

COLORADO CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY
Historic Architectural Component Form
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OAHP1404

Rev. 9/98

Use this form in conjunction with the *Management Data Form*. One of these forms should be completed for each building or structure. Include a photograph, sketch map, and a photocopy of the quad map showing building location.

I. IDENTIFICATION

1. Resource Number 5KW123 2. Temporary Resource Number: _____
3. Map ID Number / Feature Number or Code: Feature 6
4. Building or Structure Name: Metal Utility Building
5. Complex/Site Name: This metal utility building is part of the Dawson Ranch Buildings Complex
6. Photograph Number(s): Roll 1: Dawson Ranch Complex, negative 14

II. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

7. Complex/Building/Structure Type: Agricultural outbuilding/ kit building
8. Architectural Style: No style
9. Building Support System: Steel frame
10. Dimensions: L 40 x W 75 = Square Feet 3000
11. Number of Stories: 1
12. Building Plan (footprint, shape): Rectangular plan
13. Landscaping or Special Setting Features

The house, associated agricultural buildings, and airplane landing strip, sit on former agricultural land within the boundaries of the recently established Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site. The Big Sandy Creek (Sand Creek) traverses the associated landholdings north of the ranch complex buildings. At one time some of the nearby acreage was cultivated but William F. Dawson replanted the areas with native grasses. The entire Dawson Ranch Building Complex is south of the village site where Colonel John Chivington and his troops attacked an encampment of Cheyenne and Arapaho peoples in the Sand Creek Massacre (5KW28) and has no association to that event. The Dawson Ranch Building Complex is in Section 30.

Outside of the physical boundary of this survey but within the boundaries of the former Dawson Ranch land holdings are ruins from the Thompson-Bohart Ranch/Dawson Family Line Camp and remains of the immense Chivington/Brandon Canal circa 1909 (5KW122.1). Both are also in Section 30. In Section 24 are potential remains of a sheep operation associated with an African American pioneer known as "Nigger Charlie." These sites are indicative of several of the contexts in Colorado Historical Society's *Colorado Southern Frontier Historic Context*. Sites and potential sites include examples of Early Farming and Ranching in Southeastern Colorado (1840-1890), The Years of Conflict (1850-1870), Open Range Ranching (1859-1900), and the Ethnic Diversity of Southeastern Colorado (1880-1945).

14. Associated Buildings, Features, or Objects - Describe material and function (map number / name):

The Dawson Ranch Building Complex contains 7 features which include the main house (Feature 1), a barn (Feature 2), a corral (Feature 3), a railway car (Feature 4), a motel cabin (Feature 5), an utility building (Feature 6), and an air landing strip (Feature 7)

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For the following categories include materials, techniques and styles in the description as appropriate:

- 15. Roof: steel gabled roof with four skylights
- 16. Walls: steel exterior wall
- 17. Foundation/Basement: concrete foundation
- 18. Chimney(s): _____
- 19. Windows: One aluminum sliding window on the north elevation and one aluminum sliding window on the south elevation.
- 20. Doors: A single steel door on the on the west elevation and two vehicle size fiberglass panel doors on the south elevation.
- 21. Porches: _____
- 22. General Architectural Description: The steel frame structure with steel exterior walls rests on a concrete foundation. The building has three bays: two with large fiberglass-panel overhead doors and the other finished in wood framing and sheet rock to form two rooms and a bathroom. A single steel door on the west side and two aluminum windows, one on the north and one on the south, serve the finished area. The steel gabled roof has four skylights and there is a projecting solar collection system on the south elevation. On the interior north wall is a target for shooting practice. The building contains objects and trash left by the former owners including pellets and possible gun ammunition. There are signs of rodent infestation.

III. FUNCTION

- 23. Current Use: Storage of abandoned personal items—including clothes and family memorabilia— tools, and ranch equipment. In addition the National Park Service is storing artifacts from Mr. Dawson's private management of the Sand Creek Massacre Site, including a former entrance sign paid for by the Colorado Historical Society.
- 24. Original Use: The building served several functions. Mr. Dawson used the building as a workshop for the ranch and as storage for household items. He also kept an office in the building which he used for both running his ranch operations and managing the Sand Creek Massacre site. Finally, he practiced target shooting inside.
- 25. Intermediate Use(s): _____

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IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

26. Architect: Unknown
27. Builder: Atlantic Steel Structures contractor, Colorado Springs, CO.
28. Date of construction: Actual _____ Assessor 1985 Estimate _____
based on: _____
29. Modifications: Minor X Moderate _____ Major _____ Moved _____ Date Time of installation _____
Describe Modifications: The single steel door and windows were onsite modifications to the kit design.
Additions and Date: _____
30. Associated Contexts and Historical Information_

The Dawson Ranch Building Complex is associated with the context of Post World War II Farming and Ranching (1945–2000). The land upon which the house is located was homesteaded in 1907. Levi and Florence Rutledge purchased all the sections that comprise the ranch holdings, combining them in 1949. The ranch house was built between 1951 and 1952 when Levi and Florence Rutledge owned the ranch.

William F. Dawson purchased the ranch in 1963. He had the metal utility building constructed in 1985. A significant part of the 1864 Sand Creek Massacre, when Colonel Chivington led a militia attack on a Cheyenne and Arapaho encampment, occurred on the land within the former ranch. The buildings have no historical relationship to the actual event, however, Mr. Dawson used the complex and specifically this building to manage essentially a private park. After Mr. Dawson purchased the ranch he allowed the public to visit the site until 1994. That year he closed the site of to the general public. In 1998 he further decreased access to the site to all but the known descendents of massacre victims whom he trusted. Prior to closing the site to the public Dawson cleaned up trash from visitors, maintained the road from Highway 96, and asked visitors to leave a \$2 donation in a box to defray costs.

The Dawson ranch operation was typical for Kiowa County. They ran 150 head of Hereford cattle—an average amount and common breed for Kiowa County¹— and kept one to four horses. The ranch was 1,465 acres, on the small size for a Kiowa County holding, but Dawson ran his cattle on other land that he leased and owned.²

The metal utility building is less than fifty years old, is not of significant architecturally value, and is not associated with a significant person and/or event. It does not meet the criteria for the National Register.

¹ Bruce Fickensher, Extension Agent for Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Office, telephone interview by recorder, 22 May 2005.

² Marci Miller, Deputy Assessor of Kiowa County, telephone interview by recorder, 22 May 2005. Note: In comparing the Dawson acreage to the 1997 Department of Agriculture Census the ranch is smaller than the average Kiowa County farm size of 2,696 acres. According to Miller he used his parents land as well.

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V. OTHER RECORDING INFORMATION

31. Specific References to the Structure/Building: Neidinger, Paul. "Architect's Field Report" as part of Preliminary Park Planning and Brief Condition Assessment of Existing Facilities
32. Archaeological Potential: Yes ___ No X Justify: William F. Dawson, a former owner who was the occupant of the ranch and the primary caretaker of the property for over 40 years, reported no buried material. All current artifact scatter is from the last few years that the owners lived on the property.
33. Recorder(s): Jacqui Ainlay-Conley
34. Date(s): June 30, 2005

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