Form No. 10-306 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM
FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Wilson's Creek Battlefield

AND/OR COMMON
Wilson's Creek National Battlefield (preferred)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Route 2 Box 75
(1 3/4 miles south of Highway M on Route ZZ) __NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN   CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Republic   X VICINITY OF

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Missouri	29	Greene	077

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	X MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	X PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
X SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	__YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	X YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*
Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER
1709 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN	STATE
Omaha ___ VICINITY OF	Nebraska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER
1709 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN	STATE
Omaha	Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE
1959   X FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service

CITY, TOWN	STATE
Washington	D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Wilson's Creek National Battlefield includes 1749.91 acres of publicly owned land, all in federal ownership except for 22.38 acres of nonfederal road right-of-way, in the Ozark region of southwestern Missouri. The national battlefield includes virtually the entire scene of action of the Battle of Wilson's Creek.

The battlefield is situated on the east and west sides of the Wilson's Creek valley, which bisects the area from north to south. In general appearance, it is not unlike surrounding farm lands. Perhaps 20 to 25 percent is wooded and the remainder is open. The topography is generally rolling, but with steep slopes associated with water courses. The similarity between the battlefield and surrounding farm lands is due to the fact that the battlefield lands operated as small farm units until acquired in public ownership in the 1960s. The grassland-woodlot configuration of the battlefield is typical of the local small cattle operations.

Because restoration of the vegetative cover at the time of the battle is being considered by the Park Service, a synopsis of vegetative conditions is germane. Two range types occur within the national battlefield, about 610 acres being classified as Limestone Ledge and 758 acres as Chert Hills. The Chert Hills type occurs on all exposures of rolling ridges and slopes from 9 to 60 percent at elevations from 900 to 1600 feet. The highest elevation on the battlefield is 1250 feet, attained at several locations. Based on deep stony and cherty silt loam soils, the Chert Hills is a partially wooded prairie type, with a climax vegetative composition 60 percent grasses, 30 percent woody plants, and 10 percent forbs. Little bluestem dominates the grasses, the major overstory species being the oaks, and lespedeza and tickclover being common forbs. Overgrazing of this type, as has occurred here, tends to promote the advance of woody plants and less palatable grasses and forbs, with a decline in palatable grasses and forbs. In severe retrogression, plants like broomsedge, persimmon, and greenbrier move toward domination. Lower stages are also marked by dense tree stands with an understory of briar and thorny berries. These altered conditions are apparent in the Chert Hills areas of the battlefield today.

The Limestone Ledge type occurs on all exposures of slopes from 2 to 50 percent grade at the same elevation as the Chert Hills. Soils are shallow, underlain with fractured limestone, and with a high limestone content. This is also a partially wooded prairie type, although more sparse than the Chert Hills with a climax vegetative composition of 70 percent grasses, 20 percent woody plants, and 10 percent forbs. Big bluestem and sideoats grama make up 40 percent of the grasses and the oaks and eastern red cedar dominate the overstory. Overgrazing generates a reaction similar to that of the Chert Hills type except that in the lower stages, cedar tends to dominate with a sparse understory of threeawn, forbs, and annuals.

The lower stages of both types have been historically attained at various locations on the battlefield. However, overgrazing is not now in evidence, as recovery of the open areas through native grass seeding has been effective.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	X_MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X_1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	X_TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	X_COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES August 10, 1861   BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Battle of Wilson's Creek (called Oak Hills by the Confederates) was fought 10 miles southwest of Springfield, Missouri, on August 10, 1861, taking its name from the stream that crosses the area where the fighting took place. Wilson's Creek National Battlefield preserves in a fair degree of integrity, although vegetative conditions have altered, virtually the whole of the scene of battle.

The Battle of Wilson's Creek was a focal point of the bitter struggle between Union and Confederate forces for control of Missouri in the first year of the Civil War. There Brigadier General Nathaniel Lyon climaxed his campaign to drive the armed Secessionists out of Missouri in order to secure the strategic state for the Union. His two-month campaign deprived Southern sympathizers of an effective armed presence and kept them sufficiently occupied to permit the formation of a Unionist state government that then mobilized the state for the Unionist cause. Had Lyon abandoned Springfield and not attacked the Confederates under Major General Sterling Price and Brigadier General Ben McCulloch at Wilson's Creek, a pathway into Missouri would have been open for the Secessionist army. The subsequent history of the war might thus have gone quite differently.

The battle was for its size also one of the bloodiest of the war, due to the inexperience of the leaders, the zeal of the troops, and the close fighting in the wooded terrain. Of 5400 Union troops engaged, there were 1317 casualties, including 258 killed and 873 wounded. The Confederates, with 10,175 troops lost 279 dead and 951 wounded. Unionist casualties included General Price, who was killed, and the death or wounding of most senior officers. Casualties among high ranks in the Confederate forces were also high: two brigade commanders and a regimental commander were killed, and a division commander and the colonels of four regiments were seriously wounded.

Although the Confederates held the field at the end of the battle and were therefore the victors, they were badly mauled, exhausted, and their supplies and ammunition were nearly depleted. They were thus prevented from following with an advance into Missouri. The action thus sealed the fate of Southern intentions in the state, as Union forces were speedily reinforced. Unionists in both Missouri and Kentucky were enabled to prevent secession of the states in part because of the aftermath at Wilson's Creek. The battle set the stage for the Battle of Pea Ridge (Elkhorn Tavern), Arkansas, seven months later, which ended the first major transmississippi campaign and effectively ended the organized Southern threat to Missouri.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bearss, E. C., _The Battle of Wilson's Creek_, U.S. Department of
    Interior, National Park Service, July 1963.
Bray, Robert T., _An Archaeological Survey and Excavations at Wilson's
    Creek Battlefield National Park_, University of Missouri, May 1967.
-----, _Environmental Statement_, U.S. Department of Interior, National
    Park Service, 1975.   (See Continuation Sheet Page 8)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY ___1749.91___

UTM REFERENCES

4 1 0 8 - 040

A |1,5| |4,6,2,3,0,0| |4,1,0,7,9,8,0| B |1,5| |4,6,4,8,5,0| |4,1,0,7,9,8,0|
   ZONE EASTING   NORTHING   ZONE EASTING   NORTHING

C |1,5| |4,6,4,7,0,0| |4,1,0,3,6,0,0| D |1,5| |4,6,2,9,2,0| |4,1,0,3,9,5,0|

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See Continuation Sheet Page 9)

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

STATE		CODE	COUNTY		CODE
Missouri		29	Greene		077
Missouri		29	Christian		043

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Thomas P. Busch, Historical Architect

ORGANIZATION	DATE
National Park Service	March 26, 1976

STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
1709 Jackson	402-221-3423

CITY OR TOWN	STATE
Omaha	Nebraska

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES____   NO____   NONE____

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State
Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to
evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is __X__National ____State ____Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE Deputy Assistant Secretary   DATE JUN 4 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 9/1/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: Robert B. Rettig   DATE 9/2/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Acting

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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The overstory species in the wooded lands generally conform to the appropriate range
site descriptions. The predominant tree in the park is oak, in several species.
Eastern red cedar is associated with limestone areas and has intruded into old fields
and pastures. Honey locust is common, as is osage orange. There is sparsely
scattered black walnut in the ravines and bottomlands and green ash, hackberry,
American elm, basswood, Chinese elm, and the Kentucky coffee tree are present. In
the understory, there is hawthorn, persimmon, berry bramble, grape, and paw-paw.

Among grasses, little bluestem dominates the Chert Hills sites together with Indian
grass and big bluestem, with switchgrass the major subdominant. Big and little
bluestem and wide sideoats grama predominate the Limestone Ledge type. Subdominates
are switch and Indian grass. Seedings to recover grasslands and open spaces, at the
recommendations of the Soil Conservation Service, have been successful.

The battlefield is probably less forested today than it was when the battle was fought
in 1861, for some accounts described the area as being a parklike forest. This
description is typical of mature oak-hickory forests once common in the area but now
rare because of the cutting of timber in the 1930s. Very few old trees remain. At
the time of the battle the floor of the forest, actually more of an open savannah,
was relatively free of the woody plants and brush that exist today, but the dense
cover of the creek bottom remains in much the same condition as it probably had in
the 1860s.

As this description indicates, the alteration of the natural cover of the battlefield
has been great and at the same time subtle. An attempt to restore raises complicated
questions, and a recovery of the appearance of the scene in 1861 will depend first
on the results of detailed historical and botanical research, and second on a
restoration process that will probably take decades. With the general configuration
of the site essentially unaltered, the integrity of the scene is much higher than
at most Civil War battlefields.

There were local residents, two farms, and about 13 structures on the battlefield at
the time of the battle. Remains of a few of the structures can still be seen, but
most exist today only as archeological sites. Sites, structures, and features
relating to the battle are as follows:
    Ray House (HS 5) - John A. Ray built this house in 1852 and it stands today
    in fair condition on its original foundation. This is the only structure
    remaining intact that dates to the Battle of Wilson's Creek. The Ray House
    is a single-story, five-room, L-shaped structure with a porch spanning the
    front (north) and a porch on both angles of the ell at the rear (west). The
    front portion of the house measures 18 feet 2 inches by 36 feet 2 inches, and
    the rear ell measures 16 feet 1 inch by 31 feet 11 inches. The structure is
    of frame construction on stone foundations. It had clapboard siding and a
    wood shingle roof.

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Known alterations of the structure are as follows:
a) 1904-13, pantry added enclosing 11 feet of the southwestern portion
of the back porch.
b) 1904-34, back door in south room sealed off. Four fireplaces were
removed, one next to the west elevation of the northeast room, one
against the east elevation of the southwest room, one against the south
elevation of the mid-room and one against the north elevation of the
south room.
c) 1935, the northeast room and mid-room were refloored over the old
boards and a doorway cut through the west elevation of the northeast
room, north of the fireplace. Boarding creating squares was added to
the ceiling in the northeast room.
d) In the 1930s the structure was rewired for electricity.

This structure will be partially restored by the National Park Service.

SITES AND OTHER FEATURES

Ray Spring House (HS 13) - This structure existed at the time of the battle
and was used by the Ray family for the storage of their dairy products. At
present only the stone and earth foundation of the old spring house remains.
Gibson's Mill (HS 15) - It was a one- or two-story structure with massive
rock foundation and wood frame construction. It measured 45'x38'. The mill
burned to the ground before the twentieth century. The foundation and traces
of associated water control features remain.
Edwards Cabin (HS 12) - The Edwards Cabin was a one-room log structure which
was adjacent to the Wire Road. The cabin site is known and a similar log
cabin built about 1850 was acquired by the National Park Service in July 1973.
This cabin will eventually occupy the site. The site is open and in grass
much as it was at the time of the battle.
Sharp House (HS 14) - At this time a description of the house is not at hand,
nor is the exact location of the house site known. The structure stood at
the time of the battle. Today the area is open, in grass, and the Wire Road
trace can be easily seen.
E. B. Short Farmstead (HS 17) - This was a one-story structure which measured
about 20'x20'. The house was presumably built by Mr. Short, who came to the
area between 1850 and 1860. The house was no longer standing in 1910. The
farmstead also includes sites of a barn and root cellar.
T. B. Manley House (HS 18) - Limestone foundations, possibly from the Manley
home, have been discovered, but more research is necessary for conclusive
evidence.
C. B. Manley House (HS 19) - Exact location of this site unknown.
Gwinn House (HS 20) - The location of the structure is only generally known.
The house may have been vacant by 1865.
Manley Cemetery (HS 21) - Located directly south of where the C. B. Manley
house once stood, the site measures 50'x50' with 57 visible grave markers,

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most of which are unfinished limestone slabs. Only eight of the markers are inscribed.

Fayetteville Road or Wire Road (HS 11) - Today remnants of the road remain. From the western park boundary to the northeast, 3,000 feet of the road are obvious as a trace until it strikes the tour road and river valley to the north. The tour road and past cultivation of the valley have destroyed obvious evidences of the road for a 2,600-foot stretch. However, the road's original location is known with some exactness. The point where the road crossed Wilson's Creek is known. East of the creek the tour road once again interferes with the known location of the road for 400 feet. The old road then follows the north side of an intermittent stream for 2,000 feet. Approximately 1,100 feet of the road was obliterated by an early twentieth century quarry and townsite activities. However, the last 2,400 feet of the road is well defined with a 1,000-foot section being paved.

Ray's Cornfield - Approximately 50 acres comprised John Ray's Cornfield. The exact fence lines of the cornfield are not known. Today the area is planted in big bluestem, little bluestem, Indian, and switch grasses.

Sharp Cornfield and Pasture - Today this field which comprises 195 acres is in grass and treeless. In 1861, probably only 100 acres was clear, only a portion of the field was planted in corn.

Colonel Sigel's Artillery Position - In the 1860's the ridge was thinly timbered with black and white oaks and blackjack oaks. Today the ridge is timbered and much the same.

Bloody Hill - The 270 acres that comprise Oak Hill, or Bloody Hill as it is called today, were in 1861 covered with a dense undergrowth between two- and three-feet high. Bare spots covered with flintstones cropped out occasionally. Large black oak trees grew all over the field, but on Bloody Hill the average space between them was fifty yards. The hill was crisscrossed with rails leading to Gibson's Mill and the Wire Road. Today trees densely cover the crown and eastern slope of the hill. The open spaces are reseeded with big bluestem, little bluestem, Indian, and switch grasses. An access road runs along the crown of the hill to an interpretive structure and trail.

Sinkhole - an oval-shaped sinkhole measures approximately 37' long, 24' wide, and 8' deep.

Edgar Cemetery (HS 22) - Approximately a 50'x50' plot of land, it has about 25 gravesites with and without headstones.

Lyon Marker (HS 10) - This is a granite marker 3½' high, 2' wide, and 1' deep set on a concrete base, placed in 1928 near the point where General Lyon was killed.

Nonhistoric Features - Nonhistoric intrusions on the battlefield include an overhead powerline, an abandoned railroad right-of-way, and county roads.

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Present plans for the battlefield include the removal of such features
incompatible with the physical integrity of the area. Plans also call for
the construction of a visitor center at the northwest corner of the property,
and a tour road with associated interpretive stops and a picnic area. These
developments will be so sited as to intrude minimally on the property.

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Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Park was established April 22, 1960, to preserve and commemorate the site of this significant action; its name was changed by law to Wilson's Creek National Battlefield on December 16, 1970.

Significance of structures, sites, and features on the battlefield:

Ray House - The Ray House is one of the oldest structures in Greene County and is certainly one of the few 1860 farmsteads being preserved. During the 1860s the Ray family was well known in the area. John Ray served as Postmaster from January 18, 1856 to September 28, 1866. The Post Office was in the house. The house served as a mail stop for the Fayetteville-Springfield stage from June 30, 1858 to June 30, 1862. During the battle of Wilson's Creek the house was used as a field hospital by the Confederates. Union General Lyon's body was taken to the Ray House and later claimed by members of his army.

Ray Spring House - Existed at the time of the battle.

Gibson's Mill - The mill provided necessary commodities for local farmers like the Ray and Sharp families and most likely for the Confederates encamped adjacent to the mill and south of it August 6-11, 1861. It was below the mill that Union Captain Plummer crossed Wilson's Creek leading his regulars into Ray's cornfield during the battle of Wilson's Creek.

Edwards Cabin - General Price made his headquarters next to the cabin in August 1861, and it was used during the battle as a field hospital by the Confederates. In this valley, General Price's Missouri State Guard was encamped. It was here that the first Union artillery shells exploded and where the Confederate wagon train burned.

Sharp House - This location marks Union Colonel Sigel's most advanced position. It is here that Sigel arranged his troops to block the Wire Road and the expected Confederate retreat. However, Sigel was completely routed by a force under Confederate General McCulloch. Sigel's defeat is considered the turning point in the battle of Wilson's Creek, and resulted in a Confederate victory.

E. B. Short Farmstead - Several artifacts have been unearthed around this area which relate to the battle of Wilson's Creek (buttons, spoons, belt buckles, cannon shells, etc.). However, it is doubtful that they were dropped there by soldiers, rather they were collected by members of the Short family.

T. B. Manley House - Existed at the time of the battle.

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C. B. Manley House - Existed at the time of the battle.
Gwinn House - Existed at the time of the battle.
Manley Cemetery - This cemetery was in existance at the time of
the battle and was referred to on Sigel's map. Some of the graves
are probably those of Confederate soldiers.
Fayetteville Road or Wire Road - During the 1860s a state road
called locally the Wire Road connected Fort Smith, Arkansas, with
Springfield, Missouri. Approximately two miles of the old road
lies within the park. The road was originally known as the Bolivar
or Booneville Road and followed the Osage Trace. It was first
opened in the late 1830s and extended from Palmyra on the Missis-
sippi River through Booneville to Springfield and south into
Arkansas connecting Fayetteville and Fort Smith. It was the prin-
cipal route from St. Louis to the southwest. Because of its
importance it was used by the Butterfield Overland Mail coaches
from September 1858 to July 1861 to provide mail service between
St. Louis and San Francisco. Telegraph wire was strung along the
road (consequently the name Wire Road) and telegraphic service
began the summer of 1860 between Fort Smith, Arkansas, Springfield,
Bolivar, and Jefferson City, Missouri until the war's end. Through-
out the Civil War the road was used as a military highway. Con-
federate General Ben McCulloch and Union General Lyon used the road
in the engagements at Dug Springs and Wilson's Creek, and in the
latter, the Union troops advanced along the road to precipitate
the battle. The road saw heavy use during Union General Curtis's
Pea Ridge campaign against General Price.
Ray's Cornfield - In this field General McIntosh charged Captain
Plummer's forces on August 10, 1861, and succeeded in driving
the Union soldiers from the field before they could capture a
Confederate battery.
Sharp Cornfield and Pasture - At the time of the battle, the field
was used by the Confederate cavalry as their campground. It was
here that the first shells from Sigel's guns burst, scattering the
Confederates. Their retreat opened the valley for Sigel's north-
ward advance. Sigel approached the Wire Road and Sharp House from
the south and through Sharp's field.
Colonel Sigel's Artillery Position - Somewhere along the southern
portion of this ridge, Colonel Sigel posted his guns and awaited
General Lyon's signal. It was from here that Sigel successfully
surprised and scattered the Confederate artillery that was
encamped in Sharp's pasture below.

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Bloody Hill - It was along the crest of Bloody Hill and down its southern slope that Union General Nathaniel Lyon and Confederate Major General Sterling Price fought desperately on August 10, 1861. Here the most men were engaged and the highest number of casualties sustained during the Battle of Wilson's Creek. This was the focal point of the conflict and the place where General Lyon lost his life and the Union Army the battle.

Sink Hole - Seventy-two northern soldiers were allegedly buried here and later reinterred.

Edgar Cemetery - The history of this cemetery is not known and it is questionable as to whether it existed at the time of the battle.

Lyon Marker - Placed near the point where General Lyon was killed.

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-----, <u>Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Masterplan</u>, U.S.
  Department of Interior, National Park Service, March 4, 1975.

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Beginning at the intersection of the Missouri-Pacific Railroad and State
Highway ZZ in Christian County, Missouri, the boundary of Wilson's
Creek National Battlefield follows Highway ZZ north approximately 3,500
meters to a point about 6,000 meters south of the intersection of High-
way ZZ and Elm Street Road. From this point, the boundary runs due
west about 220 meters, then due north about 610 meters, then due east
about 1,220 meters, then due south about 220 meters to the intersection
of McElhaney Brook and Elm Street Road. From this point the boundary
follows the south edge of Elm Street Road east about 1,040 meters, then
turns due south along a road for about 820 meters, then due east about
200 meters, then due south about 800 meters, then due west about 200
meters, then due south about 2,480 meters, from whence it follows a
county road for a distance of about 250 meters to Wilson's Creek, which
it follows northwest about 520 meters to the Missouri-Pacific Railroad
right-of-way, which it follows about 1,140 meters in a west-southwest
direction to the point of beginning.