

National Historic Landmark
 #60 Westward Expansion 1763-1818; Western Trails
 and Travelers

Form 10-300
 (Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries complete applicable sections)

STATE:	New Mexico
COUNTY:	Mora
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

1. NAME

COMMON:
 Wagon Mound

AND/OR HISTORIC:
 Wagon Mound (Santa Clara Spring)

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
 Wagon Mound

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
 1st

STATE:
 New Mexico

CODE:
 35

COUNTY:
 Mora

CODE:
 33

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____
Comments: _____ _____			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
 Mrs. E.C. Gonzales (Wagon Mound) (See Continuance Sheet)

STREET AND NUMBER:
 P.O. Box 236

CITY OR TOWN:
 Wagon Mound

STATE:
 New Mexico

CODE:
 35

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
 Mora County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
 Mora

STATE:
 New Mexico

CODE:
 35

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
 None

DATE OF SURVEY:
 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

STATE:

CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

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DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Today U.S. 85 and the railroad pass between Wagon Mound and the Pilot Knobs, slightly to the west, just as the old trail did. South of Wagon Mound, extensive remains show the route of the trail toward La Junta (Watrous), and the westerly swing of the alternate to Fort Union is also plainly visible. The town of Wagon Mound (formerly the Mexican settlement of Santa Clara) hugs the base of the mountain. But from only a few miles to the northeast, Wagon Mound appears to rise alone and untrammelled from the plain, still a landmark. Santa Clara Spring--2 miles northeast of the town on State Route 120, then one-half mile north by ranch road--is utilized for the municipal water supply. It is covered with a tin-roofed, concrete shelter. But this intrusion is softened by overhanging willows and cottonwoods, and the spring site retains much integrity.

Boundaries:

The landmark consists of two parcels; the first encloses the Santa Clara canyon and the second encloses Wagon Mound. The boundary lines have been drawn to encompass the natural features of the landmark and exclude non-historic intrusions. Parcel #1. Preceding west out of Wagon Mound on State Route 120, the boundary begins at the point of intersection of the northern curb of Route 120 and the 6200' contour. The boundary proceeds north and west along the 6200' contour to a point due west of Dead Cottonwood Spring to the 6400' contour which it then follows west, then south around Santa Clara canyon, to the intersection of the 6400' contour with the northern curb of Route 120. At this point the boundary follows the northern curb east to the point of origin.

Parcel #2: The boundary line follows the 6400' contour completely around Wagon Mound.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE Wagon Mound was the last great landmark on the westward journey across the plains of northeastern New Mexico. It first becomes visible near Point of Rocks, and from the Rock Crossing it was the guidepoint for the caravans. Early travelers likened the mountain to a shoe with the toe pointed westward, but soon a trader had an inspired vision and saw in the humped-up hill a wagon bearing southwest with its yokes of oxen lumbering over the horizon. The name he gave it, Wagon Mound, stuck. And a more appropriate simile for the Santa Fe Trail would be hard to find.

Two miles northwest of Wagon Mound is Santa Clara Spring, up a canyon by the same name. Here the traders camped in a natural bowl, sheltered from the winds that unceasingly whip across the open plains. Beginning in the late 1840's Santa Clara Spring was the scene of frequent Indian ambushes, most famous of which was the Mail Train Massacre of May 1850. Wagon Mound became not only a guide but a warning sign.

History:

Wagon Mound served as the westernmost landmark of the Cimarron Cutoff, on the northeastern plains of New Mexico. The Cutoff, was first opened in 1822 by Captain William Becknell in his second trading venture to Santa Fe. The route dropped from the Arkansas River near the later site of Fort Mann, across Kansas and Oklahoma, through the Cimarron Desert and the plains of New Mexico, and rejoined with the Mountain Branch, which passed over Raton Pass to the north, at La Junta de Rios Mora y Sapello. After 1822, the Cutoff became the main route of the Santa Fe Trail, as it was 100 miles shorter than the Mountain Branch, and it avoided the ordeal of crossing Raton Pass. Nonetheless, this route held its own perils, including the barren Cimarron Desert and the ever present danger of Indian attack, for between the Arkansas crossing and the New Mexican frontier lay Comanche territory. It was discovered by the 1830's that the best protection against Indian raids was to travel in large trains, rather than in small parties with armed escorts.

During the war with Mexico, the Army of the West, and the traders who traveled under its protection, used the Mountain Branch, by virtue of its abundance of water and proximity to a base of operations, Bent's Fort, Colorado. After the war however, commercial freighting on the Cimarron Cutoff resumed as never before.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Joseph C. Brown, Field Notes of a Government Surveyor (1827).
 Josiah Gregg, Commerce of the Praries (Norman, 1954).
 Kenyon Riddle, Records and Maps of the Old Santa Fe Trail, revised
 (Stuart, Fla., 1963).
 James Josiah Webb, Adventures in the Santa Fe Trade, 1844-47
 (Glendale, 1931).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY		O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES	
CORNER	Parcel # 1		Parcel	# 2
NW	13.522510.3987340		13.526510.3984060	
NE	13.524500.3990080		13.527290.3984680	
SE	13.527710.3986220		13.528510.3983850	
SW	13.525740.3984550		13.527560.3983110	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **150 Acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Richard Greenwood, Historian, Landmark Review Task Force**

ORGANIZATION: **Historic Sites Survey** DATE: **2/10/75**

STREET AND NUMBER: **1100 L Street, N.W.**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **D.C.** CODE: **11**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Wagon Mound (Santa Clara Spring)

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 4

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Diamond A Ranch (Santa Clara Spring)
Wagon Mound, New Mexico

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Wagon Mound (Santa Clara Spring)
CONTINUATION SHEET

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In 1850, Wagon Mound, which with its springs and protected camping ground was a favored rest stop, became the scene of a tragic ambush.

In 1851, Fort Union was established, 20 miles southwest of Wagon Mound. A major road to the fort branched from the Cimarron Cutoff at Wagon Mound skirted the north edge of the Turkey Mountains, then joined the Mountain Branch near Turkey Rock. Military freighters made heavy use of this **alternate** route.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, the Cimarron Cutoff was virtually abandoned by the military freighters who constituted the bulk of the traffic on the Trail. The Cutoff proved too vulnerable against Confederate raiders and Indians who took advantage of the white man's internecine strife.

Traffic resumed after the war, but by 1879, the advancing rail-head from Kansas had bypassed the Cutoff point, and wagon traffic on the Cutoff virtually ceased.