

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 1
4. Building or Structure Name: William F. and Jredia A. Dawson Family Home
5. Complex/Site Name: **Dawson Ranch Buildings Complex**
6. Photograph Number(s): Roll 1: Dawson Ranch Complex; negatives 5, 9, 10, 12, and 16.

**II. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

7. Complex/Building/Structure Type: Domestic, single Dwelling
8. Architectural Style: Modern Ranch
9. Building Support System: Concrete block with wood frame.
10. Dimensions: L \_\_\_\_\_ x W \_\_\_\_\_ = Square Feet 1612
11. Number of Stories: 1
12. Building Plan (footprint, shape): Irregular 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 of 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: The roof is composition on a wood frame construction with a wide eave overhang. The roof form consists of low gables on a cross hipped roof reminiscent of a Japanese style roofline.
- 16. Walls: The walls are concrete block covered with stucco.
- 17. Foundation/Basement: The house has a concrete foundation and no basement.
- 18. Chimney(s): At the rear of the house, on the addition, there is an exterior concrete block chimney.
- 19. Windows: With the exception of one fixed window on the face of the building all window openings contain two sets of windows: an original wood double-hung window covered by a second aluminum window. The face has two window openings; the rear three; the west elevation two; the east elevation one; and the east elevation of the addition has one.
- 20. Doors: There are three doors on the front elevation. The main front door is a multi-paneled wood single door with a fixed glass plane in the top center panel. A second wood door leads to a hallway between the original house and the addition. A sliding glass door is on the face of the addition in the place of what was previously a garage door. None of the doors are original to the building.
- 21. Porches: There is a 6'X 12' open porch at the main entrance. The sloping roof is composite on a wood frame supported by metal poles.
- 22. General Architectural Description: The Dawson family ranch house is one story with an asymmetrical wide facade typical of the Ranch-style houses that dominated the 1950s and 1960s. Many modifications have taken place. The house has a low-gabled, cross-hipped, Japanese-inspired roof which replaced the original flat roof in the 1970s. This change, suggested by a local carpenter, correlates with the rise of Neoelectic architectural styles in modest homes during the same time period. The family room on the east side of the house was an attached garage which the Dawsons remodeled. The floor plan is typical of a ranch style home. The front door opens into the living room with a kitchen within the sight plane. Both the exterior and interior of the dwelling show deterioration.

**III. FUNCTION**

- 23. Current Use: Vacant
- 24. Original Use: Single Dwelling on a cattle ranch.
- 25. Intermediate Use(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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**IV. ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY**

26. Architect: Unknown
27. Builder: Ellis Rutledge, the son of former ranch owner Levi Rutledge, built the house.
28. Date of construction: Actual 1951 Assessor 1952 Estimate \_\_\_\_\_  
based on: \_\_\_\_\_
29. Modifications: Minor \_\_\_ Moderate X Major \_\_\_ Moved \_\_\_ Date 1970s  
Describe Modifications: Original flat roof replaced by a gabled roof. Original garage enclosed and remodeled into a family room. Solar power collection system added to the roof in the 1980s.  
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.  
Between 1951 and 1952 Levi and Florence Rutledge's son Ellis built the house. He and his wife Mildred lived in the house with their four children and raised sheep on the property until they moved away from the area in 1954.<sup>1</sup> According to the County Clerk's Office, Kiowa County did not have building codes at the time the house was built. When William F. and Jredia Dawson bought the property in 1963 a vagrant lived in the dwelling. The house required extensive cleaning and repair work to become inhabitable,<sup>2</sup>  
William F. Dawson is descended from several early Kiowa County settlers. The Dawson and France families moved to Kiowa County in the 1890s. The Dawsons purchased the property because of sentimental reasons; William F. Dawson's paternal grandparents, Joseph William Dawson, Sr, and Mattie Lou (Whitelaw), at one time lived in a small house which once stood on the ranch property. Remains of the building can be seen. The building, constructed between 1909 and 1913, is associated with early twentieth century ranchers Porter A. Thompson and Field Bohart. Mr. Dawson is knowledgeable about local history; he wrote essays on the Sand Creek Massacre and the Double S Ranch for the Kiowa County centennial history book.  
The house and the later outbuildings have no relationship to the actual Sand Creek Massacre event.
- Dawson essentially ran a private historic site from the ranch building complex. He allowed the public to visit the perceived Cheyenne and Arapaho village site in exchange for a small fee which he used to maintain ranch roads and remove trash.

<sup>1</sup> Cindy (Rutledge) Gillespie, daughter of Ellis Rutledge and granddaughter of Levi Rutledge, email correspondence with recorder, 11 June 2005.

<sup>2</sup> William F. Dawson, interview by recorder, 18 April 2005

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The Dawson ranch operation was typical for Kiowa County. They ran 150 head of Hereford cattle—an average amount and common breed for Kiowa County<sup>3</sup>— 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.<sup>4</sup> In addition to raising cattle on the ranch property Mr. Dawson served in the National Guard and was a Municipal Judge in Eads during part of the time he lived in the house.

The house, which is over fifty years old, has been significantly altered. Furthermore, the building is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, nor is it associated with the lives of significant persons or of architectural significance, nor likely to yield information important to history or prehistory. It does not meet the criteria for listing on the National Register.

#### V. OTHER RECORDING INFORMATION

31. Specific References to the Structure/Building: Neidinger, Paul, "Architect's Field Report," part of Preliminary Park Planning and Brief Condition Assessment of Existing Facilities and Sand Creek Massacre Project, Volume II : Special Resource Study and Environmental Assessment
32. Archaeological Potential: Yes \_\_\_ No X Justify: William F. Dawson, 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 27, 2005

Colorado Historical Society - Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation  
1300 Broadway, Denver, CO 80203  
303-866-3395

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<sup>3</sup> Bruce Fickensher, Extension Agent for Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Office, telephone interview by recorder, 22 May 2005.

<sup>4</sup> 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.