

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Historic Context Study for Stuart Homestead

Discipline: Cultural
Type of Project: Technical Assistance
Funding Agency: National Park Service
Other Partners/Cooperators: Colorado State University
Effective Dates: 8/1/2011 - 7/31/2013
Funding Amount: \$20,000

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site is scoping plans to construct a new visitor center, and the potential building site is associated with an historic homestead. Archeological surface surveys indicate locations of buildings with potential for sub-surface archeological remains. No archeological excavation has been conducted for this location.

One of the homestead's historic residents was Thomas Stuart, who along with his two brothers (James and Granville Stuart) played a role in Montana Territorial history. Unlike his brothers, Thomas Stuart's life is not well-documented. A later resident was a 30-year employee of Conrad Kohrs and Conrad K. Warren. In consultation with the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, the NPS has determined that an historic context document is needed to evaluate the significance of the homestead site and tie it into the state and national significance of Grant-Kohrs Ranch, including the homestead's development and use relative to Grant, Kohrs, Warren, and other persons significant to the ranch's story. Particular focus upon Thomas Stuart is necessary to assist in making a determination of eligibility to the National Register for the homestead site (note: the Determination of Eligibility itself is not a product of this agreement; rather, the products will supply information to be used in later development of the DOE). The historic context document should explain the history of this specific place - the "who, what, when and why" of the homestead's history as well as its relationship to Thomas Stuart in order to assess significance.

The historic context should also discuss the site's observable integrity:

- Does it evoke the qualities for which it is significant?
- If there are no significant architectural remains, what does the homestead site contribute to the character and importance of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch cultural landscape?
- What is the level of significance, i. e., is this homestead eligible in and of itself to the National Register, or only as a contributing property to the larger Grant-Kohrs Ranch?

The ultimate purpose of the historic context document is to assist the NPS and the State of Montana in determining the level of significance of the homestead location, so that decisions can be reached as to further investigations (e.g., archeological investigations including remote sensing), the feasibility of this location for the new visitor center, possible steps for avoidance or mitigation of impacts, and the incorporation of new information about the Grant-Kohrs Ranch story into education and interpretive programs.

Outcomes with Completion Dates: Draft Report on Historic Context due no later than March 15, 2012; Final Report on Historic Context due May 30, 2012 or 8 weeks after receipt of NPS comments, whichever is later.

Keywords: visitor center, historical context, Stuart Homestead, Thomas Stuart, Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, Colorado State University