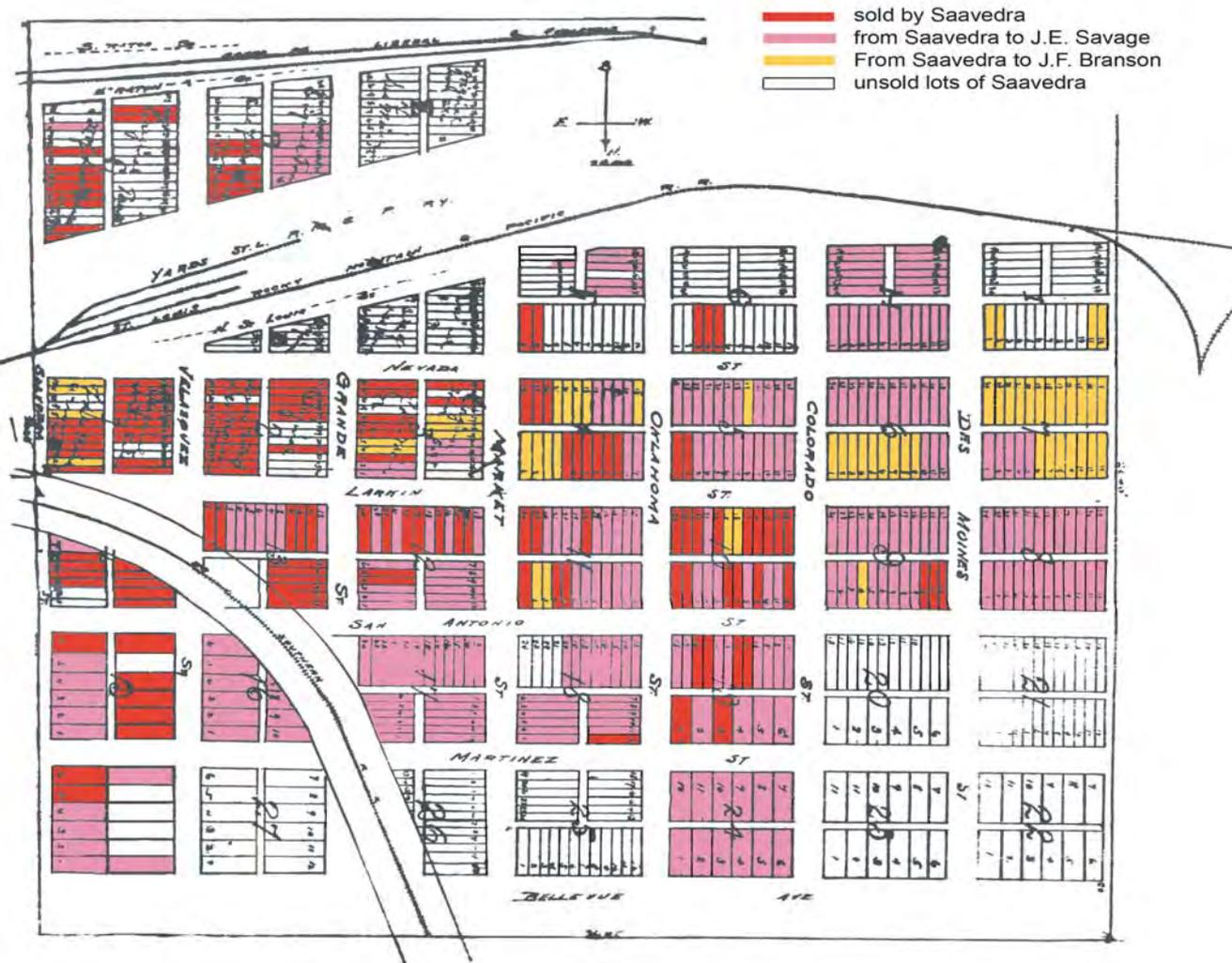


Entrepreneurship and the Settlement of Des Moines, Union County, New Mexico

Dorothy A. Zamora
Yvonne R. Oakes



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Des Moines, Union County, New Mexico**

Dorothy A. Zamora and Yvonne R. Oakes

**Timothy D. Maxwell
Principal Investigator**

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ADMINISTRATIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Archaeological Studies (OAS) conducted an archival data recovery program at LA 140462, near the town of Des Moines along US 64/87 in Union County, New Mexico, at the request of the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT). A research design was prepared by Zamora and Oakes (2004) for this historic site, which lies within the proposed expansion of the US 64/87 highway right-of-way. Only a small portion of the site will be affected by highway construction activities, and it was decided that a program of archival research would be implemented to document the property.

LA 140462 consists of two discrete areas along a 865-meter-long corridor next to US 64/87. Area 1 contains the outline of an historical structure (a residence) with associated debris, and Area 2 consists of railroad-related features such as abandoned railroad grades and a tank foundation. Archival research was conducted only for Area 1.

Initial research was carried out in Santa Fe at the New Mexico State Library, the New Mexico State

Archives, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Museum of New Mexico Photo Archives. On August 18 and 19, 2004, further research was conducted at the Clayton County Courthouse and the Des Moines City Hall. Several interviews were held with residents of Des Moines at Sierra Grande (the local restaurant) and City Hall. A site inspection revealed that the historical debris dates to before 1920. Archival research confirmed the date. The land was first homesteaded by Rafael M. Saavedra in 1907, who subsequently laid out a townsite, dividing the area (including the site) into blocks and lots. This was the beginning of the town of Des Moines. Mostly between 1907 and 1912, Saavedra sold these blocks and lots to other settlers coming into the area. LA 140462 sits in Block 4, Lot 12, of Saavedra's Addition to the community, and it appears that the house on the property was built just before 1920 under the ownership of George G. Dickey. Today, the land is vacant, and the historical rubble is hidden in tall grasses on the outskirts of Des Moines.

NMDOT Project No. NH-064-9(37)349, CN 3423.

MNM Project No. 41.758 (Des Moines Data Recovery).

Task No. 4522-15.

NMCRIS Activity No. 89848.

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INTRODUCTION

At the request of the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT), the Office of Archaeological Studies (OAS) conducted an archival research program on a portion of LA 140462, along US 64/87 near Des Moines in Union County, New Mexico (Fig. 1 and Appendix 3). The NMDOT proposes to expand US 64/87 to include four 12-foot driving lanes, 4-foot inside shoulders, and 8-foot outside shoulders (NMDOT Project No. NH-064-9(37)349, CN 3423, Task No. 4522-15). Current design plans indicate that highway improvements will take place north of the existing pavement and require approximately 14 ft of additional right-of-way on the north. Only the eastern portion of LA 140462 will be affected by the proposed undertaking.

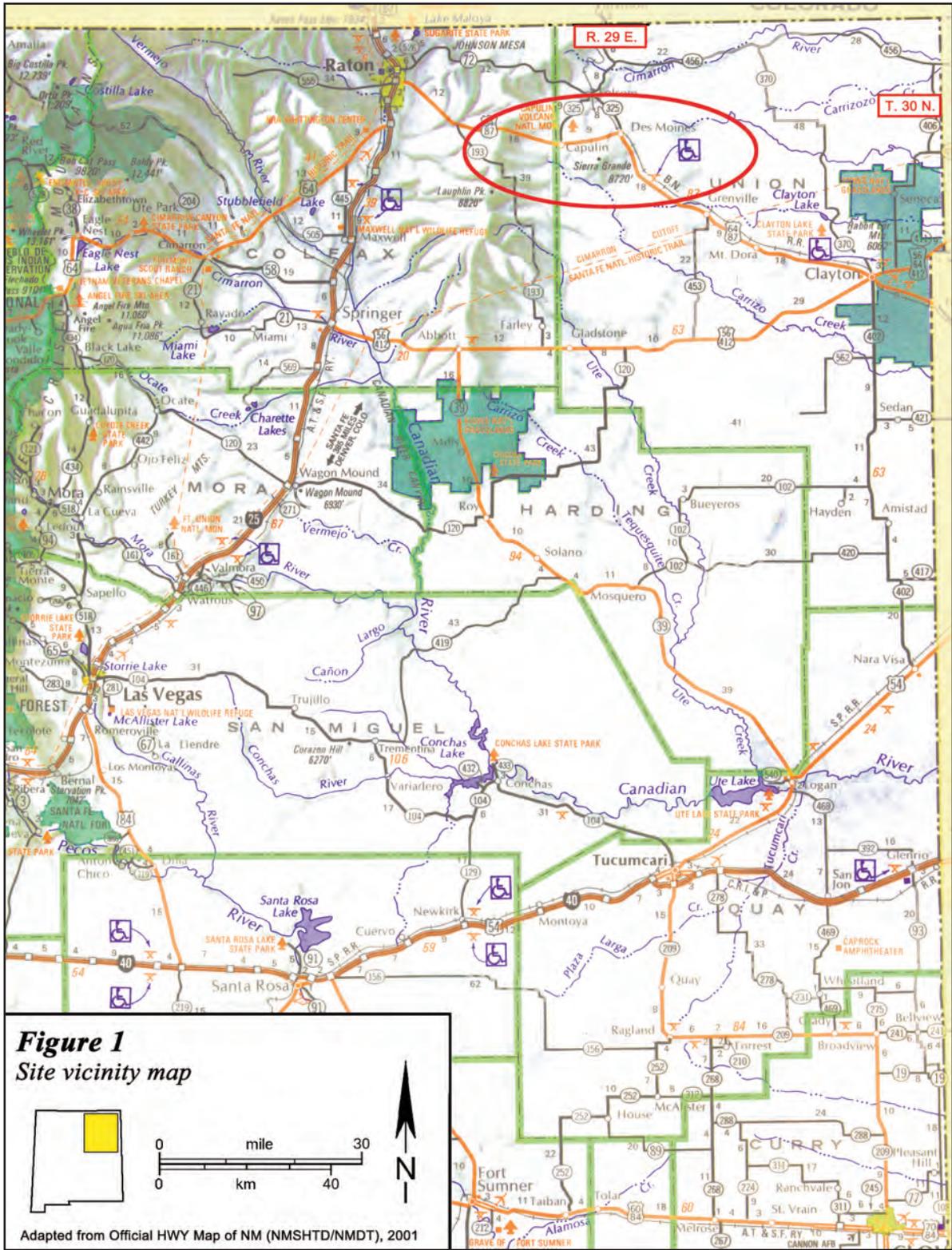
LA 140462 was initially recorded as part of a cultural resource survey conducted for the NMDOT along the US 64/87 corridor from Raton to Clayton by Campbell (2003). The site extends along the highway right-of-way for 865 m and was divided into two areas. Area 1, the focus of this study, consists of the foundation remains of an historic residence and associated debris. Area 2 contains a railroad grading and a concrete tank support (Fig. 2). Area 2 will not be investigated in this report because it will not be affected by planned highway improvements.

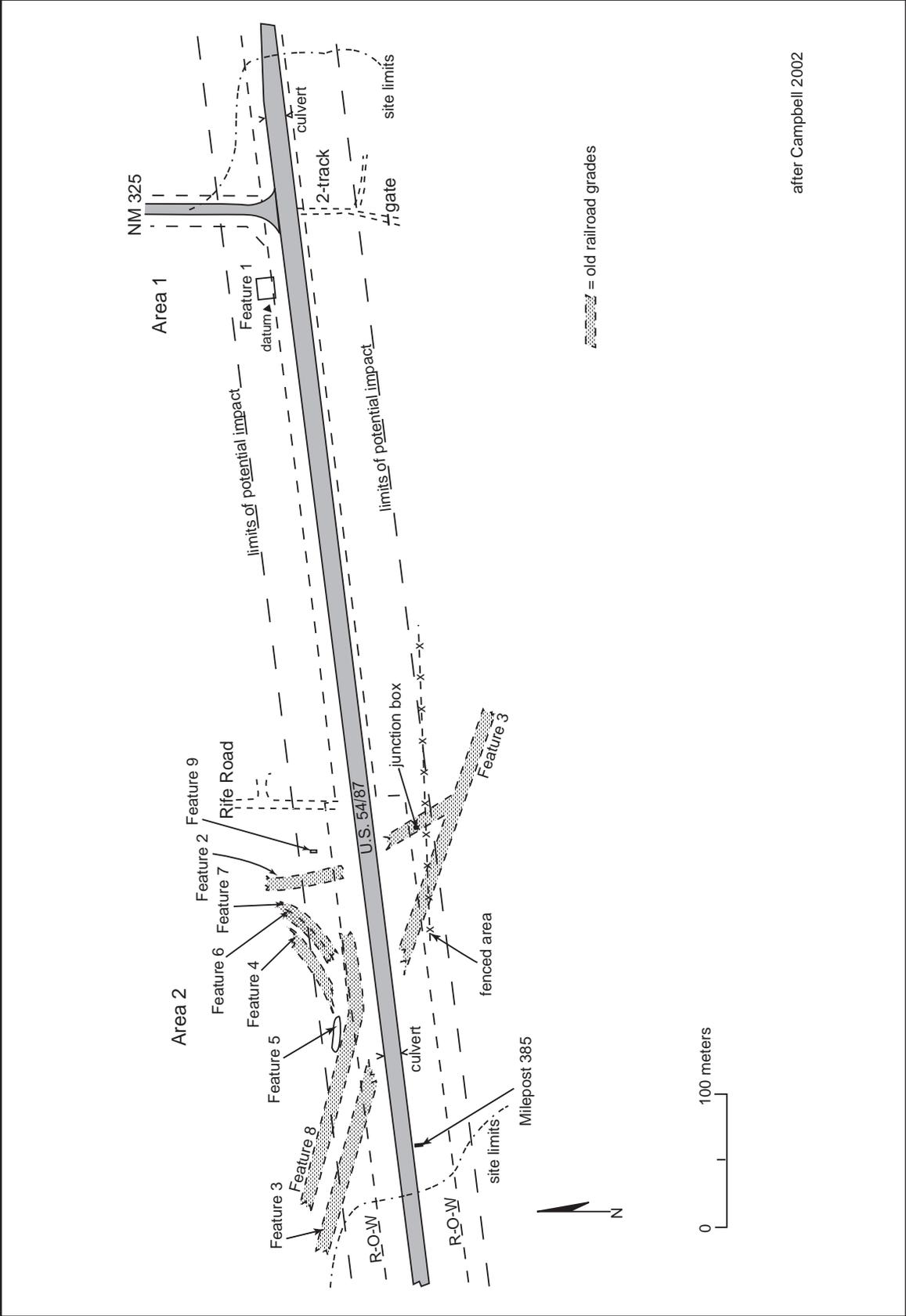
A research design was prepared by OAS (Zamora and Oakes 2004) to implement the archival research program. Investigative research was first carried out in Santa Fe at the New Mexico State Library, New Mexico State Archives, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Museum of New Mexico Photo Archives, where homestead filing papers and several books and articles were obtained regarding the history of Des Moines. On August 18 and 19, 2004, records were checked in Clayton at the Union County Courthouse and Des Moines City Hall. Joyce Ann Sowers, the chief deputy clerk of the County

Clerk's Office; Louis Trujillo, assessor; and Lorenzo Montoya, mapper of the County Assessor's Office, were most helpful in our obtaining plat maps of Des Moines and mortgage records of the property. At the Des Moines City Hall, current ownership of the land was confirmed. Also, interviews were conducted at the local restaurant and gas station, with nearby neighbors, and with employees at City Hall. No one recalled a house on the property in the last 40 years.

A site inspection revealed only the partial remains of the stone foundation and its associated debris. The structure appears to have been a residence. Historical artifacts were tallied to provide an approximate date of pre-1920 for the site. Based on the archival research, this date fits well within the possible time of occupation. Records were traced to the original owner of the land, Rafael M. Saavedra, who homesteaded 160 acres, including LA 140462, in 1907. He divided a portion of the homestead into lots and blocks for a townsite that was later to become Des Moines and promptly began to sell these to new settlers of the area. LA 140462 is in Block 4, Lot 12 (now vacant), of Saavedra's original claim.

This report gives the results of the archival research conducted by OAS staff members Dorothy A. Zamora and Yvonne R. Oakes. Timothy D. Maxwell served as principal investigator. The ownership of LA 140462 since 1907 has been recorded, and no further research is recommended. LA 140462 is not in the *National Register of Historic Places* or the *State Register of Cultural Properties*. The Historic Preservation Division considered it eligible for the *National Register* under Criterion C of 36 CFR 60.4 on March 29, 2004; however, the site may also be eligible under criterion d because it has the potential to yield information important in history, rather than embodying distinctive characteristics of a specific period or master builder.





after Campbell 2002

Figure 2. Site map, LA 140462.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Union County is in the northeastern part of New Mexico and covers 2,442,900 acres. It lies within the Raton and High Plains section of the Great Plains Physiographic Province. The project area is part of the Raton Section, a region of high pediment plains in which the highest terrain is capped with basalt. Characteristic of the topography are gently sloping and undulating to greatly rolling uplands interspersed with smooth valleys, basins, and plains (Maker et al. 1973:4). There are also steep to very steep mountains, hills, mesas, escarpments, and canyon walls. The elevation ranges from 1,341 m (4,400 ft) to 2,662 m (8,732 ft) at Sierra Grande Mountain (Fig. 3). The elevation at Des Moines is 2,018 m (6,620 ft).

The project area is in an open valley between the foothills of the Sierra Grande to the south and Dunchee Hill on the northeast (Campbell 2003). The major soil association is the Torreon-Apache (Oakes 1999:7), which is derived from volcanic or igneous origins, and the ground surface is often covered with basalt cobbles (Oakes 1999:7). The nearby Sierra Grande is a broad

shield volcano of mostly pyroxene andesite with a summit of 2,658 m (8,720 ft) and is 64.4 km (40 miles) in circumference at the base. It is known for its excellent grazing (Thompson and Hally 1962:83).

The environs of Des Moines sit on a lava flow, the Clayton basalt cap. Huge lava flows between Clayton and Raton represent younger basalts, characterized by the malpais at the border of Union and Colfax Counties and by cinder flows near Capulin Peak (Moore et al. 1988). Another large volcano is at nearby Capulin National Monument, established in 1916 (Thompson and Hally 1962:83; Muehlberger et al. 1967:93-35). A series of east-west lava-capped mesas run parallel to the Colorado-New Mexico border (Fenneman 1931:37-39). Remnants of more than 100 volcanoes and cinder cones dot the surrounding landscape and have been active intermittently up to approximately 12,000 years ago (Muehlberger et al. 1967:8). Lava flows also extend south and east from volcanic eruptions. Extensive basalt flows cap surrounding mesas (Pratt 1986:7). Quaternary or recent deposits include alluvial fans, debris flows, and



Figure 3. Environmental setting of site, with Sierra Grande in background.

landslides. The debris flows occur as isolated gravel-capped ridges of changing forms on the valley floor. The region contains geologic formations of Triassic to Upper Cretaceous ages (Oakes 1999), which include Exeter sandstone, agate beds, siltstone, clays gypsum, limestone, and quartzite beds (Baldwin and Muehlberger 1959).

The only consistent water course is the Dry Cimarron River in the northern region, which, whenever climatic conditions are poor, can also dry up except for isolated springs and seeps. Corrupa Creek, north of Clayton, may also have been a possible source of water in good seasons for prehistoric Indians and wagon trains in the late 1880s. The availability of water in the High Plains has always been a major concern to all populations occupying the area. However, ephemeral lakes and ancient playas can be seen throughout the plains, suggesting that more water was available during wetter climatic regimes (Oakes 1999). According to Emery (1936), deep wells furnished the town of Des Moines with excellent water.

The climate of the area is semiarid, with an average annual precipitation of 40.6 cm (16.0 inches) (Baldwin and Muehlberger 1959). The average rainfall for the last 33 years is 39.1 cm (15.4 inches). Most of it comes from the Gulf of Mexico and falls between May and August, accounting for 60 to 70 percent of yearly rainfall (Tuan et al. 1973:20). However, there is immense evaporation from land surfaces in the county (Pratt 1986:11). The mean average temperature is 12 degrees C, or 53.7 degrees F (Gabin and Lesperance 1977). Table 1 contains information from three nearby weather stations (Oakes 1999:7).

The climatic data suggest agriculture was possible during prehistoric times. Factors important to crop growth such as frost-free days, average mean temperatures, rainfall for seed germination, rainfall in growing season, and warm temperatures at the time of crop maturation all seem to have been favorable (Oakes 1979:7). Wendland and Bryson (1974:20) imply that there were dry periods between A.D. 690 and 1100 that may have adversely affected human populations. However, more data are needed to test this implication.

Emery (1936) states that Des Moines is colder in the winter and cooler in the summer than any other town in

Union County because it is situated on a high, unprotected plateau. In 1936 the average temperature during November to April was 34 degrees F (1 degree C), and from May to October it was 61.6 degrees F (16.4 degrees C). Rainfall was 11.46 inches (29.1 cm) in 1934 and 11.32 inches (27.8 cm) in 1935. Winds are generally from the south. The crop season extends from May to September, and the first frost usually occurs in mid-September.

The project area contains soils classified as Mollesol, which is the most extensive soil type in the region. It is best suited for dry farming and produces grasslands (Pratt 1986:13-14). The dominant vegetation on these soils is blue grama, sideoats grama, little bluestem, Western wheatgrass, galleta, buffalo-grass, Indian rice grass, New Mexico feathergrass, and three awns. In the higher elevations the vegetation includes piñon, juniper, oak brush, and other shrubs.

Tierney (1979) and Anderson (1975) believe that the climatic environment today is similar to that around A.D. 1000. However, as stated above, Wendland and Bryson (1974:20) suggest that there were dry periods between A.D. 690 to A.D. 1100.

Tierney (1979) completed a vegetation survey through various topographic zones of the Dry Cimarron River Valley. She found 114 plant species, of which 80 percent have economic use and 50 percent have edible plant parts: "These species represent a wide diversity of plant types and indicate that the gathering of these food sources by prehistoric Indians would have sustained this population in years of normal precipitation" (Oakes 1999:8).

Common fauna found in the region are mule deer, antelope, and jackrabbit. Other represented species, but less common, are elk, wild turkey, bear, mountain lion, bobcat, coyote, fox, badger, porcupine, prairie dog, chipmunk, woodrat, squirrel, and various rodents, birds, and snakes. The highest number of antelope in New Mexico is in Union County; however, bison once dominated the High Plains with herds of up to 12 million (Bloom 1933:3). By 1896 the Indians and the bison had been virtually eliminated from the Great Plains (Oakes 1999:8). Grazing in the area is excellent, and today the area is used mainly for ranching and grazing of livestock.

Table 1. Climate

Data	Folsom	Des Moines	Clayton
Number of recorded years	16	42	54
Elevation (m)	1950	2018	1515
Precipitation (cm)	46	46	40
Snowfall (cm)	131	109	56
Mean temperature (C)	9.2	9.8	11.8
Mean minimum temperature (C)	17.4	17.9	20
Mean maximum temperature (C)	1	1.6	3.6
Number of frost-free days	144	146	177

PREVIOUS WORK IN THE AREA

Most of the work in this area has been in the form of archaeological surveys conducted between 1983 and 2002 (Table 2). These sites extend from Folsom to Mount Dora, New Mexico. The majority of the sites are historic structures or railroad features. The historic sites date from 1880 to 1950. LA 140463, a prehistoric site, has a date of 9000 B.C. to A.D. 200, which suggests the area was occupied from possibly the Paleoindian period into the Archaic period. One other survey not shown in Table 2 was conducted by Haecker and Fuller (1988) for the NMDOT. The survey was near Grenville, southeast of

Des Moines; no sites were recorded. The most recent survey was conducted by Parsons Brinkerhoff for a NMDOT project along US 64/87 that began in Raton and ended in Clayton. The survey recorded 24 new sites and included the community of Des Moines. An inventory of all the buildings within the area of potential effect along the US 64/87 corridor was completed. Parsons Brinkerhoff assessed the eligibility of the buildings for the *National Register of Historic Places* (Campbell 2003).

Table 2. Previously recorded sites

LA Number	Recorder	Date	Type
4973	Oakes	1983	Houses (8); Folsom depot and outbuildings (2)
38662	Winter	1988	Fort Union wagon road
68922	Hammack	1988	House foundations
68923	Hammack	1988	Masonry room
88681	Marshall	1992	Hispanic settlement
110065	Swan	1995a	Historic dump
110066	Swan	1995b	Historic dump
108952	Zamora and Oakes	1999	Trash scatter
125548	Zamora and Oakes	1999	House foundation with fireplace
125549	Zamora and Oakes	1999	House foundation
126131	Townsend Archaeological Consultants	1999*	House foundation
133462	Zamora and Oakes	1999	AT&SF Railroad; Colmar Cutoff
140450	Parsons Brinkerhoff	2002*	Prehistoric artifact scatter
140455	Parsons Brinkerhoff	2002*	Cairn features
140456	Parsons Brinkerhoff	2002*	Historic artifact scatter
140457	Parsons Brinkerhoff	2002*	Historic artifact scatter
140458	Parsons Brinkerhoff	2002*	Historic artifact scatter
140459	Parsons Brinkerhoff	2002*	Historic features with artifacts
140463	Parsons Brinkerhoff	2002*	Prehistoric artifact scatter
140465	Parsons Brinkerhoff	2002*	Historic features with artifacts
140466	Parsons Brinkerhoff	2002*	Historic structure with artifacts

* References are found in ARMS files.

CULTURAL SETTING

Northeastern New Mexico has seen a moderate number of small surveys but few excavations. As a result, there are a limited number of well-dated sites in the area. This is of critical significance because many cultures have occupied the land over time, and distinctions between them are not always clear-cut. Sites range in time from Paleoindian to recent historical buildings. However, distinguishing Archaic from Plains Woodlands or Apishapa-focus sites can be difficult. Many of these sites exhibit a Plains Indian orientation, while others are classified using Southwest culture distinctions (Stuart and Gauthier 1981:291). This chapter presents an overview of Indian groups that occupied northeastern New Mexico throughout its history. Much of it is adapted from Oakes (1999).

As stated above, distinctions between cultural groups in northeastern New Mexico are hardly definitive. Many more absolute dates are needed to sort out the differences between similar adaptations in vastly differing time periods. The cultural periods listed here serve only as a basis for reference and for future research that will undoubtedly refine and smooth out the overlaps and discrepancies. The periods used in this report are:

- Paleoindian (10,000- 5,500 B.C.)
- Chaquagua Plateau Archaic
 - Early (5,500-500 B.C.)
 - Late (500 B.C.-A.D. 200)
- Plains Tradition
 - Plains Woodland (A.D. 200-1100)
 - Apishapa focus (A.D. 1100-1350)
- Apachean (A.D. 1500-1587)
- Plains Indians (A.D. 1500-1880s)

PALEOINDIAN

A Paleoindian presence in the region was first recognized when bones of extinct bison were found with associated projectile points at the Folsom site (LA 8121), directly west of the project area (Figgins 1927). Big-game hunting and plant gathering were part of the subsistence adaptation. Pigeon Cliffs is a Late Paleoindian site near the Oklahoma border, probably of Plainview affiliation. A large number of bison bones, a graver, a reworked Clovis point, and possible ground stone were recovered there. An uncorrected, uncalibrated C-14 date of 8220 ± 1000 B.P. was obtained (Wendorf 1960). However, based on related artifacts and possible unreliability of the radiocarbon date, Stuart and Gauthier (1981:300) place the site in the Archaic period. A few other Paleoindian sites have been found, and Winter (1988) suggests that most

may be buried under thick alluvial fill from the surrounding mesas and uplifts. However, numerous isolated projectile points have been recovered. Early Paleoindian points of the Clovis complex have been noted in the Carrizo Creek area, southwest of Clayton. Folsom points have been found not only at the Folsom site, but also near the confluence of Ute Creek and the Canadian River and in the Ute Creek-Carrizo vicinity. Points of the later Plano complex have been found at Pigeon Cliffs (Baker and Campbell (1960).

ARCHAIC

The Archaic period has produced numerous late but no early sites, except perhaps Pigeon Cliffs. Archaic projectile points are not uncommon. They are found near Folsom and in the Canadian River Valley (Campbell 2003:1-8). Based on their similarities to later Plains points, it is suggested that this period is the precursor of later Plains adaptations. Subsistence strategies are highly mobile and focused on obtaining more modern fauna and plant species. Several small Archaic campsites have been excavated south of Clayton (Kirkpatrick and Laumbach 1984:13), near Folsom (Honea 1964), and in the western portion of the Dry Cimarron River Valley (Anderson 1975). An uncalibrated C-14 date of 2650 ± 130 B.P. was obtained for LA 8120, dug by Honea. The site contained ground stone, flakes, scrapers, and corner-notched projectile points (Stuart and Gauthier 1981:300).

PLAINS WOODLAND

Renaud (1930, 1937) conducted a reconnaissance survey of the Dry Cimarron River Valley, just to the north of the project area, and found evidence of peoples which he related to the Basketmaker culture (Renaud 1930:134). Campbell (1969:465) suggests that these were probably Plains Woodland groups, assuming that the Plains Woodland adaptations developed out of the Archaic. Between A.D. 200 and 450, circular stone structures, cord-marked and plain pottery, the bow and arrow, and new projectile point styles first appear. Some cord-marked pottery occurred at Jaritas Rock Shelter, east of Springer and near Clayton (Thoms 1976). Maize came into use in this area probably after A.D. 450. After A.D. 750, shallow pit structures are found. Most of these are located in the Dry Cimarron River Valley, and Winter (1988) suggests there may have been a substantial prehistoric population here. He postulates a hunting and gathering subsistence base that may or may not have been supplemented by maize horticulture, with little lessening

of the mobility characterized by the earlier Archaic period. Frequently, freshwater mussel shells are found on Plains Woodland sites, indicating that the Dry Cimarron may once have had a heavier flow than it does today (Winter 1988:76).

Stone-based structures in northeastern New Mexico are not well dated, and there are differences of opinion about their temporal placement. Traditionally, based on Campbell (1976:47), stone enclosures date to the Plains Woodland period, while units with vertical stone placement date to around A.D. 1000-1300. Both are thought to be bases for brush and pole structures (Campbell 1969:359). But Winter (1988) states that vertical slabs were first used during Plains Woodland times *before* A.D. 1000. Lintz (1984:46-52) believes the vertical stones are later than Plains Woodland and constitute the basis of later Apishapa-focus structures. Plains Woodland peoples also used rockshelters along with the brush- or hide-covered stone structures.

One site thought to be Plains Woodland, the Cross L Ranch site (Oakes 1979), may date to before A.D. 1000. It contains stone-ring structures with vertical-slab entries. The majority of projectile points are Scallorn types.

APISHAPA FOCUS

The Apishapa focus is considered part of the Panhandle Culture, defined for the Texas and Oklahoma panhandles. Krieger (1946) called it the Antelope Creek focus, a combination of Plains and Southwest cultures. Campbell (1976) expands the adaptation to include the Apishapa focus of southeastern Colorado and northeastern New Mexico. Then Lintz (1984:45) melds the two into the Upper Canark variant of the Panhandle Culture. Subsistence adaptations are thought to remain mobile and focus on hunting, gathering, and horticulture. However, no corn has been noted at sites recorded within the Dry Cimarron River Valley.

The Apishapa focus is thought to have developed out of the Plains Woodland at about A.D. 1000 (Campbell 1976) or possibly by A.D. 900 (Winter 1988:76). However, Lintz (1984) thinks the start of the period is as late as A.D. 1100. More than 20 sites dating between A.D. 1000 and 1350 are recorded in the Dry Cimarron River Valley and nearby Texas and Oklahoma. The principal architectural characterization of this period is the vertical stone enclosure; however, not all sites of this time possess these stones. It should be noted that these architectural styles are also reported for later Plains Indians. Fortified sites are found on ends or edges of mesas. The fortifying of sites has not been explained, except to note that there may have been conflict among contemporary groups in the region.

Most Apishapa sites are single-room units but can

contain up to eight rooms. Foundations can combine vertical and horizontal slabs. In the panhandle states, structures seem to be larger and can possess up to 20 contiguous rooms. Here, foundations usually consist of double rows of parallel vertical slabs with occasional adobe blocks or wood posts. In New Mexico, Apishapa sites are recorded in the Dry Cimarron area (Winter 1988), on the middle Canadian (Stuart and Gauthier 1981), near Logan and Mora (Moorehead 1931:116), and near Las Vegas (Holden 1931:44). None have been excavated. Drake (1992) conducted limited testing at a possible Apishapa-focus site north of Clayton.

APACHEAN AND PLAINS INDIAN

Apache groups are just one of many that dominated the Great Plains after A.D. 1500 and probably earlier. Other groups include the Comanches, Utes, Kiowas, Arapahos, Cheyennes, Pawnees, Sioux, Blackfoot, Gros Ventres, Shoshones, and Cherokees. Others that made forays into the region in historical times are the Pueblos and Navajos (Winter 1988:77). Apache groups include the Carlena, Palona, Jicarilla, and Cuartelejo bands, who supposedly lived in *rancherías* (Thomas 1974). Initially buffalo hunters, these groups eventually developed reciprocal trading relationships with more sedentary groups to the west. By the 1700s, these groups ranged from South Dakota to central Texas (Gunnerson and Gunnerson 1971:21). Often they were in conflict with each other over subsistence resources, territorial rights, and trading partners.

The Jicarilla Apaches are first documented in 1702 as farmers in the Cimarron-Ponil area (Schroeder 1974). Gunnerson and Gunnerson (1971) believe that around 1730, the other Apache groups were forced off of the Plains and took refuge with the Jicarillas, merging with them. It is thought that by 1748 the Jicarillas were driven out of their *rancherías* by Comanches and Utes and moved into the Pecos-Picuris area (Schroeder 1974). By 1883 most of the remaining Jicarillas were relocated to the Mescalero Reservation in southern New Mexico (Thomas 1974), but quite a few remained in the northeastern corner of the state.

Apache sites may have the distinctive Ocate and Cimarron Micaceous pottery, and metal and glass projectile points. Housing was generally in tipis or pithouses. Only a few Apachean sites have been recorded, and they are west of the project area (Kirkpatrick and Laumbach 1984). The difficulty of assigning sites to a cultural group during this time is the similarity between adaptations and cultural manifestations. Archaeological investigations have not progressed to the point of being able to define the unique characterizations of the various groups, if any.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT AREA

UNION COUNTY

The Spaniards were the first non-Indians to explore this vast land of open, grassy plains dotted with volcanic uplifts. Coronado probably crossed the area first, passing through on his return from what is now western Kansas back to the Rio Grande Valley over what may have been the route of the later Cimarron Cutoff (Pratt 1986:17; Fig. 4). Other expeditions in the area are not documented until 1706, when Juan de Ulibarrí traveled from Santa Fe to Taos, east to the Canadian River, and northeast across the Dry Cimarron River into Colorado, passing just to the west of present-day Des Moines and past Capulin Mountain (Thomas 1935). In 1720 the threat of Indian attacks caused Valverde to deploy Don Pedro de Villasur on a military expedition to the northeast as far as what is now Nebraska, crossing northeastern New Mexico on basically the same route as Ulibarrí. He was killed in the Nebraska area. The last known Spanish expedition through this part of New Mexico was by Pedro Vial, who in 1804 traveled from the Rio Grande to the Nebraska area several times. He crossed to the west of the project area, 20 miles east of Raton (Pratt 1986:29, 32).

One of the first to use northeastern New Mexico as a transportation route was Major Stephen H. Long. Descending from the Arkansas River near Rocky Ford, Colorado, in 1820, he traveled south across the New Mexico border, over the Dry Cimarron River, possibly through what is now Tollgate Canyon. He continued south across the high plains, passing to the west of Capulin Mountain and present-day Des Moines, and then over Carrizo Creek (Tucker 1963:190). By 1823 the Santa Fe Trail was in full operation, established as a route for trade between Missouri and Santa Fe. It crossed over the mountainous Raton Pass; however, the Cimarron Cutoff was later added to avoid the mountains and shorten the route. It traveled west across northeastern New Mexico, passing north of what is now Clayton and on to Fort Union. In 1851 the Fort Union Wagon Road ran from Colorado south into New Mexico, passing near Folsom and Capulin Mountain and then on to Fort Union. Between 1867 and 1876, it became part of the Goodnight Cattle Trail, on which cattle were driven north to Colorado from Texas (Williams and McAllister 1979:41). The volume of traffic on the road decreased by 1876 due to the railroad, and it had been abandoned by 1900 (Campbell 2003:1-4).

Non-Indian occupation of the northeast plains was virtually nonexistent in the first half of the 1800s. Attempting to capitalize on the availability of the open land, Gómez y López claimed the Uña de Gato land

grant, just to the east of the Maxwell land grant and extending to the Colfax County border. The claim was based on a petition by Salvador Vernal and Tomás López to Governor Manuel Armijo, and the state granted them the land on January 1, 1839. In 1874 Manuel Otero purchased the grant, and it was recommended for confirmation by the surveyor general (Taylor 1976:121-122). But in 1877 Senator Stephen Dorsey became interested in the land and had it resurveyed. The boundaries were vague, and so Dorsey proposed expanding the grant to 600,00 acres, reaching almost as far east as Des Moines (Fig. 4). Other landowners objected, and in 1878 a hearing was held on the validity of the boundaries. It was then discovered that Gómez y López had been convicted in Colorado of forging land grant papers. The grant was subsequently considered invalid (Pratt 1986:51-52).

Settlement of Union County began before 1850 but consisted mostly of Hispanic sheepherders. Many had large ranches that have since disappeared from the landscape. They farmed the canyon bottoms and grazed sheep on the upland grasses. By 1900 about four Hispanic communities had formed along Corrupa Creek, the Canadian River, and the junction of Ute and Trampas Creeks (Campbell 2003:1-17). These early homes were usually constructed of adobe bricks with flat roofs covered with dirt. Floors were also earthen (Thompson and Hally 1962:4). In 1844 Christian Otto and Claus Schleiter drove a herd of 4,000 sheep to their land on Tramperos Creek (Alvis 1947:256). In 1878 Dishrag Ranch, on Corrupa Creek, also ran sheep under H. C. Abbott (Thompson and Hally 1962:6). By 1880 there was a large sheep industry in the region. Ranching occurred on Upper Corrupa Creek under Briggs and Leighton, partners with F. D. Wright, a wealthy stockman from Denver. W. A. Barney was another sheep rancher in the area.

The first step towards actual development of the Union County area was taken when Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving blazed a cattle trail from Texas to the mining camps of Colorado. Over 250,000 head of cattle passed over this trail to northern market centers and military forts in the territory. Its route followed the Pecos River north to Fort Sumner. Originally, it crossed over Raton Pass but was moved farther east to avoid paying a 10-cent-per-head toll on the cattle. This new route went north to Mosquero, then northeast to near Mt. Dora, northwest past Sierra Grande just south of present-day Des Moines, then north into Colorado (Redfield 1936). By 1885 the northeastern plains were controlled by large cattle companies. But the long cattle drives stopped with the invention of barbed wire, which permitted the cattle companies to change from open-range grazing to fenced-

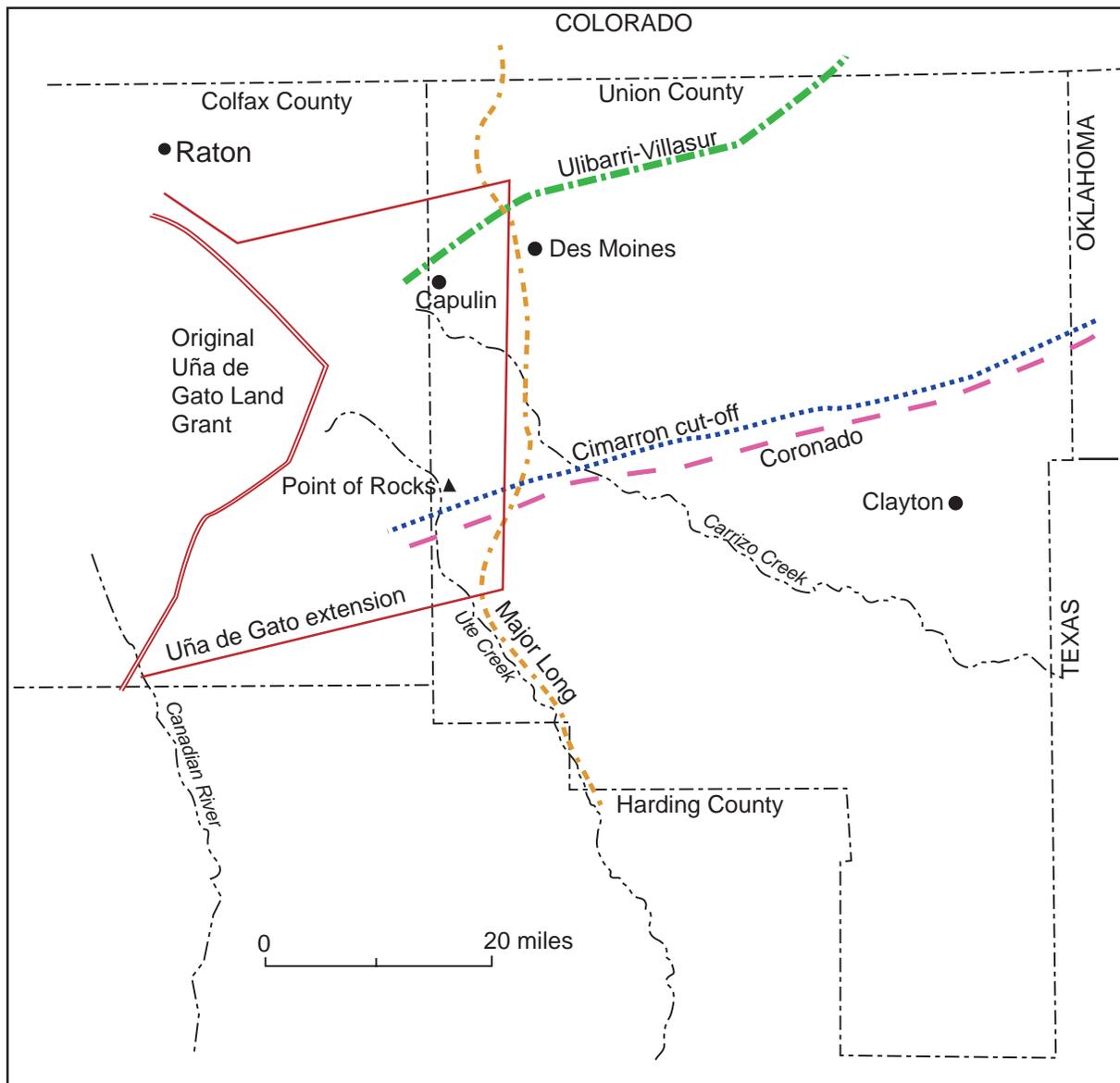


Figure 4. Early routes of travel through northeastern New Mexico.

in pastures and control the breeding of selected cattle. Huge cattle corporations soon owned hundreds of thousands of acres of Union County in the 1880s (Campbell 2003:1-14).

One of the largest cattle companies in northeastern New Mexico was the Prairie Land & Cattle Company, incorporated on September 15, 1883. It was founded by a Scottish syndicate that wanted to establish a vast empire in the west, owning ranches in Colorado, Texas, and New Mexico. Based in Trinidad, Colorado, the company was responsible for the first telephone line in the region in 1881, connected to its headquarters at the Cross L Ranch on the Dry Cimarron River (Thompson and Hally 1962:7). Westphall (1965:62) states that the Prairie

Land & Cattle Company preempted and homesteaded most of the present Union County without making any improvements, a common practice in the area.

Droughts occurred throughout this period of expanding cattle ranching. In 1870, as the ranches were just getting established, the combination of drought and a national depression made occupation of the land difficult. Another drought and recession in 1890 drove beef prices down and forced many cattle companies out of business (Campbell 2003:1-14 to1-15). Later droughts, such as in the 1930s, ruined most homesteading hopes. The infamous Dust Bowl of that time caused many to abandon the area and whole communities to disappear. Great wind storms blew the soil away and created intense dust

storms. Sand was banked up to 10 ft high against fences and houses. Locusts were also a problem (Thompson and Hally 1962:129; Campbell 2003:1-18).

During these uncertain times for cattlemen and ranchers, the railroad entered New Mexico. In 1880 only the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe ran north-south through the state, entering at Raton. In 1884 the Denver & New Orleans cut east-west across New Mexico and provided a shorter route for marketing (Thompson and Hally 1962:12). The economy of northeastern New Mexico was changed permanently by the railroad, particularly by the Colorado & Southern, which ran from Denver to Dallas. It crossed the Dry Cimarron from the north into Folsom (which for a while had the largest stockyards north of Fort Worth), then over numerous horseshoe turns to the present site of Des Moines (Thompson and Hally 1962:86; Myrick 1990). The line was originally known as the Denver, Texas, and Fort Worth Railroad, and in 1890 it became the Union Pacific, Denver, and Gulf Railway Company. It became known as the Colorado and Southern in 1898. The rail line was a huge boon to the cattlemen of northeastern New Mexico. Clayton, incorporated in 1887, was chosen as the New Mexico railhead (Campbell 2003:1-16). Trains regularly stopped at 8 to 10 stations in the region to pick up passengers (Myrick 1990). The eventual decline in railroad passenger use caused the end of the passenger line on September 11, 1967. Today the Colorado & Southern operates between Clayton and Des Moines as part of the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe.

In 1906 another rail line, the St. Louis, Rocky Mountain, and Pacific connected Raton and Cimarron. By 1908 the line had been extended east to the Des Moines townsite to connect with the Colorado & Southern. It was known as the Swastika line, using an old Indian symbol as its logo (Myrick 1990). Besides freight, it had a coach for use by passengers (Stanley 1965:6). However, traffic along the line was light, so generally service was provided only three times a week (Myrick 1990). The rail line was sold to the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe on August 1, 1913, and on March 10, 1915, the name was changed to the Rocky Mountain & Santa Fe Railway Co. Another line, the Santa Fe, Raton, and Des Moines Railroad, was to extend a route from Raton to Des Moines in 1905-1906, generally parallel to the line of the St. Louis, Rocky Mountain, and Pacific Railway Co. Grading was completed and trestles installed, but no tracks were laid. One more line, the Santa Fe, Liberal, and Englewood, was to have been built to connect the Raton coal fields with Oklahoma City markets. The plan was abandoned in 1935 (Myrick 1990).

Due to the accessibility of new rail lines connecting the Union County area with the rest of the country, it was only a matter of time before settlers moved in to farm and

ranch. New settlers came mostly from the east because New Mexico was extolled for its agricultural potential and excellent climate. Also, the Homestead Act of 1862 made it easy for settlers to claim public lands. A homestead applicant had to be the head of a household, over 21 years of age, a US citizen (or file an intent of becoming one), and one who had never borne arms against the US. He had to be a first-time homesteader and own no more than 160 acres of land in any state or territory. The applicant filed his claim in the local land office and had 7.5 years to produce his final proof of claim. He had to establish his residence on the land within six months of his initial filing, live there for five years, and cultivate a portion of the land. The final proof involved the testimony of two witnesses who could verify that he had met the necessary requirements. A notice had to be published in the nearest newspaper for five weeks, once a week, stating the applicant's intention to make final proof (Oakes 1990:10).

A land office established in Folsom in 1889 was moved to Clayton in 1892. It covered an immense amount of land (200 by 130 miles), with 8,300,000 acres available to be claimed. Remarkably, by 1913 most of the land had been claimed, and the land office was overrun with applications for making final proof. On April 30, 1925, the land office at Clayton was shut down after nearly all of the land had been claimed.

It is said that the government made filing a homestead claim too easy and thus encouraged numerous failures (Dick 1954:131). Many applicants were regrettably not qualified to work the land. Also, fraud was common. Land speculators and large landowners obtained commitments from homesteaders and payed them to sell the land as soon as the final claim was made. Another problem was that the 160-acre allotment was based on the expected productivity of richer soils east of the Mississippi River (Moran 1979:237). In the West, 160 acres was too small to provide an adequate subsistence base for the homesteader (Lamar 1970:15), so many new settlers were also forced to work in nearby communities or do manual labor for the railroad.

Most new settlers to the area practiced dry farming because of a general lack of water. The idea had been widely publicized by the railroads as a solution to the agricultural problems of the region. The purpose of dry farming was to conserve the scant moisture supply by reducing or eliminating runoff and evaporation by increasing the retention and absorption of moisture in the soil. In this region, settlers used well or gravity irrigation or constructed storage basins. They also depended heavily on annual rainfall to support crops. However, the practice of dry farming often resulted in the rapid deterioration of soil structure (Thornwaite 1941:184). This, in turn, led to the dust bowls of the 1920s and 1930s.

Therefore, there was a slim margin between success

and failure for new farmers in the region. Along with poor soils and lack of moisture, they also had to contend with droughts, hail, high summer temperatures, insect infestations, crop diseases, and prairie fires (Fite 1974:45). Sometimes the railroads sold seed wheat at cost or on credit to save the area from agricultural loss and to keep settlers on the land as a source of labor (Clark 1958:207). The railroad also brought in most of the food that the settlers could not produce themselves, such as flour, sugar, coffee, and molasses (Archer 1978:54). Settlers, however, were able to grow cowpeas, squash, pumpkins, sudan grass, and grain sorghums.

DES MOINES

The site of Des Moines was established in 1887 by the Colorado & Southern railroad when it built the line between Trinidad, Colorado, and Amarillo, Texas. The railroad apparently posted a sign at the site, calling it "Des Moines" after the city in Iowa. It was originally intended to be the hub of four railway lines, but only two were actually built: the Colorado & Southern and the St. Louis, Rocky Mountain, and Pacific (Campbell 2003:1-18). Another historian (Stanley 1965:3) says that R. M. Saavedra, original property owner of the land on which LA 140462 lies, settled here, and the small community became known as Saavedra. But when the post office was established, the name of Des Moines was used.

Saavedra was born in Mora County in 1872 and was a foreman on the Colorado & Southern railroad from 1896 until 1903. He then filed a homestead claim and by 1906 had built a house near the railroad station. He married Guadalupe Velásquez in 1900 and had nine children (LeViness 1946).

In 1906 Saavedra had built the first home in Des Moines and opened a mercantile store. The first post office was established on April 7, 1906, with Daniel Romero as the postmaster. Just to the east, J. F. Branson started another townsite, called South Des Moines. A post office opened on October 27, 1906, and the postmaster was Juan C. Martínez. In 1908 the postmistress was Mrs. Chico Green. Apparently, both Saavedra and Branson saw the locality as an excellent place for a townsite. Each filed a homestead claim on 160 acres, and most of each claim was set aside for a town. Saavedra soon enlarged his town portion, calling it Saavedra's Addition (Emery 1936). However, Branson's was the first to gain in population. It was mostly settled by Anglos, while Saavedra's was largely populated by Hispanics. Later, the railroad companies each established depots in the Saavedra Addition, creating some friction between the two towns. By 1915-16, the Saavedra Addition became the favored locality, and most of the businesses from South Des Moines moved there (Emery 1936). The two

post offices merged into the town of Des Moines. The Colorado & Southern railroad and the townsite companies together bought the 17 acres of land between the two towns to make one community (Stanley 1965:3).

J. F. Branson was said to be "the man who perhaps [was] foremost in making Des Moines a live town. . . . He came out here to get into the cattle business, but on looking over conditions in Des Moines, he saw that the range must give way to settlers, and accordingly took up a homestead" (Stanley 1965:56).

By 1908 Des Moines had become a trading and railroad shipping port for the surrounding region of farming and ranching (Muehlberger et al. 1967:96). Branson established the first newspaper at this time. By 1907 the community had its first doctor, Dr. Bassett from Iowa, who also ran a drugstore. Other businesses included the Florsheim-Blackwell Co., which had a large general mercantile store; the Bryne Hardware Co., a bakery owned by J. N. Kahn; the Cimarron Lumber Yard; the Central Hotel; the Cox & Cory townsite company; the Des Moines Land and Development Co.; a bank; and the Miller-Lanier Real Estate Co. A number of these people, including Saavedra and Branson, were listed in the *New Mexico Business Directory* in 1915 (Fig. 5). Between 1905 and 1910, Des Moines had a baseball team that played other towns, a gun club, a second-hand junk shop, a Silver Moon saloon, and several churches. North of town, the Twin Mountains, partially composed of volcanic ash, produced material for excellent cinder blocks for construction. The ash was also used as ballast for railroad tracks and was shipped to other areas by the Twin Mountain Rock Co. (Thompson and Hally 1962:36). The first railroad depot was a boxcar that was also used as living quarters by the rail agent (Emery 1936). In 1910 there was a severe drought, and the bank failed because people were unable to make their loan payments (Pratt 1986:255).

The local newspaper was established on December 23, 1907. It stated, "Des Moines has at present two railroads . . . and expects to be a junction of no little importance when the third road is completed. . . . The Colorado & Southern and the Swastika route have let contracts for a new union station here, something which is badly needed. . . . Des Moines is less than a year old but it is rapidly growing. It now numbers over 300 inhabitants [and] has an up-to-date newspaper . . . and a bank."

Housing for this growing community soon became a problem. To the rescue came J. J. Rogers, born near Fort Worth, Texas, in 1866. In May 1907 he filed a homestead claim on land near Des Moines. He had come to the area with the intent of opening a store. At first, he hauled wood and water for the new settlers, then began erecting shacks for living quarters as people moved into the community faster than they could find housing. In three

DES MOINES

A. A. JACKSON

General Blacksmithing, Horseshoeing and
 Wagon Wood Work.

Storage for Automobiles

NEW MEXICO

DES MOINES

LOANS

COLLECTIONS

J. J. Rogers

REAL ESTATE AND
 INSURANCE

NEW MEXICO

DES MOINES

BRANSON J F, general merchandise, real estate.

Byrne Clinton E, postmaster.

Catholic Church, Father M Dumerest, N Des Moines.

Christian Church, Elder Silas Scarborough pastor.

Des Moines Hotel, G S Seaton prop.

DES MOINES SWASTIKA (w), Suthers & Duran publis.

Des Moines Telephone Co, C J Dunshee mgr.

Des Moines Townsite Co, J F Branson owner.

Des Moines Transfer Co, J J Murray prop, transfer and
 implements.

Des Moines Water Supply Co, Rinaldo Martinez pres
 and genl mgr, N Des Moines.

Eddy K, general merchandise.

ELLSBERRY A S, real estate, justice peace.

Farr A W, grain dealer, N Des Moines.

Fox Harmon, general merchandise, postmaster, N Des
 Moines.

Garland H H, livery.

Garland Mrs H H, restaurant.

Gate City Lumber Co, Chas H Wohler mgr.

Gilson B F, pocket billiards, N Des Moines.

Huff I C, prin school.

JACKSON A A, blacksmith and wagon work.

Joseph George, general merchandise.

Methodist Episcopal Church, Rev W E Allman pastor.

Miner Guy, racket store.

Murray J J, agricultural implements.

Orr W J H, groceries.

Orr Hotel, E J H Orr prop.

Reichel & Co J P, meat market.

ROGERS J J, real estate, loans, insurance, collections.

Saavedra R M, real estate, notary public.

Stewart W E, agt St L, R M & P Ry and Wells Fargo Exp.

Stutchman S E, barber.

Stutchman Mrs S E, restaurant.

Thomas John D, well driller.

Wellman J R, physician.

Westover C W, barber, N Des Moines.

White M M, N Saavedra mgr, drugs, N Des Moines.

J. F. Branson

GENERAL MERCHANDISE

Shipper of Grain, Mexican Beans, Etc.

OWNER OF DES MOINES AND GRENVILLE TOWNSITE

Lumber Yard at Grenville

NEW MEXICO

DES MOINES

DES MOINES.

A rapidly growing and prosperous town in Union county, on the Colorado & Southern Ry., 80 miles southeast of Trinidad, Colorado, and 90 miles northwest of Dalhart, Texas. This is the present terminus of the St. Louis, Rocky Mountain & Pacific R. R., and crossing of the Santa Fe line, now being built. The town was started in May, 1907, is at the foot of the Sierra Grand mountain, which is 11,500 feet high. Climate healthful, is surrounded by good farming country, which is settling up rapidly. The soil is productive and plenty of good water can be had at a depth of 40 to 100 feet. It bids fair to be one of the best towns in New Mexico. Excellent grain and bean country. Yield of wheat in 1914, 20 to 50 bushels per acre. Has up-to-date newspaper, good school, several good business houses, and neat residences. There is a good opening here for business in several lines, including bank, mill and elevator. New telephone system. Population of neighborhood 600. Elevation 6,600 feet.

Atwater Mrs Lucile, U S Commissioner.

Aylor C E, jeweler.

Baptist Church, Rev J Malcom pastor.

BASSETT W G, physician and surgeon.

Figure 5. New Mexico Business Directory, 1915.

months, he built 75 shacks and acquired the nickname of “the Shack Builder.” He also found homestead claims for settlers in the Des Moines vicinity and was paid \$5 per claim. He thus became a realtor and was also justice of the peace and a member of the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce by 1920.

On April 18, 1908, the *Swastika* reported the daring capture of a band of train robbers in Des Moines: “Six desperate car robbers were captured at Des Moines by T. H. Gardiner of the St. Louis, Pacific, and Rocky Mountain Railroad of Raton. The arrest . . . is a culmination of a search of many months for car burglars who had been almost nightly breaking open cars.” Bad guys were again reported in Des Moines by the *Raton Reporter* in ca. 1912, saying that Des Moines was terrorized by outlaws who shoot up the town, rob people, and shoot at anyone attempting to arrest them.

Des Moines got its first bathtub in 1916, as stated by the *Swastika* on December 22, 1916. “Des Moines has a Bath Tub. It is no longer necessary for the citizens to make weekly trips to Clayton or Trinidad. Guy Mine has just installed a real bath tub in his barber shop and already several novices have been initiated into its mysteries.”

By 1920, Des Moines had reached “the zenith of her prosperity” with 800 citizens. It had two “high-class” garages, four churches, water works, electricity, two hotels, four restaurants, and several good stores (Emery 1936). There was also a theater and an orchestra. At that time, a Mrs. Glasspoole bought stock in the Des Moines Oil Co. and came to town from Colorado to see the business. She wound up leasing the Des Moines Hotel for one year and renaming it El Capitan. In 1920 a list of 24 Chamber of Commerce members named no Hispanics, although there were a fair number in town. J. J. Rogers (the Shack Builder) was a member.

Des Moines was also the basis for the fictional town in the cowboy novels of Max Evans, most notably *The Hi Lo Country*, which was made into a movie with Woody Harrelson in the late 1990s (T. Maxwell, personal communication, 2004).

In 1920 a severe drought took hold, and the town declined as people left for other places. It never again reached a population of 800. There were 362 residents in 1936 (Emery 1936), 289 in 1940 (LeViness 1946), 80 in 1950, and 207 in 1962. By 1965 many stores had been boarded up as people had sought employment elsewhere. There were only 14 students in the 1965 high school graduating class (*Raton Ranger*, 1965). Today, it a small community serving the surrounding farming and ranching interests.

LA 140462 is immediately west of Des Moines on the west side of NM 325 and its junction with US 64/87. The site and its surroundings consist of open, grassy fields with a few houses nearby. Sierra Grande is visible to the south of the site and Capulin Mountain to the northwest (Fig. 6).

Area 1 of LA 140462 contains a dispersed house foundation of rocks and an associated trash scatter within a 15 by 13 m area. It sits on private land directly north of the highway right-of-way fence except for a small portion (approximately 1 m long) extending into the right-of-way (Fig. 7). Campbell (2003) notes that scant wall alignments are marked by a single course of tabular sandstone and limestone rocks that form a 7.5 by 3.0 m room. Gaps 1 m wide in the north and south walls may be the location of doorways. A possible cast iron stove (parts were found) was situated in the southeast corner. A likely garden plot defined by small, tabular rocks was north of the structure.

Table 3. Historic artifacts at LA 140462

Artifact	Begin Date
Glass	
Brown beer	1880
Iridescent	Post 1900
Aqua (paneled)	1910
Purple	1917
Boyd's cap	1910
Clear (paneled)	1930
Light green	
Cobalt	
Ceramic	
Ironstone	1920
Crockery (beige and brown)	
Porcelain	
Clothing	
Button cover	
Shoe eyelet	Post 1874
Shell button (2 hole)	
Miscellaneous	
Tobacco cans	Post 1892
Lard pail	
Bucket handle	
Framing nails (round)	Post 1890
Framing nails (square)	Post 1870
Crown bottle caps	Post 1893
Hole-in-top can lid	Post 1920
Stove part (cast iron)	
Railroad spike	
Washers (small and large)	
Barbed wire	
Bricks	
Lead bottle cap	
Coal fragments	



Figure 6. LA 140462 in the foreground and Capulin Mountain in the background, looking northwest.

Campbell (2003) notes over 200 artifacts in the site area. OAS staff compiled a list of most of these artifacts when visiting the site, and they compared favorably with Campbell. However, there were no whole or even partial artifacts. Glass and ceramics were broken into small pieces, and cans were in fragments. Someone must have collected the larger pieces or deliberately broken them because many had been pushed (probably by mechanical means) to the north of the site into a pile. Table 3 (page 18) lists the artifacts observed during this project.

No makers marks or embossing on the glass or ceramics were observed; however, based on artifacts, the site was dated to between 1917 and 1920. Datable artifacts include purple, aqua, iridescent, and clear-paneled glass, a Boyd's cap, ironstone dinnerware, and a hole-in-top can lid.

LA 140462 appears to have been a residence. The scattered rocks that made up the house foundation would have been insufficient to build a rock structure, and the superstructure was probably a frame building.

RAFAEL M. SAAVEDRA

The original owner of the site and the surrounding areas was Rafael M. Saavedra, born in 1872 in Guadalupita, New Mexico, in northwestern Mora

County. His father and mother were Rafael and Juana Saavedra. In 1900 he married Guadalupe Velásquez. In the 1910 US Census, he is listed as a merchant having 4 children: Arturo (8), Orafina (7), Alfecto (5), and Rafaelita (3). In the 1900 census, Rafael Saavedra was living with an uncle, Renifio Padilla, in Folsom, Union County. Between 1903 and 1920, he lived in Des Moines. By 1920 he had moved to Clayton with his wife and three more children. Neither he nor his wife could be found in the 1930 census for Union County. Rafael Saavedra was the first person to develop land in the area that is now Des Moines, filing a homestead application and, prior to "proving up," paying cash for the 160 acres that now include the site (cash entry, Patent Certificate No. 1279, granted to Saavedra by the United States on January 13, 1908; Appendix 1). The price of the sale is unknown. Because it was a cash transaction, there are no homestead records with a description of a house or improvements to the property. The fact that Saavedra opted to pay cash for the land is interesting because most settlers chose to homestead the land, meeting the five-year requirement for living on and cultivating the land. Another choice (the one made by Saavedra) was to file a homestead claim and after six months commute the entry by paying cash for the property. Many did not approve of this procedure, enacted under the Pre-emption Law of 1854, calling it the

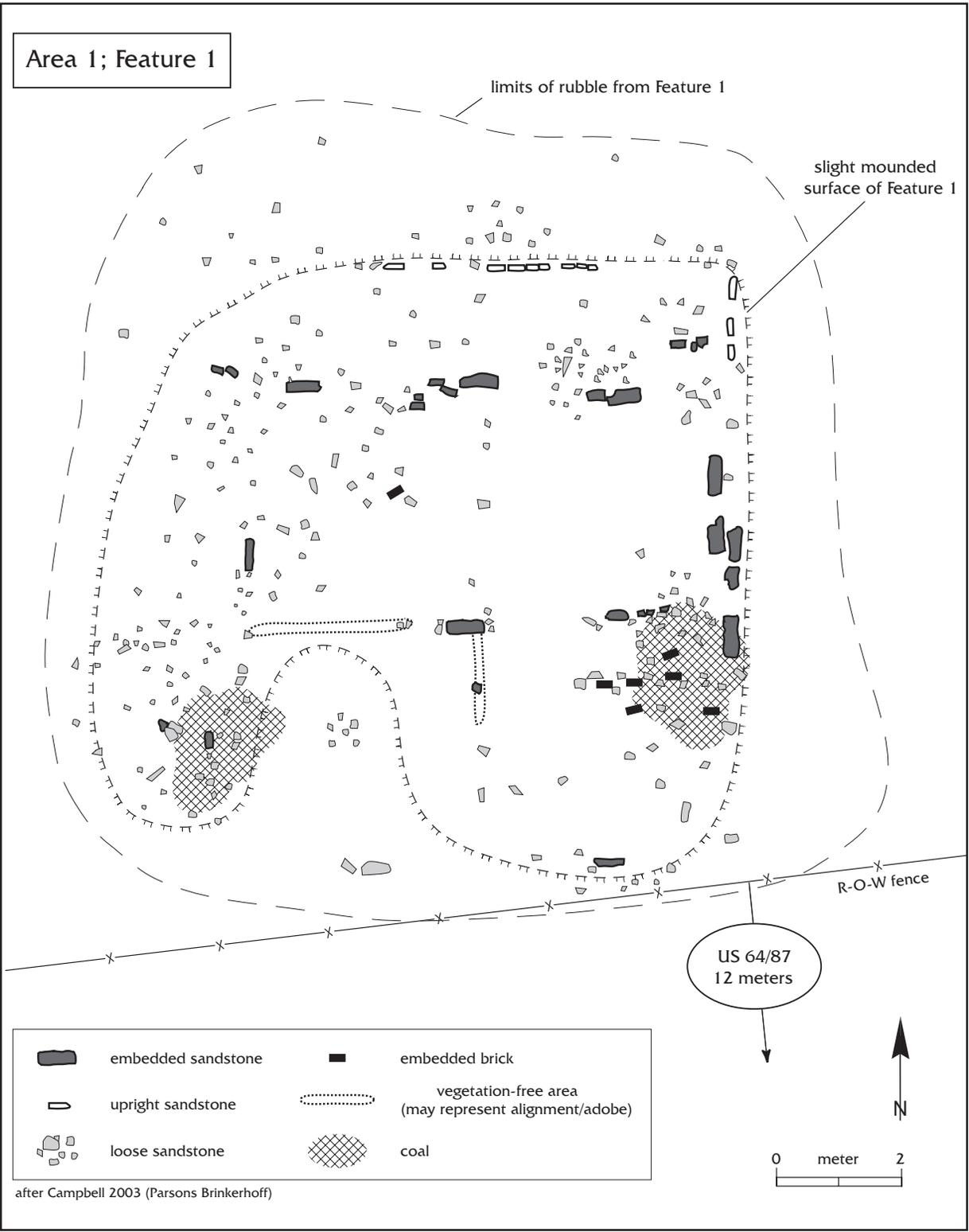


Figure 7. Site plan of LA 140462, Area 1 (after Campbell 2003).

“speculator’s law” (Westphall 1965:66). We know that Saavedra was on the land before 1907 and paid cash for it in 1908. We also know that he certainly did prove to be a “speculator.”

The location of Saavedra’s land and that of other nearby settlers is shown in Figure 8, abstracted from records at the BLM office in Santa Fe. LA 140462 lies virtually in the center of Saavedra’s purchase. The north-eastern portion of his land was initially claimed by the Aztec Land and Cattle Company in 1904 under Forest Lien No. 6338. There is no indication in the Union County deed books that Saavedra got the land directly from the cattle company; therefore, we assume it was available for purchase by 1908.

From Figure 8, it can be seen that Saavedra was perhaps only the second settler to actually occupy land in the immediate area around Des Moines. Only Santiago Sandoval was earlier, acquiring a homestead patent on land 0.5 to 1.0 miles west of Saavedra in 1906. However, we have mortgage deeds that put Saavedra on his land at least by April of 1907. Also, LeViness (1946) states that Saavedra built a house near the railroad station in 1906 and had other businesses as well. We know that Saavedra had been a foreman on the Colorado and Southern railroad from 1896 to 1903, so he was in the vicinity of Des Moines at least as early as 1903. His home was north of the Colorado & Southern railroad in an area that now contains vacant fields. LA 140462 was not his home because he sold that property almost immediately after acquiring it, and it was south of the tracks.

While Saavedra was a typical landowner in the Des Moines area, with 160 acres of homesteaded land, he was definitely the leading entrepreneur, defined in *Webster’s New World Dictionary* (1974) as “a person who organizes and manages a business undertaking, assuming the risk for the sake of the profit.” Saavedra must have been a prominent citizen of Des Moines because in 1910 he was on the School Board of District 22 in Des Moines, and in 1915 he was named as an investor in real estate and a notary public (see Fig. 5). Apparently, Saavedra’s intent was to subdivide the acreage at the small railroad stop of Des Moines into lots, blocks, streets, and alleys and sell them to newcomers. By late 1906, if not earlier, he had set aside 40 of his 160 acres (the NE1/4 of the SW1/4 of Section 10) for the original division, and by April 1907 had included the remaining 120 acres, calling it Saavedra’s Addition (Fig. 9; Appendix 2). The St. Louis, Rocky Mountain, and Pacific railroad ran through the original 40 acres, and a 160 ft corridor was deeded to them by Saavedra. Blocks south of this corridor were labeled A through I, and those north of the railroad were numbered 1 through 28, making 37 blocks total. The construction of US 64/87 has eliminated portions of some of these blocks in the southern part of the townsite. All lots

in Saavedra’s subdivision were (and still are) 140 ft long by 25 ft wide, with some exceptions near the railroad right-of-way. All streets in the town were 80 ft wide, while alleys were 20 ft wide. LA 140462 is situated in Block 4, Lot 12, of Saavedra’s Addition on the corner of NM 325 and First Street (now US 64/87). He named the next two streets to the east Saavedra and Velásquez.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DES MOINES

The development of Des Moines is an amazing story of the efforts of one man to build a town from nothing. It must have been a huge financial gamble on Saavedra’s part to buy 160 acres, divide it into blocks and lots, and then assume people would buy the parcels. He may have been an astute student of New Mexico land development, having been a foreman on the Colorado & Southern railroad, realizing that rail traffic was the transportation of the future, and knowing that Des Moines was planned to be a railroad hub. Or it may have been pure luck on his part. It is not known how much money Saavedra invested, but he was certainly a wealthy man when all of his land dealings were completed.

Saavedra divided his property into 37 blocks, most with 24 lots. Each lot measured 140 by 25 ft, and 20 ft alleys separated them in half. Eight of the blocks on the north edge of the proposed town had only 12 double-sized lots. Figure 10 shows the division of the community into blocks and lots. Saavedra began selling lots in February 1907 (Table 4), and his last transaction was recorded on February 22, 1920. However, most sales were finalized by 1912. The map indicates that he sold 31 of the 37 blocks, and only 10.4 percent of the lots in these 31 blocks were not sold. He sold some of the lots twice over several years. It is likely that some settlers were not able to make a living, and ownership reverted to the seller. The mortgage records frequently reported the selling price for the lots. From the sale of all of his lots, Saavedra received \$18,618 over a five-year period, and an unknown sum for another 37 lots. The lots ranged in cost from \$1 (most notably for Hispanic buyers) to \$500. The mean price of recorded lot transactions was \$143.48. At that cost, Saavedra would probably have earned another \$5,309.00 on the unrecorded lots, giving him a total income of \$23,927. In today’s dollars, that would equal \$454,613 (McCusker 1992; reference librarian, New Mexico State Library), making him a wealthy man in his time.

This income includes a lump sum of \$8,000 paid to Saavedra by John E. Savage on March 9, 1909, for all of the townsite of Des Moines with the exception of all sold lots, alleys, and railroad rights-of-way. Savage must have likewise made a nice profit on the resale of the lots. The lots and blocks sold to Savage are shown on Figure 10,

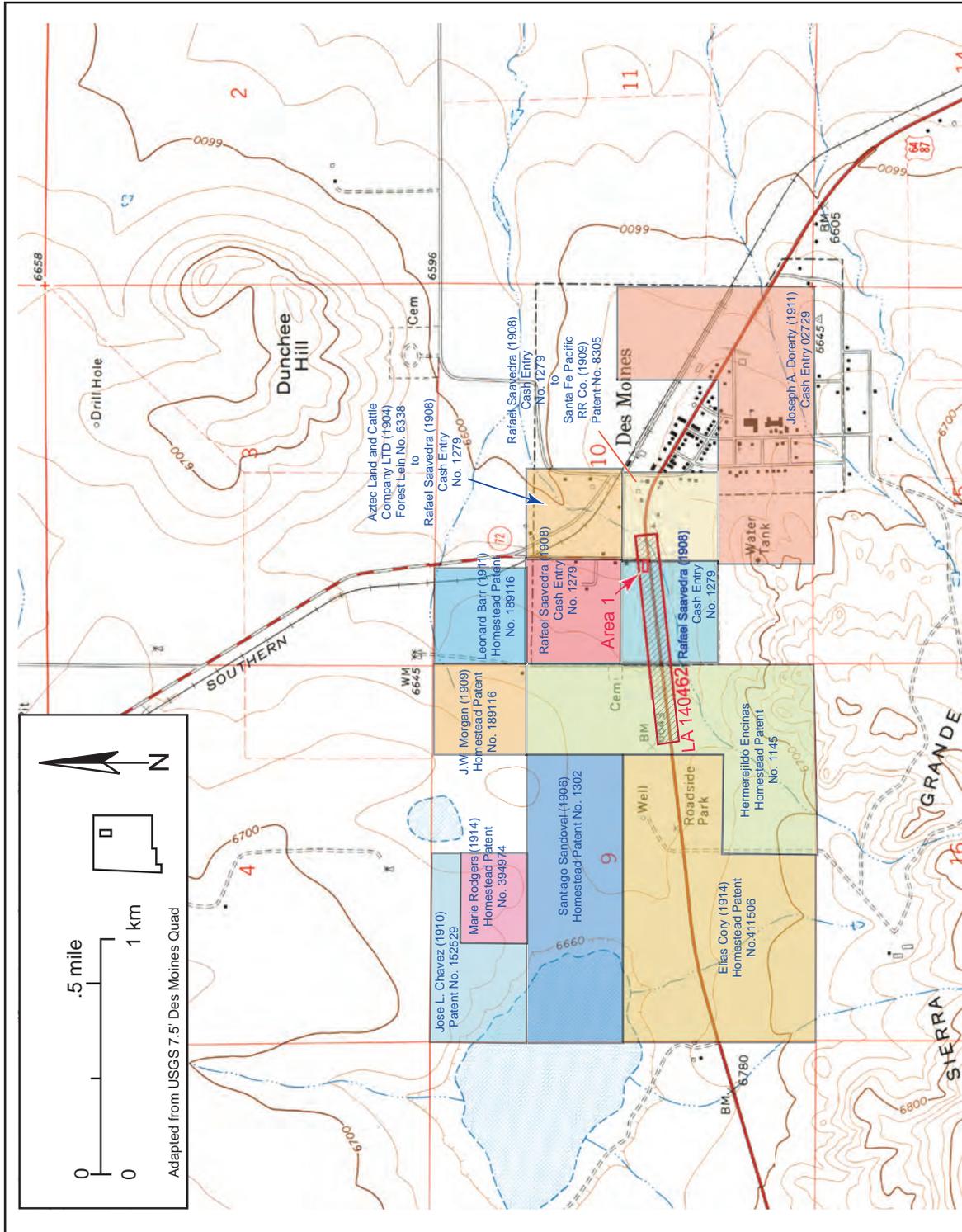


Figure 8. Landowners in the vicinity of LA 140462, 1904-1914.

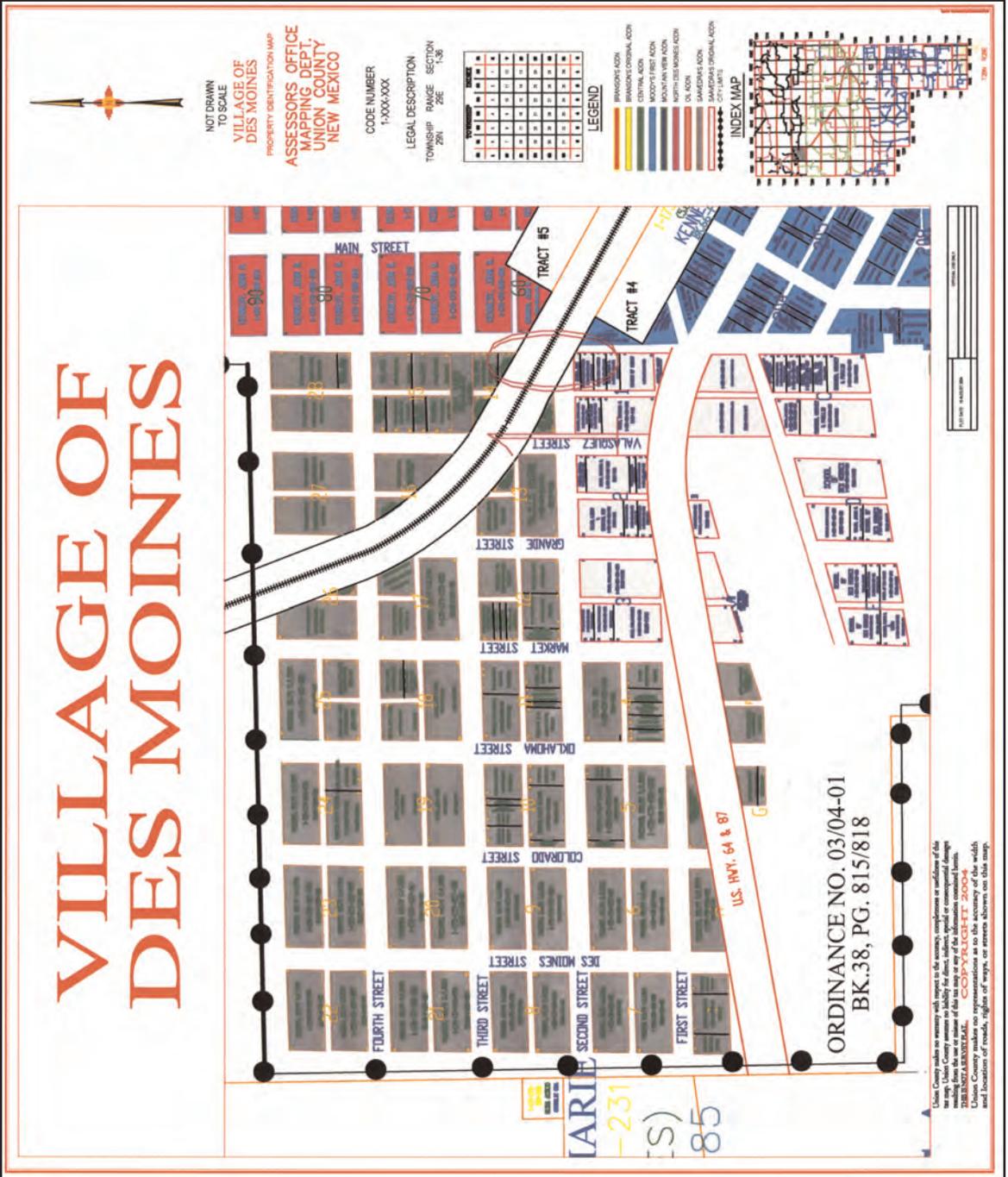


Figure 9. Saavedra's subdivisions.

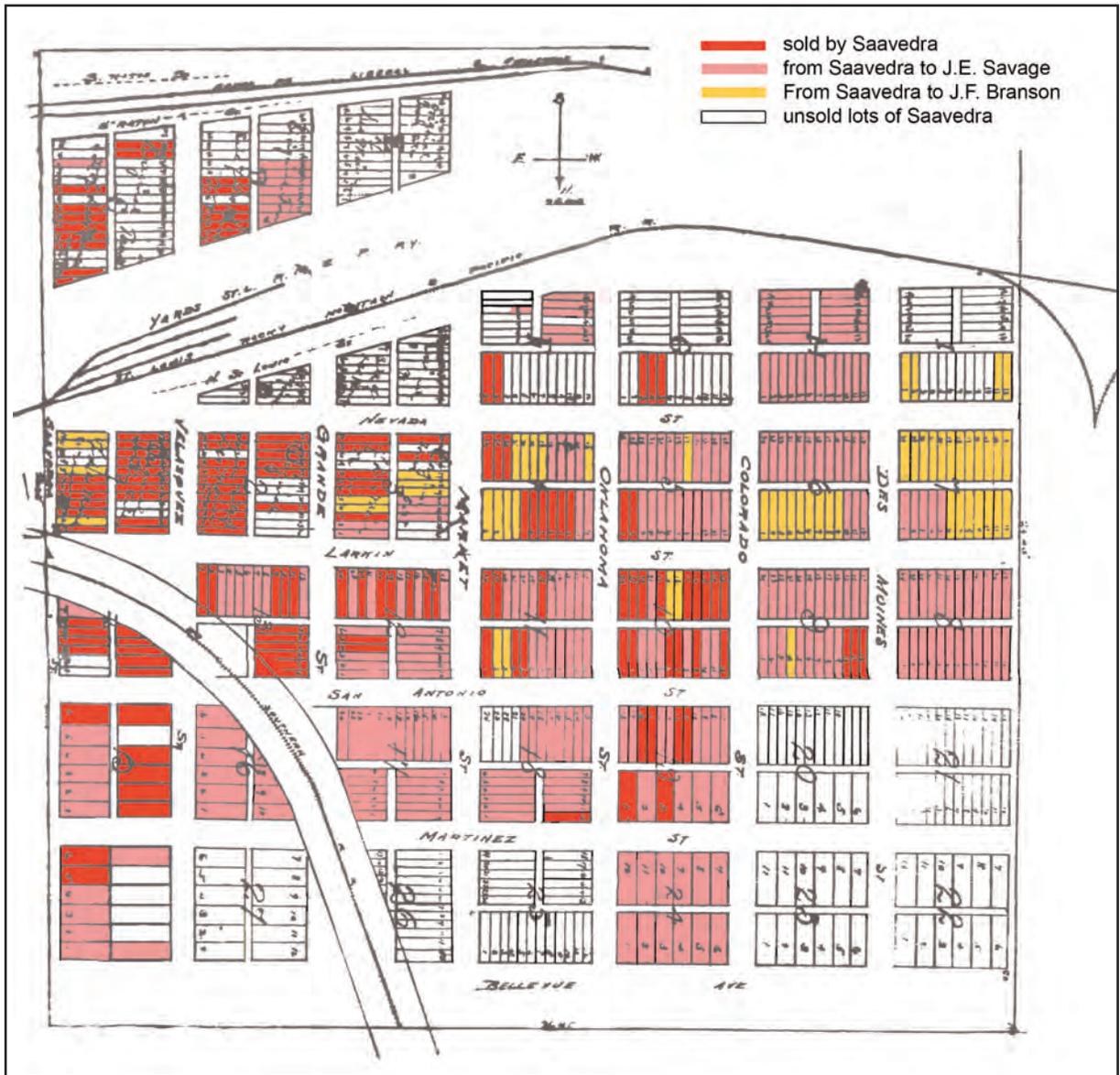


Figure 10. Map of Des Moines, March 1907, showing Saavedra's property transactions.

along with those still belonging to Rafael Saavedra and those sold to another entrepreneur, J. F. Branson.

Josiah F. Branson was born in Arkansas in 1867 and had arrived in Des Moines by 1906. He ran a mercantile and milling operation but, like Saavedra, realized the potential of land development in the area. He bought 160 acres southeast of Saavedra's property, separated from him by 17 acres along the Colorado & Southern rail line. Branson's original site contained 30 acres divided into the same size lots and blocks as those of Saavedra, with 10 acres deeded to the rail line. He subsequently added another 120 acres to his holdings south and east of his original site (Fig. 11). As mentioned previously, he sold lots within this area and built up several businesses. In 1915 Saavedra's portion of the town was more developed, and the two areas merged into the town of Des Moines after a land development company bought the 17 acres between the two (Stanley 1965). Branson seems to have started selling lots as early as May 1907, soon after Saavedra, whose property transactions began on February 27, 1907.

Another entrepreneur who capitalized on the development of Des Moines was Elias Cory, who filed a homestead claim on land west of Saavedra's property in 1914 (see Fig. 8) after first buying lots from Saavedra in Des Moines starting in June 1907. Unlike Saavedra and Branson, Cory may have used his profits from the resale of these lots to purchase his homestead.

PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS AT LA 140462

LA 140462 was part of Saavedra's original homestead claim of 1907, and later part of Saavedra's Addition. It was one of many properties that Saavedra sold to new settlers in the community. Table 5 traces the ownership of that property (Block 4, Lot 12, Des Moines) from the time of Saavedra's possession to the present through Union County Courthouse mortgage deeds.

Don Flynn is the current owner of the property. His house sits in Lot 11. Another house sits in Lot 10. The assessed value of Lots 1 through 12 in 2004 is \$8,921; \$400 of that is the value of the land, and the remainder is the value of property improvements. Around 1910 the assessed value of all of Saavedra's 160 acres was \$235. Lot 12, the location of LA 140462, contains only the barely visible remains of a structure.

From courthouse records of the small residence at LA 140462, it appears likely that George G. Dickey constructed the house on Lot 12. He owned the land between 1914 and sometime before 1937, judging from the artifact assemblage. Census records do not indicate his presence in Des Moines or Union County in 1910 or 1920. We know he was there in 1914, and therefore we suspect he came after 1910 and left before 1920.

Table 4. Saavedra's property transactions by block and lot

Block	Date	Purchaser	Location	Cost	
A	11/11/1907	Frank W. Rhodes	Lots 1-2	\$90.00	
	3/11/1908	J. W. Jordan	Lots 3-5	\$140.00	
	4/23/1908	Arturo Saavedra (son)	Lots 15-16	-	
	9/14/1908	Porfirio Salas	Part of Lots 8-13	\$150.00	
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lot 14	-	
B	4/23/1908	Arturo Saavedra	Lots 16-17	\$1.00	
	11/29/1909	P. G. Brite	Lots 4-5	-	
C	4/6/1907	Josiah F. Branson	Lots 1-2, 9-11	-	
	4/29/1907	Caraciolo Garcia	Lots 24-25	\$100.00	
	7/1/1907	W. F. McCaman	Lots 5-8	\$64.00	
	4/29/1908	Harmon Fox	Lots 18-19	\$1,000 .00	
	7/12/1912	John W. Lanier	Lots 26-27	-	
D	2/27/1907	E. J. Albright	Lot 8	-	
	4/29/1907	Caraciolo Garcia	Lot 7	-	
	4/27/1908	R. Chambers	Lot 5	\$50.00	
	4/27/1908	A. J. Chambers	Lot 4	\$40.00	
	4/29/1908	Edgar D. Daniel	Lot 3, part of Lots 1-2	-	
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 20-25	-	
E	None				
F	2/12/1908	S. Florsheim et al.	Lots 1-2	\$150.00	
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 1-7, 11-14, 16-20	-	
G	11/11/1909	Remuldo Martinez	Lots 3-4	-	
	11/22/1909	F.G. Matthews	Lot 23	-	
	11/22/1909	E.G. Langston	Lot 24	-	
	11/22/1910	Robert E. Cole	Lots 9-20	-	
	3/1/1912	Remuldo Martinez	Lots 4-5	-	
	4/4/1912	Domingo Dominguez	Lot 10	-	
H	12/29/1909	John E. Savage	All		
I	12/29/1909	John E. Savage	All	-	
1	2/27/1907	Robert E. Cole	Lots 19-20	\$30.00	
	2/27/1907	Charles Stanley	Lots 13-18	\$85.00	
	5/17/1907	Sela Cox	Lot 1	\$40.00	
	1/7/1908	E.J. Dedman	Lots 6-7	\$300.00	
	2/5/1908	G.W. Hunter	Lot 9	\$400.00	
	4/19/1908	J.W. Fox	?	\$100.00	
	11/11/1909	Remuldo Martinez	Lots 3-4	\$600.00	
	11/22/1909	P.C. Brite	Lots 4-5	\$75.00	
	11/22/1909	L.C. Langston	Lot 24	\$50.00	
	11/22/1909	F. G. Matthews	Lot 23	\$35.00	
	2	4/9/1907	John H. Lotts	Lots 1-2	\$85.00
		4/16/1907	W. J. McAdams	Lot 21	\$35.00
		5/17/1907	Harvey Cox & George Weems	Lots 6-8, 11-17	\$70.00
8/6/1907		Sam F. Goodner	Lots 22	\$70.00	
5/7/1908		Harmon Fox	Lots 3-4	\$300.00	
11/30/1908		Estefan Salas	Lot 5	\$20	
3/15/1909		John E. Savage	Lot 9	\$300	
7/16/1912		Elias Cory	Lot 7	-	
3	4/6/1907	Josiah F. Branson	Lots 1-3	\$115.00	
	4/9/1907	H. A. Salter	Lots 2-3	\$55.00	
	7/27/1907	George F. L. Bishop	Lots 11-12	\$80.00	
	10/3/1907	Felix Reid	Lot 13	\$75.00	

Table 4. Saavedra's property transactions by block and lot (continued)

Block	Date	Purchaser	Location	Cost
	2/29/1908	P. T. Garvey	Lot 15	\$40.00
	11/22/1908	Laura Cox	Lots 6-8	\$75.00
	3/15/1909	John E. Savage	Lot 12	-
	8/6/1909	Remuldo Martinez	Lot 18	\$1.00
	11/22/1909	Bennie F. Richardson	Lot 1	-
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 18-22	-
4	5/6/1907	F. Walter Carruthers	Lot 22	\$45.00
	6/3/1907	Elias Cory	Lots 23-24	\$135.00
	12/31/1907	Josiah F. Branson	Lot 8	\$15.00
	2/12/1908	S. Florsheim et al.	Lots 8-10	-
	5/7/1908	Elias Cory	Lot 6	-
	8/22/1908	Elias Cory	Lot 5	-
	1/4/1909	Antonio Lucero	Lot 17	\$1.00
	3/15/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 21-24	-
	10/2/1909	Sanford Wilson	Lot 12	-
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 11-12, 14-16, 19-20	-
5	4/14/1908	J. J. Murray	Lots 1-2	\$200.00
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 3-24	-
6	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	All	-
7	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	All	-
8	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	All	-
9	2/12/1908	S. Florsheim et al.	Lots 11-12	-
	5/7/1908	Harmon Fox	Lots 22-23	-
	11/11/1909	Remuldo Martinez	Lot 26	\$1.00
	11/11/1909	Remuldo Martinez	Lot 24	\$1.00
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 1-23	-
10	8/6/1907	Elias Cory	Lots 1-2	\$250.00
	11/11/1907	Barton	Lot 10	\$50.00
	2/12/1908	S. Florsheim et al.	Lots 13-18	-
	5/7/1908	Elias Cory	Lot 9	-
	5/7/1908	Harmon Fox	Lots 6-7	-
	6/3/1909	Elias Cory	Lots 22-24	\$250.00
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 1-5, 8-9, 14-21	-
11	5/6/1907	Viola Carruthers	Lots 23-24	\$130.00
	10/10/1907	G. N. Bucham	Lot 18	-
	2/12/1908	S. Florsheim et al.	Lots 3-5	-
	5/7/1908	Harmon Fox	Lots 1-4	-
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 1-2, 6-12, 15-17, 19-21	-
12	10/4/1907	John W. Mitchell	Lot 22	\$55.00
	10/4/1907	G. N. Bucham	Lot 24	\$100.00
	11/11/1907	George H. Benton	Lot 15	\$75.00
	2/10/1908	Victor Anderson	Lot 17	\$50.00
	4/27/1908	Ella Rogers	Lot 14	\$50.00
	7/2/1908	E. R. Langsford	Lot 19	\$50.00
	5/12/1909	E. M. Bernetti	Lot 20	\$50.00
	11/11/1909	Francisco Martinez	Lot 19	\$15.00
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 3, 8-9, 11-12, 23	-
13	8/6/1907	Elias Cory	Lots 1-2	\$250.00
	11/11/1907	Barton	Lots 1-2	\$50.00
	2/12/1908	S. Florsheim et al.	Lots 13-18	-
	5/7/1908	Elias Cory	Lot 9	-

Table 4. Saavedra's property transactions by block and lot (continued)

Block	Date	Purchaser	Location	Cost
	1/22/1909	Bennie Richardson	Lot 1	\$40.00
	11/12/1912	J. F. Walls	Lot 11	-
14	9/14/1907	E. H. J. Krull	Lots 4-7	\$120.00
	2/28/1908	Elias Cory	Lots 1-3	\$250.00
	3/10/1909	A. P. Fox et al	Part of Lots 8-12	\$175.00
15	3/11/1908	P. F. Garvey	Lot 7	-
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 9-11	-
	11/19/1910	Guadalupe Saavedra (wife)	Lot 6 (correction in deed)	-
16	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	All	-
17	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	All	-
18	5/7/1908	Harmon Fox	Lot 12	-
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 5-10, 13-20	-
19	11/9/1907	G. W. Carson	Lot 1	\$35.00
	2/12/1908	S. Florsheim et al.	Lots 11-12	-
	5/7/1908	Harmon Fox	Lots 15-16	-
	3/10/1909	T. R. Scarborough	Lot 3	\$1.00
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 2, 4-9,13-14, 17-18	-
20-23	None			
24	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 1-10	-
25	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 26-27	-
26-27	None			
28	1907	John E. Savage	Lots 5-6	-
	5/7/1908	Elias Cory	Lots 5-6	\$100.00
	12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Lots 1-4, 7-12	-

Table 5. Property transactions at LA 140462

Date	Seller	Buyer	Notes
12/2/1909	Rafael M. Saavedra	John E. Savage	Part of \$8,000 sale of lots to Savage
12/2/1909	John E. Savage	Sanford Wilson	Property bought and sold same day
9/5/1914	Sanford Wilson	George G. Dickey	Includes Lot 11
Before 1937*			
8/31/1937	Union County Treasurer	State of New Mexico	Includes Lots 3-4, 7-11
3/28/1945	State Tax Commission	Joe I. Rivera	Includes Lots 7-11
2/8/1949	Joe I. and Eva G. Rivera	J. C. King	Includes Lots 1-11
12/31/1949	J. C. and Landie O. King	Francis W. Smith	Includes Lots 1-11
11/16/1951	Francis W. and Vida Mae Smith	Jay C. Carruthers	Includes Lots 1-11
2/21/1956	J. C. and Erin L. Carruthers	Jay W. Ellis	Includes Lots 1-11
12/28/1963	Jay W. and Billie Rhea Carruthers	Joe M. Gurule	Includes Lots 1-11
9/18/1967	International State Bank of Raton	Joe M. Gurule	Only Lot 12**
9/14/1987	Joe M. Gurule	School District of Des Moines	Includes Lots 1-11
7/1/2003	School District of Des Moines	Don Flynn	Includes Lots 1-11

* Apparently the property was taken over by the county, possibly for delinquent taxes.

** Apparently repossessed by Gurule.

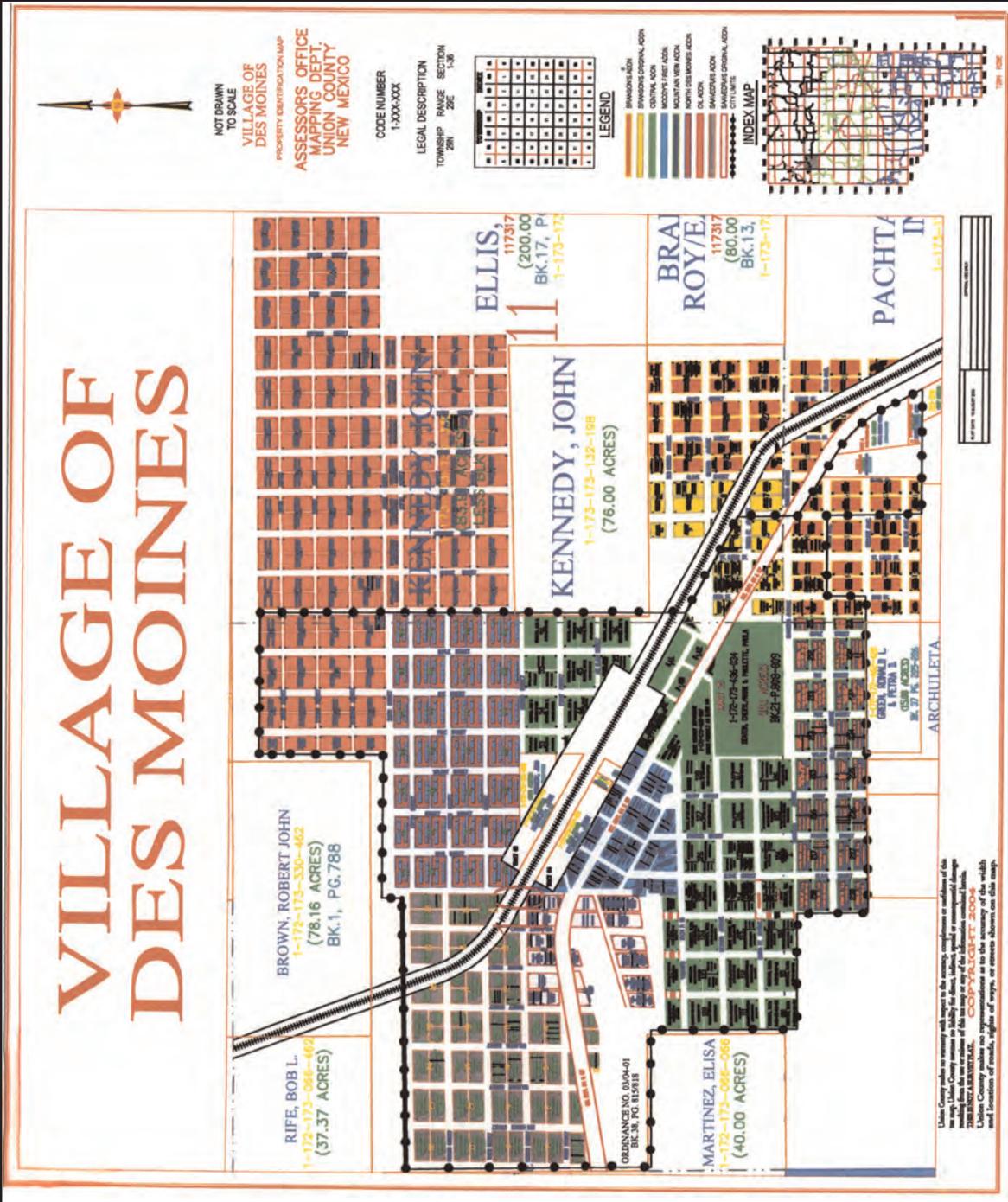


Figure 11. Branson's additions to Des Moines.

CONCLUSIONS

This project consisted primarily of archival research on the twentieth-century structural remains at LA 140462 in Des Moines. Interviews with residents of Des Moines confirmed that no structure has been visible at the site since the 1960s or earlier. Records at the Union County Courthouse and the US Census were useful in recovering information about the site.

In 1907 Rafael M. Saavedra purchased 160 acres of homestead land, including the location of LA 140462. The history of the property was intertwined with Saavedra's entrepreneurship and the development of Des Moines. The location of LA 140462 was absorbed into the real estate dealings of Saavedra, who succeeded in selling off most of his 160 acres by subdividing the land into blocks and lots. LA 140462 was Lot 12 in Block 4 of Saavedra's Addition (adjacent to his original townsite). The property was sold to John E. Savage, another real estate entrepreneur, and went through many subsequent

owners.

The original construction of a residence at LA 140462 was undertaken by George G. Dickey, who owned the property between 1914 and prior to 1937 (most likely prior to 1920). This time period coincides with the dates of the artifacts found on the site. The town of Des Moines reached its peak in population and number of businesses in approximately 1920 and then declined fairly rapidly. Many people moved away from the community during the period of decline. We can only speculate that George G. Dickey was one of these who left around this time.

LA 140462 is historically important because the site is inextricably tied in with the development of Des Moines and the vast real estate holdings of Rafael M. Saavedra, who was responsible for that development. Today, only the bare outline of foundation walls reveal the site's presence.

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APPENDIX 1: SAAVEDRA'S PATENT CERTIFICATE

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The United States of America,

do all to which these presents shall come, Greeting:

Certificate No. 1279.

WHEREAS,

RAFAEL M. SAAVEDRA

has deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE of the United States a Certificate of the Register of the Land Office at Clayton, New Mexico, whereby it appears that full payment has been made by the said Rafael M. Saavedra

according to the provisions of the Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820, entitled "An Act making further provision for the sale of the Public Lands," and the acts supplemental thereto, for the south half of the northwest quarter and the north half of the southwest quarter of Section ten in Township twenty-nine north of Range twenty-nine east of the New Mexico Meridian, New Mexico, containing one hundred sixty acres.

according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said lands, returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the Surveyor General, which said Tract has been purchased by the said Rafael M. Saavedra:

NOW KNOW YE, That the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in consideration of the premises, and in conformity with the several Acts of Congress in such case made and provided, HAVE GIVEN AND GRANTED, and by these presents DO GIVE AND GRANT, unto the said Rafael M. Saavedra

and to his heirs, the said Tract above described; TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the same, together with all the rights, privileges, immunities, and appurtenances, of whatsoever nature, thereunto belonging, unto the said Rafael M. Saavedra

and to his heirs and assigns forever; subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights, as may be recognized and acknowledged by the local customs, laws, and decisions of courts, and also subject to the right of the proprietor of a vein or lode to extract and remove his ore therefrom, should the same be found to penetrate or intersect the premises hereby granted, as provided by law; and there is reserved from the lands hereby granted, a right of way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States.

In testimony whereof I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the seal of the General Land Office to be hereunto affixed.

(SEAL) GIVEN under my hand, at the City of Washington, the thirteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eight and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and thirty-second.

By the President: Theodore Roosevelt

By M. W. Young, Secretary.

Recorder of the General Land Office.

APPENDIX 2. SAAVEDRA AFFIDAVIT (APRIL 18, 1907)

Presents:

That I, Rafael M. Saavedra, of Union County, Territory of New Mexico, being the sole owner of the 160 acres, described as follows: being the S1/2 of NM1/4 of Section 10 and the N1/2 of the SW1/4 of Section 10, in Twp 29N., R 29 East of the New Mexico Principal Meridian, in the County of Union, Territory of New Mexico, have set apart, subdivided and dedicated and by these presents do set apart, subdivide and dedicate into lots, blocks, streets, and alleys all that of the foresaid tract of land as shown in the map or plat filed herewith and which map or plat is hereby made apart of this instrument of writing and is designed of an official map or plat of Saavedra's addition to the original town of Des Moines, New Mexico of which reference herein is made for the purpose of more particularly describing and locating said lots, blocks, streets and alleys are hereby declared to be the first addition and only original subdivision of land in said town and which map or plat is hereby declared to be the first and only map or plat of the aforesaid land in lots, blocks, streets and alleys. The general metes and bounds of which are here particularly described as follows: to wit:

Beginning at a stone at the NE corner of the NE 1/4 of the SW 1/4 of Sec 10; thence north 13 degrees east 1320 feet to a point; thence north 76.5 degrees west 2640 [?] feet to a stake; thence south 13 degrees west 2640 feet to a stone; thence south 76.5 degrees east 1320 feet to a point; thence north 13 degrees east 1320 feet to a point;

thence south 76.5 degrees east 1320 feet to place of beginning, containing 120 acres more or less.

All of the streets inside of the town are 80 feet wide except as indicated otherwise upon said map or plat; all alleys are 20 feet wide and all lots are 25 feet wide and 140 feet deep except as are otherwise indicated on said map or plat and the said Rafael M. Saavedra, has given, granted and dedicated and by these presents has given, granted and dedicated all the portion of the foresaid land indicated on the said map or plat as streets and alleys to the public and [?] for the purpose of public streets, alleys and highways to have and to hold the same to said public authorities for the purposes aforesaid forever and it is hereby declared public and published the foregoing subdivide and said tract of land is with the free consent and in accordance with the desires of the undersigned owners and proprietors in witness whereof the said Rafael M. Saavedra, and Guadalupe V. Saavedra have hereunto set their hands and seal this 18th day of April, 1907.

Rafael M. Saavedra
Guadalupe V. Saavedra

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 18 day of April, 1907

Irvin Green
Notary Public,
Union County

