Lower Cimarron Spring lies in the High Plains section of the Great Plains physiographic province in southwestern Kansas.⁴ With the exception of the major drainages of the Arkansas and the Cimarron rivers, the region has poorly developed surface drainage. The uplands surrounding Lower Cimarron Spring are fairly smooth, large expanses of land with broad gentle swales and shallow depressions. These depressions may hold water for days or weeks after heavy rains which, under the right conditions, offered thirsty Santa Fe Trail travelers welcome relief.⁵ The area lies within the Colby-Otero-Bayard soil association, which consists of "deep, gently sloping to sloping, calcareous, loamy soils on fans and in the uplands."⁶ These soils are susceptible to water and wind erosion.

The geology of the area represents the evolutionary history of the Rocky Mountains. During the uplifting of the mountain system in the Tertiary period, large volumes of rock were eroded and transported onto the plains by the rivers. By the end of the period, the eroded materials covered an area from the Rocky Mountains to the Flint Hills in central Kansas.⁷ Western Kansas is part of the non-eroded remnants of this vast sand and gravel plain. These deposits are part of the Ogallala Formation, one of the major aquifers in the central Great Plains. Late Pleistocene loess mantles the upland regions. Eolian sand deposits also occur over earlier Pleistocene deposits and the Ogallala Formation in localized areas. In addition, erosional and depositional episodes in the Pleistocene created terraces along the major rivers, including the Cimarron River. During the Nebraskan and Kansan glacial stages, terrace deposits were laid down along the Cimarron River. Erosion during the Late Pleistocene resulted in the exposure of sand and gravel sediments on these terraces. This activity formed flanking pediments along the Cimarron River Valley. In areas where the river and its tributaries

² Adolphus Wislizenus, *Memoir of a Tour to Northern Mexico, connected-with Col. Doniphan's Expedition in 1846 and 1847* (Washington, DC.: 30th Congress, 1st session, Senate Miscellaneous Document, 1848), II.

³ Vernon L. Hamilton, Quinten L. Markley, William R. Swafford, and Harold P. Dickey, *Soil Survey of Grant County, Kansas* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, 1969), 44-45; Merle J. Brown, "Climate" in Hamilton et al., 47; Andrew D. Robb, "Climate of Kansas" in *Climate and Man: Yearbook of Agriculture 1941*, House Document No. 27, 77th Congress, 1st Session (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, United States Department of Agriculture, 1941), 873-883; and Glenn T. Trewartha and Lyle H. Horn, *An Introduction to Climate*, Fifth Edition (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1980; originally published 1937), 360-364.

⁴ Nevin M. Fenneman, *Physiography of Western United States* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1931); and Hamilton et al, 1.

⁵ Hamilton et al., 45; and Patricia J. O'Brien, *Archeology of Kansas*, Public Education Series No. 9 (Lawrence: University of Kansas, Museum of Natural History, 1984), 21.

⁶ Hamilton et al., 5-6. The soils in the [NHL] project area consist of Bayard fine sandy loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes (Ba); Bridgeport silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (Br); Colby loam, 5 to 12 percent slopes (Co); Colby-Ulysses loams, 3 to 5 percent slopes, eroded (Cu); Glenberg soils, 0 to 1 percent slopes (Gb); Lincoln soils, 0 to 1 percent slopes (Ln); Otero fine sandy loam, 4 to 12 percent slopes (Of); Otero gravely complex, 5 to 20 percent slopes (Og); Otero-Manter fine sandy loams, 1 to 4 percent slopes (Om); and Ulysses loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes (Ud).

⁷ F. Wilson, "Landscapes: A Geological Diary," in *Kansas Geology: An Introduction to Landscapes, Rocks, Minerals, and Fossils*, ed. by Rex Buchanan (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1984), 33.

have cut through the unconsolidated sediments into the underlying rock formations, seeps and permanent springs occurred, such as Lower Cimarron Spring.⁸

Lower Cimarron Spring also lies within the Kansan biotic province, which consists of the shortgrass region that covers the southern part of the Great Plains. Native vegetation in the spring area consists of blue grama, buffalograss, perennial three-awn, broom snakeweed, sand paspalum, sand sagebrush, small soapweed, sand dropseed, western ragweed, side-oats grama, western wheatgrass, switchgrass, and little bluestem.⁹ The short grass association is highly resistant to drought and grazing. In addition, these grasses, especially the grama grasses and the buffalograss, produce nutritious and palatable forage for domestic livestock and native herbivores. Prickly pear cactus and yucca also occur, especially along the rougher valley margins. Although trees are rare, cottonwoods occur along the banks of the Cimarron River.¹⁰

Previous Archeological Investigations

The first systematic archeological investigations of the Lower Cimarron Spring area did not occur until the late 1980s. Although amateurs had collected in the area prior to the late 1980s, no systematic inventory of artifact provenance had been kept. In 1987, amateur archeologist Edward Dowell of Ulysses, Kansas, began collecting artifacts along the Cimarron Route of the Santa Fe Trail in the vicinity of Lower Cimarron Spring. Unlike the earlier, random, amateur collections, Edward Dowell's collections represented more controlled collection. (In 1993, Dowell's methodology was reviewed by National Park Service archeologists and determined to be adequate.) Dowell utilized a metal detector in identifying artifact concentrations and individual artifacts in the river valley. Dowell then documented these concentrations and individual locations on an aerial photograph of the area. By use of the aerial photograph, Dowell was able to match the collection areas on the ground with their location on the photograph. In many cases, Dowell also provided individual locations for artifacts recovered during his metal detection activities. The recovered artifacts were stored in individual containers or sealed plastic bags with the provenance written on the containers with permanent ink.

Given the fact that Lower Cimarron Spring was a major campground on the Santa Fe Trail, the presence of metal artifacts are to be expected, but are not the only type of cultural material or feature that would be expected from a campground of this type. There should be numerous fire hearths since this was a major resting point on the trail. However, the investigations of the site have been limited to surface collections and the limited metal detector collections of Edward Dowell. Much of the area from which the artifacts have been recovered lies on the left bank of the river above the lower floodplain of the valley, which is to the south of the river. While flooding would have a major erosional effect on the river channel and the lower portions of the floodplain, the upper part of the site—which includes the major portion of the campground—would not have suffered from the negative impact of the floodwaters. Based on Dowell's metal detection, there are over 14 inches of archeological deposits associated with the campground. This is the effective depth limit for the metal detector that was used by Dowell. As a result, the potential for recovering additional information on 19th-century plains travel is extremely high, especially concerning commercial trade and military activities within the area.

In 1990, personnel from the Kansas State Historical Society conducted an archeological investigation of the interpretive display on Lower Cimarron Spring, which had been erected by the local chapter of the Santa Fe Trail Association.¹¹ Their investigations revealed no significant artifact concentrations or features, although artifacts had been recovered from the area surrounding the interpretive display. An 1856 dime had been recovered by Dowell within the enclosure prior to the archeological investigations; however, Dowell indicated

⁸ J.C. Frye, A.B. Leonard, and A. Swineford, *Stratigraphy of the Ogallala Formation (Neogene) of Northern Kansas*, Bulletin No. 118 (Lawrence: Kansas Geological Survey, University of Kansas, 1959); Hamilton et al., 44.; and J.C. Frye and T.H.U. Smith, "Preliminary Observations on Pediment-Like Slopes in the Central High Plains," *Journal of Geomorphology* 5(3) (1942): 215-221.

⁹ Lee R. Dice, *The Biotic Provinces of North America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1943), 26-27; and Hamilton et al., 27-28.

¹⁰ O'Brien, 22.

¹¹ Martin Stein, "Archeological Survey of Wagon Bed Springs," Memorandum dated August 1, 1990, in the files of the Center for Historical Research, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka.

that he found very few artifacts within the enclosure. During the archeological investigations, the Kansas State Historical Society archeologists concluded that the area within the enclosed display area had been seriously eroded by runoff from the pivot irrigation system to the northwest of the enclosure. A temporary holding pond had been constructed in a 200-meter-square area immediately west of the enclosure. The archeologists also examined this area, and identified a few bone scraps.

National Park Service Archeological Investigations

During September 1993, the Rocky Mountain Regional Office of the National Park Service conducted additional archeological and historical investigations of the Lower Cimarron Spring site in order to reassess the NHL boundaries. These investigations included a photographic analysis of the site by James Walker of Brigham Young University, and a hydrological study of the area by Edwin Gutentag, formerly of the US Geological Survey. As part of the photographic study, Walker took low-altitude, large scale aerial photographs of the spring site. Walker compared these photographs with aerial views of the area that were taken by the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) between 1939 and 1991. Walker's analysis illustrated how the riverbed and other land features in the area have changed over the years. In addition, the 1939 aerial photographs were revealing in that they showed numerous wagon wheel ruts leading to a junction at the Lower Cimarron Spring site (Figure 1).¹² Gutentag's study analyzed the hydrological characteristics of the area and determined the most likely location of the historic spring site.¹³

Historical records were also used to help identify the location of Lower Cimarron Spring. These records include the survey notes and maps of Joseph C. Brown, who mapped the Santa Fe Trail in 1825, as well as a description of an ice house that was constructed adjacent to Lower Cimarron Spring by Grant County settlers R.H. Joyce and J.W. Dappert in 1887. In September 1993, National Park Service archeologists Steven De Vore and William Butler located the depression of the Joyce-Dappert ice house on the northern bank of the Cimarron River. James Walker's aerial photographs also showed the location of the ice house depression. This area matched historical descriptions of the spring site; and the hydrological analysis also supported the identification of this area as the historic spring site. The area surrounding the Cimarron River in the vicinity of the spring site was mapped, and the ice house depression, the edge of the Cimarron River, section and half section fence lines, Santa Fe Trail ruts, a row of trees associated with the Joyce homestead, and the artifact locations/concentrations identified by Dowell were demarcated and recorded during the mapping process (Figure 2). Based on Dowell's metal detecting, an area of approximately 171 acres was identified as containing artifacts related to the Santa Fe Trail traffic and the Lower Cimarron Spring camp site.

The National Park Service also conducted an analysis of the artifacts in the possession of Dowell. Also analyzed were artifacts on exhibit at the Grant County Museum, including one display belonging to Dowell and one display collected by another local amateur, William Purnell. Approximately 3000 artifacts in seven functional categories have been collected by Dowell at the Lower Cimarron Spring campground location.¹⁴ The major functional categories include architecture (n=1183), commerce and industry (n= 1459), personal items (n=70 artifacts), personal and domestic transportation (n=43), domestic items (n=40), aboriginal lithics (n=27), and miscellaneous items (n=117).¹⁵

Although there are several items that are directly associated with the homesteading and ranching activities of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, most of the artifacts in the Dowell collection are directly associated with commerce and military activities on the Santa Fe Trail and at Lower Cimarron Spring. Personal

¹² James Walker, "Interpretation of Area around Wagon Bed Springs from USDA Imagery Obtained between 1939 and 1991, Report Number 2," 1993, copy in the files of the National Park Service, Omaha, Nebraska.

¹³ Edwin D. Gutentag, "Location and Hydrological Characterization of Wagon Bed Spring, Grant County, Kansas," 1993, copy in the files of the National Park Service, Omaha, Nebraska.

¹⁴ Roderick Sprague, "A Functional Classification for Artifacts from 19th and 20th Century Historical Sites," in *North American Archaeologist* 2(3) (1980-81): 251-261.

¹⁵ Christine Whitacre, Steven De Vore, and William Butler, *Lower Cimarron (Wagon Bed) Spring Camp Site, National Historic Landmark (NHL) Boundary Study* (Denver, CO: National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Region, 1994), 26-32; and Steven De Vore, "Lower Cimarron Spring, Kansas, Archeological Field Summary" (Denver, CO: National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Region, 1993), 11-16.

items include artifacts from the following categories: clothing, footwear, adornment, indulgences, ritual, pocket tools and accessories, and luggage items. Domestic items include furnishings, housewares and appliances, and cleaning and maintenance items. Architectural items consist of construction related items. It is probable that several of these items (e.g., machine cut nails and tacks, hand-wrought nails and tacks, and wood screws) are from wagons; however, without additional analysis, it would be extremely difficult to distinguish their actual function. Personal and domestic transportation items consist of vehicle-related artifacts from wagons. The commerce and industry category includes agriculture and husbandry items, hunting-related artifacts, construction tools, commercial services artifacts in the form of coins, and manufacturing items. With the exception of .22 cal. bullets and casings and modern shotgun shells, the hunting artifacts are related to activities along the Santa Fe Trail during the 19th century. Miscellaneous metal artifacts consist of scraps, rod segments, rivets, grommets, hooks, and other items that have not been identified. The final category of artifacts in the Dowell collection consists of lithic artifacts of an aboriginal origin, which probably pre-date Euro-American exploration of the region.

Lower Cimarron Spring Campsite

The campsite associated with Lower Cimarron Spring is an excellent example of a Travel and Trade Site (Natural Amenity subtype), as described in the revised multiple property nomination. As stated above, this campsite includes approximately 171 acres around the spring that was used by travelers and traders from 1822 to 1868. The original National Register nomination included only four acres for its boundary (Figure 3). The archeological investigations and historical research accomplished in the 1990s necessitated the expansion of the NHL boundary—and thus the National Register boundary—to include the actual historic site of the spring and its campground.

NHL Trail Segment

The segment of swales included within the revised National Historic Landmark boundary are an example of a Transportation Site (Trail Segment subtype), as described in the revised multiple property nomination. This segment is a clear set of two to four swales in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 28, Township 30 South, Range 37 West and the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 33, Township 30 South, Range 37 West, east-northeast of Lower Cimarron Spring (Figure 4). This segment was included in the revised National Historic Landmark nomination because they provide clear evidence of the route taken (east-southwest) along the north bank of the Cimarron River toward the spring. The swales are visible on aerial photos and portions can be followed on the ground.

This segment includes two swales at the northeast boundary line of the NHL site that become four swales as they extend to the southwest for approximately one-half mile. These swales closely follow the north bank of the river to the south side of an access road, staying at a nearly even elevation of approximately 3000 feet amsl. Likely due to its proximity to the river, this corridor has never been cultivated; however, to the immediate southwest of the NHL boundary, trail evidence has been obstructed by a pivot irrigation system in a cultivated field.

Northeast Trail Segment

The additional swales being included in this nomination are also an example of a Transportation Site (Trail Segment subtype), as described in the revised multiple property nomination. This segment is also a clear set of three to four swales in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 28, Township 30 South, Range 37 West, northeast of Lower Cimarron Spring (Figure 4). They were not included with the original National Register nomination or the National Historic Landmark nominations, but they do provide clear evidence of the route taken (northeast-southwest) from the uplands down the slope of the Cimarron River valley toward the spring. The swales are clearly visible on aerial photos. They can be followed on the ground, though in places the number and orientation of each swale can be difficult to discern.

This segment includes at least three swales that extend northeast-south for nearly one-half mile. The topography along this site is varied, but the swales continue down slope toward the south throughout their extent, beginning at an approximate elevation of 3090 feet amsl and ending at an approximate elevation of

3010 feet amsl. The land has never been cultivated but is currently used for grazing.

Wagonbed Springs DAR Marker

The DAR marker associated with this site is within the boundary of the National Historic Landmark but was not counted as a resource. This National Register nomination seeks to count it as a contributing object. As a commemorative marker, the Wagonbed Springs DAR Marker is an example of a Monument and Memorial property type, as described in the revised multiple property nomination.

This red granite marker faces north-northwest to the south of the SFTA display area. It is approximately two feet tall AND two feet wide; it rests on a concrete base. The face is carved, saying, "WAGONBED SPRINGS / SANTA FE TRAIL / 1822-1872 / MARKED BY THE / DAUGHTERS OF THE / AMERICAN REVOLUTION / AND THE STATE OF KANSAS / 1906. The marker is surrounded by a hollow-pipe fence and to its east is the bronze plaque commemorating the National Historic Landmark.

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.

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

Archeology

Social History

Period of Significance

1822-1868

1906-1907

Significant Dates

1822, 1824-1825, 1868

1907

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

n/a

Period of Significance (justification)

The periods of significance include the years the spring was used by Santa Fe Trail traffic (1822-1868) and the years the Kansas Society Daughters of the American Revolution planned & erected a marker at the spring (1906-1907). This differs from the National Historic Landmark period (1821-1873) on three accounts. First, William Becknell's first trip to Santa Fe did not follow this portion of the trail; his second trip, in 1822, likely did. Second recent scholarship indicates that this section of the trail was disused for overland traffic by 1868 when the eastern terminus reached Sheridan, Kansas. Third, this takes into consideration the significance of the commemoration of the trail as described in the revised multiple property nomination.

Criteria Considerations (justification)

As discussed in the revised MPDF, the commemorative DAR marker is eligible because the age, intent, and symbolic value of this resource contribute to the marker's own historical significance. This significance is in large-part directly tied to the effort to memorialize the trail by those who were associated with the trail. This object also provides the location of a Santa Fe Trail segment, and in this way helps to confirm and illuminate the history of the trail itself.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

Lower Cimarron Spring is nationally significant under Criteria A and D for its association with transportation and commerce along the Santa Fe Trail and for its potential to yield important information about this route. This site is also nationally significant under Criterion A in the area of social history for its association with the commemoration of the trail in Kansas. Located at the western end of *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 William Becknell's second trip to Santa Fe in 1822 and ends with the commemoration of this site in 1907 by the Kansas Society Daughters of the American Revolution. 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; The Santa Fe Trail and the Railroad, 1865-1880; and The Commemoration and Reuse of the Santa Fe Trail, as well as the Santa Fe Trail in Kansas.

Elaboration

Unless otherwise noted, the following information, including citations, is taken directly from the 1997-1998 National Historic Landmark Nomination written by Christine Whitacre and Steven De Vore and edited by Patty Henry. Specific editorial changes are noted in brackets.

As a dependable source of water on a dangerously dry crossing on the Santa Fe Trail, Lower Cimarron Spring was a major landmark for trade caravans as they crossed the open plains of the trail in what is now southwestern Kansas. The spring and its associated campground were on the trail's Cimarron Route, which was the original and principal route of the Santa Fe Trail. The spring [signaled the western end of *La Jornada*], the arid desert plain between the Arkansas and Cimarron rivers. As the spring offered westbound travelers the first reliable source of water [west of the Arkansas River crossings], it became a major resting point on the Santa Fe Trail. Numerous travelers recounted their immense relief, after crossing *La Jornada*, of finding the cool, sweet, running water of Lower Cimarron Spring. While the spring provided drinkable water, the valley supplied grasses for draft animals. The Lower Cimarron Spring camp site also allowed travelers to regain their strength for the next leg of the journey, and an opportunity to repair equipment. The spring's reliable water also made it an important campground for the many American Indians who frequented the site, including the Kiowa, Comanche, Plains Apache, Cheyenne, and Arapaho.¹⁶

Archeologically, Lower Cimarron Spring has a high potential to yield information on campground activities associated with the Santa Fe commercial trade ventures. Recovered materials indicate great variation in artifacts deposited at the site, representing numerous functional categories. Artifacts recovered from the site may answer research questions related to methods of travel over the plains, travel hardships, relations between American Indians and Euro-American travelers, commercial freight train activity, the roles of women and/or minorities in plains travel, differences between commercial and military travel, and day-to-day life on plains travel. Future archeological investigations may also look at the placement of features and artifacts to determine differences between the military and commercial freight train use of the campground. Due to the specific and random nature of metal detector surveys of the site, features associated with camping activities (e.g., hearths) have yet to be identified. However, the probability of their presence is extremely high since the area was a major camp site for over 40 years.

¹⁶ At the time of the 1960 NHL designation, Wagon Bed Springs was also believed to have been the location where mountain man and explorer Jedidiah Smith was killed by Comanche Indians in 1831. However, recent scholarship indicates that Smith may have been killed at another location along the Cimarron River in Seward County. Louise Barry, ed., *The Beginning of the West: Annals of the Kansas Gateway to the American West, 1840-1854* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972), 201-203.

Further, 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 the trail segment leading from the northeast into the Lower Cimarron Spring site, there is every reason to believe that the presence of such an assemblage is possible. These swales 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, 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. 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.¹⁷

The Cimarron Route of the Santa Fe Trail

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 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, which only consisted of small pools of water most of the year, 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.¹⁸

For travelers heading to Santa Fe via the Cimarron Route, the Arkansas River had to be crossed. Several crossing choices were available (Figure 5). The Lower Arkansas Crossing, also known as the Mulberry Creek Crossing, began at that point where Mulberry Creek enters the Arkansas River. The Middle Arkansas Crossing, also known as the Cimarron Crossing, was located approximately 40 miles upriver (west) from the Lower Arkansas Crossing, near the present town of Cimarron, Kansas. The Upper Arkansas Crossing, located at Chouteau's Island on the Arkansas River near the present town of Lakin, Kansas, was the most direct southern route and was the one taken by the 1825 [Sibley-Brown] survey. Of these three crossings, the Middle Arkansas (Cimarron) Crossing was the most popular.¹⁹ [Most] of the crossings led to Lower Cimarron Spring.²⁰

For travelers who used the Cimarron Route, which was the primary route during most of the commercial years of the trail, it was approximately 753 miles from Independence to Santa Fe. The Mountain Route, which followed the northern bank of the Arkansas River into Colorado before heading south over Raton Pass to Santa Fe, measured 797 miles. With Santa Fe Trail caravans averaging ten to 15 miles a day, the

¹⁷ Kansas State Historical Society, *Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail Multiple Property Documentation Form (Revised)*. August 2012, F117. Citation covers paragraph; paragraph not included in the NHL nomination.

¹⁸ This paragraph was not in the NHL nomination.

¹⁹ Leo E. Oliva, *Soldiers on the Santa Fe Trail* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), 17. According to Hobart Stocking, the trip from Chouteau's Island to Lower Cimarron Spring was approximately 25 hours by ox-cart; see Hobart Stocking, *The Road to Santa Fe* (New York: Hastings House, 1971), 160.

²⁰ The route from Chouteau's Island split into two branches about 12 miles south-southwest of the island. The easternmost branch continued south to terminate at Lower Cimarron Spring; the westernmost branch 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.

Cimarron Route could eliminate at least three days of travel time. In addition, the Cimarron Route also avoided the difficult trek over Raton Pass, which required additional travel time.²¹

Although the Cimarron Route was at least 40 miles shorter than the Mountain Route, it was considered to be a more dangerous journey as it necessitated crossing *La Jornada*, the desert land between the Arkansas and Cimarron rivers. According to Santa Fe Trail historian Hobart E. Stocking, *jornada* is idiomatic for a "journey" that is hopefully completed in one day.²² On *La Jornada*, water was scarce, and travelers often reported seeing mirages of water pools during the scorching heat of the day. Despite the daytime heat, night temperatures dropped drastically, and firewood was almost as hard to find as water. One traveler recalled that: "Tons of iron strewed the road, remnants of scenes when for temporary relief freezing men burned the woodwork of their wagons."²³

Trade caravans were also wary of encountering the many American Indians who traveled the Santa Fe Trail's Cimarron Route. American Indians hunted buffalo in the area, and congregated along the trail in anticipation of receiving annuities and trading with the caravans. However, as increasing numbers of trade wagons began to disrupt tribal life and encroach on traditional lands, the trail became the site of several conflicts between traders and Indians. Despite their apprehensions, caravan travelers also frequently relied upon the Indians to guide them through the region, particularly in the early years of the trail. In 1831, when Josiah Gregg's caravan got lost on the "inhospitable desert" of *La Jornada*, the group encountered Indians who led them to Lower Cimarron Spring.²⁴

As it was for Gregg, the immediate destination point for [most] *La Jornada* travelers was Lower Cimarron Spring. The Lower Cimarron Spring provided drinkable water, and the valley supplied grasses for draft animals. By camping at Lower Cimarron Spring, travelers could rest and regain their strength for the next leg of the journey; the campsite also gave them the opportunity to repair equipment. As noted by historian William Brown:

On the westward journey, the Lower Spring of the Cimarron was the lifesaver of the traders. This pinpoint in the dry bed of the Cimarron was the destination of the long trek across the Jornada, or Cimarron Desert. Here was the only living water for many miles. To miss it meant death for the straining animals that had gone at least two and usually three days with little or not water. This in turn meant abandonment of the wagons, disaster for the caravan, and possible death for the traders. No spring on the Santa Fe Trail was of such critical importance for the traders.²⁵

Before leaving the Arkansas River to cross *La Jornada*, travelers often spent a day or so of rest on the Arkansas River, where they filled water barrels and prepared for the journey. Lower Cimarron Spring was approximately 58 miles southwest of the Middle Crossing, and travelers tried to cross this stretch of trail as quickly as possible. Santa Fe-bound travelers often began their *La Jornada* crossing in the afternoon and traveled through the night, stopping for only a few hours rest. With perseverance and luck, they reached Lower Cimarron Spring the next day. Aerial photographs of the Lower Cimarron Spring vicinity show numerous trail ruts leading to the spring site, underscoring its importance as a destination stopping point for Santa Fe Trail travelers.

Many travelers had difficulty finding the trail to Lower Cimarron Spring. In Josiah Gregg's classic 1844 account of the Santa Fe Trail trade, *Commerce of the Prairies*, the trader observed that the arid plains between

²¹ Jack D. Rittenhouse, *The Santa Fe Trail: A Historical Bibliography* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 197), 115; and *Santa Fe National Historic Trail Comprehensive Management and Use Plan*, 14.

²² Stocking, 149 & 160.

²³ Hezekiah Brake, *On Two Continents: A Long Life's Experiences* (Topeka: Crane Publishing Company, 1896), 130.

²⁴ Josiah Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, edited by Max L. Moorhead, 1954. Originally published 1844), 55-57.

²⁵ William Brown, *The Santa Fe Trail* (St. Louis, MO: The Patrice Press, 1988), 110.

the Arkansas and Cimarron rivers were furrowed with buffalo paths, which made the route "exceedingly perplexing to the bewildered prairie traveler." The buffalo paths, wrote Gregg, "have all the appearance of immense highways, over which entire armies would seem to have frequently passed. They generally lead from one watering place to another; but as these reservoirs very often turn out to be dry, the thirsty traveler who follows them in search of water, is liable to constant disappointment."²⁶

On his first journey to Santa Fe, William Becknell followed the Arkansas River into what is now Colorado before heading south into New Mexico. In 1822, on his second trip to Santa Fe, Becknell crossed *La Jornada* between the Arkansas and Cimarron rivers. Becknell's expedition consisted of 21 men and three wagons, which reportedly marked the first use of wagons for commercial trade on the trail.²⁷ Two years later, in 1824, Augustus Storrs also chose to cross *La Jornada*. M.M. Marmaduke, a member of that expedition who later became governor of Missouri, described the suffering endured by the traders and their animals on the Cimarron Route. "I have never in my life experienced a time when such general alarm and consternation pervaded every person on account of the want of water," Marmaduke wrote in his trip diary.²⁸ Marmaduke's diary held another vital piece of information about the Cimarron Route. The Cimarron River was usually dry, noted Marmaduke, and the water it did occasionally hold was "remarkably bad." But Marmaduke, like future travelers on the trail, quickly discovered that good water could be found by digging holes into the river bed.²⁹

Josiah Gregg, who made four trips between Santa Fe and Missouri, also noted the characteristics of the Santa Fe Trail's many "dry streams" which, like the Cimarron River, had "remarkably shallow channels, which, during droughts, sometimes go dry in their transit through the sandy plains." In these rivers, noted Gregg, "travelers procure water by excavating basins in the channel, a few feet deep, into which the water is filtrated from the saturated sand."³⁰ As a result, Santa Fe Trail travelers who did not find Lower Cimarron Spring could still obtain water by digging in the Cimarron River channel, which may account for the many conflicting early descriptions of the spring site.

Lower Cimarron Spring

Journals and diaries of travel on the Santa Fe Trail offer various and often contradictory descriptions of Lower Cimarron Spring. James A. Little, who traveled the Cimarron Route in 1854, remembered that "The first [good] water that we reached was the Cimirone [sic] Spring on a stream by that name.... We were almost perishing for water. With our tin cups in hands we surrounded the springs where the cold, sparkling water was gushing from under the bank." Julius Froebel, in his 1852 crossing, also found the spring on the bank of the river and that the spring water was sweet, while the river water was stagnant and brackish. By contrast, other travelers such as John McCoy, who traveled the route in 1848, recalled "Approaching the Lower Cimarron Spring we hoped to obtain an abundant supply [of water], but it was only by digging in the bed of the stream water enough for drinking, much less in sufficient quantities for the stock was to be had."³¹

²⁶ Josiah Gregg, 55-57 & 64-65; and aerial photographs of the Lower Cimarron Spring taken by James Walker in October 1993, and Social Conservation Service photographs of Grant County in the vicinity of the spring site dated April 1, 1939; August 12, 1953; July 2, 1960; May 3, 1967; July 5, 1973; May 14, 1981; and September 9, 1991.

²⁷ Larry M. Beachum, *William Becknell: Father of the Santa Fe Trade* (El Paso: University of Texas at El Paso, Texas Western Press, Southwestern Studies, Monograph No. 68, 1982), 34. Becknell's 1822 expedition is the first recorded journey across *La Jornada*.

²⁸ Archer Butler Hulbert, *Southwest on the Turquoise Trail* (Denver: Stewart Commission of Colorado College and the Denver Public Library, 1933), 73.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Josiah Gregg, 358-359.

³¹ James A. Little, *What I saw on the Old Santa Fe Trail* (Plainfield, Indiana: The Friends Press, 1904), 41; Julius Froebel, *Seven Years Travel in Central America, Northern Mexico, and the Far West of the United States* (London, 1859), 280; and John McCoy, *Pioneering on the Plains: Journey to Mexico in 1848; the Overland Trip to California* (Kaukauna, Wisconsin: John McCoy, 1924), 22-23.

It is likely that travelers such as McCoy thought they had reached Lower Cimarron Spring when they had only encountered the Cimarron River. As noted above, travelers could always obtain water in the often-dry Cimarron River bed by digging down a few feet. Yearly variations in weather and rainfall would also have changed the characteristics of the spring and the river. In addition, the fact that ground water probably surfaced in more than one location over the years—which is supported by a hydrological study of the area, as well as by the accounts of long-time residents in the area—may also account for the variety of descriptions regarding Lower Cimarron Spring.

The records of the US government-sponsored survey of the Santa Fe Trail offer one of the earliest descriptions of Lower Cimarron Spring. The spring was described in survey commissioner George C. Sibley's journal of the expedition, as well as in the "Field Notes of Joseph C. Brown, United States Surveying Expedition, 1825-1827." Sibley's journal reports that the survey party began its expedition across the Cimarron desert at 8:35 a.m., September 27, 1825. The survey party crossed the Arkansas River at the Upper Crossing at Chouteau's Island, and headed almost directly south towards the Cimarron River. While other travelers were humbled by *La Jornada* crossing, Sibley seemed unfazed. "So much for this Bugbear," he commented in his journal.³²

On the evening of September 28, the expedition reached the "famous Semerone [Cimarron] Spring," which Sibley noted had a North Latitude of 37° 24' 00," which was "well ascertained by observations of the [constellation] Aquilae." At noon the next day, surveyor Joseph C. Brown confirmed the accuracy of that latitude.³³ Although Brown's survey notes do not include the longitude at the Lower Cimarron Spring site, his maps of the Santa Fe Trail show it as being immediately west of the 101° West Longitude mark.³⁴ In addition, Brown's maps show Lower Cimarron Spring as being almost directly south of Chouteau's Island on the Arkansas River (Figure 6). Josiah Gregg's 1844 map of the Santa Fe Trail also shows the Lower Cimarron Spring site as being at approximately the same latitude and longitude as given by the Sibley-Brown party.

In his journal, George Sibley also noted that Lower Cimarron Spring:

issues from a Hollow near the So[uth] E[ast] Extremity of the large Valley that it waters. The Valley is in area probably 300 acres, & is for the most part well set with good grass.... The Springs, as I saw it, appeared small, probably because an immense herd of Buffalo had just been treading about it. It no doubt afford an abundant supply of Water when properly opened, as it always is when the Indians camp near it. Its water is cool, sweet and good.³⁵

Joseph Brown's field notes of the journey also describe the spring site. Brown recorded that 480 miles from Ft. Osage, the expedition reached "Lower Semaron [sic] Spring," which he described as being at "the west edge of marsh green with bulrushes. The marsh is north of the creek and near it. The spring is constant, but the creek is sometimes dry...."³⁶ Brown's description of the spring site as a marshy area coincides with other descriptions of the site. A member of the Doniphan Expedition of 1846 described the spring as an "oasis in the

³² Kate Gregg, *The Road to Santa Fe: The Journal and Diaries of George Champlin Sibley and Others Pertaining to the Surveying and Marking of a Road from the Missouri Frontier to the Settlements of New Mexico, 1825-1827* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1952), 87-88.

³³ *Ibid.*, 88. At this location, each second of latitude equals approximately one hundred feet; each second of longitude equals approximately eighty feet.

³⁴ Brown's map was reproduced in the *Kansas City Star*, August 4, 1925; a portion of it is also in Robert W. Baughman, *Kansas in Maps* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1961), 30.

³⁵ Kate Gregg, 88-89. It must be noted that Sibley's description of the spring being at the *southeast* end of a valley conflicts with the latitude coordinates that he recorded, and which were later verified by Brown. It also conflicts with other historical accounts of the spring's location, including J.W. Dappert's description of the spring site, as well as the 1874 Government Land Office Survey of Grant County. It also conflicts with the physical evidence provided by archeological investigations of the campsite, the location of trail ruts, and the hydrological analysis of the area. Based on this evidence, Lower Cimarron Spring is located at the *northwest* end of a valley that is approximately 300 acres in size.

³⁶ Hulbert, 122.

desert," with rushes growing on the banks. James C. Hall, who took the Cimarron Route in 1863, described Lower Cimarron Spring as a "wide marshy plat."³⁷

The Doniphan Expedition encountered a large group of Cheyenne camped near Lower Cimarron Spring, reflecting the historic use and importance of the spring site for American Indians. However, as trail traffic increased, the relationship between the Indians and the caravan travelers deteriorated, and Lower Cimarron Spring became the site of several violent encounters. By 1863, hostilities had escalated to the point that Brigadier General James H. Carleton, Commander of the Department of New Mexico, recommended placing a cavalry regiment at a number of strategic points along the Santa Fe Trail, including Lower Cimarron Spring. The following year was the most violent in the trail's history. On August 13, 1864, Comanche Indians killed five traders near Lower Cimarron Spring and stampeded the caravan's cattle. Six days later, another battle near the spring left ten men dead. In 1865, the federal government took several measures to ensure safer travel for trade caravans, including a new system of military escorts for caravans, the establishment of additional military posts, and renewed efforts to negotiate a peace settlement with the Indians.³⁸

The popularity of this site can also be documented by the multiple trail swales leading to the spring. As previously mentioned, Lower Cimarron Spring was the location where travelers coming from the Upper, Middle, and Lower crossings of the Arkansas River converged (Figure 7). The swales included in this nomination are remnants from the route leading from the Lower and Middle crossings (Figure 8). Approximately seven miles northeast of Lower Cimarron Spring in Section 4, Township 30 South, Range 36 West, the route leading from the Lower and Middle crossings appears to have split, re-converging at the spring. The southernmost split closely followed the Cimarron River, while the northernmost split stayed on higher ground. Extant trail swales from the southernmost split were included in the National Historic Landmark nomination (and therefore this National Register nomination); extant trail swales that were part of the northern split are being added to the National Register nomination.³⁹

This spring continued to see traffic until the Union Pacific Eastern Division Railroad (later the Kansas Pacific) reached the short-lived town of Sheridan, Kansas, in June 1868. Santa Fe-bound freight was shipped to this rail-end town where it was then loaded onto wagons and hauled along the Mountain Route.

Homesteading and Agricultural Settlement in Grant County

Agricultural settlement of Grant County began in the late 1870s. In 1879, Richard H. Joyce filed the county's first homestead claim, and his land included the Lower Cimarron Spring site. By this time, the spring site was popularly known as Wagon Bed Springs, as a result of a wagon bed having been placed in the spring. Early journal accounts by Cimarron Route travelers make no mention of the wagon bed, and the stories regarding the placement of the wagon bed are largely anecdotal. Local resident E.F. Towler, who lived in the vicinity of the spring, reportedly said that he was told by William Boyd of Missouri that an 1849 caravan placed a bottomless wagon bed into the spring as a casing to collect water. Another popular story is that an 1871 cattle drive placed an abandoned government wagon in the spring to serve as a water collector.⁴⁰

J.W. Dappert, who served as Grant County surveyor, gave the earliest recorded account of finding a wagon bed in the spring. In a 1944 letter to the *Ulysses News*, Dappert recounted how he and Azel Cook, another local resident, "dug out the old Wagon Box in Wagon Bed Spring in January 1886" so that they could water their livestock. Dappert, who homesteaded in the area and was living approximately 2400 feet northwest

³⁷ Adolphus Wislizenus, *Memoir of a Tour to Northern Mexico, connected with Col. Doniphan's Expedition in 1846 and 1847* (Washington, DC: 30th Congress, 1st session, Senate Miscellaneous Document, 1848), 49-55; and James C. Hall, "Personal Recollections of the Santa Fe Trail," *Kansas Magazine*, January 1911.

³⁸ Oliva, 146, 154-155, & 160-161.

³⁹ This paragraph was not included in the NHL nomination.

⁴⁰ *Ulysses (Kansas) News*, October 28, 1992, 16.

of the spring, recalled "that one or two of the [wagon bed] boards were of a yellowish-red color and I thought POPLAR wood and still had strips of flat iron 'Straps' nailed upon top edge of plank."⁴¹

In November and December 1887, J.W. Dappert and Richard Joyce built an ice house on the north bank of the Cimarron River near the site of Lower Cimarron Spring. (National Park Service archeologists William Butler and Steven De Vore located the remains of this ice house in 1993.) According to Dappert's diary, the ice house was located:

on the north bank of the Cimarron river, just alongside a deep hole in the river below [presumably downstream from] Wagon Bed Springs.... We made the ice house of sod two feet thick, made a door at the north end, placed sills on top of the walls, and a frame and plank roof, covered with tar paper, cut a ton of slough grass for use instead of sawdust to place under and around the ice to keep out the heat and thus preserve the ice.⁴²

The following January, when the ice in the Cimarron River froze to a thickness of eight to ten inches, Dappert and Joyce began putting up the ice. As Dappert described it:

I cut the ice into blocks about 18 inches square and Mr. Joyce used a rope with a noose to lasso the chunks out of the water and skidded them up to the ice house door....The dimensions inside being 16 by 18 by 6 feet, which as I figured it would contain 48 tons of ice....⁴³

Another source of information on the characteristics and location of Lower Cimarron Spring—at least how it appeared in the early twentieth century—was provided by local resident Lucille Towler Lewis, who was born in Ulysses in 1901. In 1902, her family moved to a ranch located north of the Cimarron River in the vicinity of Lower Cimarron Spring. Lewis lived at the site until 1941, at which time the ranch was destroyed by a flood.

Lewis recalled that Lower Cimarron Spring was located north of the Cimarron River in the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 33, Township 30 South, Range 37 West. Similar to the accounts of several Santa Fe Trail travelers, Lewis noted that the spring site was a large marshy area, approximately 40 feet across, and filled with cat tails and rushes. The presence of such a large marsh indicates a long-term, reliable source of water, rather than an intermittent discharge of ground water. Lewis also recalled that the spring water ran through the winter, providing a continuing source of ice. Because of changes to the river channel, that site is today located in the river bed.⁴⁴

Historical Designation of Lower Cimarron Spring

In 1907, E.F. Towler (Lucille Towler Lewis's father) petitioned the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) to place a Santa Fe Trail marker at Lower Cimarron Spring. The DAR, in conjunction with the Kansas State Historical Society, agreed to the request, and Towler's correspondence indicates that the marker was located in the northeast quarter of Section 33, Township 30 South, Range 37 West, "about the center of the section in the NW corner of the quarter," noting that the stone "is also about 50 yards of the wagonbed." Per Towler's recommendation, the stone was engraved with the words "Wagonbed Springs." The granite stone

⁴¹ J.W. Dappert, letter to the *Ulysses News*, January 1, 1944.

⁴² R.R. Wilson and Ethel M. Sears, *History of Grant County, Kansas* (Wichita: Wichita Eagle Press, 1950), 242. The north door described in this account is the access door. The south end of the building, which faced the river, had a loading door that was determined through the archeological investigation of the site.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Lucille Towler Lewis, interview with Christine Whitacre and Steven De Vore of the National Park Service, September 18, 1993, Ulysses, Kansas; and *Ulysses News*, September 25, 1941. Lewis and her husband only lived away from the ranch for one year, 1919-1920. Years later, Lewis painted a picture of the spring site, which is now located in the Grant County Museum in Ulysses. The painting depicts the Towler-Lewis Ranch, the Towler Crossing of the Cimarron River, Wagon Bed Springs, and the DAR marker at the site.

marker was placed by Towler and his brother-in-law, Richard H. Joyce.⁴⁵ [DAR historian Almira Cordry noted in her 1915 history *The Story of the Marking the Santa Fe Trail* that the Grant County commissioners paid all bills related to the shipping and hauling of the marker from the end of the railroad to Lower Cimarron Spring.⁴⁶] Lucille Towler Lewis stated that the spring was almost directly south and slightly east of the marker. According to Lewis, it would have been impossible to have placed the marker much closer to the spring without getting into the swampy marsh land.⁴⁷

In 1914, the first of a series of devastating floods struck the area and dramatically altered the spring site. J.W. Dappert, who returned to the area in 1916 after an absence of several years, was shocked by the way in which the 1914 flood had changed the Cimarron River. He wrote:

...right at Wagon Bed Springs, the river had receded some hundreds of feet farther to east, thus shortening the quite abrupt bend...much of the area formerly growing "Cattails" (Flags) was now covered with sand; but the most noted change was that of the width and size of the bed of the Cimarron River from a brook which I could easily jump across—to a Sandy River 400 to 600 Feet from bank to bank.⁴⁸

Dappert later drew a map of the site showing how the river channel had changed, which included the location of Lower Cimarron Spring as he had found it in 1886. The 1914 flood effectively destroyed the spring site and its associated marsh, although spring water continued to surface in the general area.⁴⁹

In 1937, the local 4-H Club, in cooperation with the Joyce family, moved the DAR marker to a site approximately 1200 feet to the south. According to Harry Joyce, the grandson of homesteader Richard H. Joyce, the marker was moved because the 1907 marker location had eroded away. The new marker site was also closer to a road (no longer extant) and was more accessible for visitation. The new location, which was located in a shaded bend of the river, also offered better picnic facilities. The 4-H Club built a brick cistern at the new location; the cistern filled with water and served as a representation of Lower Cimarron Spring.⁵⁰

Harry Joyce, who was interviewed by the National Park Service in 1993, refuted a popular misperception that the historical marker was moved because the Joyce family believed the more southern (1937) marker site was the spring's historic location. Joyce, who was born in 1918, confirmed that the 1907 marker site was historically correct. Joyce also stated that the historic spring site generally lined up with a row of trees located on the Joyce property.⁵¹ The row of trees, [which still stood in 1997], lines up with the 1907 DAR-designated site.

⁴⁵ Although the marker is engraved with the year 1906, Towler's correspondence with the DAR and the State of Kansas indicates that it was placed at the site in 1907. E.F. Towler, letter to the Sec. of the Daughters of the Revolution, Washington D.C., January 15, 1907; E.F. Towler, letter to Geo. M. Martin, Topeka, Kansas, June 4, 1907; E.F. Towler, letter to Geo. M. Martin, Topeka, Kansas, November 23, 1907 (this letter includes a map showing the location of the marker); and Ed Lewis [grandson of E.F. Towler] to Lysa Wegman-French, National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Region, October 26, 1992. E.F. Towler served, variously, as the Grant County attorney and surveyor.

⁴⁶ Mrs. T.A. [Almira] Cordry, *The Story of the Marking of the Santa Fe Trail by the Daughters of the American Revolution in Kansas and the State of Kansas* (Topeka: Crane and Company, 1915), 140.

⁴⁷ Lucille Towler Lewis interview.

⁴⁸ Dappert letter.

⁴⁹ Dappert's letter includes this map. The map shows the spring site as being in the northwest quadrant of Section 33, but includes a notation stating that the spring is "shown somewhat too far west." This agrees with Dappert's statement that the spring was located on the Joyce homestead, which was in the northeast quadrant. The northwest quadrant of Section 33 was owned by Flora Bowman.

⁵⁰ Harry Joyce, interview with Christine Whitacre at Lower Cimarron Spring, near Ulysses, Kansas, September 17, 1993. The 1974 U.S. Geological Survey map shows Wagon Bed Spring at the location of the 1937 marker. Although the spring water was no longer surfacing at the time of the map survey, the U.S. Geological Survey identified it as such because of the presence of the historical marker.

⁵¹ Joyce interview.

Although the DAR marker was moved for practical reasons—to avoid erosion and provide better picnic facilities—the 1937 marker site was eventually accepted as the "historic" location of Lower Cimarron Spring. In 1960, the Secretary of the Interior designated Wagon Bed Springs as a National Historical Landmark (NHL). During this time, the National Park Service was completing the Santa Fe Trail component of the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, and Wagon Bed Springs was identified as a trail site of exceptional significance.⁵² In 1962, the National Park Service participated in a ceremony at which the NHL plaque was placed at the 1937 marker site.

In addition to the devastating flood of 1914, a series of natural and man-made events continued to erode the site of Lower Cimarron Spring. The spring site was also impacted by floods in 1941, 1942, and 1951. For the Towler-Lewis family, who lived approximately one-half mile east of Lower Cimarron Spring on the north bank of the Cimarron River, the 1941 flood was more devastating than the 1914 flood, and caused them to permanently abandon their home. As a result of the flooding, the Cimarron River channel in the vicinity of Lower Cimarron Spring shifted back and forth (east and west) over an area nearly half a mile wide, which is evident by the numerous rows of fallen trees in the channel bed, as well as by the several lines of sand bars demarking the edges of the previous channels. Agricultural development and well-drilling in the area also affected the water table, diminishing the flow and frequency of upwelling ground water. The most significant development occurred in the 1960s with the advent of deepwell irrigation in the area, which caused a drop in the water table and brought an end to the flow of spring water.

In the 1980s, Edward Dowell, an amateur archaeologist and member of the Wagon Bed Springs chapter of the Santa Fe Trail Association, began investigating the area surrounding the Lower Cimarron Spring site. Through the use of a metal detector, Dowell uncovered a large amount of Santa Fe Trail-related artifacts. The artifacts were concentrated in the southern portion of Section 28 and the northern portion of Section 33, Township 30 South, Range 37 West, generally in the area surrounding the historic location of Lower Cimarron Spring as marked by the 1907 DAR marker. The area investigated by Dowell also included several remnants of Santa Fe Trail ruts. By contrast, no ruts have been located near the 1937 marker location; nor have any trail-related artifacts been found in that area.

Partly as a result of Dowell's investigations, and also based on historical accounts of Lower Cimarron Spring, the Wagon Bed Springs chapter of the Santa Fe Trail Association (SFTA) challenged the NPS-designated site. By this time, the historic location of the spring had become a controversial issue as local residents, historians, and SFTA members debated where the historical markers should be located. In 1989, the Wagon Bed Springs chapter of the SFTA relocated both the DAR and NHL markers to a site closer to the original 1907 location of the DAR marker. The new site straddles the section line between the southwestern quarter of Section 28 and the northwestern quarter of Section 33, Township 30 South, Range 37 West. Here, SFTA members constructed an interpretive exhibit that included a wagon bed placed in the ground and watered by a solar-powered pump.

Hydrological Characteristics of the Lower Cimarron Spring Site

In an effort to determine the historic location of Lower Cimarron Spring, the National Park Service also contracted with Edwin D. Gutentag, a water hydrologist formerly associated with the US Geological Survey (USGS). Gutentag conducted an on-site field inspection, as well as an investigation of the geographic and hydrological conditions of the Lower Cimarron Spring area. Gutentag concluded that the most likely historic location of the now-dry spring is at North Latitude 37° 24' 07" and West Longitude 101° 22' 10". This places the spring in the bottom of the river bed at the bend of the Cimarron River in the northwest quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 33, Township 30 South, Range 37 West.

Gutentag found that the water table at the Lower Cimarron Spring site was historically very close to the land surface. In 1941, which was the first year that the water table in that area was measured, the water level

⁵² "The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings: The Santa Fe Trail," 23-11.

was approximately 2985 feet above sea level. The 1974 USGS map indicates that the land surface in the same area was around 2987 feet above sea level. Thus, despite the prolonged 1930-1940 drought, the water level was very close (approximately two feet) to the land surface in 1941. Therefore, Gutentag determined that during extended periods of normal precipitation and normal recharge (unlike the 1930s drought), the water table of the High Plains Aquifer would have regularly risen above the land surface in the area of Lower Cimarron Spring. (By 1975, the water level in the vicinity of Lower Cimarron Spring was approximately 30 feet below the land surface, a consequence of deepwell pump irrigation in the area.)

Gutentag concluded that Lower Cimarron Spring was historically located in the old sand and gravel stream channel of the Cimarron River. In a probable sequence of events, a flood along the Cimarron River when the channel was narrow produced a deep scoured cut that was below the water table. As a result, ground water was able to fill this site. Gutentag also noted that springs that develop in sand and gravel can be considered artesian springs, and most springs of this nature are associated with quicksand. (The springs at the Highway 23 bridge over the Cimarron River south of Meade, Kansas, have artesian boils and quicksand.) As in the case of what eventually became known as "Wagon Bed Springs," an effective way to stabilize a low spot with upwelling ground water is to install a water collection device, such as a wagon bed. A wagon bed would maintain the spring, and prevent it from being trampled by animals or affected much by quicksand.

Gutentag also observed that during different seasons and years, the upwelling ground water could have surfaced in more than one place along the Cimarron River, which could account for some of the varying descriptions of the spring. In hydrological terms, the area is considered to be a "diffuse ground water discharge area" that includes other springs and a marshy area, with Lower Cimarron Spring as the main water source. As noted above, the historic marsh and shallow pools associated with Lower Cimarron Spring would have resulted from a steady ground water discharge.⁵³

Historical evidence supports Gutentag's conclusion that Lower Cimarron Spring was located in the vicinity of the river bend in Section 33. The accounts given by long-time residents Harry Joyce, Lucille Towler Lewis, E.F. Towler, and J.W. Dappert indicate that this was the historic location of the spring. This site also agrees, generally, with information found in historic journals, survey notes, and maps, particularly the Sibley-Brown survey of 1825. The archeological remains of the Joyce-Dappert ice house also provide strong evidence regarding the historic location of Lower Cimarron Spring. The ice house remains (which match the dimensions given by J.W. Dappert in his diary) are located at North Latitude 37° 24' 08" and West Longitude 101° 22' 11"—a site that agrees with Dappert's description that the ice house was located just below (downstream) from Lower Cimarron Spring.

⁵³ Gutentag report; and Edwin D. Gutentag, letter to Christine Whitacre, National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Region, December 16, 1994.

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Lower Cimarron Spring
Name of Property

Grant County, Kansas
County and State

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: **Grant County Museum**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 240.43
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

See Continuation Sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

See Continuation Sheet.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

See Continuation Sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Christine Whitacre, Steven De Vore, and Patty Henry ed (NHL); Amanda Loughlin & Tim Weston (NR)
organization National Park Service; Kansas State Historical Society date March 17, 1997; November 2012
street & number KSHS: 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:** (Historic images, maps, etc.)

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: Lower Cimarron Spring (Northeast Trail Segment)
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 5:** Looking SE across swale from near north boundary.
2 of 5: Looking SW toward spring area.
3 of 5: Looking SE along swale.
4 of 5: Looking NW across swale.
5 of 5: "Wagonbed Springs" DAR marker.

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Lower Cimarron Spring
Grant County, Kansas

Section number 10 Page 24

UTM Coordinates

1. Original Location of 4-Acre NR Boundary

The original National Register nomination for "Wagon Bed Springs" gives the UTM reading "14 / 290300 / 4134700" using an unspecified datum. Plotting this reference with NAD27 (because the nomination predated NAD83 and WGS84), this coordinate is in Stevens County, about 5 miles south of the Lower Cimarron Spring site. Further, the sketch map (Figure 3) provided in the nomination appears to indicate that the boundary was in the eastern bend of the Cimarron River, but DeVore & Whitacre's map (Figure 2), place the original four-acre site on the west side of the river bend (the sketch map indicates the NHL plaque was within the boundary; Figure 2 places the NHL plaque on the west bank).

This amended National Register nomination uses Devore & Whitacre's map to place the approximate location of the original 4-acre boundary.

UTM Reference

Datum= NAD83

<u>14</u>	<u>290304</u>	<u>4141767</u>
Zone	Easting	Northing

Latitude/Longitude Coordinate

Datum = WGS84

<u>37.398972</u>	<u>-101.369028</u>
Latitude	Longitude

2. Amended Boundary

a. National Historic Landmark Boundary

This amended National Register nomination adopts the 195-acre boundary created by DeVore & Whitacre for the revised National Historic Landmark nomination. This boundary incorporates the original boundary of the 4-acre site, the associated campground, the historic location of the spring, the DAR marker, and a trail segment.

The UTM references used in the revised NHL were plotted using the NAD27 datum. The boundary was drawn in the correct location on the accompanying USGS topographic map. This nomination revises the NHL references and gives new latitude/longitude coordinates. Letters correspond to the associated map.

UTM References

Datum = NAD83

A	<u>14</u>	<u>289916</u>	<u>4142932</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<u>14</u>	<u>290766</u>	<u>4141371</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<u>14</u>	<u>290825</u>	<u>4142670</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

D	<u>14</u>	<u>289737</u>	<u>4141764</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum = WGS84

A	<u>37.330024</u>	<u>-101.481633</u>
	Latitude	Longitude

C	<u>37.320149</u>	<u>-101.484233</u>
	Latitude	Longitude

B	<u>37.329894</u>	<u>-101.481078</u>
	Latitude	Longitude

D	<u>37.315942</u>	<u>-101.487859</u>
	Latitude	Longitude

b. Addition of Northeast Trail Segment Boundary

The boundary of this amended National Register nomination also incorporates a 45.43-acre linear corridor that includes the trail swales leading from the northeast to Lower Spring and a 50-meter (164-foot) land area around the swales, as required in the revised multiple property nomination. Letters correspond to the associated map; H is the DAR marker.

UTM References

Datum = NAD83

E	<u>14</u>	<u>290840</u>	<u>4143738</u>	G	<u>14</u>	<u>290707</u>	<u>4142700</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
F	<u>14</u>	<u>290891</u>	<u>4143158</u>	H	<u>14</u>	<u>290157</u>	<u>4142175</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum = WGS84

E	<u>37.416840</u>	<u>-101.363531</u>	G	<u>37.407469</u>	<u>-101.364742</u>
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
F	<u>37.411628</u>	<u>-101.362793</u>	H	<u>37.402612</u>	<u>-101.370806</u>
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description

Lower Cimarron Spring is located on the valley side slopes, alluvial fans, and flood plain of a sharp bend of the Cimarron River in the south ½ of Section 28 and the north ½ of Section 33, Township 30 South, Range 37 West, Grant County, Kansas. The boundary of the NHL, which is also part of the revised National Register nomination, forms a polygon with outward curving sides. The N-S axis measures approximately 1200 meters in length and the NE-SW axis measures approximately 1300 meters in length. Beginning at the N axis point and going clockwise, the sides of the polygon measure 500 meters, 1280 meters, 520 meters, and 1100 meters in length. It is outlined on the accompanying map (Paragraph from the revised NHL nomination).

The trail segment corridor also being added to the National Register nomination is located in the E½ (mostly the NE ¼) of Section 28, Township 30 South, Range 37 West. This linear corridor is centered around the extant swales and includes a 50-meter (164-foot) area around all sides of the outermost swales, as required by the revised multiple property nomination.

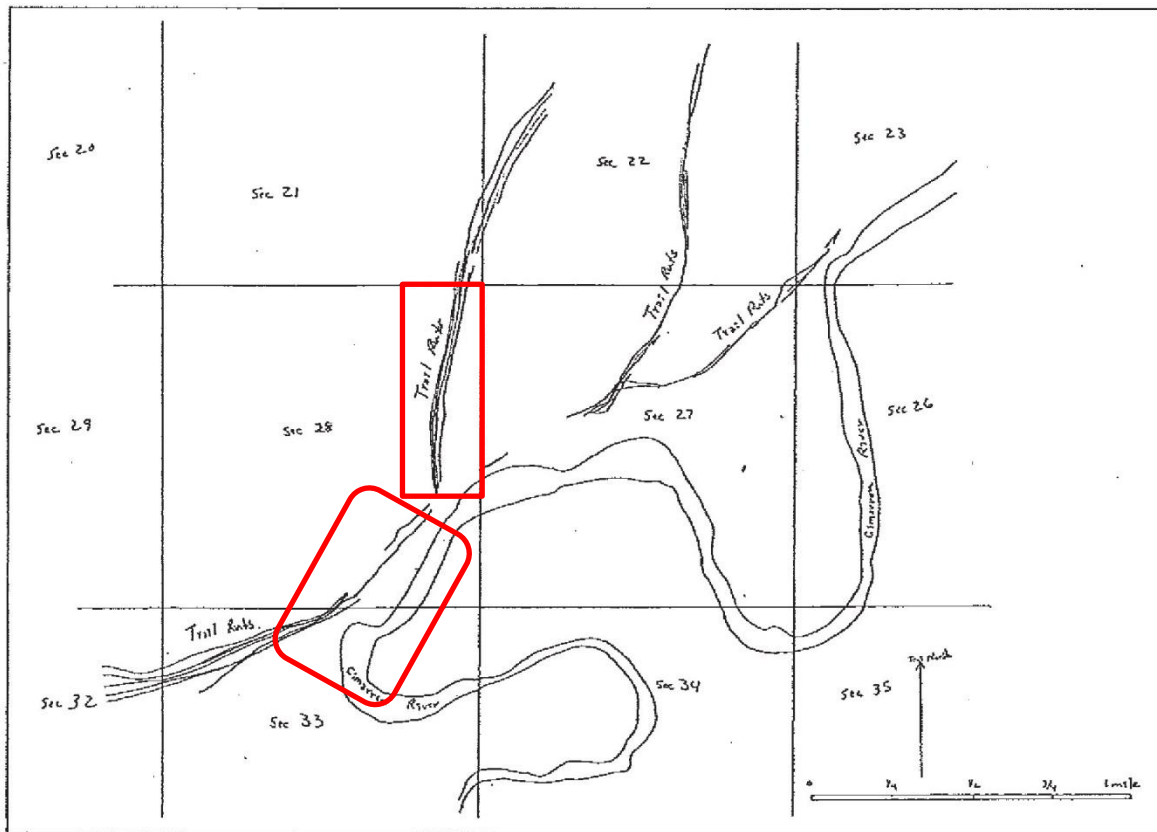
Boundary Justification

The boundary of Lower Cimarron Spring encompasses the historic spring site, the surrounding lands that have a high concentration of trail-related artifacts and that represent the area's historic use as a major Santa Fe Trail campground and the original (mistaken) spring location of the National Historic Landmark/National Register site as designated in 1960 & 1966. The boundary encompasses approximately 240.43 acres, and includes numerous Santa Fe Trail ruts that lead to and from the spring, including a segment that is just north of the spring and a segment to the northwest of the spring. The boundary also includes North Latitude 37°24'00", which government surveyors George C. Sibley and Joseph C. Brown identified as the location of the "famous Semerone [Cimarron] Spring" in September 1825. The general location of the spring is also supported by the Government Land Office Survey of Grant County. More specific locational information on the spring is provided by oral and written accounts of early homesteaders and residents of Grant County, including County Surveyor J.W. Dappert who mapped the location of "Wagon Bed Spring." The discovery of the remains of the Joyce-Dappert ice house, which historical accounts indicate was just north of the spring, places the spring in the bend of the Cimarron River within the boundary. A hydrological analysis of the area by Edwin Gutentag also places the spring in this location. The size and extent of the camp site surrounding the spring was determined by metal-detection survey, shovel excavations, and surface artifact collection done by Edward Dowell of Ulysses, Kansas. Dowell's identification of the distribution of metal artifacts initiated the NHL boundary revision, and indicate that the core of the Lower Cimarron Spring campground is within the boundary. NFS archaeologists, who discovered the ice house remains and oversaw low-altitude aerial photography of the area, agreed with Dowell's conclusions. Based on Dowell's metal detection, there are over 14

inches of archeological deposits associated with the campground, indicating that the potential for recovering additional information within the NHL boundary is extremely high.

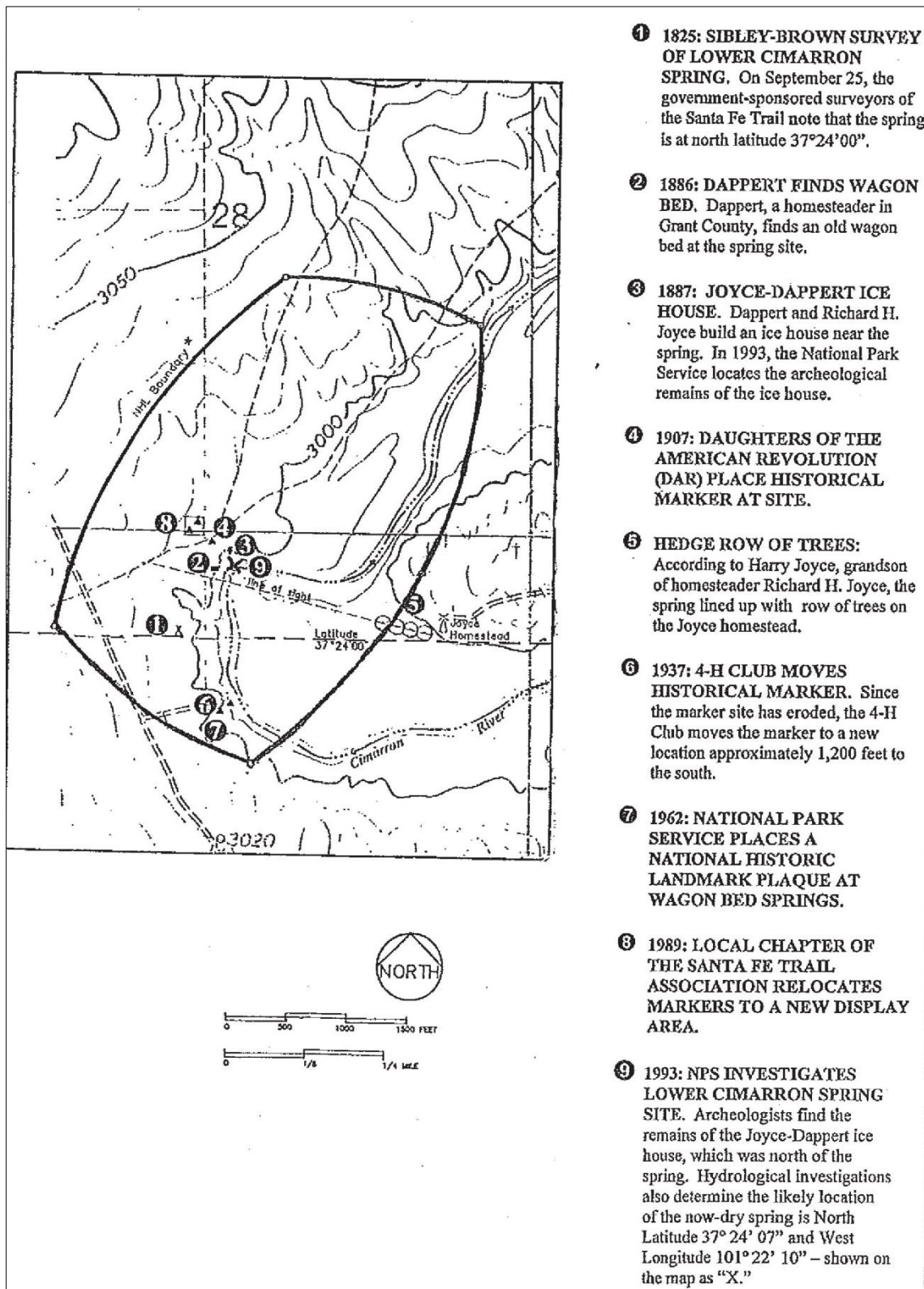
In order to be consistent with the NHL boundary of this site, the boundary for the National Register nomination is being amended to concur with the NHL boundary. Recent site visits to the Lower Cimarron Spring area confirmed the existence of previously identified but unlisted trail swales leading to the spring. Instead of creating a new National Register nomination for this trail segment, the boundary of the National Register nomination is expanded to also include this segment because it continues to expand upon the history of the Lower Cimarron Spring site.

Figure 1.



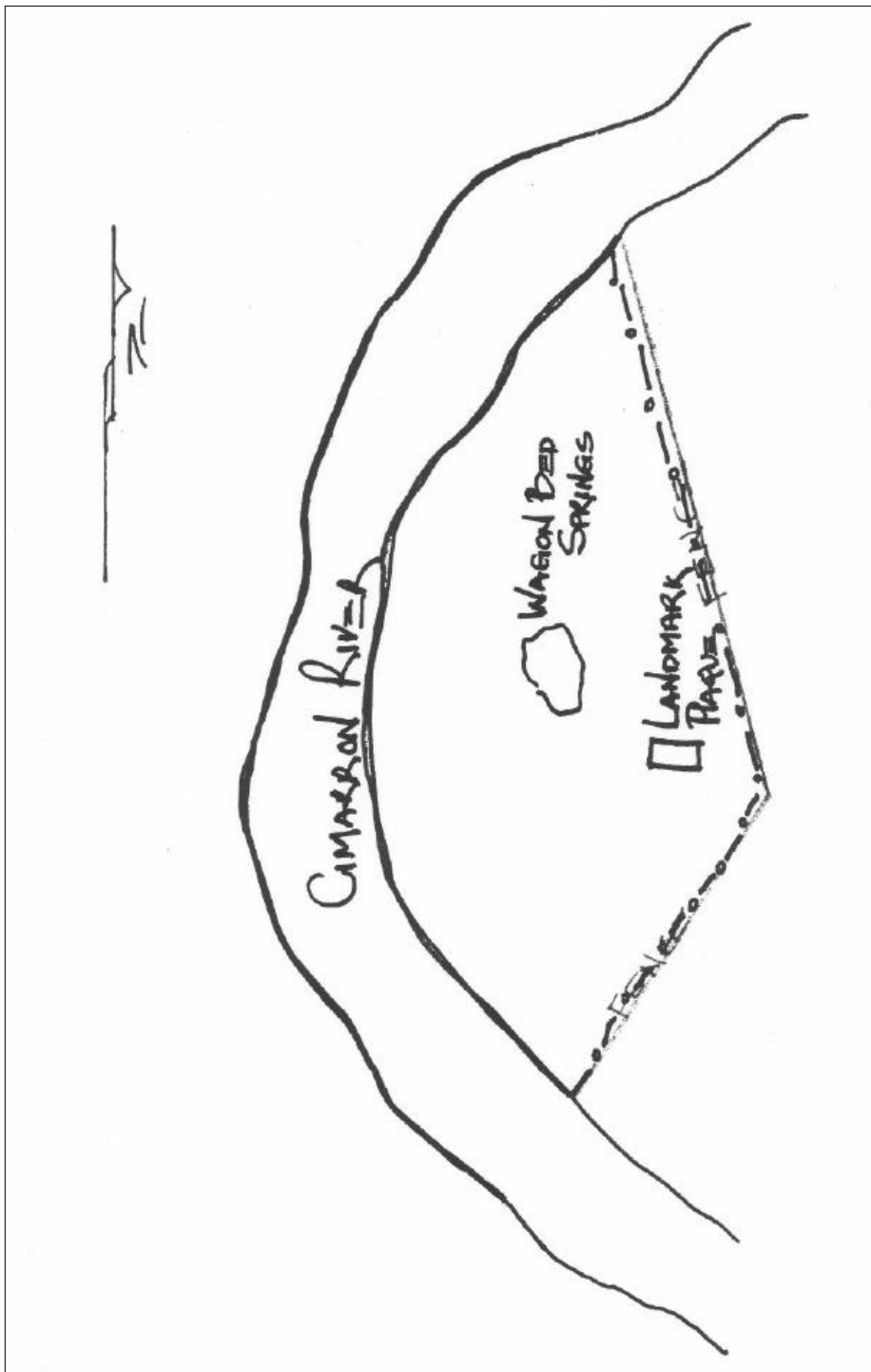
Santa Fe Trail ruts in the vicinity of the Lower Cimarron Spring camp site (adapted from the 1939 ASCS aerial photograph. Boxes indicate location of nominated site.
Source: Whitacre, Christine and Steven L. De Vore. "Cultural Resource Investigations at the Lower Cimarron (Wagon Bed) Spring Camp Site (14GT101), Grant County, Kansas." *The Kansas Anthropologist* 19 (1998): 23.

Figure 2.



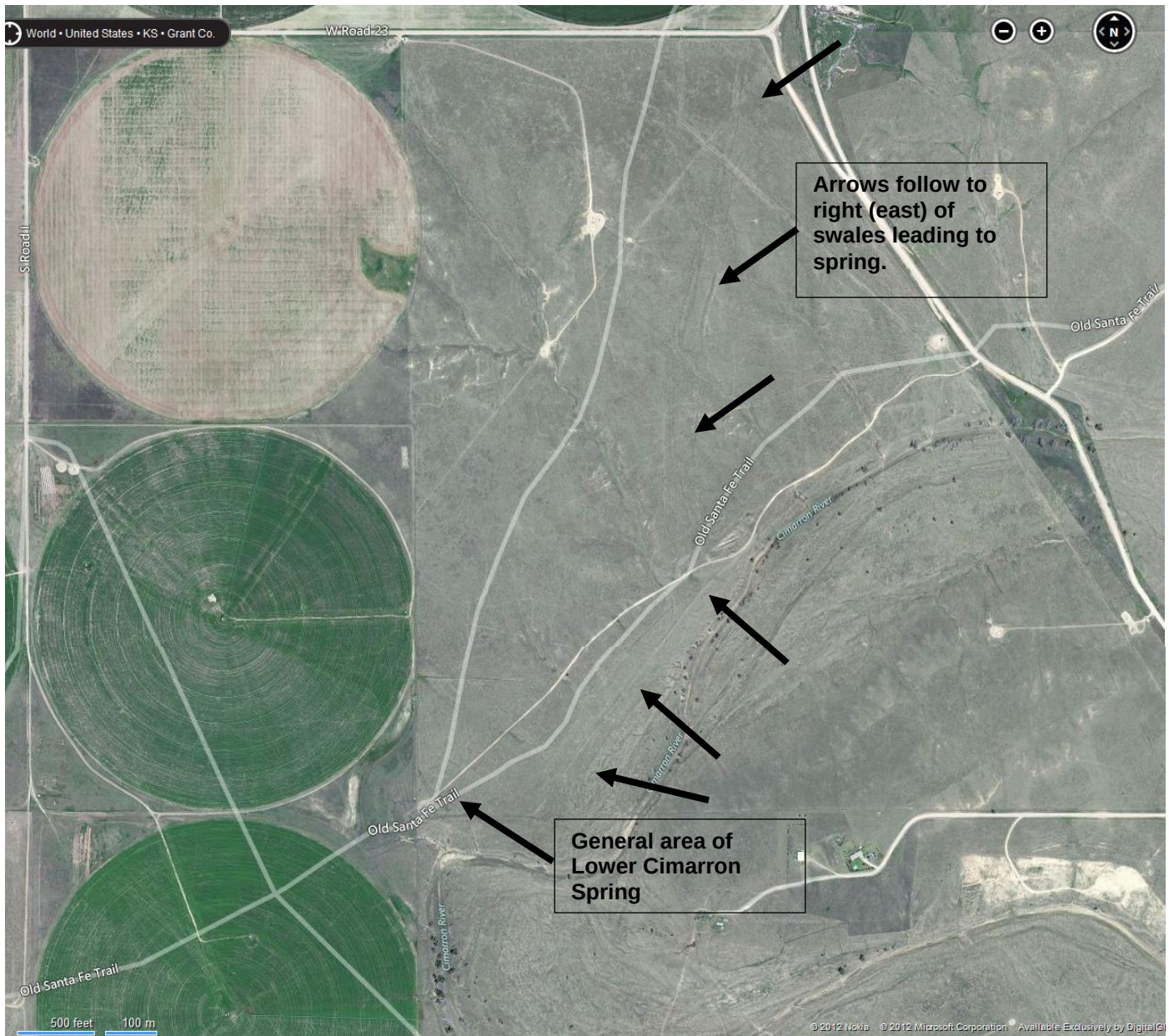
Chronology of events associated with the location of the Lower Cimarron Spring and various markers.
Source: Whitacre, Christine and Steven L. De Vore. "Cultural Resource Investigations at the Lower Cimarron (Wagon Bed) Spring Camp Site (14GT101), Grant County, Kansas." *The Kansas Anthropologist* 19 (1998): 19.

Figure 3.



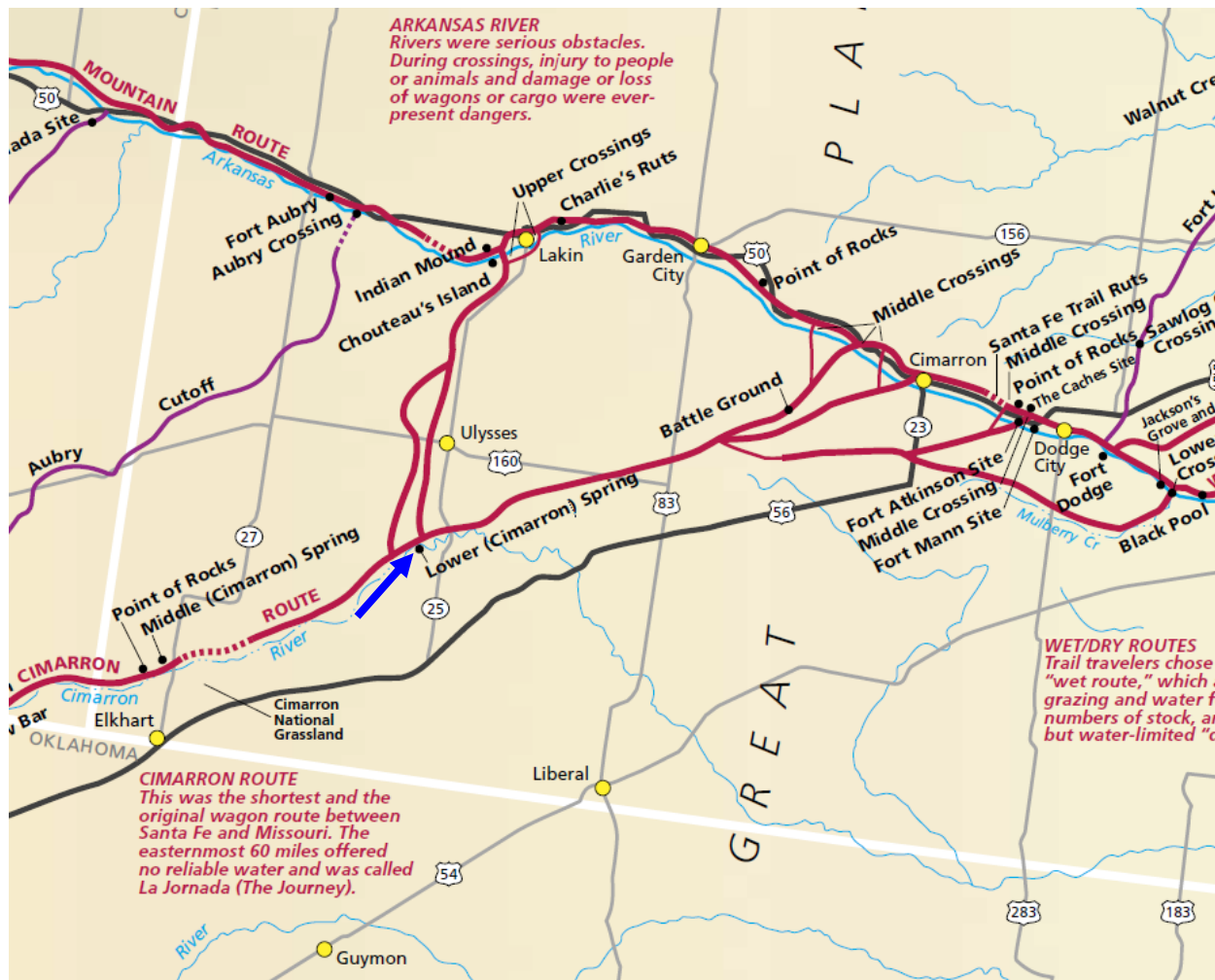
Sketch map from original National Register nomination, showing four-acre site included in the nomination. Compare this image with Figure 2 (number 7) to determine its approximate location within the landscape.

Figure 4.



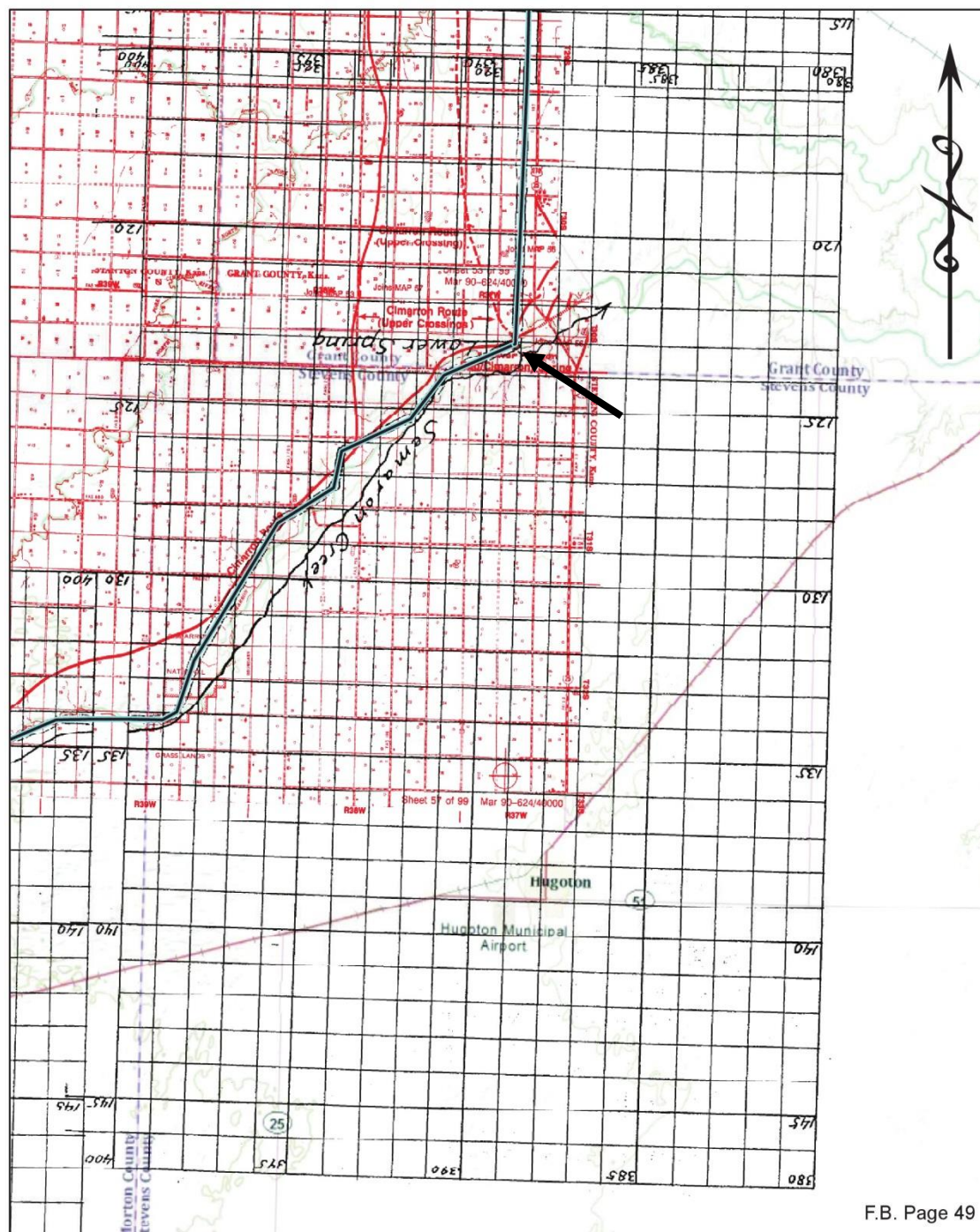
Aerial image (maps.bing.com; accessed 28 November 2012).

Figure 5.



Santa Fe National Historic Trail brochure, National Park Service Official Map and Guide.
Arrow indicates approximate location of nominated site.

Figure 6.



Mapping of Sibley Expedition 1825, 1826, & 1827

0 1 2 4 6 8
Miles

Santa Fe Trail Association - SFTA
by L. Stephen Schmidt, Richard Hayden - August 2011

L. Stephen Schmidt and Richard Hayden, "Field Book Page 49," in "Appendix G: Plots of the Survey Route on Modern Maps," *The Survey and Maps of the Sibley Expedition 1825, 1826, & 1827*, Santa Fe Trail Association Grant Report, August 2011[electronic copy on-line]; available from *Santa Fe Trail Association Online*, <http://www.santafetrail.org/about-us/scholarly-research/sibley-survey/Appendix_G.pdf> (accessed 28 November 2012).

Figure 7.

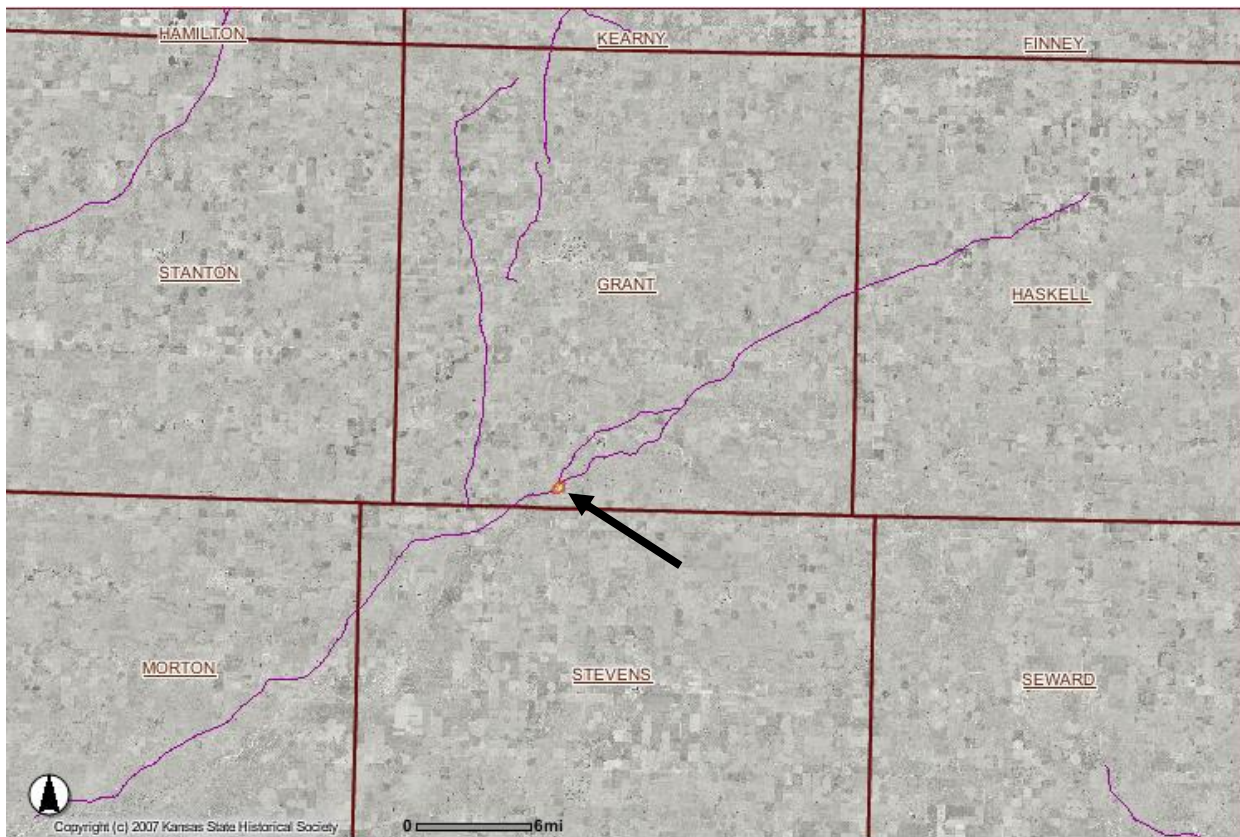


Image shows the 1875 General Land Office survey lines through Grant County in relation to the Lower Cimarron Spring site, indicated by arrow.

Figure 8.

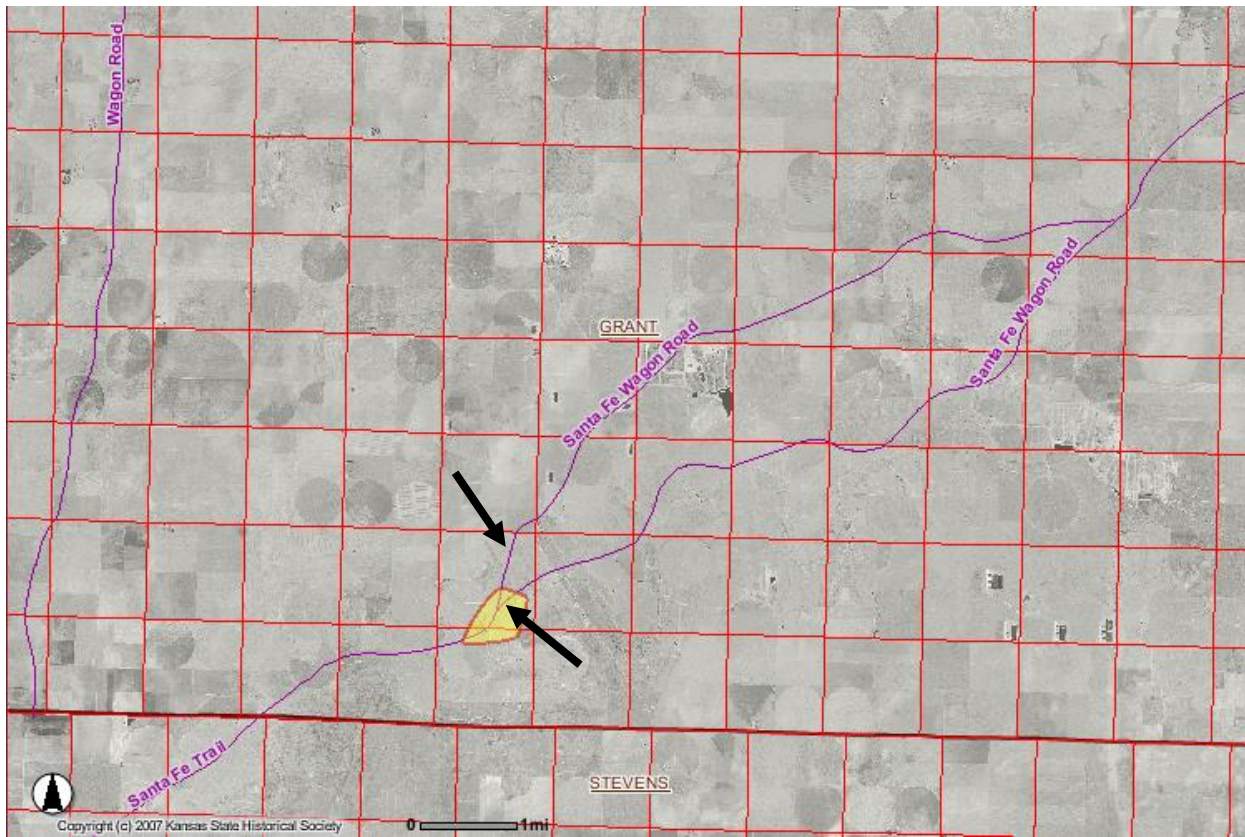
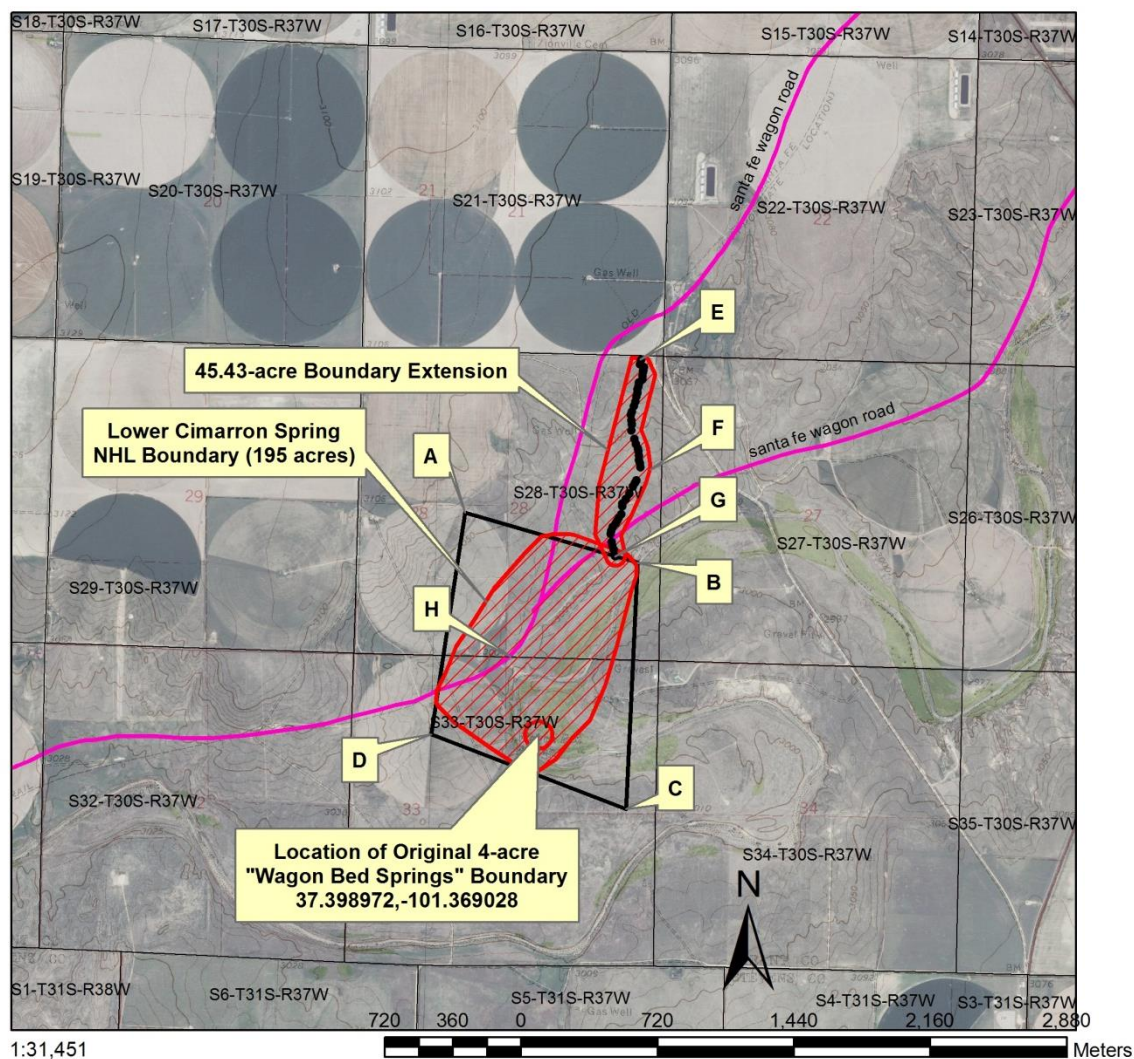


Image shows the 1875 General Land Office survey in relation to the Lower Cimarron Spring site, indicated by polygon. The locations of the swaled remnants are indicated by the arrows. The grid lines are sectional divisions.

Photograph Key.



Boundary Map.



Lower Cimarron Spring (National Register Nomination)
Ulysses vicinity, Grant County, Kansas

Boundary extension includes the 195-acre National Historic Landmark Boundary and
a 45.43-acre linear corridor to the north of the NHL.

NHL Boundary Coordinates (WGS84):

A: 37.409373,-101.373741 / B: 37.407225,-101.363399
C: 37.395506,-101.363703 / D: 37.398818,-101.375425

Northeast Trail Segment Boundary Coordinates (WGS84):

E: 37.416840,-101.363531 / F: 37.411628,-101.362793
G: 37.407469,-101.364742

DAR Marker & General Location of Historic Spring (WGS84):

H: 37.402612,-101.370806

Total acreage = 240.43 acres

Contextual Map.



Kansas Historic Resources Inventory (<http://www.kshs.org/khri>).
Accessed 28 November 2012.











WAGONBED SPRINGS
SANTA FE TRAIL
1822 — 1872
MARKED BY THE
DAUGHTERS OF THE
AMERICAN REVOLUTION
AND THE STATE OF KANSAS
1906

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Lower Cimarron Spring (Boundary Increase)
NAME:

MULTIPLE Santa Fe Trail MPS
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: KANSAS, Grant

DATE RECEIVED: 8/02/13 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/26/13
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/10/13 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/18/13
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 13000728

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 9/25/2013 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Kansas Historical Society



June 14, 2013

Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, N. W.
8th Floor (MS 2280)
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

We are pleased to submit for your consideration the following new National Register nominations:

- Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 2 (Fry Ruts) – Rice County
The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the (Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 2) to the National Register of Historic Places.
- Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 3 (Swanson Swales) – Rice County
The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Santa Fe Trail – Rice County Segment 3 to the National Register of Historic Places.

This enclosed nomination is an amendment:

- Lower Cimarron Spring – Grant County (amended nomination)
The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Lower Cimarron Spring to the National Register of Historic Places.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I may be reached at 785-272-8681 ext. 216 or smartin@kshs.org.

Sincerely yours,

Sarah J. Martin
National Register Coordinator

Enclosures