

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Dawson Ranch Buildings Complex at Sand Creek Massacre NHS: Survey and Determination of Eligibility

Type of Project: Technical Assistance

Funding Agency: National Park Service

Other Partners/Cooperators: University of Colorado at Denver

Effective Dates: 3/1/2005 - 11/1/2005

Funding Amount: \$1,645

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract:

Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site (SAND) includes the remains of the former William and Jredia Dawson Ranch complex. This building complex is in the vicinity of Eads, Colorado, in Section 30, Township 17 South, Range 45 West. The complex includes a house, constructed in the early 1950s, a metal building that was constructed in 1974, and a barn that was built in 1970. Also on the property are three structures and one site. The structures are an unpaved air landing strip, a boxcar used for storage, and a corral. The site is comprised of the remains of the foundation of a residence that served as a line camp for the SS/Holly Ranch near the center of the section. (In 1871, Hiram Holly established the Holly Ranch, which later evolved into the SS Ranch, over much of southeastern Colorado, and the open-range cattle lands encompassed the Sand Creek Massacre area. By the 1880s, SS Ranch pasture was under fence, and the Sand Creek Massacre site marked the western boundary of the "north pasture.")

The purpose of this project is to obtain a Determination of Eligibility (DOE) for the Dawson Ranch complex, within the historic context of ranching in eastern Colorado. The CU-Denver graduate student will research the history and evaluate the significance of this former ranch, and determine whether or not it is eligible to the National Register of Historic Places. The Sand Creek Massacre Site is listed on the National Register, and the nomination lists the Dawson Ranch as a noncontributing resource. However, the National Register nomination evaluated the Dawson Ranch within the context of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre, and noted that the site's "noncontributing resources may be re-evaluated at a later time to determine their local or state significance within the context of ranching in eastern Colorado."

In cooperation with the National Park Service, the Principal Investigator/Researcher will prepare a State of Colorado (Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation) cultural resource inventory for the Dawson Ranch buildings complex site, including the required photographs and locational and sketch maps. SAND will submit this form, as well as a project report, to the Colorado Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation. The preparation of the inventory form and report, which includes a narrative statement on the history and significance of the site, will involve research of local settlement and ranching patterns, county assessor records, and interviews with local residents, including members of the Dawson family.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

Final draft of Colorado Cultural Resource Inventory Form(s): July 15, 2005.

Keywords: Determination of Eligibility (DOE), Dawson Ranch, National Register of Historic Places, Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, University of Colorado - Denver, ranching history

For Administrative Use Only:

Date Annual Report Received:

Date Final Report Received:

Publications, etc. on file: