

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Jensen Ranch
other names/site number 48SU976

2. Location

street & number Martin Jensen County Road 23-169
city, town 16 miles southeast of Boulder
state Wyoming code 56 county Sublette code 035 zip code 82923

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked), public-local, public-State, public-Federal
Category of Property: building(s), district (checked), site, structure, object
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing (6), Noncontributing (2), Total (10)

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: [Signature] Date: April 11, 1988
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
[checked] entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
[] determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register.
[] other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper: [Signature] Date of Action: 5-5-88

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC - single dwelling
 AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE - storage
 animal facility
 agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Same

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Foursquare

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
 walls wood - weatherboard
 roof asphalt shingles
 other two wooden porches

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The historic Jensen Ranch is located in Sublette County, Wyoming, about sixteen miles southeast of the town of Boulder. It is situated on a level, treeless, sagebrush-covered plain a short distance northeast of Muddy Creek, a tributary of the East Fork River. The landscape is dominated on the northeast by the imposing, snow-capped Wind River Range. A mile-long gravel driveway connects the ranch with a gravel county road east of the site. The Jensen Ranch complex consists of a cluster of dwellings, barns, outbuildings, pole corrals, and barbed wire fences arranged in a rectangular configuration. There are twelve structures, ten of which are considered contributing elements of the complex. The ranch is dominated by a wood frame Foursquare ranch house of two and one-half stories, constructed in 1918. It is set apart from the livestock buildings to the east with a wire and pole fenced yard that is landscaped with two large cottonwood trees and various shrubs, flowers, and a mowed lawn. There is a garden plot adjacent to the house on the western perimeter of the yard. The dominant livestock building is a large frame horse barn with a tin-covered gabled roof constructed in 1917. A long frame stock shelter is located parallel to and south of the barn. The western perimeter of the barn-livestock corral area is protected from prevailing winds by a high vertical board fence. The remainder of the outbuildings are arranged in a row along the north side of an east-west running driveway on the northern perimeter of the ranch complex. These log and slab log buildings consist of a bunkhouse, workshop, sheds, and an outhouse. However, these buildings were constructed in the 1940s and have not been included within the district boundaries. The Jensen Ranch retains a remarkably high degree of integrity of setting. It has few modern intrusions and open, natural vistas in all directions. It also retains high physical integrity. As historic photographs attest, the ranch house has received virtually no significant interior or exterior alterations since construction. Outbuildings have been added to the complex

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G NA

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture
Exploration/Settlement

Period of Significance

1905-1937

Significant Dates

NA

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Metinus Jensen

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Jensen Ranch is a pioneer cattle ranch in southeastern Sublette County, Wyoming, that is considered a significant property under National Register Criterion A, because it represents the themes of early 20th century settlement and agricultural development on submarginal lands in Sublette County and the State of Wyoming. Submarginal lands were settled late, after the more attractive and better watered lands had already been claimed. The Jensen Ranch is on the southern fringes of irrigable land and is largely composed of treeless, sagebrush-covered grazing land. It was here on the banks of Muddy Creek, a tributary of the East Fork River, that Danish immigrant Metinus Jensen settled in 1905 and gradually built a successful beef cattle operation. The ranch is significant, not because it is unique or associated with a prominent individual, but rather because it typifies the early twentieth century pioneer ranching homestead in this region. Because of the location of the Union Pacific mainline and the Oregon Shortline to Opal, settlement in what became Sublette County began along the southern drainages and gradually moved north. Not until the early twentieth century did settlers claim the interior of the county, which consisted primarily of sagebrush-covered plains. Small year-round tributaries such as Muddy Creek allowed Metinus Jensen and other homesteaders to penetrate the interior rangeland and establish successful cattle operations. The Jensens were neither political leaders nor the county's wealthiest cattle barons, but they helped form the real foundation of Sublette County's ranching community, persevering against an inhospitable climate on marginal lands far from the nearest railhead. A stock grazing operation controlling large blocks of land through direct ownership and leasing of federal lands, represented the best possible means of rendering these marginal lands economically viable. As a result, this portion of Sublette County

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 1.4 acres

UTM References

A

1	2	6	2	1	0	5	0	4	7	2	1	6	4	0
Zone		Easting					Northing							

B

1	2	6	2	0	9	3	0	4	7	2	1	6	4	0
Zone		Easting					Northing							

C

1	2	6	2	0	9	3	0	4	7	2	1	5	9	0
Zone		Easting					Northing							

D

1	2	6	2	1	0	5	0	4	7	2	1	5	9	0
Zone		Easting					Northing							

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

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organization Historical Consultant date June 8, 1987
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United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Jensen Ranch

Section number 7 Page 7.1

throughout the history of the ranch as the need arose. They are well maintained, and nearly all share common log, log slab, or rough lumber building materials and scale except for a modern metal barn, which is located outside the district boundary, and two circular metal grain storage cribs. The buildings within the district are described below. Sequential numbers correspond with locations on the sketch map, and contributing structures are shaded.

The main ranch house (No. 1) was constructed by Metinus Jensen in 1918. The structure represents the Foursquare style and is a large wood frame two and one-half story building (35'x 40'). It has a high hipped roof covered with asphalt shingles. There is a plain boxed cornice and a centrally located internal brick chimney. The building faces south and rests on a concrete foundation with a full basement. The exterior walls are covered with clapboard siding painted white with dark green trim. The south facade has a hipped roof dormer and a hipped roof front porch. The latter is supported by square tapered wooden columns and a concrete footer and extends across the full width of the building. This porch has a wooden deck and narrow wood paneled ceiling. Concrete steps lead to the porch level and front entrance. The north and east elevations have a similar wrap-around hipped roof back porch supported by tapered square columns. The porch also has a wooden deck and narrow wood paneled ceiling. There is an outside basement entrance on the east elevation that has concrete walls and steps and is covered with hinged wooden doors. Windows are generally evenly spaced and in line on the first and second floors. They consist of one over one-light double-hung windows in wooden frames with plain surrounds and are covered with aluminum storm windows. The dormer has twin one over one-light double-hung windows in wooden frames. Basement windows are above grade. Historic photographs reveal that the front and back porches are not original but were added shortly after construction. There have been no other exterior modifications to this building.

The first floor consists of a living room, dining room, bedroom, kitchen, den, and bath. Adjoining entryways have pine sliding doors. All rooms retain original pine trim and moldings with natural finishes. The interior also features pine floors and plastered walls. All doors and associated hardware are original. There is a central wooden stairway with wooden balustrade leading to the second floor. The second floor contains four bedrooms arranged on either side of a central hallway and linen closet. The third floor contains open attic space and has never been used for living quarters.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Jensen Ranch

Section number 7 Page 7.2

The ranch house has received no major modifications to the interior or exterior since it was constructed. It is in good repair, and is therefore considered a strong contributing element to the district.

The horse barn (No. 2) was constructed by Metinus Jensen in 1917, the year before he constructed the ranch house. It is a large rectangular-shaped frame structure (44'x 32') with a gabled roof covered with tin. The barn rests on a concrete footer and has a wood plank floor. Exterior walls are covered with red shiplap siding. There is a single sliding wooden barn door on the east and west elevations. The interior has grain and tack rooms built into the west end, stalls, and a hay loft on the second floor. The barn is dimly lit by infrequent but evenly spaced four-light fixed windows in wooden frames on the first and second floors. The horse barn is in good condition and has received no major modifications since it was built. It is therefore considered a strong contributing element to the district.

The remaining contributing outbuildings, bunkhouses, and pole corrals that complete the ranch complex are of log, log slab or frame construction and were designed and built by Metinus Jensen and his sons. There is a row of log and log slab outbuildings (Nos. 9-13 on sketch map) located on the north side of an east-west running driveway on the northern perimeter of the district. They replicate the scale and materials of contributing elements within the district, but they were not constructed until the 1940s and therefore have not been included within the district. However, they do not affect the integrity of setting of the nearby district. There is also a modern metal barn (No. 14) northwest of this row of buildings that has not been included in the district. There are two short, cylindrical metal grain silos located within the district behind Building No. 7.

3). GARAGE (built: 1920)

Dimensions:	18'x 30'	Stories:	one
Orientation:	south	Rooms:	one
Foundation:	concrete footer		
Walls:	frame with clapboard siding		
Roof:	gable; wood shingles		
Interior:	two stall; dirt floor		
Doors:	twin hinged wooden double doors		

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Jensen Ranch

Section number 7 Page 7.3

4). CHICKEN COOP (built: 1934)

Dimensions:	30.5'x 16'	Stories:	one
Orientation:	south	Rooms:	one
Walls:	frame with shiplap siding		
Roof:	gable; asphalt shingles		
Windows:	elongated 2-light fixed in south elevation		

5) SPRINGHOUSE (built: ca. 1920s)

Dimensions:	approximately 8'x 10'	Stories:	one
Orientation:	south	Rooms:	one
Foundation:	concrete footer		
Walls:	cement block		
Roof:	gable; asphalt shingles		
Interior:	concrete floor		

6) STOCK SHELTER (built ca. 1920s)

Dimensions:	22'x 80'	Stories:	one
Orientation:	south; open on south elevation	Rooms:	one
Walls:	frame and log poles covered with log slabs		
Roof:	gable; overlapping rough boards		

7). HOMESTEAD CABIN (built: 1935),
Noncontributing, nonintrusive

Dimensions:	12.3'x 14'	Stories:	one
Orientation:	south	Rooms:	one
Foundation:	concrete footer		
Walls:	frame; clapboard siding		
Roof:	gable; asphalt shingles		
Doors:	wood door with single light on south elevation		

Note: This building was constructed by Otto Jensen and has been moved from its original location.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Jensen Ranch

Section number 7 Page 7.4

- 8). CHICKEN COOP (built: 1947)
Noncontributing, nonintrusive

Dimensions:	22.4'x 10.3'	Stories:	one
Orientation:	south	Rooms:	one
Foundation:	concrete footer		
Walls:	logs with square notching; cement chinking		
Roof:	gable; tarpaper		
Door:	one wooden door on south elevation		
Windows:	one 4 over 4-light double-hung on south elevation		

The stock corrals (Nos. 8.1 and 8.3) are an integral part of the stock raising activity on the ranch. They consist of a system of high log fences associated with the main stock barns. They are partitioned and interconnected by gates for conveniently holding and moving stock. There are separate pens for calving, branding, and feeding livestock. The overall corral system also includes a log and timber scale (No. 8.2) conveniently located within the main corral near the barn for weighing livestock. Finally, a stock loading chute (No. 8.4) constructed of logs, planks, and railroad ties has been built onto the south side of the corrals for moving and transporting livestock. These structures are included as contributing, because they clearly demonstrate the integrity of planning, design, and workmanship. All are handcrafted structures that have been carefully maintained and that contribute to the sense of time and place (see photographs). The complex exudes a strong sense of continuity of use, because it is evident that the original layout and design continue to serve the Jensens in their modern stockraising operation.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8.1

and similar geographic and climatic locales throughout Wyoming are occupied today by a small number of large beef cattle and sheep ranching units. The Jensen Ranch has remained a working cattle ranch and has been owned and operated by the same family for three generations. It retains fine integrity of setting and exceptional physical integrity with few modern intrusions, largely due to the fact that the area is isolated, sparsely populated, and stock raising remains the main occupation of its residents.

Metinus Jensen was born on January 14, 1874 in Brammings, Denmark. He immigrated from Denmark to America at the age of nineteen. His older brothers James, Neils, and Andreas preceded him to America. Metinus lived and worked in a number of places before homesteading on Muddy Creek. As a newcomer to America, he first lived in a small Danish community in Nebraska. It was here that he met Hannah Percilla Dodd, a native Nebraskan. They were married on September 27, 1898. She was widowed and had two children from that marriage. The Jensens eventually had nine children of their own. Metinus (Martin) did farm work and later got a job with the railroad. He moved westward along the Union Pacific mainline according to his assignments with the railroad: Cheyenne, Thayer Junction, and Rock Springs. His brother James was meanwhile employed by Sam Leckie at Leckie Station (a stage stop and ranch on the Lander cut-off, about fourteen miles southeast of the Jensen Ranch) and bought up failed homesteads in the area. It was undoubtedly at James' urging that Metinus first came to the Big Sandy-Muddy Creek country. The two brothers homesteaded on Muddy Creek in about 1905. Land records reveal that Metinus obtained a Water Certificate on 3/26/1910, and he and his wife eventually patented three adjacent parcels in Section 19 by means of two Cash Entry Patents and one Homestead Entry Patent in 1911. The Jensens then owned 630.72 acres of land. The first homestead was built along Muddy Creek west of today's ranch complex and consisted of a log house and bunkhouse. In about 1917, Metinus decided to relocate his ranch at its present location about a half mile to the east. He first constructed a large frame gable-roofed horse barn at that location in 1917. In 1918, he built a large two and one-half story Foursquare home that was quite impressive for its time and location. He hauled the building materials from Rock Springs and built his home with the help of his two stepsons, who were older than his own seven sons, and Rock Springs laborers. The style of the home was influenced by houses his wife had seen in Nebraska and in her family's home State of Pennsylvania.

Metinus was primarily a cattle rancher, but at various times he added sheep to his operation. He and his stepson Clarence also

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Jensen Ranch
Section number 8 Page 8.2

engaged in the freighting business to augment his income. He took orders from the local ranchers and John Vible's store at New Fork and made trips to Rock Springs at least twice a year to bring back supplies. In later years, he made the trip by truck. As his cattle and sheep business became larger, he relied less on freighting.

Metinus built the first school in the area for children of the neighboring ranches in about 1909. Known as Emerson School, it was a one-story frame schoolhouse. It was first located at the end of the present driveway, about a mile east of the ranch. Later it was moved about two miles south to its present location.

Metinus remained in the cattle business until he became ill. He and his wife moved to Rock Springs in 1945, and his son Otto bought the ranch in the same year. Otto had homesteaded on a nearby parcel of land in 1933. In 1940, he married Florence Sommers, whose family homesteaded on the Green River. After buying the ranch from Metinus, Otto and Florence resided in the large ranch house and continued in the ranching business. Otto moved his small frame homestead cabin to the main ranch complex where it still stands. Otto and Florence gradually added to the family holdings and constructed or moved more buildings to the complex. The Jensen Ranch now contains about 2700 acres of deeded land, in addition to Bureau of Land Management and State grazing leases and a Forest Service grazing permit. They run about 350 to 400 head of cattle.

The Jensen Ranch, while typical of other ranching operations in the area and throughout the state, does exhibit some distinctive characteristics that deserve mention because of the potential for future research. The careful planning evidenced by the layout of the complex and the fastidious tidiness of the ranch are unusual in an industry that requires small family ranches to function with a minimum of outside help. The absence of junk piles and clutter that commonly surround ranch complexes and often fill the outbuildings may be a cultural or ethnic phenomenon associated with the Danish ancestry of the Jensen family, or it may simply reflect personal preferences. No studies have yet been conducted to determine if this is an ethnic phenomenon or an isolated occurrence. This is an important topic that deserves examination when time and funds allow. In the meantime, the Jensen Ranch deserves recognition as an excellent example of the early ranching settlement patterns in Sublette County. It retains a high degree of integrity of setting, location, design, workmanship, materials, and feeling and association, and therefore meets the requirements for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Jensen Ranch

Section number 9 Page 9.1

Bureau of Land Management, BLM Master Title Plats, Historical Indices, Tract Books and General Land Office (GLO) Plats.
Cheyenne: BLM General Land Office.

Historic Photographs of the Jensen Ranch and Family Tree. In possession of Otto and Florence Jensen, Boulder, Wyoming.

Jensen, Otto and Florence, Personal Communication, Jensen Ranch, Boulder, Wyoming, 9/15/86, 5/15/87.

Rosenberg, Robert G. Wyoming's Last Frontier: A Settlement History of Sublette County, Wyoming. An historic context for the Sublette County Certified Local Government Commission Site Survey, 1985-1987.

Sublette County Clerk, Grantor Books. Pinedale: Sublette County Courthouse.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

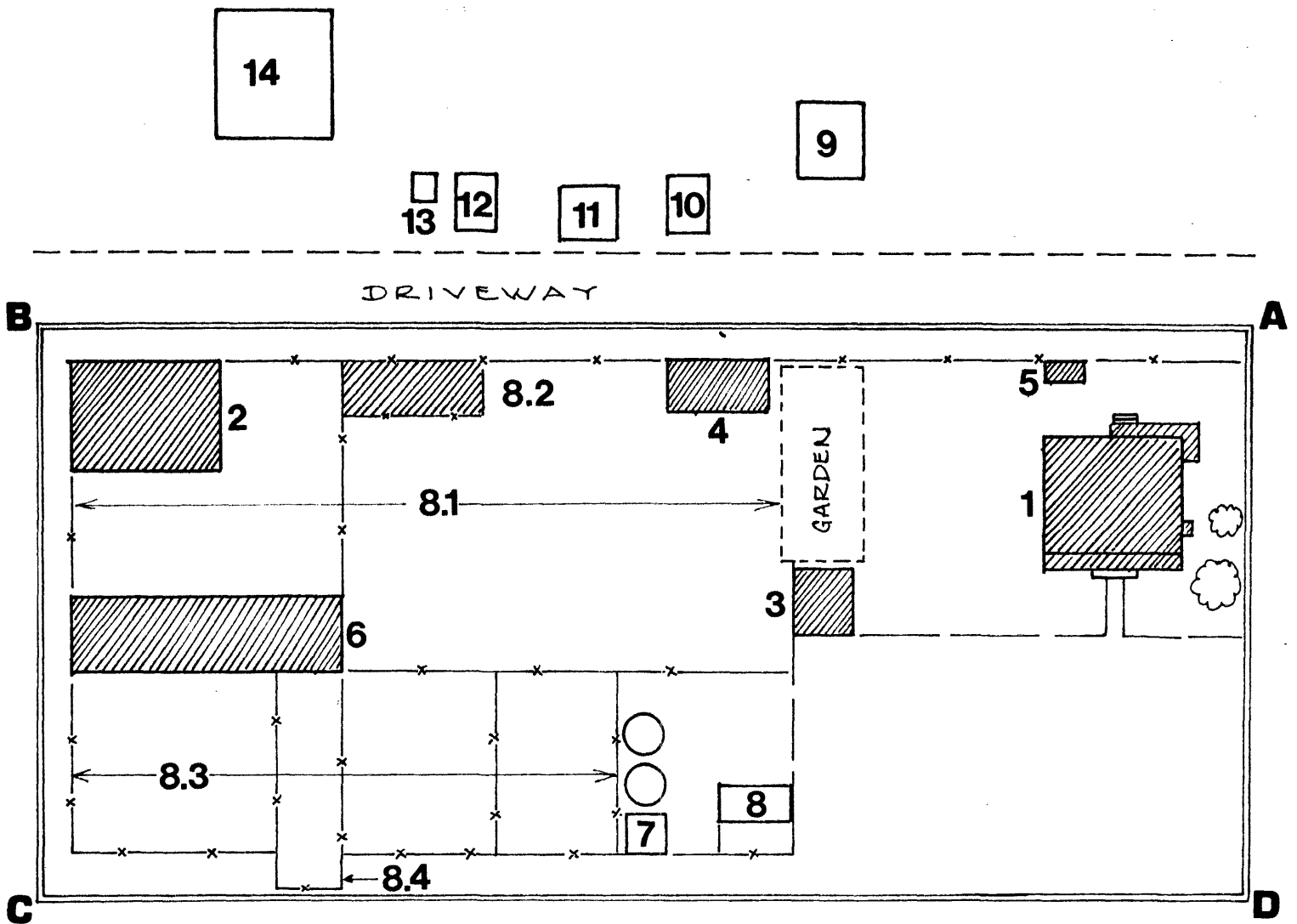
Section number 10 Page 10.1

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at Point A (see accompanying map), a point 10 feet due north (AZ. 0 or 360 degrees) of the northeast corner of the fenced lot around the ranch house, proceed due west (AZ. 270 degrees) along the south berm of a gravel driveway for a distance of approximately 360 feet to Point B. From Point B, proceed due south (AZ. 180 degrees) for a distance of approximately 170 feet to Point C. The boundary between Point B and Point C is parallel to and 10 feet west of the west building lines of Building Nos. 2 and 6 and an existing fenceline. From Point C, proceed due east (AZ. 90 degrees) approximately 360 feet to Point D. The boundary line between Points C and D is parallel to and 10 feet south of an existing fenceline and the south building line of Building No. 7. From Point D proceed approximately 170 feet due north (AZ. 0 or 360 degrees) back to Point A.

Boundary Justification


This boundary forms a rectangle measuring 360 feet east-west by 170 feet north-south and encompasses the significant historic buildings in the Jensen Ranch complex and the associated pole corrals while eliminating unnecessary acreage. The north boundary line uses an existing gravel driveway and conveniently excludes a row of non-contributing outbuildings built in the 1940s. The west, south, and east boundary lines parallel existing fencelines and building lines at distances of approximately ten feet. These fencelines and the gravel driveway appear to have been in use since the ranch was built and provide a logical cohesiveness to the district that corresponds with the ranch's physical layout.





JENSEN RANCH (48SU976)


Legend

1. Main ranch house, 2-1/2 story wood frame (1918)
2. Main barn, wood frame (1917)
3. Garage, wood frame (c. 1920)
4. Chicken house, wood frame (1934)
5. Springhouse, cement block
6. Stock shelter, wood frame (c. 1920s)
7. Homestead cabin, wood frame (1935, moved from another location)
8. Chicken coop, log (1947)
- 8.1 Stock corrals, log
- 8.2 Log and timber weigh scale
- 8.3 Stock corrals, log
- 8.4 Stock loading chute (logs, planks, railroad ties)
9. Outbuilding, log (1946)
10. Outbuilding, split log (c. 1940s)
11. Workshop, log (1948)
12. Outbuilding, split log (c 1940s)
13. Outhouse (c. 1940s)
14. Modern barn, metal

 Contributing buildings

 Noncontributing buildings

 Storage silos

 Proposed historic district boundary

