

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 determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Oregon-California Trail Segments (boundary increase & additional documentation)

other names/site number NRIS 16000132 - First United Methodist Church OCT Segment; Price OCT Segment

2. Location

street & number US-40 Highway not for publication

city or town Lawrence vicinity

state Kansas code KS county Douglas code 045 zip code 66049

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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national ___ statewide ___ local

Register of Historic Kansas Places Listed November 13, 2021

Signature of certifying official Date

Kansas State Historical Society
Title / State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

National Register of Historic Places Listed January 20, 2022

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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 include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	buildings
0	0	district
1	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	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

N/A

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION / Road-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE / Unoccupied land

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

Summary

This nomination is submitted as a boundary increase and additional documentation to create a discontinuous historic district, which includes two archaeological sites: the Price Oregon-California Trail Segment, and the First United Methodist Church Oregon-California Trail Segment (NRIS 16000132, Listed April 5, 2016). The First United Methodist nomination is amended (2021) in this nomination to create a discontinuous district as the properties have an identical context and are 1.5 miles apart; separated by highway and cultivated agricultural fields, which retain no archaeological integrity and are therefore excluded from the district.

The nominated property in this form refers to the Price property and OCT segment, differentiated from the First United Methodist Church segment, by the owner's last name – Price. It consists of a well-preserved set of Oregon and California Trail swales, extending for nearly ¼ mile along a northwest-southeast ridge top in the NE ¼ of Section 25, Township 12 South, Range 18 East (Figure 1). This portion of the Oregon and California trails network is located at the western edge of the Lawrence metropolitan area where most intact trail segments have been destroyed by cultivation and residential/commercial development. The segment survived in an un-grazed pasture east of old US Highway 40 (US-40) overlooking the Wakarusa valley to the south (Figure 1). The swales are partially situated on a ridge top where they have presumably not been deepened by erosion, and so are indistinct in places. Those portions located on sloping areas are more distinct. Despite being surrounded by modern development, particularly to the east, the Price swales comprise one of the few (and largest) remaining intact segments in this portion of the trail.

Elaboration

General Landscape¹

The Price Swales are located within the Attenuated Drift Border division of the Dissected Till Plains section of the Central Lowland province of the Interior Plains division of North America.² The Dissected Till Plains is a formerly glaciated northerly extension of the Osage Plains that covers all of the rest of eastern Kansas. Most of the Dissected Till Plains is taken up by a glaciated area known as the Kansas Drift Plain. The less heavily glaciated Attenuated Drift Border lies along the southern and western periphery of the Dissected Till Plains in a 25-35 mile wide strip roughly marked by the Kansas, Big Blue, and Little Blue rivers. Bedrock in the western part of the Dissected Till Plains consists of sedimentary formations of Permian age, while bedrock formations throughout the rest of the area are of Pennsylvanian age. The formations are made up of interstratified beds of limestone, shale, and sandstone, covered over by glacial deposits of varying thicknesses. Loess is also present, occurring as a thin upland mantle over most of northeastern Kansas but in thicknesses of up to a hundred feet in the bluffs along the Missouri river. The loess thins rapidly away from the river.

The topography of the region is directly related to the degree of glaciation. The heavily glaciated Kansas Drift Plain has a gently undulating erosional drift-controlled surface, while the lightly glaciated Attenuated Drift Border is more rugged, with an erosional rock-controlled surface similar in most respects to that of the Osage Plains. Unlike the latter, which was never glaciated, the Attenuated Drift Border is covered by isolated patches of glacial till and outwash along with scattered boulders, cobbles, and pebbles of ice-transported materials, including quartzites, granites, and diorites brought in from locations well to the north of the state. The resultant topography is less bold than that of the Osage Plains but decidedly rougher and of greater relief than the Kansas Drift Plain.

The prehistoric vegetation of the northeast Kansas region consisted almost entirely of prairie cut through by narrow ribbons of riverine forest. The natural vegetation of most of the area was tall grass prairie consisting of dense stands of big and little bluestem. The prairie was cut through by riverine forest vegetation

¹ The following three paragraphs are adapted from standard language used in reports written by Kansas State Historical Society, Cultural Resources Division, Archeology Department.

² W.E. Schoewe, "The Geography of Kansas, Part II: Physical Geography," *Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science* 52, no. 3 (1949): 280, 291.

consisting of broadleaf deciduous forests often containing dense undergrowth and many vines, occasionally interrupted by freshwater marshes. Hackberry, cottonwood, willow, and elm were the dominant forest species;³ although oak, black walnut, linden, sycamore, locust, hickory, pecan, and other hardwoods could also be found along with smaller forms such as Osage orange, persimmon, papaw, elderberry, serviceberry, chokecherry, and wild grape.⁴ Prairie vegetation covered the uplands in all but the eastern edge of the Dissected Till Plains, where forested conditions prevailed. The natural vegetation of that area consisted of medium tall multilayered broadleaf deciduous forest, with various forms of hickory and oak being the dominant species.⁵ The forest was most pervasive on the bluffs along the Missouri river. To the west, the forest/prairie transition was marked by a "mosaic" situation in which forests with islands of prairie gradually changed westward into prairie with islands of forest,⁶ and finally into prairie with little or no upland forest vegetation.

Price Trail Segment

The Price trail segment within Section 25, Township 12 South, Range 18 East is located in a semi-rural area of north central Douglas County, approximately four miles south of the Kansas River and 2 miles west of K-10 Highway. To the immediate east of this highway are new housing and commercial developments. To the west of the highway, the landscape remains a mixture of agriculture parcels and large-acre residential properties. This section of the Oregon and California trails network lies approximately eight miles northwest of the Upper Wakarusa River Crossing and eight miles southeast of Big Springs.

The boundaries of the nominated site are drawn to include the complex east of old US Highway 40. The southern, eastern, and western boundaries are formed by areas of recent disturbance, beyond which cultivation has removed all traces of trail remnants. The northern/northwestern limit is formed by US Highway 40. The Price swales are located on an upland ridge (1050 - 1070 feet) overlooking both the Kansas River (to the north) and Wakarusa River (to the south and east) valleys. The swales are visible heading southeast-northwest from the southern to the northwestern boundaries.

Current aerial photography does not show the swales clearly, given the tall grasses in the pasture where they are situated (Figure 2). However, they are clearly visible in aerial imagery taken during drier conditions (Figure 3). Given their setting along a relatively level upland ridge, they have not been substantially deepened by erosion, except for the far northwest end. Nevertheless, they can be easily followed on the ground. The swales' true extent can be seen by utilizing LiDAR (Light Distance and Ranging) imagery (Figures 4 - 7). LiDAR can be an excellent tool for locating and/or defining the extent of subtle trail remnants. Such images are produced with systematic laser aerial data acquisition. The greatest advantage of LiDAR is its ability to see through vegetation and to produce shaded images that enhance subtle features on the ground. Though subtle in places, the swales are visible on the ground (Figures 8 - 10). The Price ruts are some of the best intact and largest collection of trail ruts in the area. They have excellent historic integrity and remain relatively undisturbed.

The Price ruts, and previously listed First United Methodist ruts are included as a discontinuous historic district as the context is the same, they are both part of the Oregon-California Trail, and the location is very close. The two properties are separated by 1.5 miles, modern highway, and cultivated agricultural fields which are not included in this nomination.

³ A.W. Kuchler, "A New Vegetation Map of Kansas," *Ecology* 55, no. 3 (1974): 600-601.

⁴ Waldo R. Wedel, "An Introduction to Kansas Archeology," *Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin* (1959): 14.

⁵ Kuchler, 599.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 588.

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

ARCHEOLOGY (Historic—Non-aboriginal)

Period of Significance

1841- ca.1860

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance for the discontinuous historic district and this property includes the years the Oregon and California trails were active in Kansas, beginning in 1840 with the first pioneers headed to Oregon Country and ending by 1860 when the majority of emigrants departed from Nebraska river towns.

Criteria Considerations (justification)

N/A

Narrative Statement of Significance

Summary

This remnant of the Oregon and California trails network is part of the eastern (beginning) section of the combined trail, which the emigrants passed over on the first few days of their journey (Figure 11). One of the most important resources in this initial portion of the trail was Big Springs, a reliable water source lying approximately eight miles west of the Price swales. Active between 1840 and circa 1860, these swales are nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for their association with transportation and exploration/settlement along the combined route of the Oregon and California trails. This site's associative significance and similarity to related trail sites suggest that associated artifact assemblages may be present; they are therefore also nominated under Criterion D.

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Elaboration

Trail Overview⁷

The Oregon Trail began as a network of Indian trade and migration routes that crisscrossed the American West. British, French, and American fur trappers of the late 18th and early 19th centuries found and followed those paths as they scoured the country for beaver. By the 1820s, caravans of pack trains, carts, and wagons were beating a rough "fur trace" from the Missouri River to the annual trappers' rendezvous in the Rocky Mountains of today's Wyoming and northern Utah. Pack trails ran west from the Rockies, following the Snake and Columbia Rivers to Hudson's Bay Company headquarters at Fort Vancouver in the Oregon Country.⁸

When the first family of covered wagon pioneers joined a fur caravan heading to the Rockies from Missouri in 1840, the Oregon Country was jointly occupied by the fledgling United States and powerful Great Britain. Over the next several years, Britain watched uneasily as a low but steady tide of American emigrants surged along the developing, 2200-mile Oregon Trail and emptied into the Pacific Northwest. As the number of American settlers grew, so did the pressure for British withdrawal. In 1846 the two nations signed a treaty giving the U.S. control of lands between California and the 49th parallel, today's border between the United States and Canada.⁹ The emigration swelled in the early 1850s as homesteaders flocked to Oregon to stake

⁷ Trail overview written by Lee Kreutzer, National Trails Intermountain Region, National Park Service.

⁸ Will Bagley, *So Rugged and Mountainous: Blazing the Trails to Oregon and California, 1812-1848*, vol. 1, *Overland West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 77, 80; Hulbert, Archer Butler ed., *Where Rolls the Oregon: Prophet and Pessimist Look Northwest*, vol. 3, *Overland to the Pacific* (Colorado Springs: The Steward Commission of Colorado College & the Denver Public Library, 1933), 52, 91, 105, 136, 149-154, 156-159; Bernard De Voto, *Across the Wide Missouri* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1947), 47, 59, 69; Merrill J. Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road: The Covered Wagon Mainline via Fort Kearny to Fort Laramie*, (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1969), 4; Merrill J. Mattes, *Platte River Road Narratives: A Descriptive Bibliography of Travel over the Great Central Overland Route to Oregon, California, Utah, Colorado, Montana, and Other Western States and Territories, 1812-1866* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 1-5.

⁹ Bagley, *So Rugged and Mountainous*, 290-291.

their claims under the Donation Lands Act. By 1860, some 53,000 covered wagon emigrants and hundreds of thousands of livestock had followed the Oregon Trail to the Pacific Northwest.¹⁰

The California Trail, too, began at the Missouri River and stretched more than 2000 miles across plains and mountains, then branched out to end at various towns and camps in and beyond the Sierra Nevada. Much of that distance was part of a shared corridor with the Oregon Trail through Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming, and eastern Idaho. Near today's Soda Springs, Idaho, the 1841 Bidwell-Bartleson Party split away from the Oregon Trail and turned south to blaze a new emigrant route across the unmapped Great Basin and along the Humboldt River to California, part of Mexico at that time. Against all odds, the entire party survived the trip, and some of the successful pioneers set to work recruiting other emigrants to California. A trickle of over-landers followed over the next several years, developing a more direct trail across Idaho and Nevada to the Humboldt River and better routes through the Sierra Nevada.¹¹

As a result of the 1846-1848 Mexican-American War and annexation of Texas, the United States gained a tremendous swath of territory that stretched from the Gulf of Mexico across the Southern Plains, Southwest, and Great Basin to the Pacific coast. Emigration to California continued at a dribble despite the change of government. Few Americans were tempted to make the arduous trip until news of the gold discovery at Sutter's Mill reached the East and opened the emigration floodgates. In the spring of 1850 some 44,000 Argonauts and entrepreneurs rushed along the California Trail to seek their fortunes in the gold camps. As a result of the influx, California gained statehood the following year, and by 1860 over 200,000 emigrants had followed the long trail west to the Golden State.¹²

Starting in 1847, Oregon- and California-bound travelers shared the trail corridor with some 60,000 members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who followed the Mormon Trail across Nebraska and Wyoming to the Great Salt Lake Valley of Utah. Total emigration along the multi-trail corridor to Oregon, California, and Utah between 1841 and 1866 is commonly estimated at 350,000 to 500,000 persons.¹³

Across the three decades of the emigration, the trail experience evolved. As historian John Unruh observed, "The emigrant experience was ever changing; each travel year evidenced distinctive patterns, unique dramas of triumph and tragedy, new contributions to the mosaic of western development."¹⁴ In the 1840s, emigrants were on their own once they left Missouri and entered "Indian Territory." During those years, many suffered extreme hardship and even death as they trudged across Nevada's Forty-mile Desert, struggled through the Sierra Nevada, dodged the fierce rapids of the Columbia River, or tried untested new routes across the western mountains and deserts. Military and trading posts were few along the way and usually had little food to spare; emigrants were unable to resupply if their provisions ran low. But as the emigration progressed, explorers, military expeditions, and other travelers gradually opened shorter, safer routes. Towns and road ranches sprang up along the way. Businessmen established ferries, bridges, and toll roads, hauled water into the desert to sell to thirsty travelers, and built trading posts where travelers could resupply or exchange worn out draft animals for fresh ones. Meanwhile, as the years passed, the vast buffalo herds that 1840s emigrants had encountered in eastern Nebraska retreated farther and farther west, dwindling to near-extinction; hungry campfires and livestock consumed the woodlands and grasslands along the trail; and once-friendly native peoples, alarmed by the never-ending march of emigrants and embittered by the usurping of their lands and

¹⁰ John D. Unruh, *The Plains Across: The Overland Emigrants and the Trans-Mississippi West, 1840-60* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1982), 60, 84-85.

¹¹ George Stewart, *The California Trail: An Epic with Many Heroes* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962), 18, 27-28; Doyce B. Nunis, Jr., *The Bidwell-Bartleson Party: 1841 California Emigrant Adventure: The Documents and Memoirs of the Overland Pioneers* (Santa Cruz, CA: Western Tanager Press, 1991), 39, 125, 149; Dale L. Morgan, *The Humboldt: Highroad of the West*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 67-78.

¹² Stewart, 217; Unruh, 84-85; Will Bagley, *With Golden Visions Bright Before Them: Trails to the Mining West, 1849-1852*, vol. 2, *Overland West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 15, 17-18, 388.

¹³ Mattes, *Platte River Road Narratives*, 5. Matte's estimate includes all western emigration, including that to Colorado, Montana, Nevada, etc.

¹⁴ Unruh, 321-322.

resources, were driven to armed resistance. As a result of these changes, travelers of the 1860s experienced the overland trails much differently than those who had gone west in the 1840s.

Not just the experience but the trails themselves changed, as well. For example, Independence and Westport, Missouri, at the eastern edge of the frontier, were the original Oregon and California trailheads. There emigrants could purchase supplies, wagons, and livestock and make repairs before merging with the great freight caravans rolling west along the Santa Fe Trail into Kansas. Near the present-day town of Gardner, the Oregon-California trail corridor branched off to follow the "Independence Road" across northeastern Kansas toward Nebraska's Platte River. Through the 1840s and 1850s, new military roads were developed to connect Fort Leavenworth, Kan., to Fort Riley in central Kansas, Fort Gibson, Okla., and Fort Kearny, Neb., and emigrants quickly adopted these and other new trails in making their way to the Platte River. Also during those years, especially following outbreaks of cholera, emigrants began outfitting and "jumping off" onto the trails farther and farther north, gradually shifting the bulk of the emigration traffic upriver to Fort Leavenworth, St. Joseph, Nebraska City, and Omaha/Council Bluffs.

By the close of the 1850s, the Nebraska river towns had largely replaced Independence, Westport, Fort Leavenworth, and St. Joseph as outfitting and jumping-off places, and the flow of Oregon-California traffic across Kansas had nearly dried up.¹⁵ Riding a steamboat up the Missouri River to Nebraska City and Council Bluffs saved emigrants several difficult stream crossings and many days of driving across northeastern Kansas. Starting farther north also enabled travelers to avoid the Kansas-Missouri border troubles of the mid-1850s and allowed them to take advantage of substantial trail improvements made by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to help its Mormon emigrants cross Nebraska.

Farther west, significant new alternates were developed, including Sublette's, Hudspeth's, and Goodale's cutoffs across Wyoming and Idaho, the difficult Hastings Cutoff through Utah's Wasatch Mountains and over the Great Salt Lake Desert, the Raft River route to the Humboldt, and several Oregon dry-land alternatives to the dangerous Columbia River passage. New wagon roads punched through the Sierra Nevada and commercial ferries, bridges, and other improvements increasingly aided the emigration as the years passed.

But the greatest improvement to western emigration by far was completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. The driving of the ceremonial golden spike that linked the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads at Promontory Summit, Utah, was a stake in the heart of the covered wagon era. The laborious, dangerous overland trip that once took five to six months, killed hundreds of thousands of draft animals, and tested the endurance of the most determined emigrants could now be made safely in a matter of weeks. Some emigrants who could not afford train passage continued to use the old Oregon and California trails, but long-distance wagon traffic gradually dried up. The last documented westbound covered wagon on the Oregon-California Trail crossed Wyoming in 1912.¹⁶

The mid-nineteenth century emigration of hundreds of thousands of people, rich and poor, free and slave, along the Oregon and California trails is unparalleled in world history. The trails they traveled opened the door for the Pony Express, the transcontinental telegraph, the transcontinental railroad, and parts of the modern interstate highway system, all of which followed the Oregon and California trails corridor. The overland emigration fulfilled the nation's "manifest destiny" to stretch from Atlantic to Pacific, spurred economic development and security, and directed the course of American history. At the same time, however, it disrupted hundreds of indigenous cultures, destroyed traditional lifeways that had developed over millennia, and contributed to extinctions and significant shifts in native plant and animal populations. Today's West is largely the product of the California and Oregon emigrations and the events that flowed from those movements. Extant

¹⁵ Merrill J. Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road: The Covered Wagon Mainline via Fort Kearny to Fort Laramie* (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1969) 104-105.

¹⁶ Mary Hurlburt Scott, *The Oregon Trail Through Wyoming*, (Aurora, Colorado: Powder River Publishers, 1958), 87-100, 122, 135.

trail remnants, including wagon swales and ruts, stream crossings, graves, campgrounds, and associated forts, are touchstones to that iconic place and period in the nation's history.

The national and regional significance of the Oregon and California trails has been identified through the work of many lay and professional historians and defined in numerous scholarly publications.¹⁷ Congress designated the Oregon and California National Historic Trails in 1978 and 1992, respectively, and the National Park Service in 1998 published a combined comprehensive management and use plan/environmental impact statement for the Oregon, California, Pony Express, and Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trails.

In Kansas, approximately 165 miles of wagon route are designated as part of the Oregon National Historic Trail and 290 miles are designated as California National Historic Trail. For a short distance from Missouri into eastern Kansas, the Oregon and California Trails followed the same corridor as the earlier Santa Fe Trail, also a designated National Historic Trail.¹⁸ Many more miles of historic wagon route, once traveled by emigrants to the far west, exist across Kansas, and many of these routes are currently under study for possible addition to the Oregon and California National Historic Trails.

Routes through Lawrence and Big Springs Areas

This segment of the Oregon and California trails network was situated along the middle of the roughly 15-mile route between the Wakarusa River and Big Springs. When the emigrants passed through this area, they had recently crossed the Wakarusa River, (Figure 11) and were heading to a camping area, Big Springs, eight miles west. This section of the emigrants' route was described by Kansas historian William Connelley as follows:

The trail passed up Mount Oread [where the University of Kansas is now located] and followed the "back bone ridge" which divided the waters of the Kansas from those of the Wakarusa. Six miles west of Mount Oread, on a fine elevation, there was a noted spring. At that point Judge John A. Wakefield, who arrived in the Territory on the 8th day of June, 1854, made home. Another noted place on the trail was Big Springs, within a mile of the west line of the county. A settlement was made there.¹⁹

This portion of the trail was surveyed by the General Land Office, with the earliest results appearing in 1857 (Figure 12 – Stuck's 1857 map of Douglas Co. Kansas territory). That map, along with one produced in 1858, illustrates the trail routes (Figure 13 – U.S. General Land Office 1858 survey map). The passage of 30 years brought many changes, and by 1887 a landscape dominated by section line roads in place of trails was depicted (Figure 14 – Douglas Co. map of 1887 by John P. Edwards).

Big Springs

For the emigrants passing through this area, a key landmark and water source (Big Springs) was the immediate destination. Although the Oregon and California Trail only passes a short distance through Kansas, there were three well-known water sources in the form of springs: Big Springs in Douglas County, Alcove Spring in Marshall County, and Scott Spring in Pottawatomie County. Alcove Spring and Scott Spring retain a higher degree of integrity than Big Springs, which has been significantly impacted by the construction of Interstate 70.²⁰ Although Big Springs no longer reflects its trail-era appearance, trail-era swales in the vicinity of Big Springs are intact.

¹⁷ See attached bibliography for a sample of these sources.

¹⁸ Kansas State Historical Society, *Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail* revised National Register of Historic Places multiple property documentation form (Topeka, KS: Kansas Historical Society, 1994, revised 2012).

¹⁹ William E. Connelley, *Standard History of Kansas and Kansans* (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1918), 356.

²⁰ Rex Buchanan, Robert Sawin, and Wayne Lebsack, "Water of the Most Excellent Kind: Historic Springs in Kansas," *Kansas History* 23, 3 (Autumn 2000): 130. Accessed online 13 August 2021.

http://www.kshs.org/publicat/history/2000autumn_buchanan.pdf

There are only a few references to Big Springs in the historical record that pre-date 1850. The earliest reference to the area was noted by Rufus B. Sage, a writer who was traveling with a caravan led by Lancaster P. Lupton, which left the Shawnee reserve in present-day Johnson County, Kansas bound for Fort Platte, Wyoming, in September of 1841. In his account, which was published in 1846 under the title *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains*, he recorded that Lupton's caravan had camped by the Wakarusa River and, after traveling twelve miles, stopped overnight "at a place known as the Springs."²¹ A few years later in 1844, trader David Adams noted in his diary that his small outfit had camped at the Wakarusa on September 5th and at the "the spring" on the 6th. He was delayed three days at the springs while searching for lost horses.²² Both Lupton's and Adam's parties would have crossed the nominated land.

Several years later and shortly before Kansas Territory was opened for settlement, a group of Italians led by Count Leonetto Cipriani set out for California from Westport, Missouri, also crossing the nominated swales. They were driving cattle, and their caravan included "11 covered wagons (carrying more than 20,000 pounds of freight), one 'omnibus,' 24 hired hands, 500 cattle, 600 oxen, 60 horses, and 40 mules." The group may have had a scientific mission as one man in the group reported in the count "three secretaries and a draughtsman, one engineer, one mathematician, a physician, a number of servants and many wagons to carry provisions, instruments, etc."²³ Cipriani kept a diary that was translated and edited by Ernest Falbo and published in 1862. According to Barry, Cipriani noted having camped the night of June 12, 1853 "near a cold-water spring surrounded by giant oak trees...a veritable oasis," which was Big Springs.²⁴

Later that same June, Captain John W. Gunnison led an expedition tasked with surveying parts of the West for future railroad development. Gunnison recorded setting out for the Wakarusa River on June 26, 1853 and passing the "conspicuous landmark 'Wahkarrussi [Blue] mound,' the 'wooded dell, called Coon Point,' [and] the 21-mile march from Coon Point to 'Big spring' ('situated in a hollow, and there are several small jets from the bank.')"²⁵ This is the first known mention of the name Big Spring.

Several trail-era accounts of this area were written after Kansas Territory was opened for settlement in 1854. A small settlement – known as Big Springs – grew up around this natural source of water in the mid-1850s. In his *History of the State of Kansas*, author William Cutler noted the first residents as William Harper and John Chamberlain, who settled there in the fall of 1854. Big Springs was less than ten miles from the pro-slavery leaning settlement of Lecompton, and during the late 1850s this area buzzed with political fervor. Within a year Big Springs' founding, the settlement hosted a convention of Free-staters as they attempted to win political control over the territory (Figure 15).

It was shortly after this initial settlement that traveler and writer William Tomlinson, who spent time in Lawrence in 1858, described the surrounding countryside from atop Mount Oread:

I followed a winding path leading from the town to the summit, and in a few minutes was standing on the crest of Mount Oread. Seldom have I gazed on a fairer, or more glorious scene than the one presented. To the south and eastward was a perfectly level and beautiful plain, dotted over with farm-houses and cultivated fields to the dense belt of timber skirting the Wakarusa, and opening again with a similar landscape beyond, until a bold, high promontory, known as 'Timber Mound,' closed the eastward view. Westward towards Lecompton could be seen for miles and miles the winding Kaw; while northward,

²¹ Rufus B. Sage, *Scenes in the Rocky Mountains* (Philadelphia: Carey & Hart, 1846), 23. As quoted in Louise Barry, *The Beginning of the West: Annals of the Kansas Gateway to the American West, 1540 – 1854* (Topeka: Kansas State Historical Society, 1972), 435-436.

²² Barry, *The Beginning of the West*, 526-527.

²³ *Ibid.*, 1163.

²⁴ Cipriani as quoted in Barry, *The Beginning of the West*, 1163.

²⁵ Gunnison as quoted in Barry, *The Beginning of the West*, 1167-1168.

miles away, upwards toward the May heaven from the wilderness of trees, rose the thin smoke from the village of the Delawares.²⁶

A few days later, he traveled to Topeka by stagecoach likely passing through the Big Springs area according to the road network delineated as the westbound "California Road" on Stuck's 1857 map (Figure 12):

I took a stage-coach ride up the Kaw to Lecompton and Topeka. They are both flourishing towns, but small compared to Lawrence. Topeka is about fifteen miles west of Lawrence, on the same side of the Kansas. The route lay for the most part through a fine country, and we passed many fields of wheat and oats, which promised a yield far in advance of the best lands of the north-west.²⁷

Early Kansas settler Julia Lovejoy provides another account of the Big Springs area at about the same time as Tomlinson, "On we jog, and fifteen miles from Lawrence we reach the town of Big Springs, so called from several large springs, from which beautifully clear water in abundance gushes forth. The place was too destitute of trees and shrubbery to suit our taste."²⁸ Both Tomlinson's and Lovejoy's accounts document the dual use of the Oregon-California Trail in this part of Kansas at this time. Not only was it used for long-distance travel, but also it was used for more local traffic between these developing cities. Certainly by 1861, the year of Kansas' statehood, the Oregon and California trail was used almost exclusively by local traffic.

Archeological Potential

Archeological prospection, geophysical survey, and metal detector survey of similar trail segments have been shown to reveal associated artifact assemblages, sometimes buried and sometimes not, that can inform on the use of the trail during its period of significance. Though no such surveys have been undertaken on this trail segment, there is every reason to believe that the presence of such an assemblage is possible. This segment and its immediate landscape have the potential to yield important information to understanding the use and nature of this section of the trail, including patterns of use and change over time, evolving trade patterns, and cultural interactions. Study of both the remnant trail swales and adjacent archeological features can provide valuable insight into the evolving patterns of historic development in this region. This site likely contains data which may be vital to any wider study of 19th-century trade and economic development. Further investigation could address key questions regarding trade and transportation variability and change. Excavation could also provide additional social data including better estimates of the frequency of use during various phases of history, the role played by the military, various ethnic and social groups, and the nature of trail users, material culture and the production, distribution, and consumption of commodities.²⁹ Though isolated from other trail segments, this property has the potential to yield additional information. Archeological survey at this property (including metal detector investigations and remote sensing) might produce trail period artifacts. Their distribution, if plotted precisely, could yield additional significant information regarding issues (in addition to those mentioned above) such as discard patterns or wagon repair activities.

²⁶ William P. Tomlinson, *Kansas in Eighteen Fifty-Eight* (New York: H. Dayton; Indianapolis: Dayton and Asher, 1859), 43. Accessed online 13 December 2012 <<http://archive.org/details/kansasineighteen00toml>>

²⁷ Tomlinson, 45.

²⁸ Julia Louisa Lovejoy, "Letters of Julia Louisa Lovejoy, 1856-1864," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 14 (November 1947): 376-377.

²⁹ "Historic Resources of the Santa Fe Trail," F116. Citation covers paragraph.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: **Kansas Historical Society**

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____ n/a _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 71.9 acres-Price swales; less than one – First United Methodist swales
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

PRICE - OCT Segment

1	<u>15S</u>	<u>294503</u>	<u>4317903</u>	2	<u>15S</u>	<u>294754</u>	<u>4317903</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
3	<u>15S</u>	<u>294754</u>	<u>4317482</u>	4	<u>15S</u>	<u>294947</u>	<u>4317482</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
5	<u>15S</u>	<u>294947</u>	<u>4317066</u>	6	<u>15S</u>	<u>294503</u>	<u>4317066</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

FIRST UNITED METHODIST - OCT Segment

1	<u>15S</u>	<u>297196</u>	<u>4316061</u>	2	<u>15S</u>	<u>297215</u>	<u>4316023</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
3	<u>15S</u>	<u>297257</u>	<u>4316061</u>	4	<u>15S</u>	<u>297294</u>	<u>4316020</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

Price – OCT segment (boundary increase): The property is located in the NE ¼ of Section 25, Township 12 South, Range 18 East. It consists of multiple swales, bounded on all sides by areas of recent disturbance. The northern, southern, and eastern boundaries are defined by areas of agricultural disturbance while the western boundary is formed by U.S. Highway 40.

Measurements from points:

- (1) 15S 294503 e 4317903 n – (2) 15S 294754 e 4317903 n = 277.2 yards east/west
- (2) 15S 294754 e 4317903 n – (3) 15S 294754 e 4317482 n = 461.33 yards north/south
- (3) 15S 294754 e 4317482 n – (4) 15S 294947 e 4317482 n = 231.38 yards east/west
- (4) 15S 294947 e 4317482 n – (5) 15S 294947 e 4317066 n = 452.26 yards north/south
- (5) 15S 294947 e 4317066 n – (6) 15S 294503 e 4317066 n = 495 yards east/west
- (6) 15S 294503 e 4317066 n – (1) 15S 294503 e 4317903 n = 912.34 yards north/south

First United Methodist – OCT segment: Previously listed in the National Register April 5, 2016 (NRIS 16000132). The property is located in the NE ¼ of the NE ¼ of Section 31, Township 12 South, Range 19 East. It consists of two swales, bounded on all sides by areas of recent disturbance. The western boundary is formed by the grounds of the Celebration Center of the First United Methodist Church of Lawrence, while the eastern limit is formed by ongoing commercial development. The northern and southern boundaries are defined by agricultural disturbance.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The entire discontinuous historic district boundaries include the two separate and distinct sites for a total of approximately 73 acres in Douglas County, Kansas. The boundaries were selected to encompass the visible and intact trail swales at both locations. The properties share a historic context and are intact portions of the Oregon-California Trail; separated by highway development and cultivated agricultural fields.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rick Anderson, Jamee Fiore, Tim Weston
organization Kansas Historical Society date July 2021
street & number 6425 SW 6th Avenue telephone (785) 272-8681
city or town Topeka state KS zip code 66615
e-mail kshs.shpo@ks.gov

Property Owner:

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Gary E. Price
street & number 730 N 1750 Rd telephone _____
city or town Lawrence state KS zip code 66049

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Figure 1. Location of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales

Figure 2. Location of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales

Figure 3. Aerial view of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales

Figure 4. LiDAR Image of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales

Figure 5. LiDAR Image of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales

Figure 6. LiDAR imagery of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales.

Figure 7. Enhanced Color LiDAR Imagery of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales

Figure 8. View Southeast at the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales

Figure 9. View Southeast at One of the Most Distinct Price Oregon-California Trail Swales

Figure 10. View East at the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales

Figure 11. Location of the nominated area along the combined route of the Oregon and California trails in Kansas.

Figure 12. Map of Douglas County, Kansas Territory. J. Cooper Stuck, 1857

Figure 13. Partial view of 1858 General Land Office survey map of

Figure 14. Map of Douglas County, Kansas Territory. John P. Edwards, 1887.

Figure 15. Election of Delegates to the Free State Convention. Joel K. Goodin, August 1855.

Figure 16: Boundary Map for Price OCT swales 2009 Google Imagery

Figure 17: Boundary for the whole discontinuous district contains the Price OCT Segment and First United Methodist Church OCT Segment

Figure 18: Boundary for the whole discontinuous district contains the Price OCT Segment and First United Methodist Church OCT Segment

Figure 1.
Location of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales
Location is denoted by circle. North is up.
USGS 7.5' Lawrence West Quadrangle Map

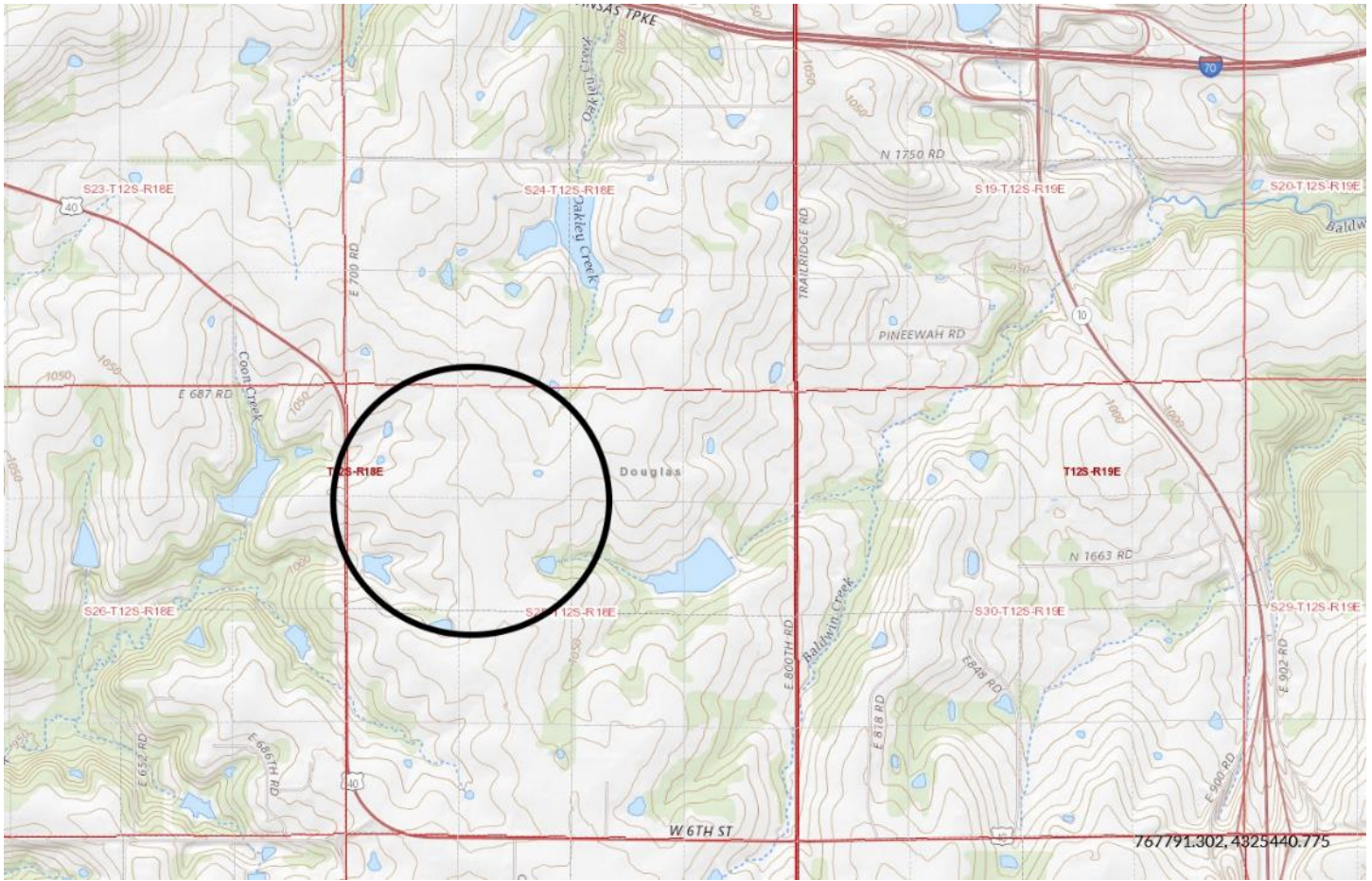


Figure 2.
Location of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales
Definition of Intact Swales is Difficult due to Vegetation Coverage
North is up; (2019 Google Earth Imagery)

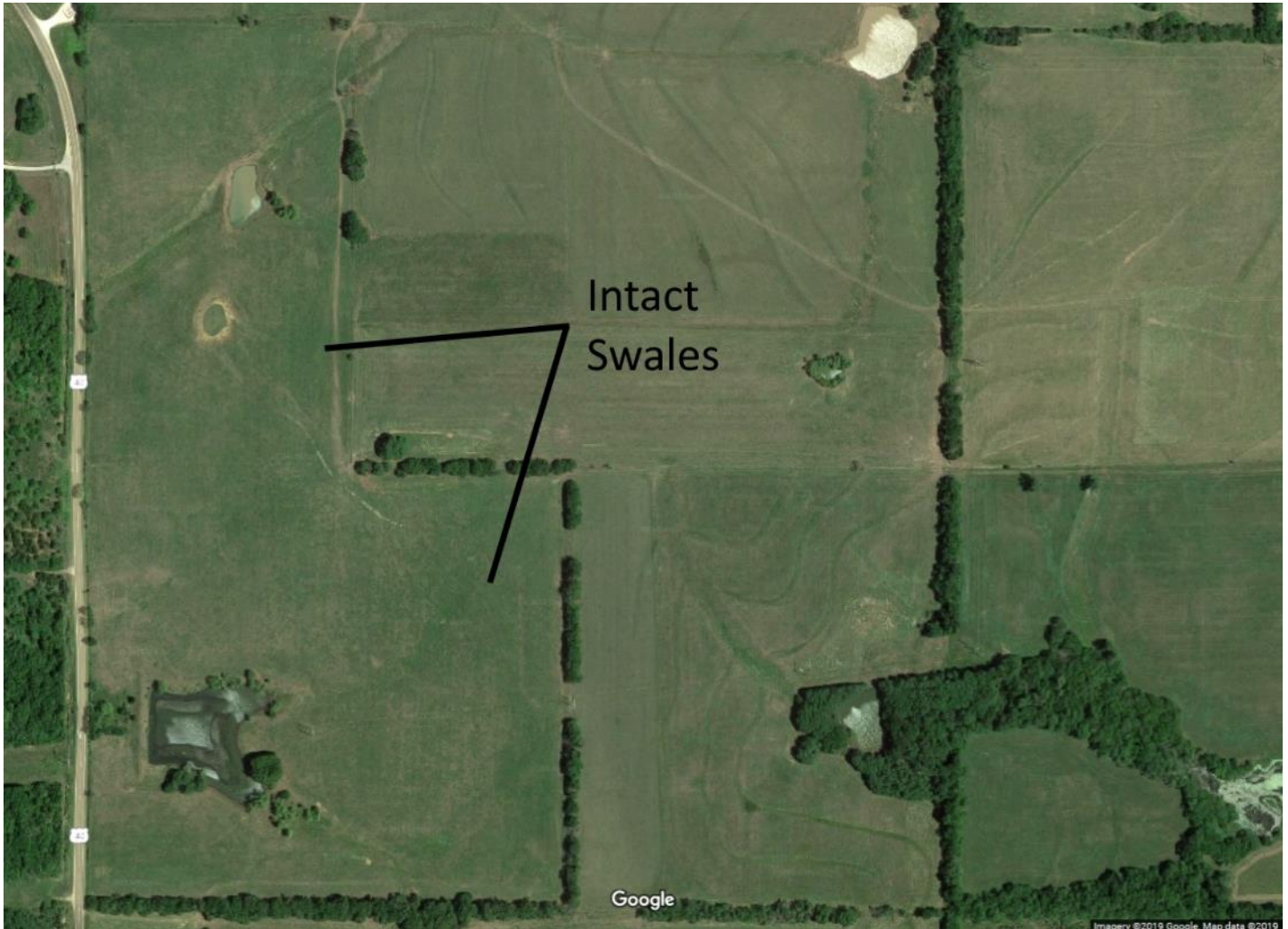


Figure 3.
Aerial view of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales
(Douglas County, Kansas Parcel/Property Ownership Map)

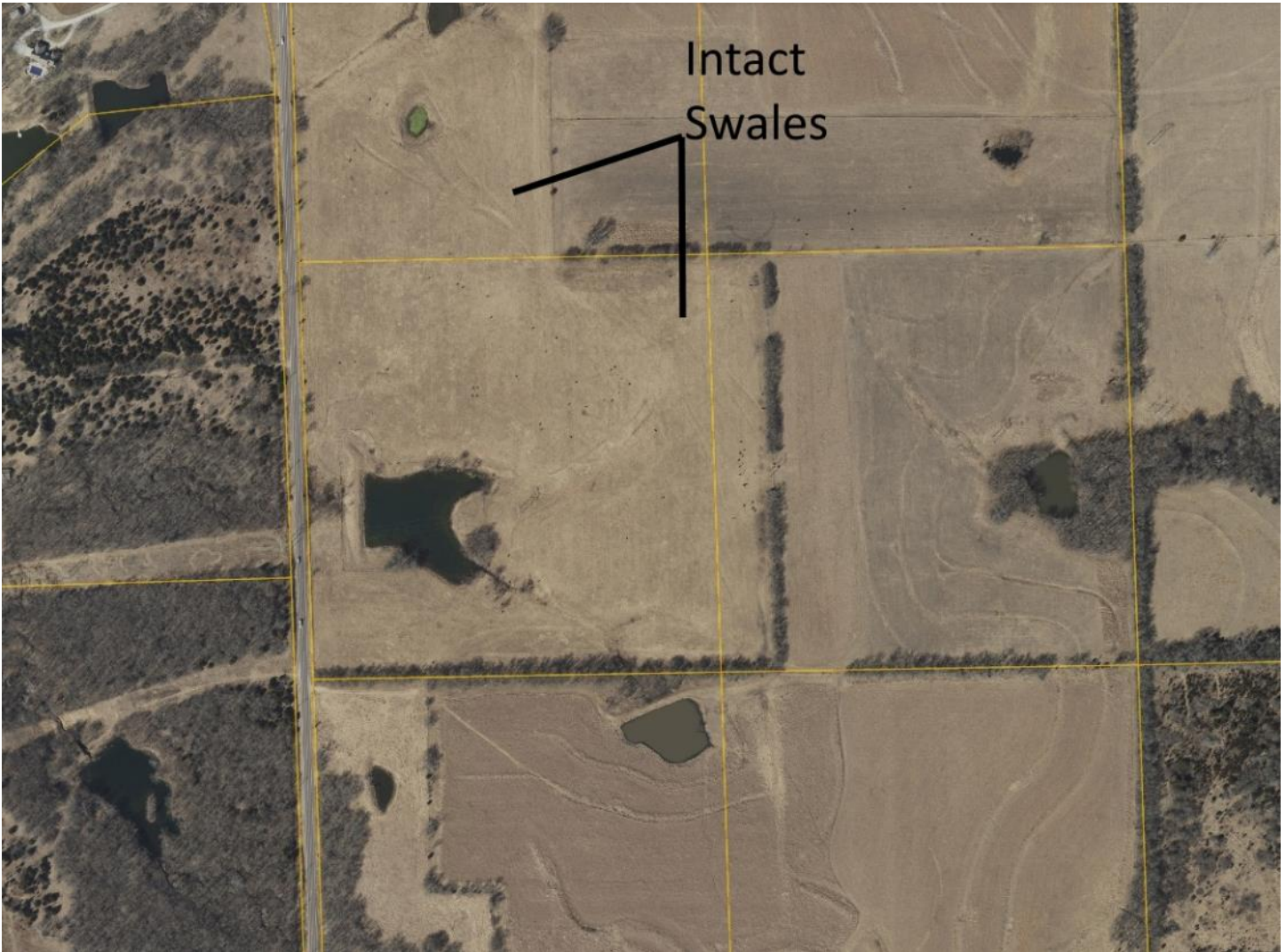
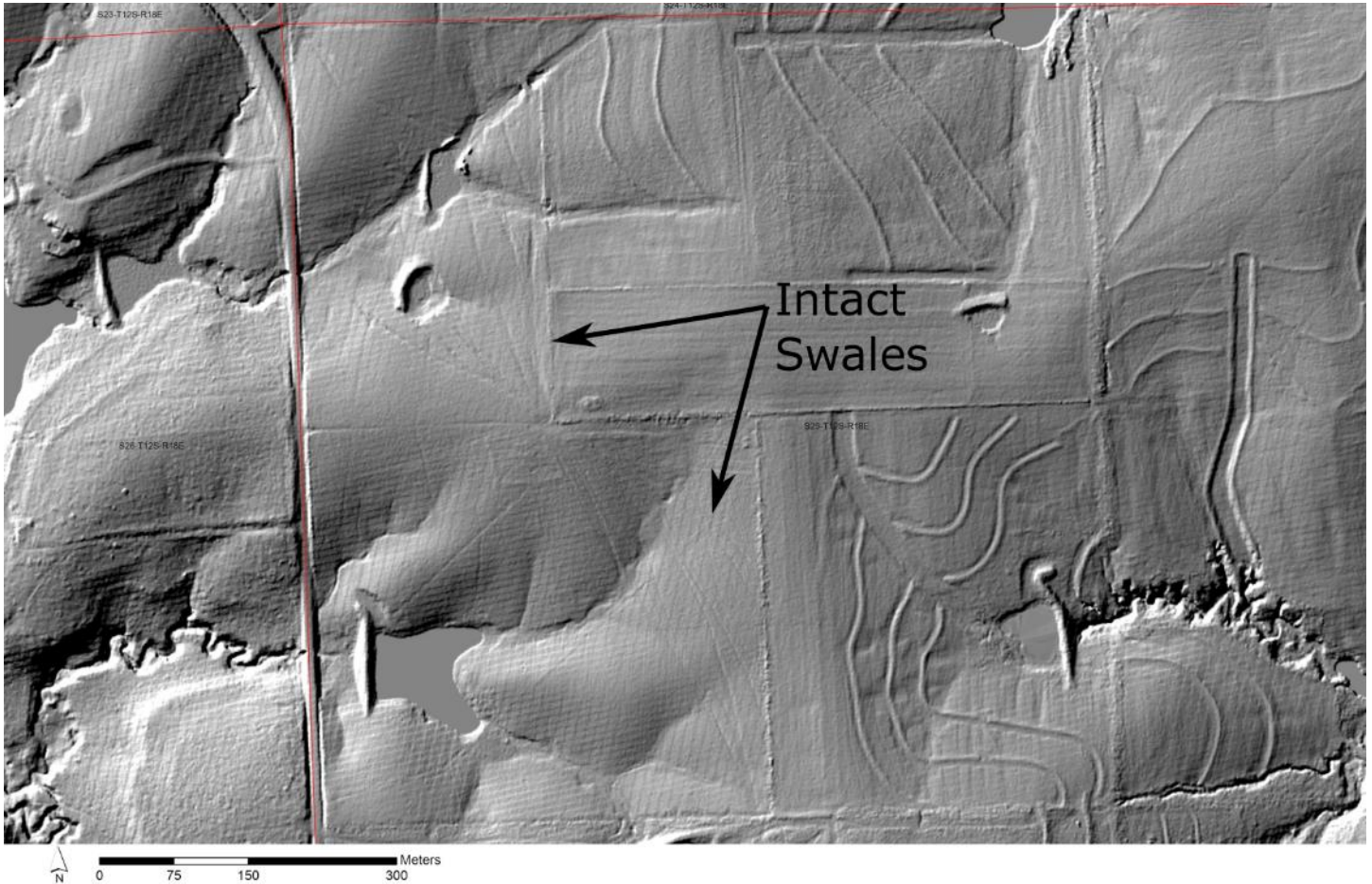


Figure 4.
LiDAR Image of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales



Nominated area.

Figure 5.
LiDAR Image of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales
Arrows Indicate General Extent of the Swales

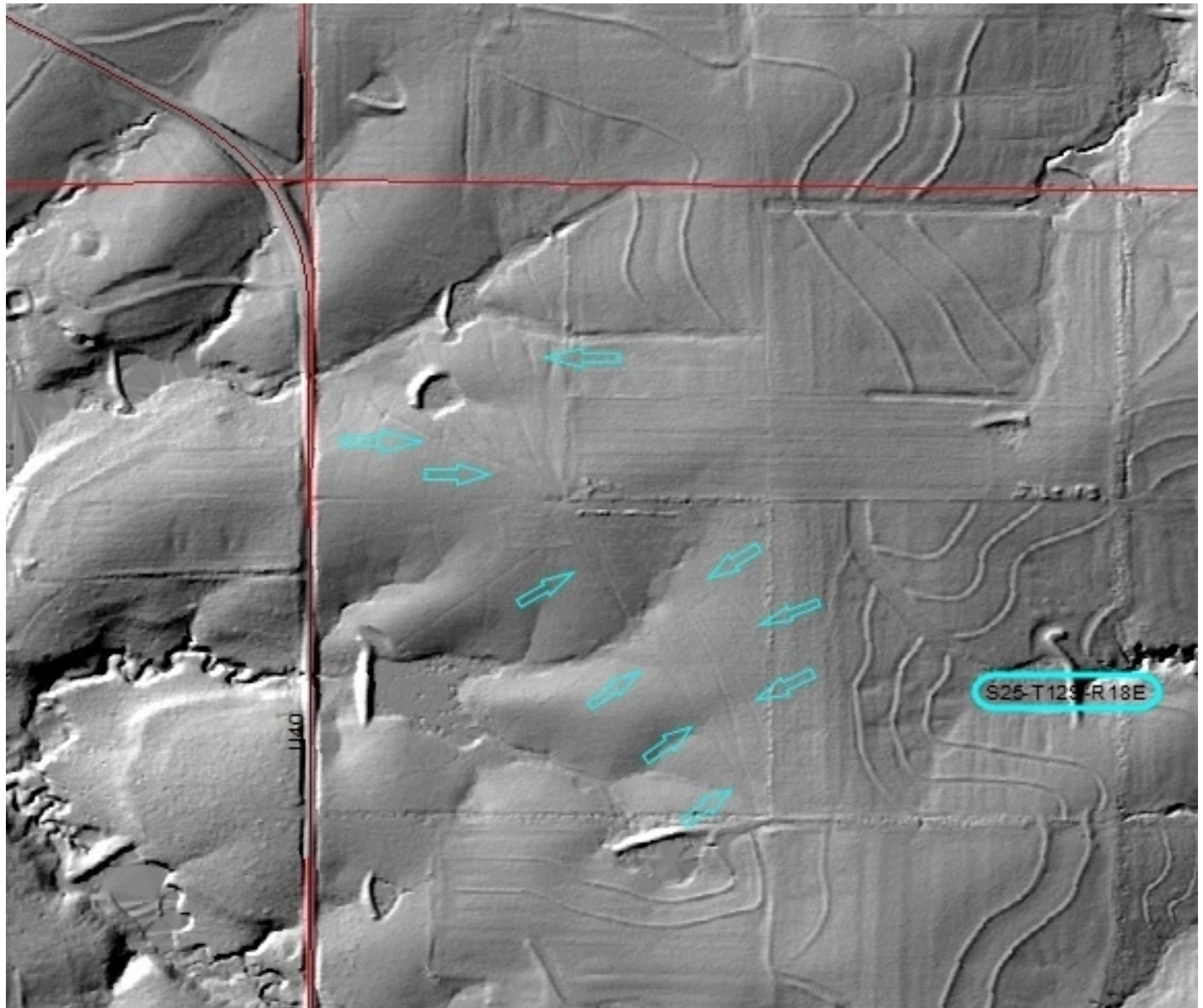


Figure 6.
LiDAR imagery of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales.
Orange Dots are GIS Points Representing the Rough Boundaries of Swales Visible on the Ground
Purple Lines Represent the Trail Location as Mapped by the General Land Office (GLO)

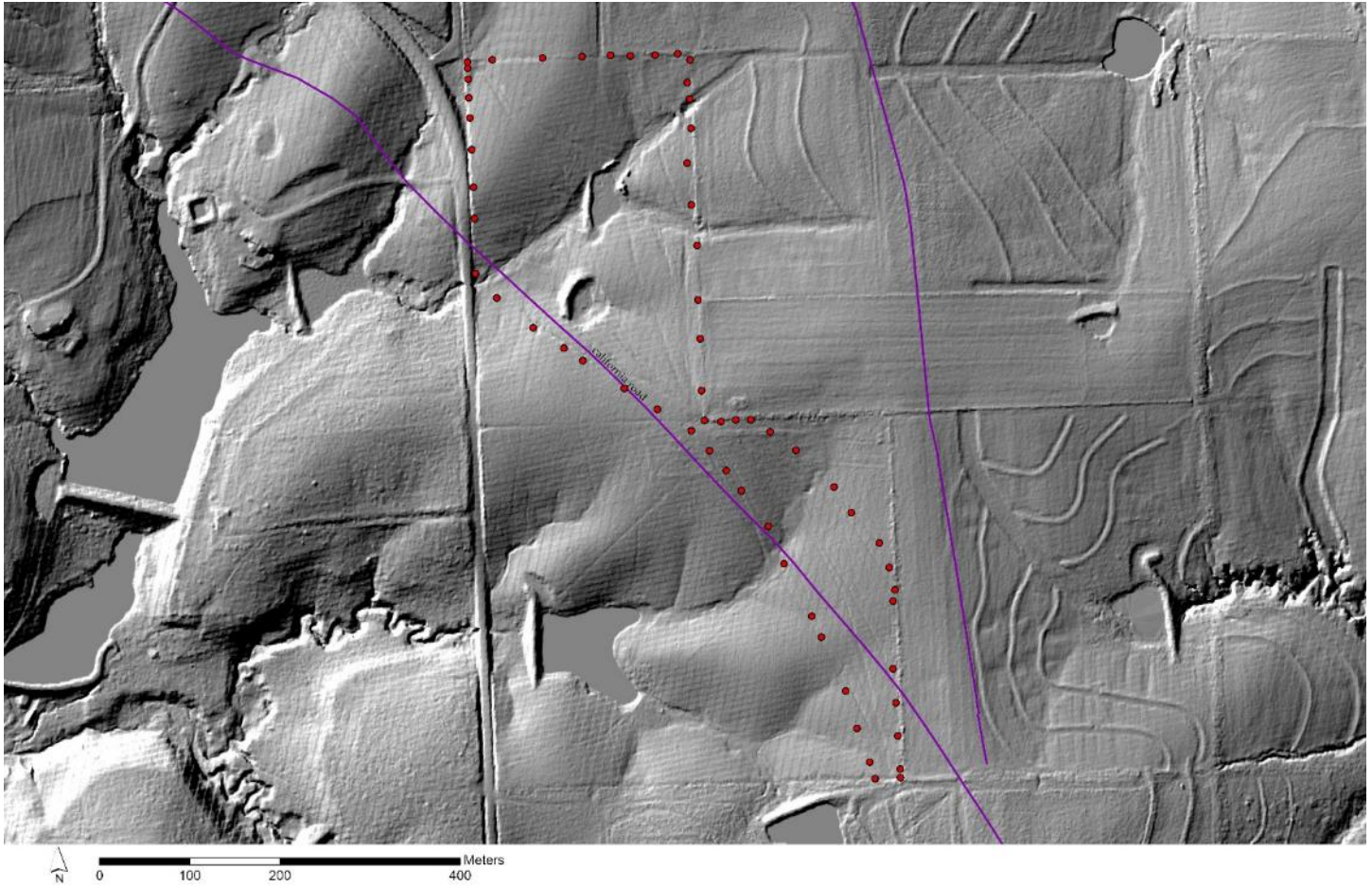


Figure 7.
Enhanced Color LiDAR Imagery of the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales

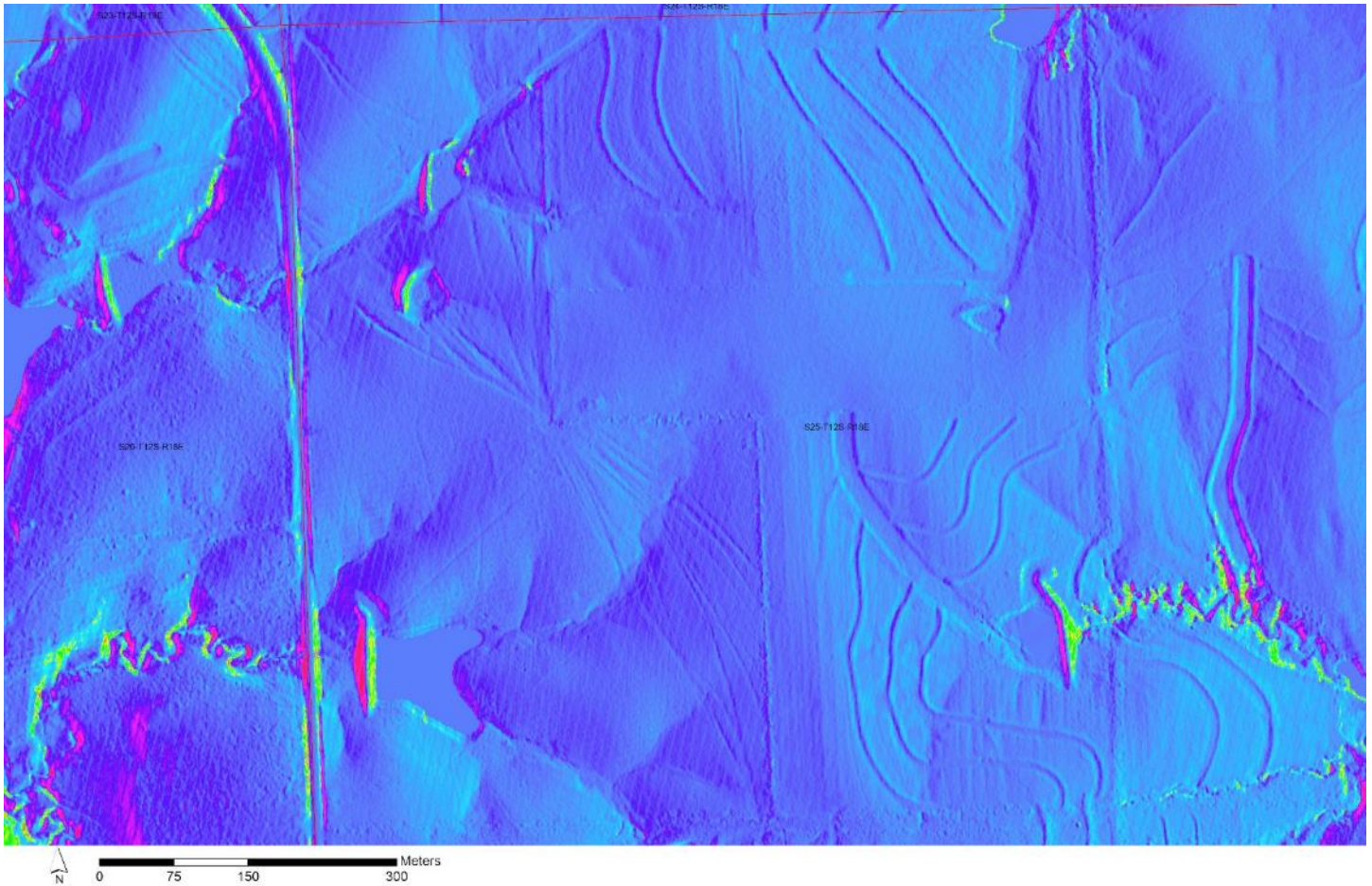


Figure 8.
View Southeast at the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales
(Swales are Visible as Diagonal Lines in the Background)



Figure 9.
View Southeast at One of the Most Distinct Price Oregon-California Trail Swales
(Uphill View, Swale Likely Deepened by Erosion)



Figure 10.
View East at the Price Oregon-California Trail Swales
Two Swales are Visible as Diagonal Lines in the Foreground



Figure 11.

Location of the nominated area along the combined route of the Oregon and California trails in Kansas.
US Department of the Interior National Park Service (NPS) California National Historic Trail Map.
(<http://www.nps.gov/california/planyourvisit/upload/CALmap1-web.pdf>).

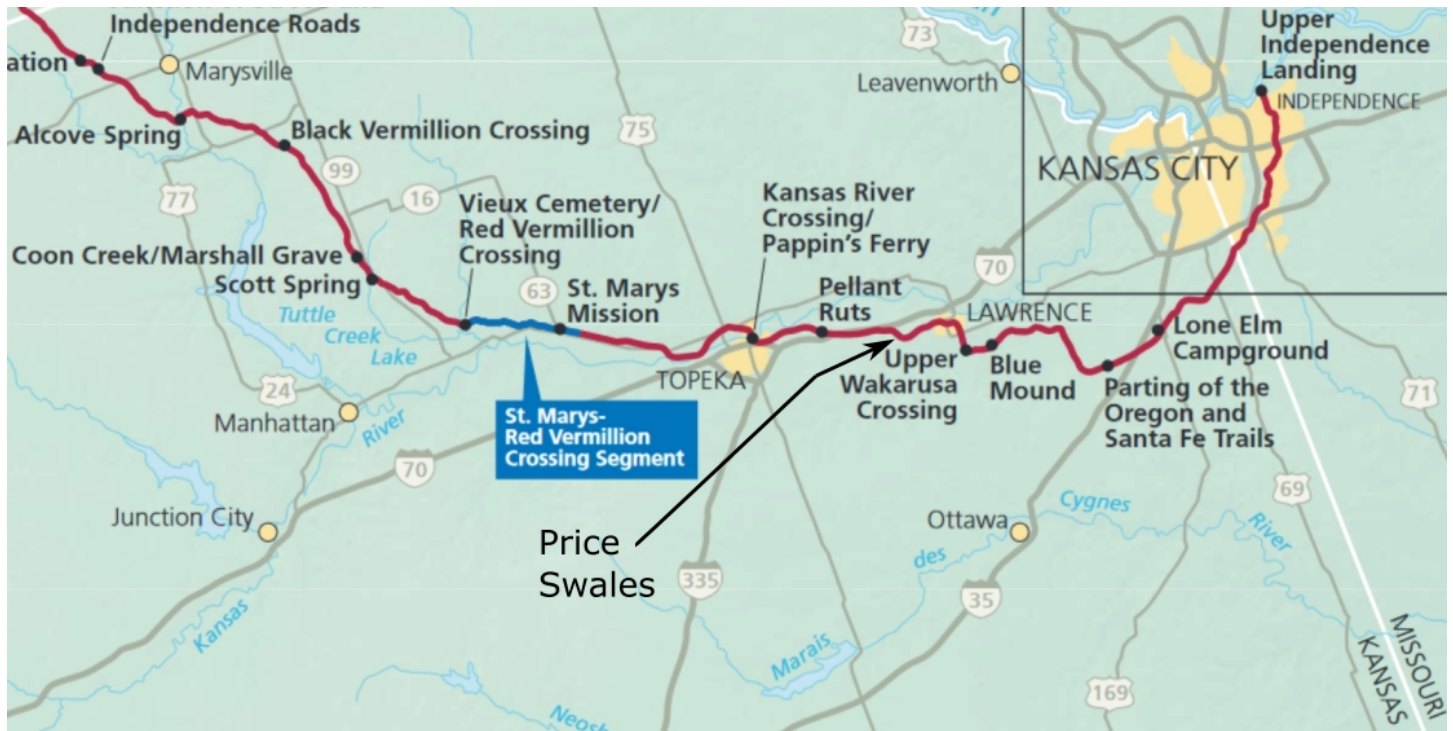
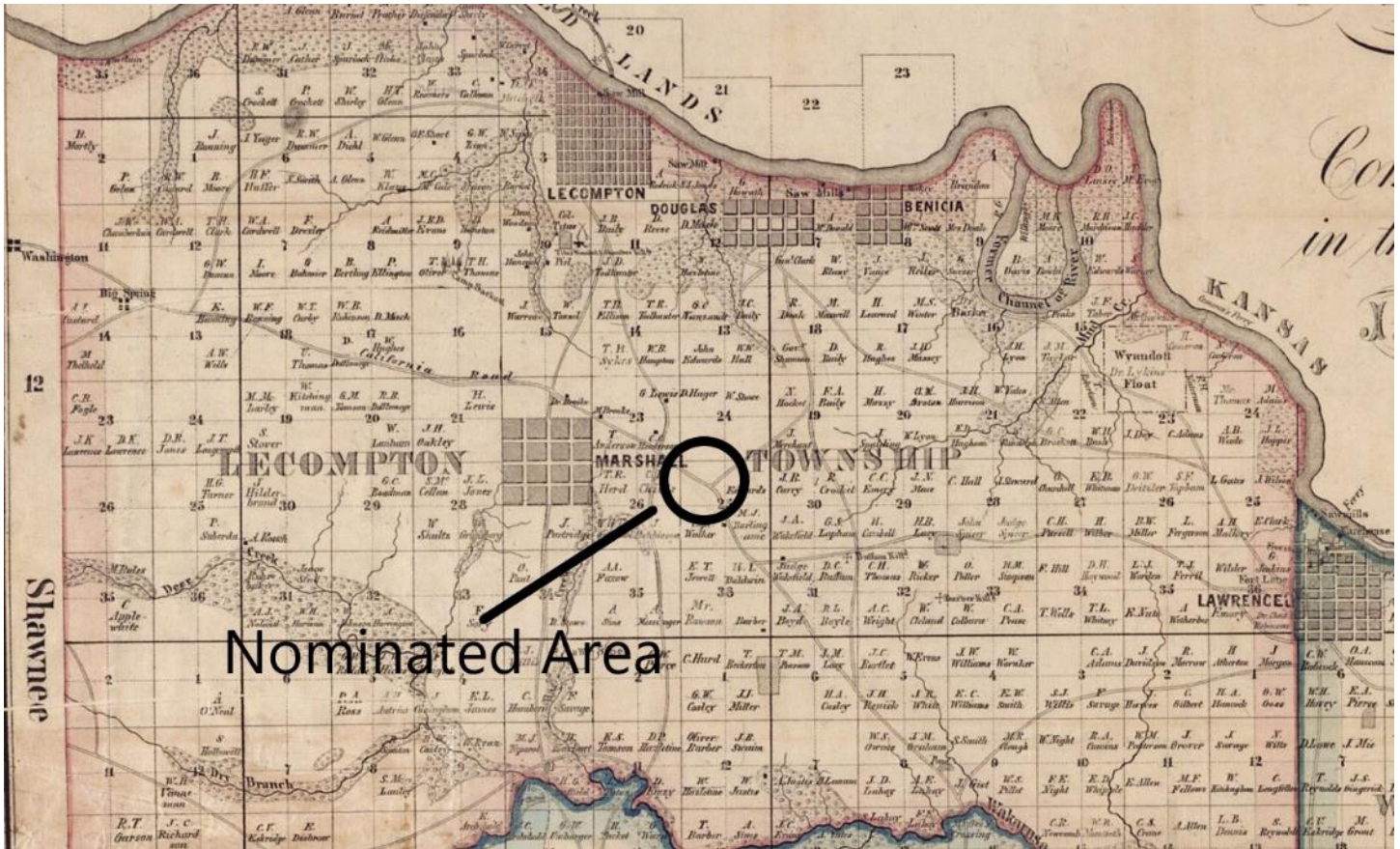


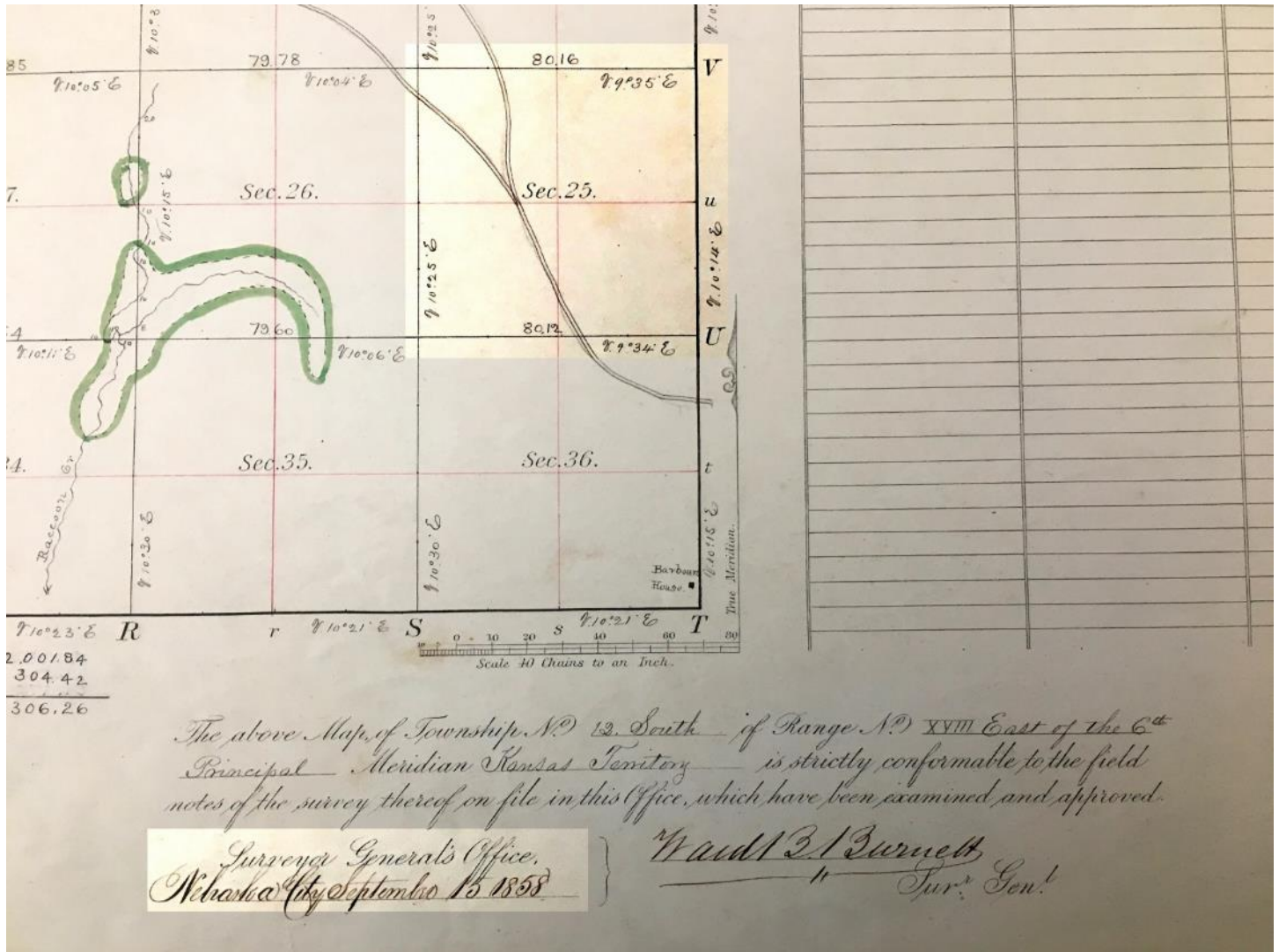
Figure 12.
Map of Douglas County, Kansas Territory. J. Cooper Stuck, 1857.



Source: <http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/208420> (accessed September 4, 2015).

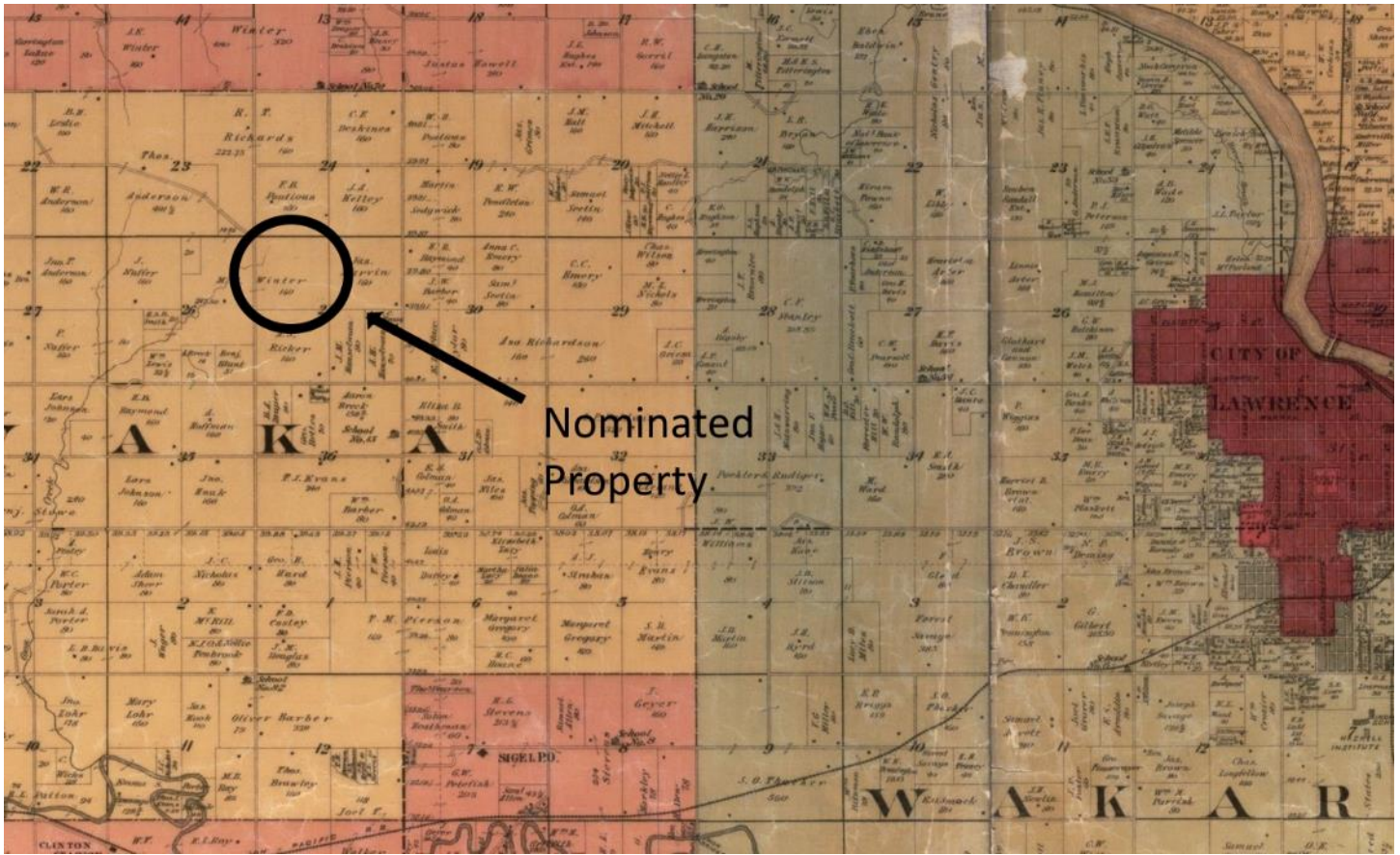
Note: Nominated property is highlighted.

Figure 13.
Partial view of 1858 General Land Office survey map of
Township 12 South, Range 18 East.
Nominated Property is Highlighted



Source: Kansas Memory (October 18, 2019).

Figure 14.
Map of Douglas County, Kansas Territory. John P. Edwards, 1887.



Source: <http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/217197> (accessed September 4, 2015)
Note: Property with swales is highlighted.

Figure 15.

Election of Delegates to the Free State Convention. Joel K. Goodin, August 1855.

975-1- C.P. V.I.
Cal.
1855

1068

FREE STATE CONVENTION!

All persons who are favorable to a union of effort, and a permanent organization of all the Free State elements of Kansas Territory, and who wish to secure upon the broadest platform the co-operation of all who agree upon this point, are requested to meet at their several places of holding elections, in their respective districts on the 25th of August, instant, at one o'clock, P. M., and appoint five delegates to each representative to which they were entitled in the Legislative Assembly, who shall meet in general Convention at

Big Springs, Wednesday, Sept. 5th '55,

at 10 o'clock A. M., for the purpose of adopting a Platform upon which all may act harmoniously who prefer Freedom to Slavery.

The nomination of a Delegate to Congress, will also come up before the General Convention.

Let no sectional or party issues distract or prevent the perfect co-operation of Free State men. Union and harmony are absolutely necessary to success. The pro-slavery party are fully and effectually organized. No jars nor minor issues divide them. And to contend against them successfully, we also must be united.— Without prudence and harmony of action we are certain to fail. Let every man then do his duty and we are certain of victory.

All Free State men, without distinction, are earnestly requested to take immediate and effective steps to insure a full and correct representation for every District in the Territory. "United we stand; divided we fall."

By order of the Executive Committee of the Free State Party of the Territory of Kansas, as per resolution of the Mass Convention in session at Lawrence, Aug 15th and 16th, 1855.

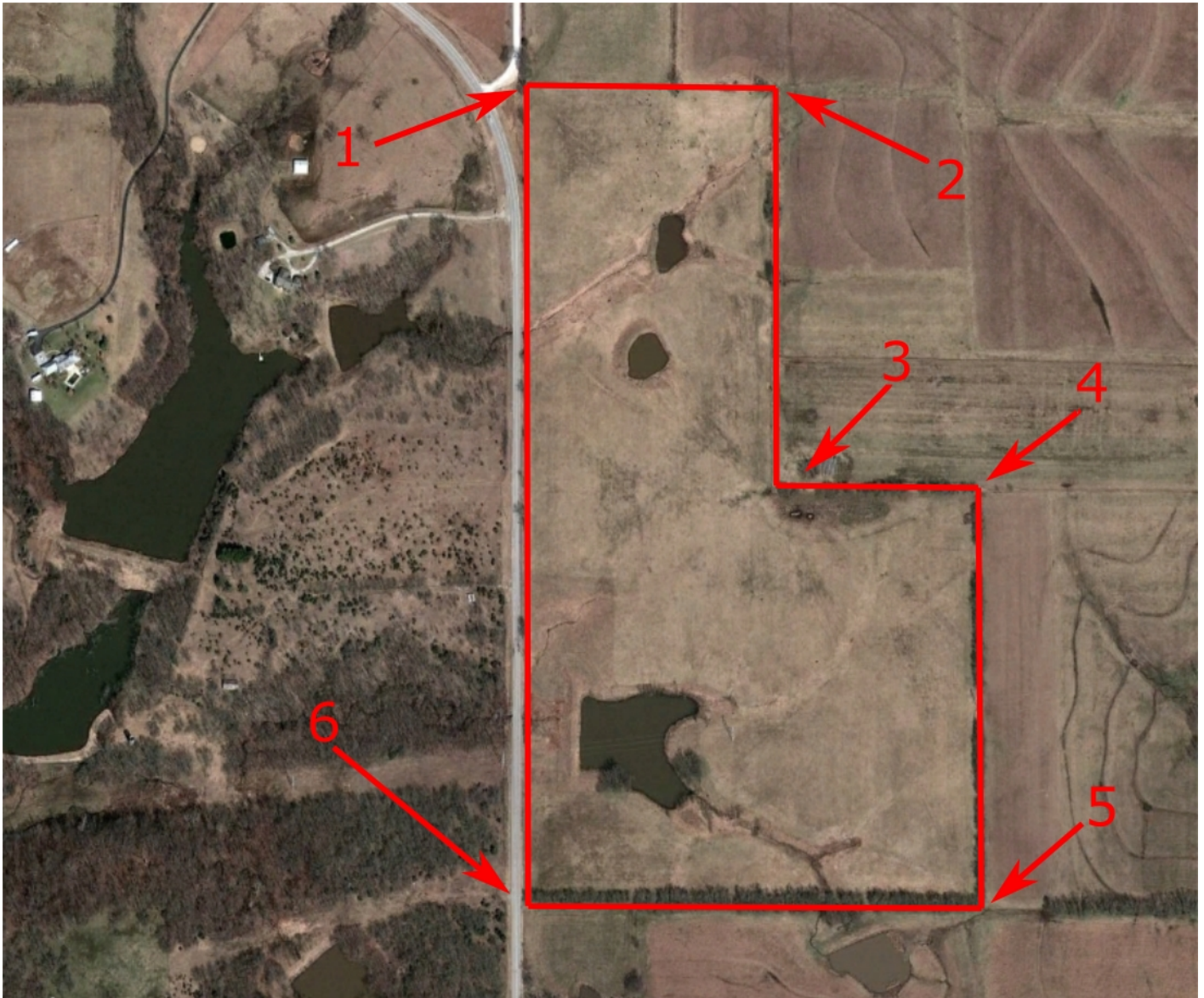
J. K. GOODIN, Sec'y.

C. ROBINSON, Chairman.
Herald of Freedom, Print.

Big

Source: <http://www.kansasmemory.org/item/90318> (accessed December 13, 2012).

Figure 16: Boundary Map for Price OCT swales
2009 Google Imagery
North is up; no scale.



UTM Boundary Coordinates

1	<u>15S</u> Zone	<u>294503</u> Easting	<u>4317903</u> Northing	2	<u>15S</u> Zone	<u>294754</u> Easting	<u>4317903</u> Northing
3	<u>15S</u> Zone	<u>294754</u> Easting	<u>4317482</u> Northing	4	<u>15S</u> Zone	<u>294947</u> Easting	<u>4317482</u> Northing
5	<u>15S</u> Zone	<u>294947</u> Easting	<u>4317066</u> Northing	6	<u>15S</u> Zone	<u>294503</u> Easting	<u>4317066</u> Northing

Figure 17:

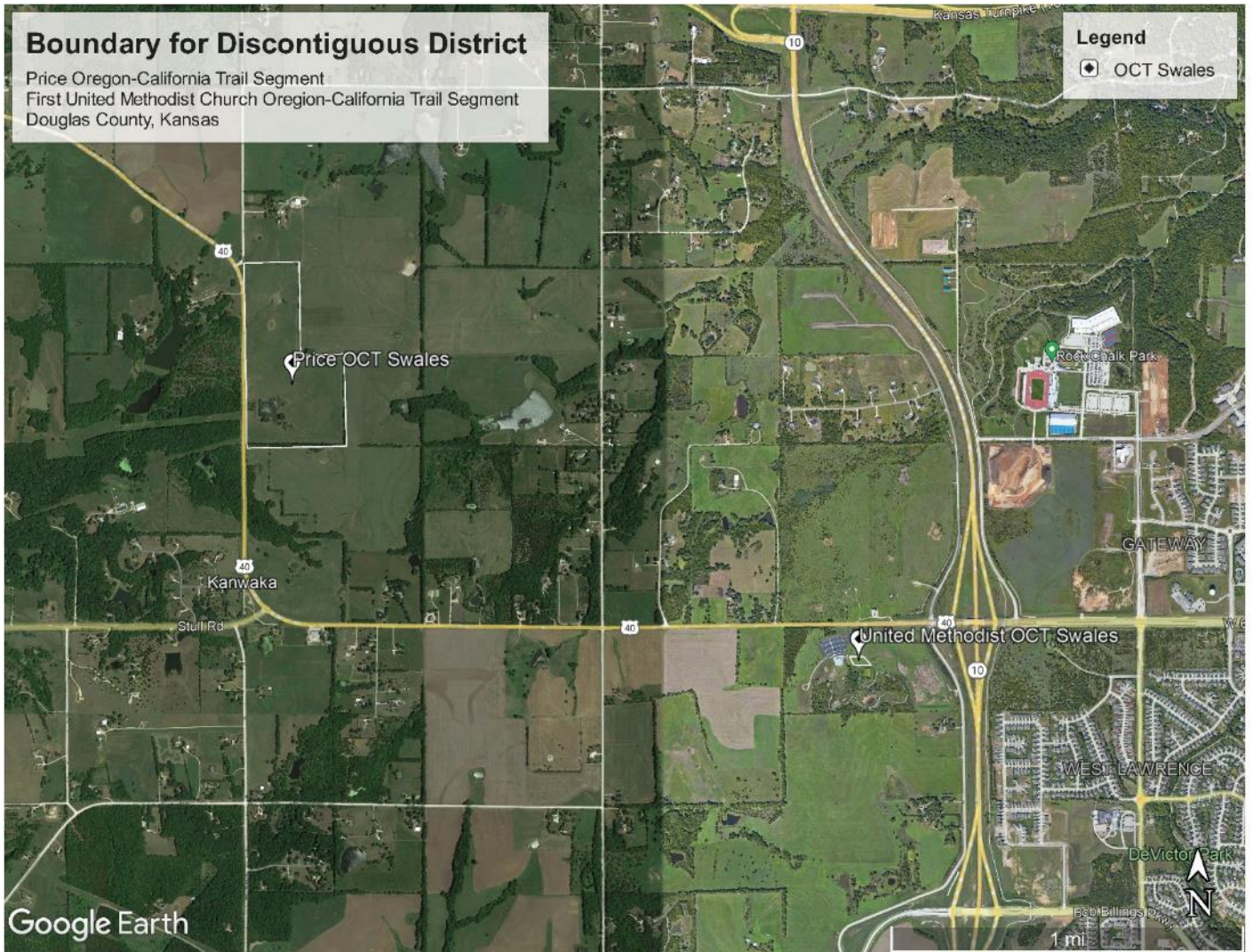


Figure 18

