

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 determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Santa Fe Trail (Rice County Trail Segments)

other names/site number Ralph's Ruts/NPS Master Plan #93A

2. Location

street & number Bushton Blacktop (FAS 570), 3/4 mi. no. of US 56 [n/a] not for publication

city or town Chase [X] vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Rice code 159 zip code 67524

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 nationally statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Ramon Powers SHPO 11.2.94
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Kansas State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- 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
See continuation sheet [].

Entered in the National Register
Edson H. Beall 5.11.95
Signature of the Keeper Date

Santa Fe Trail
(Rice County...)
Name of Property

Rice/KS
County/State

Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail
Multiple Property Submission

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not count previously listed resources.)
Contributing Noncontributing

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

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

0	0	buildings
6	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
6	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources
previously listed in the National
Register.

Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/
agricultural field

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A
walls N/A
roof N/A
other N/A

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Santa Fe Trail

(Rice County...)

Rice/KS

Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail

Name of Property

County/State

Multiple Property Submission

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation _____

Commerce _____

Military _____

Periods of Significance

1822 - c. 1870 _____

Significant Dates

N/A _____

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A _____

Cultural Affiliation

N/A _____

Architect/Builder

N/A _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository:

National Park Service Regional Office--
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Santa Fe Trail
(Rice County...)
Name of Property

Rice/KS
County/State

Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail
Multiple Property Submission

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 16 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A. Zone 14 Easting 550300 Northing 4245770

B. Zone 14 Easting 550700 Northing 4245710

C. Zone 14 Easting 550700 Northing 4245560

D. Zone 14 Easting 550300 Northing 4245⁵60

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title See Continuation Sheet, section 11

organization The URBANA Group date May 1993

street & number 202 South Broadway, Suite 206, P.O. Box 1028 telephone (217) 344-7526

city or town Urbana state IL zip code 61801-9028

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

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.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FOP for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FOP.)

name Ralph Hathaway

street & number R.R. 1, Box 28 telephone _____

city or town Chase state KS zip code 67524

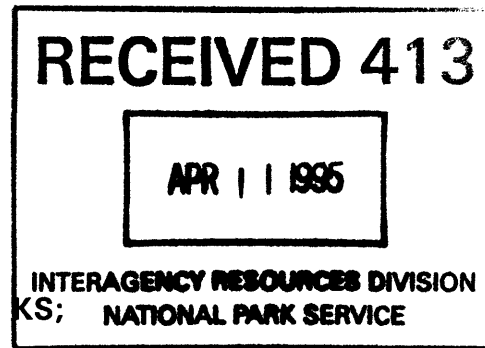
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Santa Fe Trail (Rice County Trail Segments); Rice Co.,
Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail, 1821-1880
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Narrative Description

The Santa Fe Trail (Rice County Trail Segments) site is located four miles west of Chase, Kansas on Highway 56 and three-quarters of a mile north on the east side of the Bushton Blacktop. The site contains six contributing resources in the form of rutted Trail segments. Since the physical characteristics of land, natural features, and vegetation play a dominant role in the assessment of the site's integrity, the seven qualities of integrity called for in the National Register criteria are applied to the site in a special way similar to their application to rural landscapes.¹

Seven sets of ruts merging into six sets of ruts are discernible at the site. The ruts begin east of the Bushton Blacktop. Six swales enter the site to the west and proceed in a east-southeasterly direction across the site. The three most northerly swales enter the site to the west bearing approximately 110 degrees east of north and remain parallel for approximately 250 meters until a natural depression in the landscape is reached. The three more southerly sets of ruts enter the site to the west bearing between ninety-three and ninety-nine degrees east of north. They remain parallel for approximately 175 meters at which point the two most northerly sets of ruts merge bearing 107 degrees east of north while the most southerly swale diverges to form two rutted segments bearing ninety-nine and 135 degrees east of north respectively. The convergence and divergence of these ruts may represent the wagon drivers' desire to avoid this natural depression which may have posed an obstacle for the heavier wagons. The three most northerly swales traverse the depression which is approximately 50 meters wide. To the east of the depression, seven swales emerge oriented in a northeasterly direction bearing between sixty-four and seventy-seven degrees east of north. These rutted segments converge and diverge at various points along their route and continue for approximately 80 meters before exiting the site to the east.

Several factors have contributed to the high environmental quality and preservation values of these ruts. Clearly, the volume of commercial and military traffic played its role in the formation of the ruts at this site as did the abreast formation adopted by many wagon trains in order to reduce its line of exposure to attack. The past and present physical environment also played an important role in the formation and conservation of these rutted segments. Due to the nature of the sandy soil in western Rice County and the weights exerted by wagons traversing the site, a strong physical impression was imprinted on the landscape. Over time, as the weight load of wagons and the volume of traffic increased, a deeper impression was left in the landscape. The physical remains of these ruts were deepened by aerial erosion and became too deep in some instances to be used by wagons so a new route often parallel to the existing one was chosen.² After the Trail was abandoned by wagons, sunflowers were the first form of

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vegetation to grow in the ruts themselves.³ This type of vegetation gave way to buffalo, bluestem, and cheat grasses which are more characteristic of the present-day vegetation.⁴

The lack of cultivation of the site can be attributed to the sandy soils which were not conducive to retaining moisture for crop growth and to the generational family stewardship of the current owner. Natural depressions of various sizes are common in the landscape of western Rice County and this site is no exception. To the east of the site, a natural, shallow depression occurs. On a seasonal basis, these depressions may accumulate water due to an increase in the water table or the impermeability of the underlying bedrock. The depression, referred to as a buffalo wallow, has been reinforced with earthen embankments to form a cattle pond. These earthen embankments are the only man-made intrusions on this site.

Endnotes

1. United States Department of the Interior/National Park Service, National Register Bulletin 30: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990), pp. 22-23.

2. Ralph Hathaway, My One-Half Mile of Santa Fe Trail (Ellsworth, Kansas: Ellsworth Printing Company, 1984), p. 4; Paul Hawkins, "Ralph's Ruts," KANSAS! Magazine, 1st Issue, 1991, p. 4.

3. Ralph Hathaway, 1984, p. 4.

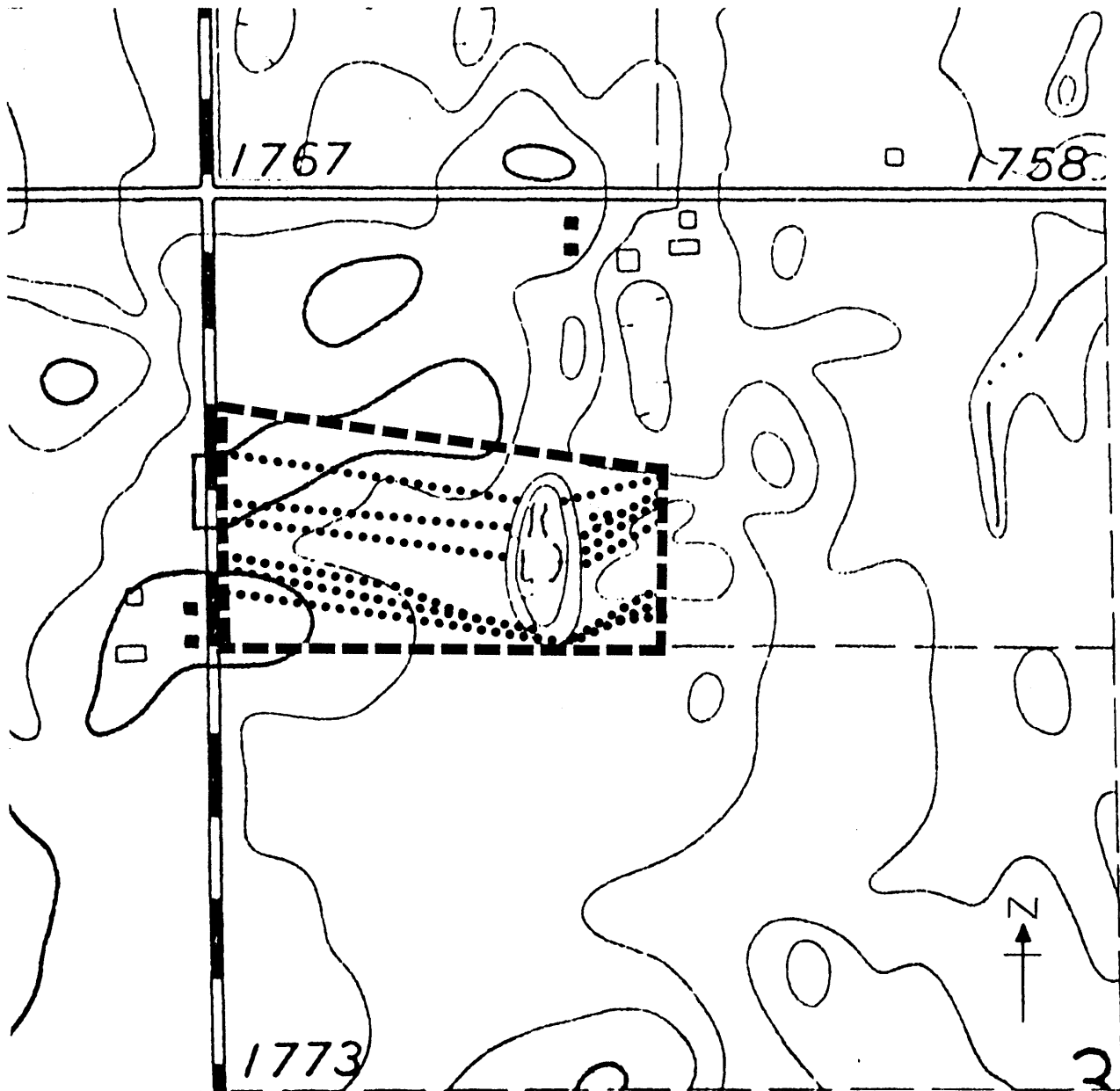
4. Paul Hawkins, p. 5.

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Sketch Map



KEY

- ■ ■ SITE BOUNDARY
- TRAIL SEGMENTS

APPROXIMATE SCALE

0 100 METERS



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Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

The Santa Fe Trail (Rice County Trail Segments) site is eligible to the National Register under Criterion A as a reflection of historically-significant Trail traffic and meets the criterion within the areas of commerce, transportation and military. The site fulfills the requirements of the Historic Trail property type detailed within section F of the Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail, 1821-1880 Multiple Property Documentation Form. The ruts retain integrity in location, setting, feeling and association and represent the Trail's importance in terms of international and national commerce and transportation in the nineteenth century. The ruts also represent the military traffic that traversed this portion of the Trail. The site's period of significance begins with the initiation of wagon movement across the Trail in 1822 and ends with the coming of the railroad and declining Trail use c. 1870. The ruts materially reflect important historic events outlined in the historic contexts: International Trade on the Mexican Road, 1821-1846; The Mexican War and the Santa Fe Trail, 1846-48; Expanding National Trade on the Santa Fe Trail, 1848-1865; and Effects of the Civil War on the Santa Fe Trail, 1861-1865. Very few rutted segments along the Santa Fe Trail vie with the environmental quality and high preservation values of these ruts.

History

This portion of the Trail was used from the initiation of wagon traffic over the Trail in 1822 to the coming of the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe railroad, approximately a half mile south of this site, in the late 1860s. These rutted segments were an important component of the commerce and transportation network that developed. These ruts were traversed by caravans that undertook that portion of the Trail from Cow Creek in the east to the Big Bend of the Arkansas River to the west--two popular overnight camping grounds. The camping grounds chosen by the wagon master were often near streams or rivers as they were sources of water and wood. Among the notable individuals believed to have traversed this portion of the Trail are Francisco Vasquez de Coronado (prior to the establishment of the Trail itself), Kit Carson, George Custer, and Bill Mathewson.¹

The possibility of American Indian confrontation over this portion of the Trail was very real. While the sandy nature of the soil at the site contributed to the formation of seven sets of ruts, the density of the ruts across the site are also indicative of the four abreast formation adopted by the wagon trains in order to reduce their line of exposure. This type of formation also facilitated the organization of the wagons into a corral formation in times of attack. One instance of American Indian and Santa Fe Trail traffic confrontation related to this site is the "Plum Buttes Massacre." Although the sand dunes known as the Plum Buttes are approximately two miles west of the site, the incident was identified with this natural landmark

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because of its imposing presence in the landscape at that time. Despite conflicting accounts, the incident most likely occurred on September 9, 1867 when several wagons composing the annual Santa Fe Trail caravan was confronted by Cheyenne, Kiowa, and Arapaho Indians. The driver of one of the wagons was killed as was a woman and her son traveling in that wagon.² The incident was reported at Fort Zarah, approximately fifteen miles away, by Frank Huning. Huning was the leader of the annual merchant caravan and had requested a military escort to Fort Zarah but was refused.³ Huning's mother-in-law and brother-in-law Fritz, who were killed in the incident, were members of the caravan and were en route from Dayton, Ohio to Albuquerque, New Mexico to be reunited with Huning's wife, Ernestine.⁴ Captain Charles Christy and Roma, a Mexican, were dispatched from Fort Zarah to investigate the incident.⁵ They recovered the three bodies and placed them in the army ambulance in which they were travelling. As they were returning to the fort, they were confronted by Cheyennes and were engaged in a four-mile chase which lasted until they were met by a military escort.⁶ The "Plum Buttes Massacre" most likely took place east of the site⁷, however, the annual merchant caravan and the subsequent rescue attempt probably used the well-established Santa Fe Trail and crossed the ruts at this site.

This portion of the Trail performed important freighting transportation functions. The freighting firm of Majors, Russell, and Waddell held an Army contract in 1866 to deliver supplies to forts along the Trail. The firm employed 5,000 men, utilized 3,500 wagons, 40,000 oxen, 1,000 mules, and transported 8,000 tons of freight.⁸ With the location of Fort Zarah to the west of the site and several other forts further along the Trail itself, much of this freight probably traversed this site.

The ruts have only become known as "Ralph's Ruts" within the last fifty years and are named after their current owner, Ralph Hathaway. The property has been in the Hathaway family for three generations and over 114 years.⁹ The ruts contained within this site retain a high degree of visual and environmental integrity. "The seven parallel trail ruts are some of the finest examples of pristine trail remains any place along the entire route"¹⁰ and some of the most impressive.¹¹

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Endnotes

1. Paul Hawkins, "Ralph's Ruts," KANSAS! Magazine, 1st Issue, 1991, p. 4.
2. Marc Simmons, "'Ralph's Ruts' Mark Scene of Massacre: New Mexican Scrapbook," El Paso (Texas) Times, 15 December 1985, n.p.
3. Rowe Findley, "Along the Santa Fe Trail," National Geographic, Vol. 179, No. 3, March 1991, p. 112.
4. Ralph Hathaway, My One-Half Mile of Santa Fe Trail (Ellsworth, Kansas: Ellsworth Printing Company, 1984), p. 12; Ralph Hathaway, "From the Little Arkansas to the Big Arkansas," Typewritten, Chase, Kansas: n.p., 1990, p. 10.
5. Ralph Hathaway, 1984, p. 12.
6. Ibid.
7. Ralph Hathaway, 1990, n.p.
8. Ralph Hathaway, 1984, p. 4.
9. Paul Hawkins, p. 4.
10. United States Department of the Interior/National Park Service, Santa Fe National Historic Trail: Comprehensive Management and Use Plan (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1990), p. 99.
11. Rowe Findley, p. 111.

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Bibliography

- Findley, Rowe. "Along the Santa Fe Trail." National Geographic, Vol. 179, No. 3, March 1991, pp. 98-123.
- Hathaway, Ralph. My One-Half Mile of Santa Fe Trail. Ellsworth, Kansas: Ellsworth Printing Company, 1984.
- Hathaway, Ralph. "From the Little Arkansas to the Big Arkansas." Typewritten. Chase, Kansas: n.p., March 1990.
- Hawkins, Paul. "Ralph's Ruts." KANSAS! Magazine, 1st Issue, 1991, pp. 4-5.
- Simmons, Marc. "'Ralph's Ruts' Mark Scene of Massacre: New Mexican Scrapbook," El Paso (Texas) Times, 15 December 1985, n.p.
- United States Department of the Interior/National Park Service. National Register Bulletin 30: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Landscapes. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990.
- United States Department of the Interior/National Park Service. Santa Fe National Historic Trail: Comprehensive Management and Use Plan. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1990.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Commencing at a point on the eastern margin of the Bushton Blacktop and 1,220 meters north of the intersection of Highway 56 and the Bushton Blacktop, proceed due east for 375 meters until the fence line is reached. Continue due north along the fence line for 150 meters before turning northwest. Continue the boundary northwest bearing 278 degrees east of north for 400 meters until a point on the eastern margin of the Bushton Blacktop, and 1,440 meters north of the intersection of Highway 54 and the Bushton Blacktop, is reached. Proceed directly south for 220 meters to the point of origin. The use of the road margin as a boundary, contained within this nomination, presupposes the exclusion of the road's current publicly-designated rights-of-way.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the site enclose an area of approximately sixteen acres and include the rutted segments and their immediate environs. The boundaries were formed only to encompass the historically-significant Trail resources especially in the case of the northern and southern boundaries. The Bushton Blacktop to the west of the site disturbs the continuity and environmental context of the ruts. Therefore, the eastern margin of the Bushton Blacktop provides an appropriate western boundary for the site. Rutted segments exist west of the Bushton Blacktop but they only occur intermittently. The installation of an oil pipe and pumps west of the site have destroyed many of the rutted segments in that area. A fence line with cultivated land to its east defines the eastern boundary of the site.

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Form Prepared By

For The URBANA Group:

Joseph Gallagher/Cultural Geographer
Writer

Archaeological Survey, University of Missouri-St. Louis
Colleen Hamilton and Brad Mueller/Historic Archaeologists
Field Work