

DEARFIELD AGRICULTURAL COLONY

(Dearfield, Colorado)

South of U.S. Highway 34 approximately 11 miles west of Wiggins

Dearfield

Weld County

Colorado

HALS CO-7

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WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

1849 C Street NW

Washington, DC 20240-0001

## HISTORIC AMERICAN LANDSCAPES SURVEY

### DEARFIELD AGRICULTURAL COLONY (Dearfield, Colorado)

HALS NO. CO-7

**Location:** Townsite is located in the northwest quarter of Section 30, Township 4 North, Range 61 West, of the 6<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian. Agricultural homesteads are located in Sections 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, and 34 of Township 4 North, and Sections 1,2,3,4,5,6,9,10,11,12, and 15 of Township 3 North, Range 61 West, of the 6<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian.

Site is located south of U.S. Highway 34 approximately 11 miles west of Wiggins in Weld County, Colorado.

National Register of Historic Places (NRIS 95001002 , 8/4/1995)

Latitude: 40.287328 Longitude: -104.259060 (Center of Townsite [Washington Avenue and Foster / Second Street], Google Earth, Simple Cylindrical Projection, WGS84)

**Significance:** The agricultural colony of Dearfield, Colorado originated with the purchase of approximately 320 acres of sand prairie by Oliver Toussaint (OT) Jackson in 1910. With a vision of a self-sufficient African-American agricultural colony inspired by the writings of Booker T. Washington, Mr. Jackson recruited prospective property owners and residents to share in his dream rooted in the practices of dryland farming. The colony grew to include approximately 19,200 acres by 1917; much of it was homesteaded under the 1862 Homestead Act and 1909 Enlarged Homestead Act (though not all of the acreage was settled). The colony is significant for its important associations with Federal land policy and speculation from the 1860s to 1930s; agriculture-based efforts of African Americans for economic self-reliance and social equality from the 1830s to 1930s (considered the last major attempt on the high plains); dryland farming post-1900; and the Great Depression (Waddell 1994 and Taylor 1998).

**Description:** *LAND DIVISION*

Dearfield was originally platted in 1910 on three of the four quarters of Section 30, Township 4 North, Range 61 West, of the 6<sup>th</sup> Principal Meridian (see map on page 34). Known as the 'townsite,' this assemblage of lots consisted of a commercial and residential core arranged in an orthogonal grid situated around the center point of the northwest quarter of Section 30 (NW1/4 Section 30). Each of these lots was laid out at approximately 25 wide by 125 feet deep, arranged in eight blocks with alleys to serve each block. Surrounding this inner core, larger blocks (approximately 5 acres each) for agricultural production extended in all four directions to the limits of the platted property, with the largest lots (approximately 10 acres each) located in the southeast quarter section.

This division of land was modified with the 1914 Amended Plat, which kept the general arrangement around the commercial core intact, but modified six of the eight blocks along Haskins Street (renamed as the Lincoln Highway) to provide small commercial lots facing outward and north towards the new (unpaved) highway.

Reviewing the Weld County assessor maps via the county's Property Information Portal, it appears that the original 1910 division of land remains largely intact, with some lots merged, but none of the 1914 lots along Highway 34 (formerly Lincoln Highway) extant.

The greater Dearfield colony consisted of individual homesteads ranging in size from 1/4 sections (160 acres) to full sections (640 acres) of land, spread out over 30 square miles (approximately 19,200 acres) to the east and south of the townsite. The full 30 sections of land are included in this survey, though many parcels of land may not have been improved or claimed during the period of Dearfield's settlement, and some were settled by whites. These lands were divided and described using the Public Land Survey System, established by the 1785 Land Ordinance Act of the Continental Congress to provide a uniform method to describe and convey land titles, without the need for detailed field surveys. Approximately 8,800 acres were successfully homesteaded and patented in association with the Dearfield settlement; other lands within the area were claimed by Jackson to be under cultivation, but were not yet 'proven' to receive patents.

#### ***TOPOGRAPHY AND HYDROLOGY***

The Dearfield Agricultural Colony is located on wind-deposited sands approximately 50 to 300 feet in elevation above, and one to six miles south of, the South Platte River. Elevation of the survey area varies from approximately 4470 in the north (below Bijou Canal) to approximately 4760 in the southeast (near Interstate 76). The gently rolling sand hills are generally oriented in a northwest-southeast alignment.

***South Platte River:*** The South Platte River is a dominant landscape feature that influenced the development of Dearfield. It is located approximately 6,000 feet north of the townsite, providing limited firewood and drinking water to residents during times of scarcity on the prairie. The river remains the primary source of water for irrigation in an otherwise semi-arid environment. The river is now negatively impacted by urban development upstream in the Denver area, including reduced water quality, altered flow regimes, and significant withdrawals for irrigation, (Dennehy et al 1998), but it retains historic characteristics such as a cottonwood gallery forest, meandering channel, and wide floodplain.

***Lost Creek:*** Lost Creek is an intermittent tributary of the South Platte River located approximately 4,000 feet west of the townsite. The creek appears to be a 'losing stream,' meaning its water infiltrates into the sandy soils before its confluence with the South Platte River. The groundwater from this creek was noted as providing water for Dearfield residents.

### ***SOILS***

The physical properties of the soils found at the Dearfield Agricultural Colony may have played a significant role in the success and failure of dryland crops. The 20,000 acres of agricultural lands associated with the colony are situated within a large complex of sand hills that extend along the Platte River corridor from southwest Weld County into Nebraska. The predominant soil map unit is Valent sand, comprised of approximately 95% sand and derived from Aeolian (wind-originated) deposits (see map on page 30) (Natural Resources Conservation Service 2011). The soils drain very rapidly and have a very low available water capacity for crops. These physical properties also result in high losses / low efficiency for delivery and storage of water associated with the Bijou Canal, Empire Intake Canal, and Empire Reservoir.

### ***VEGETATION***

The majority of the 20,000 acre survey area is grazed by cattle and is dominated by sand sagebrush and unidentified grasses. Common rangeland weeds such as kochia, Russian thistle, and cheatgrass are not commonly found except within Section 30, the platted townsite, where they are prevalent. The site may be characterized as belonging to the Western Great Plains Sandhill Shrubland ecological system as defined by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program (Colorado Natural Heritage Program 2005).

Due to the semi-arid climate and the excessively drained soils, the presence of trees within the survey area is limited to sites of human activity, intentional and unintentional. Ornamental trees are found in Section 30 (the platted townsite), where individual specimens of Siberian elm, Scotch pine, black locust, and white poplar appear to be intentionally planted (e.g. the Scotch pine and white poplar) or escaped from cultivation (e.g. a large colony of black locust surrounding the Squire Brockman cabin). A few plains cottonwoods are also present in Section 30, and are suspected to have been planted due to their proximity to home sites and unlikely placement in the landscape (e.g. the Thomas and Marie Russell property and well site).

Native plains cottonwoods, peachleaf willows, and other riparian species are found around the perimeter of Empire Reservoir and along the Empire Intake Canal and the Bijou Canal. These populations of trees are mature and may date back to the 1910s, when these waterworks were completed. Additional specimens can be found in low-lying areas that may benefit from seepage from the canals.

A few isolated colonies of lilac remain extant around some of the buildings near Highway 34. These lilacs were certainly planted as ornamental shrubs, but their age cannot be determined.

### ***AGRICULTURAL FEATURES***

#### ***Bijou Canal***

The Bijou Canal diverts water from the South Platte River for crop irrigation purposes. Owned and operated by the Bijou Irrigation Company, the 42-mile-long ditch has a capacity of 600 cubic feet per second (CFS) and services more than 20,000 acres (Colorado Division of Water Resources 2011b). Available diversions for Bijou Canal average 47,000 acre-feet per year (Colorado Division of Water Resources 2011b). The Canal was constructed between 1904 and 1910 (Colorado Division of Water Resources 2011b) and continues to function as originally designed. It appears to be in good condition.

The Bijou Canal was newly completed at the time Dearfield was established, to serve farmlands along the south side of the South Platte River near the survey area. The Bijou Canal provides irrigation to portions of Sections 30, 29, 28, 27, 26, and 25 north of the canal; it serves a much larger area to the east and north of the survey area. The canal also traverses the northeast quarter of Section 30 (near the townsite). This water was not available for the vast majority of the Dearfield settlement, since the water is only available to lands within the Bijou Irrigation District, located north of the canal (Sobieski and Wilson 2004).

#### ***Empire Intake Canal***

The Empire Intake Canal diverts water from the South Platte River to fill the Empire Reservoir, both of which are owned by the Bijou Irrigation District. The unlined 21-mile-long canal was completed in 1906, a year after completion of the Empire Reservoir, and continues to function as originally designed. It has a capacity of 612 CFS and delivers an average of 46,000 acre-feet per year (Colorado Division of Water Resources 2011a and 2011b). It appears to be in good condition.

The Empire Intake Canal is highly sinuous through the survey area and traverses Section 30, Township 4N, Range 61W (the townsite) and continues east through Sections 31, 32, 29, 28, 33, and 34 where it empties into Empire Reservoir.

The Empire Intake Canal was newly completed at the time Dearfield was established. Since this canal was established solely to provide water to the Empire Reservoir, it was not available for Dearfield residents nor were its water rights attached to agricultural land purchased or homesteaded by Dearfield colonists.

***Empire Reservoir***

The Empire Reservoir stores irrigation water for members of the Bijou Irrigation District. Construction plans were prepared by Mr. C.D. Page, engineer for the Bijou Irrigation District, in April 1906 (Colorado State Engineer 1911). The reservoir was built during the summer of 1906 and has a total storage capacity of 34,483 acre-feet. (Colorado Division of Water Resources 2011b) The unlined reservoir experiences significant seepage losses (Colorado Division of Water Resources 2011b) but continues to function as originally designed. It appears to be in good condition.

Within the survey area, Empire Reservoir covers most of Sections 35 and 36 and portions of 34, 26, 25 of Township 4N, as well as portions of Sections 2, 1, and 12 of Township 3N.

The Empire Reservoir was newly built and filled by the time Dearfield was established. Since the reservoir was established solely to provide storage of water for members of the Bijou Irrigation District, its water was not available for use by Dearfield residents. However, some Dearfield colonists owned land along the margins of the reservoir, which were often inundated at high water levels early in the year, taking advantage of its water even though they had no formal irrigation rights.

***Windmills***

Windmills provided a wind-powered means of pumping groundwater from wells for stock watering and domestic purposes. Historic photos of Dearfield homesteads show the presence of windmills, although photographic and archaeological evidence of windmills within the immediate town site has yet to be identified. A few windmills of unknown age remain in use for this purpose, located in the SW 1/4 of Section 15, SW 1/4 of Section 34, and the SE 1/4 of Section 28.

***Center Pivot Irrigation***

Center pivot irrigation is a modern technique of crop irrigation delivered by an overhead pipe system with sprinklers along its length and moved in a circular pattern around a well at the pivot point. The resulting circular field pattern is readily apparent in aerial photography. Center pivot systems are operated in the NE 1/4 of Section 30, NE 1/4 of Section 29, N 1/2 of Sections 28, 27, and 26.

***Surface Irrigation Ditches***

The survey area north of the Bijou Canal is within the Bijou Irrigation District and can be irrigated with surface irrigation supplied by the canal, if the landowner owns shares in the Bijou Irrigation Company. Surface irrigation requires a system of lateral ditches to distribute the water to the fields and furrows to distribute water across the fields. Portions of the NE 1/4 of Section 30 and N 1/2 of Section

29 are irrigated by concrete-lined ditches with siphon tubes to deliver water into the furrows.

### ***Fences***

By the time Dearfield was settled, the open range era had ended in Colorado. Barbed wire fencing was commonly used to demarcate property boundaries and contain livestock. Traces of barbed wire fencing with wood posts are found within the platted townsite; their age was not determined. In the larger agricultural setting, modern barbed wire fencing with steel posts are prevalent along section lines that still serve as property boundaries. Along County Road 91, a steel cattle guard (a steel grate set over a depression within the road surface) is regularly encountered at each crossing of a section line, serving to keep cattle within the fenced properties. Much of this acreage has been consolidated under a single owner, but the grazing continues to reflect original homestead patterns as evidenced by fence boundaries.

### ***STRUCTURES***

Several commercial and residential structures built at the platted townsite remain extant, though most are in ruins. The following information is mostly obtained from the National Register of Historic Places Nomination (95001002) (Dixon 1990), with additions and corrections by the University of Northern Colorado (UNC, Brunswig et al 2011). Dates of construction and square footage of modern homes was obtained from Weld County Assessor data (Weld County 2011). Preservation and restoration activities are underway for some historic structures. The contemporary construction of several residences in the platted townsite has negatively impacted the cultural landscape and visual setting of the historic structures, but this is mostly limited to the townsite. Structures listed as 'Contributing' were identified in the National Register nomination as having sufficient historic integrity to support the nomination.

#### ***Lunch Room (National Register 5WL 744.1, Contributing)***

The Lunch Room is located in the northeast corner of Block 5 adjacent to Washington Avenue and facing Haskins Street / Lincoln Highway (now U.S. Highway 34). It is a rectangular, false front wood frame commercial building, approximately 60.5' x 20.5'. The property is now owned by the Black American West Museum, which has stabilized the structure to prevent collapse. A large white poplar and its offspring are found east of the structure.

#### ***Barn Pavilion (National Register 5WL 744.2, Contributing)***

***(Now identified as possibly the Methodist Church and earliest school building)***

This building is located in Block 6, a parcel purchased by John and Mary Caton in 1922. A 42' x 62' concrete foundation is all that remains. The so-called Barn Pavilion foundations identified in 1990s historic surveys of the town site were found not to match dimensions and reconstructed foundation footprints of historic photos of the actual pavilion in recent studies of the town site. Historic

documentation and information from former Dearfield residents suggest the foundation likely belonged to the town's Methodist Church, which doubled as the Dearfield School during weekdays sometime between 1910 and 1919 until a new school was built at the Chapelton townsite (near Empire Reservoir) in 1919. The property is now owned by the Black American West Museum, who acquired it in a land trade in 2010.

***Blacksmith Shop / Garage (National Register 5WL 744.3, Contributing)***

This building is located in Block 5 on the west side of Washington Avenue, south of the Lunch Room. Originally a blacksmith shop, the building was converted to a repair garage to service automobiles. It is a rectangular wood frame building, approximately 32.5' x 22.5'. The property is now owned by the Black American West Museum, which has stabilized the structure to prevent collapse.

***Hunter's Cabin (National Register 5WL 744.4, Contributing)***

The Hunter's Cabin was located in Block 5 on the west side of Washington Avenue, south of the Blacksmith Shop. It was believed to be rented out by O.T. Jackson as a hunter's cabin. The rectangular wood frame building, approx. 24' x 12', was demolished and removed from the town site in the late 1990s. The property that the building once occupied is now owned by the Black American West Museum.

***Squire Brockman Cabin (National Register 5WL 744.5, Contributing)***

The Squire Brockman Cabin was located on Lots 21 and 22, Block 11 west of DuBois / Texas Avenue. The property was purchased from O.T. Jackson in 1919 by Squire Brockman, one of the last inhabitants of Dearfield. The ruins of the approximately 20' x 32' wood frame building with electrical service (circa 1936) remain. A well and an historic debris scatter are evident on site. The ruins are surrounded by a colony of locust, an invasive ornamental shrub/small tree. The remains of a large tree lies on the ground northeast of the cabin.

***Dearfield Lodge / Jenny Jackson Residence***  
***(National Register 5WL 744.6, Contributing)***

The Dearfield Lodge is located on Lots 27 and 28 of Block 13, facing Washington Avenue. This was the residence of O.T. Jackson and Minerva Jackson, succeeded by niece Jenny Jackson until 1973. The wood frame building with concrete foundation measures approximately 64.5' x 35' with a 16' x 20' back addition. It was electrified circa 1936. An historic scatter was found in the backyard, with datable artifacts from 1908-1945. Archaeological excavations conducted by the University of Northern Colorado in 2011 identified intact subsurface deposits of historic artifacts dating from the early 1900s through the late 1960s, buried trash burner debris, and buried wood posts belonging to a stock pen and chicken coop immediately southeast of the house. The property is now owned by the Black American West Museum.

***Grocery Store (National Register 5WL 744.7, Contributing)***

Located in Block 21, this building ruin was identified by a previous Dearfield resident, Walker Groves, as a grocery store, dance hall, and in the 1930s after the town site was largely abandoned, served as a home for the Groves' family for a short time. The concrete foundation is approximately 24.5' x 58'. South of this ruin is a depression with a small wooden ruin and concrete foundation, which could have been an outhouse or livestock outbuilding. An historic debris scatter is in the vicinity, with datable artifacts from 1908-1945. Archival and artifactual evidence places the building circa 1911-1919.

***Granary (National Register 5WL 744.8, Contributing)***

Located approximately in Lots 43 and 44 of Block 20 facing Washington Avenue, this building was identified by a previous Dearfield resident as the granary where grain and other produce were stored before transport to market. Because it has a chimney, it is believed the structure was originally a residence or commercial building and likely served both purposes during its history. The concrete foundation measures approximately 24' x 50'. An historic debris scatter contains datable artifacts from 1920-1940. Structure is in ruins.

***Thomas and Marie Russell Debris Scatter & Well  
(National Register 5WL 744.9, Contributing)***

Located west of Washington Avenue in Blocks 28 and 29 along the southern NW quarter section line, this feature consists of a well surrounded by an historic artifact scatter concentrated around two cottonwood trees. An electric transmission line runs east-west nearby. An historic artifact scatter approximately 150' x 200' is located east of the well, with dateable artifacts from 1908-1945. This site is believed to be the residence of Reverend Thomas and Marie Russell who purchased the land from O.T. Jackson in 1920.

***House in Block 4 (National Register 5WL 744.11, Contributing)***

Located in Block 4 approximately 53' south of Highway 34 and 200' east of the gas station, this wood frame house has no foundation and could have been moved from another location on the Dearfield town site. The property was purchased from O.T. Jackson in 1945 by Martin and Ivalee Couch. Size is approximately 34' x 14.5'. Both the house and well with submersible electric pump was used by the gas station and lunchroom owners for their own and their employees' use according to a previous Dearfield resident. Archaeological excavations, historic photograph studies, and information from a local landowner established that the building was demolished in either late 2002 or early 2003. All of Block 4 is owned by the Black American West Museum.

***Wood and Tin Trailer and Historic Debris Scatter  
(National Register 5WL 744.10, Non-Contributing)***

Located in Block 8 in the northwest corner of the townsite, this historic debris scatter measures approximately 43' x 106' and at the time of the National Register nomination included a trailer made out of sheet metal and wood, holding aged wood and chalk wallboard. This block was purchased from O.T. Jackson in 1920 by Fred Burton of Denver. All historic debris was removed from the site along with the House in Block 4 between late 2002 and early 2003.

***Depression (National Register 5WL 744.15, Non-Contributing)***

Located in Block 12 on the west side of Washington Avenue across from the Dearfield Lodge, this rectangular depression measuring approximately 40' x 50' x 3' deep appears to be in Lots 19 and 20 which were purchased from O.T. Jackson in 1917 by A.E. Fraser. Because of its shape and alignment to the street it appears to have been a cellar for a building.

Historic documents and aerial photographs show the depression is the location of a building owned by Minerva Jackson, O.T. Jackson's wife. Unsubstantiated evidence, including calculation of the probable size and outline of the Barn Pavilion shown in a Dearfield Resort advertisement flyer and from historic photos, suggests the depression's original structure may have been the town's original Barn Pavilion. Most of the former structure's area (Block 12, Lot 16) is now owned by the Black American West Museum.

***Filling Station and Modern Structures (National Register 5WL 744.16, Non-Contributing\*)***

Located in the northwest corner of Block 4 adjacent to Washington Avenue and facing Highway 34, this rectangular wood frame building measures approximately 60' x 24'. The building has had many owners since O.T. Jackson's death, and has been extensively remodeled. The property served as a fueling station for automobiles into the 1990s (Chandler 2008). Two modern outbuildings are in close proximity, to the south and east. The property is now owned by the Black American West Museum.

\*Originally listed as non-contributing in the National Register of Historic Places Nomination, the status may warrant reconsideration. While extensively remodeled, the original front (north) portion of the filling station retains substantial elements of the original Dearfield building, including ceiling joists and construction lumber stamped with the name 'O.T. Jackson'. (Brunswick 2011b)

***Block 1 Modern Residence (Non-contributing)***

This modular home of approximately 1,900 square feet was built in 1995 and appears to have been placed on site shortly thereafter. An equipment building of approximately 1,700 feet was built in 1996 and is located south of the residence (Weld County 2011). This home is accessed via a road in the approximate alignment of platted Houston Avenue.

***Blocks 2 & 3 Modern Residence (Non-contributing)***

This manufactured home was built in 1971 and appears to have been placed on site after 2002 (Weld County 2011). This home is accessed via a road in the approximate alignment of platted Houston Avenue.

***Block 7 Modern Residence (Non-contributing)***

This modular residence of approximately 1,500 square feet was built in 2003 (Weld County 2011). This home is accessed from a driveway that approximately aligns with platted Wagner Avenue.

***Block 9 Modern Residence (Non-contributing)***

This modular residence of approximately 1,800 square feet plus was built in 1996 (Weld County 2011). This home is accessed from a driveway that approximately aligns with platted Wagner Avenue.

***Block 10 Modern Residence (Non-contributing)***

This residence of approximately 2,200 square feet plus a full basement was built in 2005 (Weld County 2011). This home is accessed from a driveway that approximately aligns with platted Wagner Avenue.

***Block 17 Modern Residence (Non-contributing)***

This modular home of approximately 2,300 square feet was built in 2002 and appears to have been placed on site shortly thereafter (Weld County 2011). This home is accessed via a road in the approximate alignment of platted Houston Ave.

***Block 30 Modern Residence (Non-contributing)***

This modular home of approximately 1,700 square feet plus a full basement was built in 2003 and appears to have been placed on site shortly thereafter (Weld County 2011). This home is accessed via a road in the approximate alignments of platted Houston Avenue and Jackson / Fourth Street.

***Block 42 Modern Residence (Non-contributing)***

This modular home of approximately 1,600 square was built in 2000 and appears to have been placed on site around 2004 (Weld County 2011). This home is accessed via a road in the approximate alignments of platted Washington Avenue and Young / Fifth Street. The Empire Reservoir Intake Ditch intersects the southwest corner of this parcel.

***Block 48 Modern Residence (Non-contributing)***

This modular home of approximately 1,600 square was built in 2003 and appears to have been placed on site shortly thereafter (Weld County 2011). A manufactured utility shed of approximately 320 square feet was placed on site in 2004 (Weld County 2011). This home is accessed via a driveway extension in the approximate alignment of platted Washington Avenue.

***RS L1 RS-1113 Dearfield (Blocks 5&6, SE 1/4 Section 30)***

***Modern Residence (Non-contributing)***

This modular home of approximately 2,100 square feet plus a full basement was built in 2005 and appears to have been placed on site in 2008 (Weld County 2011). This home is accessed via a driveway extension in the approximate alignments of platted Washington Avenue and Young / Fifth Street.

***PT N1/2 NW1/4 Section 32, T4N R61W Modern Residence (Non-contributing)***

This modular home of approximately 1,200 square feet was built in 1998 (Weld County 2011) and is located approximately 700 feet north of the Empire Reservoir Intake, amongst scattered groves of mature cottonwoods. A utility shed and two cattle sheds are located on the parcel. This home is accessed via a road in the approximate alignment of Franklin Avenue.

***UTILITIES***

***Electric Transmission***

The Rural Electrification Administration, established as a New Deal program of the Great Depression in 1935, provided electricity to the Dearfield townsite circa 1936 (Dixon 1990) via a transmission line that remains today (lines and equipment updated). This line runs east-west along the south quarter section line, noted by the 30' easement along Jackson / Fourth St. on the Retracement Survey (Alles 2009). As it likely was at the time of construction, this electric line is a significant visual element in the open prairie landscape.

***Municipal Water Storage***

Property owners in the survey area generally get all of their water service from individual private wells. However, two modern water storage tanks were recently constructed near Interstate 76 in the Southeast 1/4 of Section 10, near the highest point in the survey area. These municipal tanks are owned by the Morgan County Quality Water District, fed by a high volume well located on a 1.5 acre parcel acquired in 2000 (Weld County 2011, Colorado Division of Water Resources 2011c).

***Communications Towers***

Between the water storage tanks and I-76 lay the highest lands within the survey area, and the site of five communications towers in Sections 14 and 15. Their prominent location and concentration is evident from the southern portion of the survey area, as well as the I-76 corridor.

***Oil & Gas Wells***

Oil and gas exploration has occurred in the survey area since the time Dearfield was established, as evidenced by the 1914 Amended Plat for the settlement (Jackson 1914). This plat identifies Tracts 33, 34, 55, 56, 59, 60, 66, 67, 70, 71, 77, and 78 (160 acres total) as being under an oil lease to Emmet Williams, Ben

Hooper, A.J. Thomas, and George Lewis. No oil and gas development is known to occur within the survey area during the time of settlement (Brunswig 2012).

The survey area lies near the eastern limits of the 978 square mile Wattenberg Gas Field, a major contemporary ‘play’ in the Denver Julesburg Basin that was discovered in 1970 (Matuszczak 1973). Nevertheless, approximately 73 oil and gas wells are recorded to exist in the Dearfield Agricultural Colony area (COGCC 2011). These wells are situated in an orderly grid in accordance with the Colorado Oil & Gas Commission’s Greater Wattenberg Area Special Well Location Rule 318A (COGCC 1999). This rule generally requires wells to be drilled within certain windows based on divisions of a 640-acre section. A network of gravel roads provides access to each well pad.

### ***Water Wells***

Archaeological surveys of the town site by the University of Northern Colorado revealed remnants of the Dearfield town well in the southeast corner of Block 12, Lot 24, west and across Washington Avenue of the O.T. Jackson house (Brunswig 2011a). The well is shown on the Amended Plat dated August 6, 1914 (Jackson 1914). The well’s location is marked by a 7-9 ft wide circular concentration of broken concrete slabs. Two 8-10 inch diameter post sections to south and southeast of the concrete may be posts that once supported a cross-bar for raising and lowering a bucket to the water table.

Approximately 130 modern and historic groundwater wells are recorded to be within the survey area, varying in depth from 42 to 190 feet with a static water level varying from 8 to 100 feet (Colorado Division of Water Resources 2011c). The average depth to groundwater in the survey area is estimated to be 34 feet based on available well records. One well is recorded to have first been in use in 1911; three others in 1928 and one more in 1934. The majority of recorded wells were constructed since the 1970s; the completeness and accuracy of the State’s records may be questionable, particularly for historic wells.

### ***TRANSPORTATION***

#### ***Highway 34 (Old Lincoln Highway Loop) (Weld County Road 42)***

U.S. Highway 34 serves as the northern boundary of the survey area, on the alignment of Weld County Road 42 which serves as the northern boundary of Sections 30 (townsite), 29, 28, 27, 26, and 25 of Township 4N.

Highway 34 provides contemporary access to the Dearfield area. The local section was paved to serve as an east-west thoroughfare between Greeley and Fort Morgan. The importance of this road for northeast Colorado is reflected in the festivities marking its completion. An opening ceremony was held on July 28, 1931 in Dearfield, featuring state officials and a fly-in of three planes (Waldo 2011).

The portion of U.S. Highway 34 through the survey area was briefly designated part of the Colorado Loop of the transcontinental Lincoln Highway in 1914 (Patrick and Wilson 2002). The Colorado Loop diverged from the main route at Big Springs, Nebraska and traveled up the South Platte River Valley through Julesburg, Sterling, and Fort Morgan to Denver, then returning north by way of Longmont, Loveland, and Fort Collins to rejoin the main Lincoln Highway at Cheyenne, Wyoming. The Colorado Loop was formally dropped in 1915, but locals continued to refer to this road as the Lincoln Highway for many years thereafter (Patrick and Wilson 2002).

It is not clear whether the Lincoln Highway was constructed in the precise alignment of the current Highway 34, or slightly to the south where Haskins Street was platted as part of Dearfield; the latter seems more probable. Today, portions of the Haskins Street alignment are evident south of the Highway 34 embankment, as illustrated in Photo 6.

The growth in popularity of the automobile, combined with improvements in road construction, resulted in the development of recreational amenities at Dearfield. With the decline of agricultural production and prices, Mr. Jackson turned to recreation and leisure pursuits as a source of revenue to sustain the town of Dearfield (University of Northern Colorado, Brunswig et al 2011). A poster was printed by Mr. Jackson circa 1919-1921 advertising Dearfield as a destination for hunting, fishing, and picnicking (Jackson 1919).

***Weld County Roads 38, 87, 91, and 95***

Weld County Roads 38, 87, 91, and 95 traverse the survey area. Their dates of construction are unknown but they may have been present during the time Dearfield was occupied. County Road 91 bisects the survey area, connecting Highway 34 with I-76 (the only road that does so within the project area) along a north-south section line. The road crosses the Bijou Canal and the Empire Intake Canal with bridges and terminates at Highway 34 on the north end, and at an I-76 interchange (grade separated road junction) at the south end. Within the survey area it is a two-lane rural road constructed of crushed rock and is in good condition.

County Road 87 also follows a north-south section line, two miles west of County Road 91 and adjacent to the Dearfield townsite. It provides the only contemporary crossing of the South Platte River in the area, providing access to the Riverside Reservoir and areas north. According to the U.S. Geological Survey (United States Geological Survey 1950), the historic townsite of Masters was located at the intersection of County Road 87 and the Union Pacific Railroad, just north of the South Platte River. Today, within the survey area this road terminates approximately one mile south of Highway 34, just north of the Empire Intake Canal. Within the survey area it is a two-lane rural road constructed of crushed rock and is in good condition.

Other improved roads within the survey area are labeled County Road 95, County Road 36, and County Road 38 on U.S. current topographic maps (United States Geological Survey 2010B and 2010C). However, these roads are not identified as county roads on the current Weld County Road Map (Weld County 2007). These roads were not visited or evaluated for this survey.

***Platted Roads – Townsite***

The 1910 Plat of the Dearfield Settlement ('townsite') laid out a grid of streets (east-west) and avenues (north-south), with the nexus of the townsite at the intersection of Washington Avenue and Foster Street, which coincided with the center of Section 30 (Jackson 1910). All platted roads were named after people, some celebrities and others local homesteaders. Many road names were changed by the time of the 1914 Plat Amendment (Jackson 1914); it is not known how much of the road system was in place at the time of settlement.

Today, Washington Avenue remains the central road into the townsite from U.S. Highway 34, now serving contemporary residents. Other extant roads include Houston / Indiana Avenue, Foster/Second Street, and portions of Dunbar/Louisiana Avenue, DuBois/Texas Avenue, Matlock Avenue, Bruce/Ohio Avenue, and Jackson/Fourth Street. These roads are either unimproved (native soil) or improved with crushed rock ('road base').

***Unimproved Roads***

Miles of unimproved ('two-track') roads traverse the survey area to provide contemporary access to stock watering wells, oil and gas wells, private residences, and other destinations. These roads are generally in fair to good condition.

***Union Pacific Railroad***

To shorten the distance to move its Denver-bound traffic (instead of through Cheyenne), Union Pacific financed a cutoff across northeastern Colorado, paralleling the South Platte River from Julesburg to a connection with Denver Pacific at La Salle. The new line was operated by Union Pacific as the Colorado Central Julesburg Branch (Strack 2011).

While not within the Dearfield survey area, the Union Pacific Railroad played a significant role in the development of Dearfield and other agricultural communities in the area. It is located north of the South Platte River approximately 1-1/4 miles from the Dearfield townsite. The closest rail station was Masters, located 1-1/2 miles northeast of Dearfield, established in 1881. The Masters station had two extra railroad sidings to accommodate the supplies and crews needed to build the Empire Reservoir, Empire Intake Canal, and Bijou Canal (Lynch 2011).

This line provided a route for immigrants to travel to Dearfield (mentioned in recruiting materials), and offered a good access to markets for selling crops. As

new settlers were often poor, some took the train as far as they could afford and walked the rest of the way to Dearfield.

This line of the Union Pacific Railroad has been abandoned, but the aggregate rail bed remains extant.

**History:** **The following history is a reproduction of The Dearfield Dream: Hope and Self Sufficiency, used with permission. (Brunswig, Robert 2011 The Dearfield Dream: Hope and Self-Sufficiency. Collaborative Research Program grant proposal to the National Endowment to the Humanities from the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, Colorado)**

*In 1910, Oliver Toussaint Jackson purchased 320 acres for \$1.25 [per acre] 25 miles east of Greeley, Weld County, Colorado, under the Desert Land Act (1877) (Ford 2007: 3-4; Ganoë 1937; Landstrom 1954). Jackson was an entrepreneur and admirer of Booker T. Washington, founder of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute (1877). Washington, styling himself as a political and social realist, advocated a middle-ground approach for achieving African-American economic self-sufficiency and social advancement in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Moton 1917; Washington 1907). His Atlanta Compromise Address to the 1895 Cotton States Exposition proposed tacit recognition of disenfranchisement and segregation if the dominant Euro-American majority would support African-American efforts in seeking economic and educational opportunities through their own efforts.*

*Jackson moved to Colorado from Ohio in 1877 at the age of 24, establishing and successfully operating a catering business, cafes, a small resort, and a farm in the Denver and Boulder areas (Junne et al. 2011: 105-106). In 1909, he was appointed to Colorado governor John Shafroth's staff as a messenger. The previous year (1908), the Colorado branch of the Colored Men's National Business League, whose national president was Booker T. Washington, formed a Denver committee to explore establishment of a "negro colony in Colorado..." as part of a national initiative (Breckenridge Bulletin, June 27, 1908). The following year, League delegates met in Denver to carry "out Booker T. Washington's theory which held that every negro community in every state should have a district and a town of its own whose purpose is not to establish the entire negro community of Colorado upon this [the town's] land, but to own land upon which to let homesteads." (Colorado Transcript, August 5, 1909).*

*Although the League's state chapter examined locations for their proposed community throughout Colorado, one of the most desirable sites which emerged was an area of still open homestead land in northeastern Colorado, east of Greeley. O.T. Jackson, largely on his own personal initiative formed the Negro Town Site and Land Company in 1909 and began purchasing*

*homestead land in the Dearfield area under the Desert Act of 1877 in 1910 (Junne et al. 2011: 106). Although documentary evidence is limited, it appears he had at least nominal support from the Colorado chapter of the Colored Men's National Business League. With purchase of the "negro colony" land, Jackson formed the town of Dearfield and, assisted by the Denver-based Colored American Loan & Realty Company (1915), tirelessly worked to recruit prospective investors, property owners and residents for an African-American agricultural colony centered on the town (Denver Star 1914, 1915; NA 1920; Taylor 1998: 153-154; Waddell 1994; Wayne 1976).*

*In the words of historian Quintard Taylor, Dearfield had become "the last major attempt at [African-American] agricultural colonization on the high plains", following a long history of such efforts from the Antebellum era through World War I and including such well-known towns as New Philadelphia (Illinois), Nicodemus (Kansas), and Booker (Texas) (Taylor 1998: 153, 146-156; see also Agbe-Davies 2010; Everett 1986; National Park Service 2009). Press releases announcing the colony appeared in several Colorado newspapers in 1914 (cf. Colorado Transcript 1914; Yuma Pioneer 1914). In 1915, Jackson told a writer for the Western Farm Life Journal that Dearfield had 27 families, 44 wood-framed houses, a planned concrete block factory, a lodge hall, restaurant, grocery store, and boarding house with 595 acres in cropland (Ford 2007; Frederick 1915). By 1917, Dearfield reached its economic zenith with marketable crops valued at \$50,000, 60 residential families, and 20,000 acres of affiliated agricultural land, much of that land homesteaded under the 1862 Homestead Act and the 1877 Desert Act (Ford 2007: 7).*

*Awareness of Dearfield's initial success at the national level is illustrated by its being featured in two articles in the prominent The Southern Workman journal, published by the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute of Virginia, predecessor to the famous Tuskegee Institute founded by one of Hampton's graduates, Booker T. Washington (Harsha 1916, 1919), the Western Farm Life Journal (Johnson 1915), and the Topeka (Kansas) Plaindealer (Miller 1918). And, although Washington himself never visited Dearfield, having died early in its existence (1915), his widow, son, Booker T. Washington, Jr., and his grandson, Booker T. Washington, III, visited the town on August 11, 1918 (Harsha 1919: 176, all shown on the article's photograph captioned IN THE CORNFIELD, page 179).*

*In 1920, Dearfield farmers' crop success prompted the area Fort Collins newspaper to carry the headline "Weld County Negroes Produce Record Crop in Dearfield Section" (Fort Collins Courier 1920). At its height between 1919 and 1923, the town had between 150 and 300 residents and two dozen wood-frame homes, two churches, a school, a blacksmith's shop, general store, dance hall, a café known as the "Lunchroom," and a filling station (Dixon*

1990; Ford 2007; Massey et al. 1985; Norris 1980; Picher 1976; Waddell 1988, 1994). The 1920 Dearfield U.S. Census record data on residents' birth places show they came from diverse national and international origins, including 21 states and Mexico (U.S. Census 1921).

The dynamism of early Dearfield is illustrated by local collective road building and maintenance efforts (Oak Creek Times 1916), annual community fairs (Haswell Herald 1916; Weld County News 1916), and establishment of a school under the newly created Chapelton School District (124) in 1919, the school being supported by the local Negro Agricultural Co-Op (Carlson 1994: 7-12; Ford 2007: 9; Shwayder 1983: 4-40; Stephens, Larson, and Black American West Museum 2008: 35).

Due to higher-than-normal rainfall prior to and shortly after World War I, Dearfield residents who homesteaded or purchased farm land in the town's vicinity prospered. They raised wheat, corn, sugar beets, and vegetables until prosperity declined and then ended with increasingly severe drought of the mid-1920s and full arrival of "dust bowl" drought conditions by the late 1920s and early 1930s. As Dearfield's agricultural base eroded, the rise of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and growing prejudice against ethnic minorities, particularly African-Americans, made life for those minorities even more challenging. In 1925, Clarence Morley, a KKK-backed Republican, was elected Colorado Governor (Davis 1965) and O.T. Jackson, who had continued his employment as a governor's office messenger during earlier Democrat administrations, lost his job and the political influence it entailed at a critical time in Dearfield's history (Ford 2007: 3). After Morley's two year term, Jackson returned to the governor's office, but finally retired in 1933.

O.T. Jackson, Dearfield's ever-active promoter and entrepreneur, attempted to stave off its decline by advertising it as a "Valley Resort" for hunting, fishing, and week-end recreation for Denver's African-American population. A flyer distributed between 1919 and 1921 (Jackson 1919) advertised its advantageous proximity to the South Platte River for hunting pheasants and deer, fishing, and access to a rich social life with week-end dances held at its Barn Pavilion dance hall, country meals at its Lunchroom, and comfortable rooms at the Dearfield Lodge. Many Denver African-Americans traveled to Dearfield for week-end entertainment by train, disembarking at the Masters Railroad depot only two miles away.

By 1930, Dearfield had become a virtual ghost-town, its demise emphasized by omission from that year's U.S. Census, a decade after appearing in the 1920 Census (U.S. Census 1921; U.S. Census 1931). Many residents moved to Denver's Five Points neighborhood and formed the core of a vibrant African-American community which exists to the present day (see Junne 2011; Stephens, Larson, and Black American West Museum 2008).

*Chronology*

- 1785 Land Ordinance is adopted, establishing the basis for the **Public Land Survey System**. Land is to be systematically surveyed into square townships, six miles on a side. Each of these townships is subdivided into thirty-six sections of one square mile or 640 acres. These sections can then be further subdivided for re-sale by settlers and land speculators. This survey system is used to efficiently distribute public lands to settlers, including the homesteads associated with the Dearfield Agricultural Colony.
- 1862 **Oliver Toussaint Jackson** is born in Ohio
- 1862 **Homestead Act** – Encourages the settlement of the West by offering 160 acres of undeveloped federal land west of the Mississippi River (file application, improve the land, file for deed). Acreage limit is based on eastern lands that are generally fertile with sufficient rainfall; this is not as applicable to farming in the semi-arid high plains and thus not very effective for settling northeast Colorado. Land can be obtained if within five years a house was built, a well dug, broken (plowed) 10 acres, fenced a specified amount, and the applicant actually lives on the parcel.
- 1869 **Transcontinental Railroad** is completed
- 1877 The **Desert Land Act of 1877** is enacted: "The Desert Land Act of 1877 was more suited to the western climate. A homesteader could buy up to 640 acres of land which required irrigation for the cultivation of crops. He paid 25 cents per acre for the first three years, after which \$1 per acre was paid to gain title. The settler had to irrigate at least a portion of the land to patent it."(Waddell 1994)
- 1882 The Colorado Central Railroad begins operation, serving the town of Masters (Strack 2011).
- 1887 O.T. Jackson and his wife Minerva **move to Denver, CO**.
- 1889 **Bijou Reservoir and Canal Company** is incorporated; start of construction in October 1888. (Canal transects northeast corner of Section 30 townsite.) (Colorado State Engineer 1890)
- 1893 Extensive cultivation of non-irrigated lands begins in eastern Colorado; drought persists through 1894 destroying crops. (Stone 1918)

- 1901        **Up From Slavery** is published by **Booker T. Washington**.
- 1905        The first statewide “good roads” meeting is held in Denver, attended by sixty-five authorized delegates. The **Colorado Good Roads Association** is formed to promote the development of a road system for bicycles, then automobiles. (Stone 1918)
- 1907        "In 1907 the **International Dry Farming Congress** was established in Denver... The Congress resolved on record to approve the fundamental principles of soil culture as practiced by Professor H. W. Campbell of Bethany, Nebraska." (Waddell 1994)
- 1909        O.T. Jackson is appointed as a messenger for Colorado **Governor John Shafroth**.
- 1909        **Enlarged Homestead Act** is enacted, targeting land suitable for dryland farming by increasing acreage to 320 per claim. (22 original homestead claims in Dearfield area were 160 acres and 12 claims were 320 acres)
- 1910        The Agricultural Experiment Station of the Colorado Agricultural College publishes **Dry Land Farming in Eastern Colorado** (Cottrell 1910):
- “Ordinarily, three hundred and twenty acres of dry land will be needed to comfortably support a family. A good arrangement for this is eighty acres in growing crops, eighty acres in summer fallow, or part in summer fallow, and part in crops intensively cultivated, and one hundred and sixty acres in grass.”
- “Four things are necessary to secure profitable crops with the limited rainfall of eastern Colorado:
1. Storage of rainfall.
  2. Retaining moisture in the soil.
  3. Reducing the effects of the wind.
  4. Drought resisting crops from seed grown under dry land conditions.”
- 1910        **Dearfield is established** by O.T. Jackson as an agricultural colony for colored people. 480 acres are platted as lots and blocks for residential and commercial development. “The purpose of the townsite is to provide a central gathering place for the people of the district, to provide them with the necessary business houses, as well as residences for those not desiring to occupy the farm lands.” Non-platted lots surrounding the townsite are available for dairying, poultry raising, and truck farming. (Jackson 1925)

O.T. Jackson: "After much investigation, we picked our present location near the South Platte River, in Weld County. The soil here is of very fine quality; a sandy loam not hard to work; plenty of native grass; water handy for domestic purposes, and none of the land over five miles from a railroad and only seventy miles from Denver, which practically assured us a market for our produce. The land is gently rolling and has an inexhaustible underflow of water for irrigation which has to be pumped from only sixteen to eighty feet." (Johnson 1915)

Dearfield's first year: 7 families and three teams [of horses] grow corn, melons, pumpkins, squash, Mexican beans, some hay; clear sagebrush; and raise chickens, ducks, and turkeys. Buffalo chips and sagebrush are the chief fuels; little firewood is available, which was driftwood collected from the Platte River and carried by hand three to seven miles. (Johnson 1915)

- 1910-1920 "The decade of 1910-1920 was the period of most **rapid growth in dryland farming**. Changes in land laws which opened up more land for homesteaders plus wartime prices encouraged settlement on the dry plains again (Mehls and Mehls 1988:23). A wet period also led farmers to believe there would be enough moisture to prevent them from failing. These events prompted drylanders to try marginal lands and incur debt in equipment." (Waddell 1994)
- 1911 The **Painter Brothers English Cattle Company** is established, with headquarters east of Roggen, Colorado. The Painters ranch lands along Lost Creek from 1884 to the 1930s; they bought many sections of land that the Dearfield settlers sold or lost to tax sales. (Waddell 1994)
- 1911 **Jackson family** takes up residence in Dearfield. (Johnson 1915)
- 1913 **Lincoln Highway Association** is formed
- 1914 "In 1914 the **Lincoln Highway (Highway 34)** was built... The highway entered Colorado through Wray past Akron, Brush, Ft. Morgan and entered Weld County near Empire Reservoir. It angled past Masters, Dearfield, Hardin Kuner, Kersey into Greeley and west to Larimer County (Shwayder 1992:265)" (Waddell 1994)
- 1914 The **Amended Plat** of Dearfield townsite is filed.
- 1915 The **Colorado Loop** of the Lincoln Highway is formally dropped.

1915 By 1915, approximately **40 farms of 160 acres each are settled around the Dearfield area**. O.T. Jackson claims that approximately 20,000 acres of land were available from the federal government, plus an additional 7,000 acres of state land. (This encompasses an area slightly larger than the project survey area; actual boundaries of Mr. Jackson's claimed acreage remain unclear.) Individual land patents are filed– white settlers acquire about one half of the land outside of the townsite. (Johnson 1915)

O.T. Jackson: Dearfield presently boasts 44 wood cabins, 27 families (some left), 20 teams, 23 cows and calves, 32 hogs, 1,000 chickens, ducks, turkey and geese. 595 acres under cultivation and 300 acres cleared for hay. Growing oats, barley, alfalfa, corn, beans, and potatoes, all kinds of garden truck, sugar beets, watermelons, cantaloupes, pumpkins, and squash. (Johnson 1915)

O.T. Jackson: Employment is provided by white farmers in the neighborhood (10 mile radius). This is of great assistance to both negroes and whites – farmers cooperated with each other by exchange of work, use of tools and horses, and sharing of food and fuel, “like one large family”. (Johnson 1915)

O.T. Jackson: “Up to the present time we have done no irrigating. Our lands are all above the ditches. A ditch has been surveyed south of us, part of the Henrylyn system, which will irrigate all of our lands when constructed, but thus far we have been able to do very well by practicing ‘dry farming’ methods. It may be possible that later on we shall do more or less irrigating by pumping, but this can only come after we have made progress enough to secure capital to purchase the necessary machinery.” (Johnson 1915) [The Henrylyn Irrigation District was formed but did not incorporate the lands associated with the Dearfield settlement.]

1916 The **Stock Raising Homestead Act** is enacted, allowing an individual to claim up to 640 acres in arid places

1917 The **Chapelon Post Office** is established for the Dearfield colon. (Waddell 1994)

Dearfield produces its **first marketable crop** of potatoes, beans, corn, watermelon, cantaloupe, pumpkins, squash, onions, turnips, cabbage, tomatoes, oats, rye, alfalfa, and native hay (Jackson 1918).

O.T. Jackson: "Attracted by their [negroes] success, **white farmers began moving into the territory** to take advantage of the cheap lands offered for sale, and today there are both whites and colored farmers working harmoniously together in the region." (Jackson 1925)

- 1917 **United States enters World War I.** The war aids the early twentieth-century dryland boom in Weld County. The wartime needs encourage continued increases in crop output. Existing farms can not meet the demands and new immigrants come into the region to take advantage of land opportunities. In addition, marginal lands are placed into production in order to take advantage of high crop prices. (Mehls et al 2006)
- 1918 June 5, 1918 O.T. Jackson patents 320 acres for the S 1/2 of Section 29, T4N, 61W. Patent #633227 (BLM 2012).
- 1918 Dearfield boasts over 100 miles of fencing, hundreds of horses, cows, and pigs, and poultry by the thousands (Jackson 1918).
- 1918 **World War I ends**, resulting in the **collapse (1919 to 1921) of food commodity prices**, which had doubled during the war. "As prices fell with the end of World War I, farmers either gave up or tried to produce more to pay for their debts. Some **switched to cattle** as cattle prices remained high [Mehls and Mehls 1988:24]. **Drought and depression** drove more away from the plains until only the very hardy were left. Many farms were **foreclosed or auctioned off** for taxes [Mehls and Mehls 1988:25]." (Waddell 1994)
- 1920 The **Census** for Green City [the greater Dearfield colony area and lands to the north and east on both sides of the South Platte River] has entries for 97 blacks and 228 whites for a total population of 325. (U.S. Census Bureau 1921)
- 1922 The **Chapelton Post Office is discontinued**, and mail is delivered to Wiggins (Waddell 1994)
- 1929 The **Stock Market Crashes**, starting the **Great Depression** (1929-1939)
- 1930 The **Census** drops Dearfield, reflecting a decline in population (U.S. Census Bureau 1931). Dearfield is almost a ghost town (UNC Brunswig et al 2011).

- 1931            **U.S. Highway 34** is dedicated, providing a paved road between Greeley and Fort Morgan; part of a 15-year, 295-mile paving project. The opening ceremony is held at Dearfield, featuring state officials and three airplanes (Waldo 2011). This gives the Greeley-Fort Morgan area a paved east-west thoroughfare, allowing for increased tourism and another transportation network for farmers and ranchers to market their goods.
- 1931-1939      Drought is experienced in northeast Colorado. Non-irrigated lands frequently fail to produce crops. (Waddell 1994)
- 1932-1933      Winds cause dust blizzards in Weld County. Though not officially part of the federally designated Dust Bowl, conditions were similar in Weld County, causing great hardship. (Mehls and Mehls 2006).
- 1936            The **Rural Electric** transmission line is completed (Dixon 1990)
- 1948            **O.T. Jackson dies** in Denver

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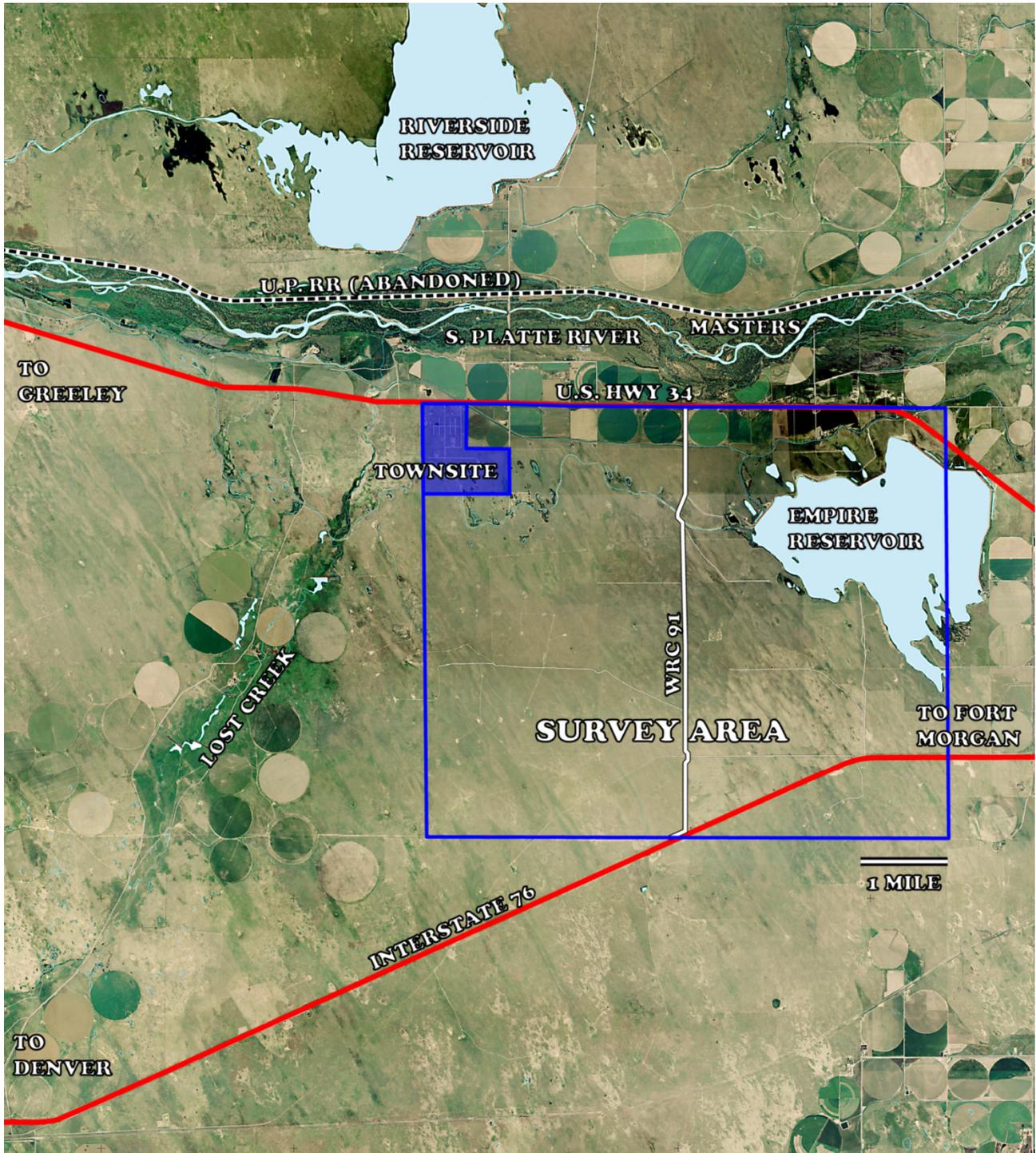
2011 Weld County Property Information Portal, <http://propertyinfo.co.weld.co.us/> Accessed August through October, 2011.

**Historians:** Kevin M. Lyles, ASLA (primary author)  
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Professor of Anthropology  
University of Northern Colorado

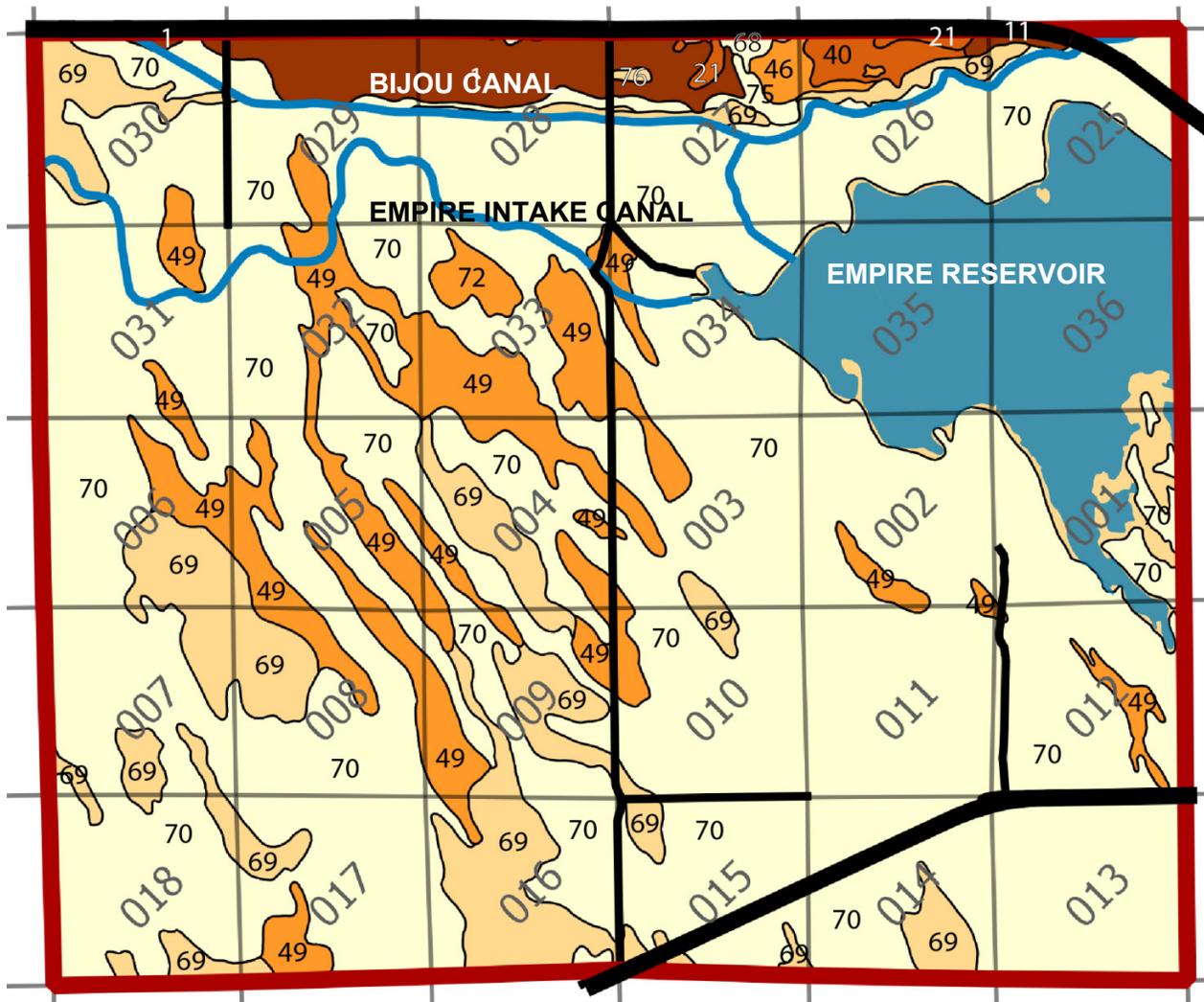
George H. Junne, Jr., Ph.D. (history narrative)  
Professor and Chair, Africana Studies  
University of Northern Colorado

2012



**Location Map**

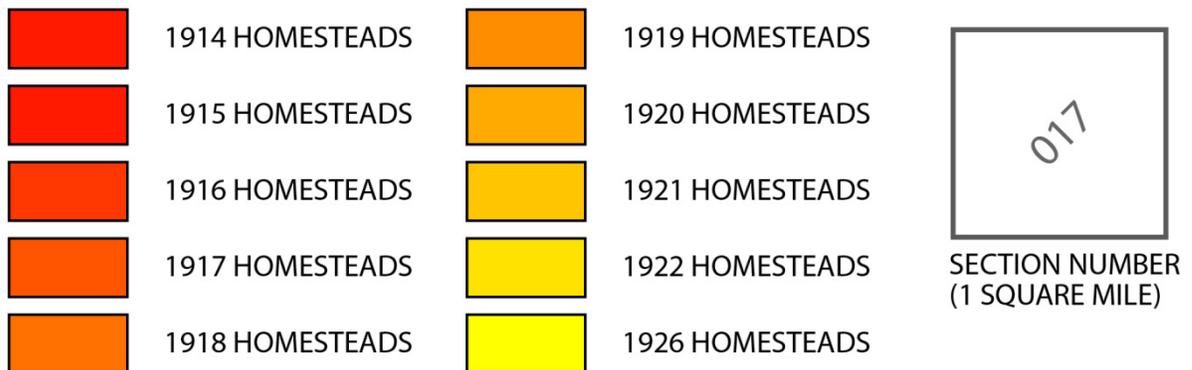
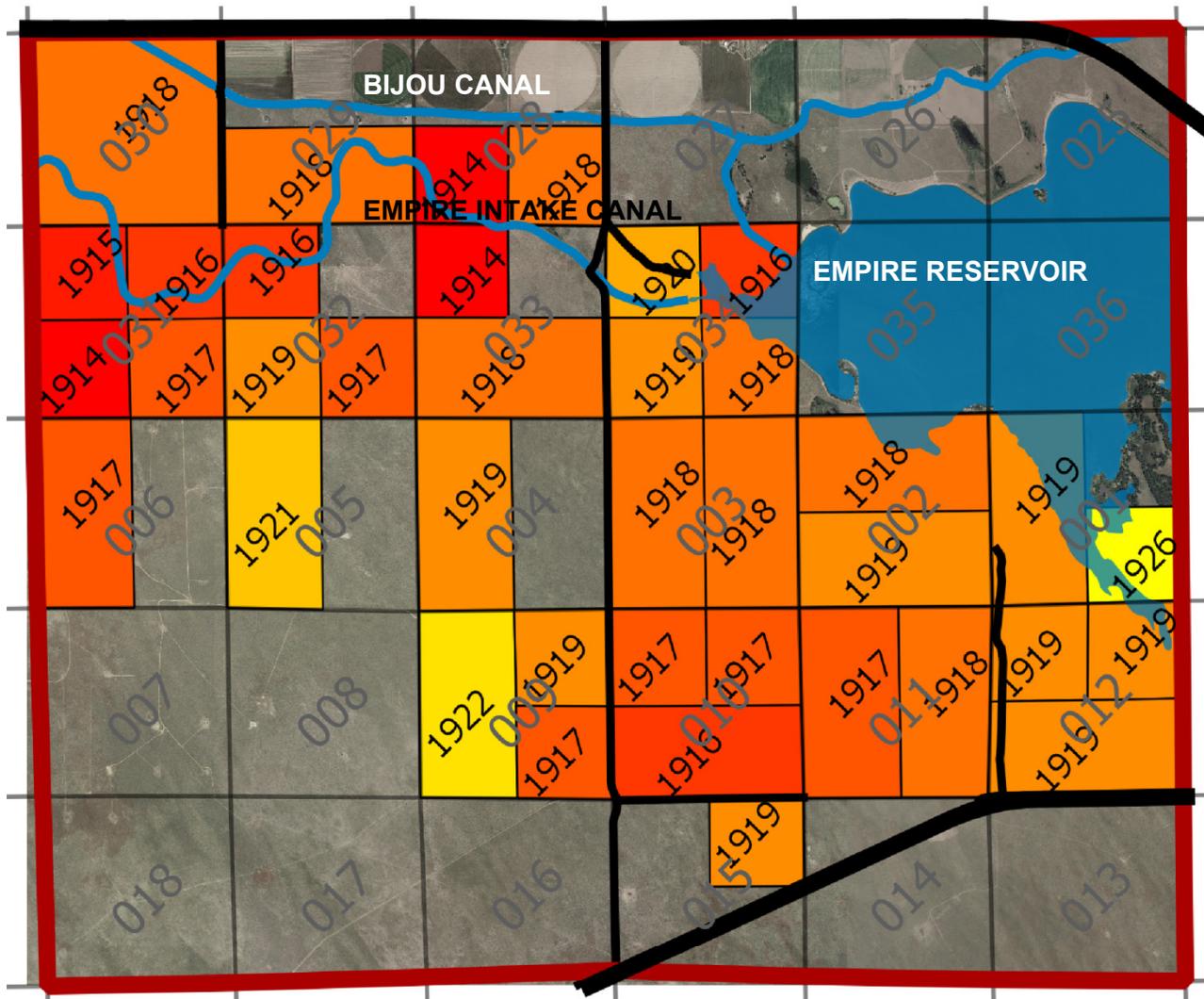
Data Sources: United States Geological Survey 2010a , 2010b, 2010c, 2010d; Imagery from the National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP), June 2009



70	Valent sand, 3 to 9 percent slopes
68	Ustic Torriorthents, moderately steep
75	Vona sandy loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes
69	Valent sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes
76	Vona sandy loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes
49	Osgood sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes
72	Vona loamy sand, 0 to 3 percent slopes
46	Olney fine sandy loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes
2	Altvan loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes
21	Dacono clay loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes
40	Nunn loam, 1 to 3 percent slopes
1	Altvan loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes
11	Bresser sandy loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes

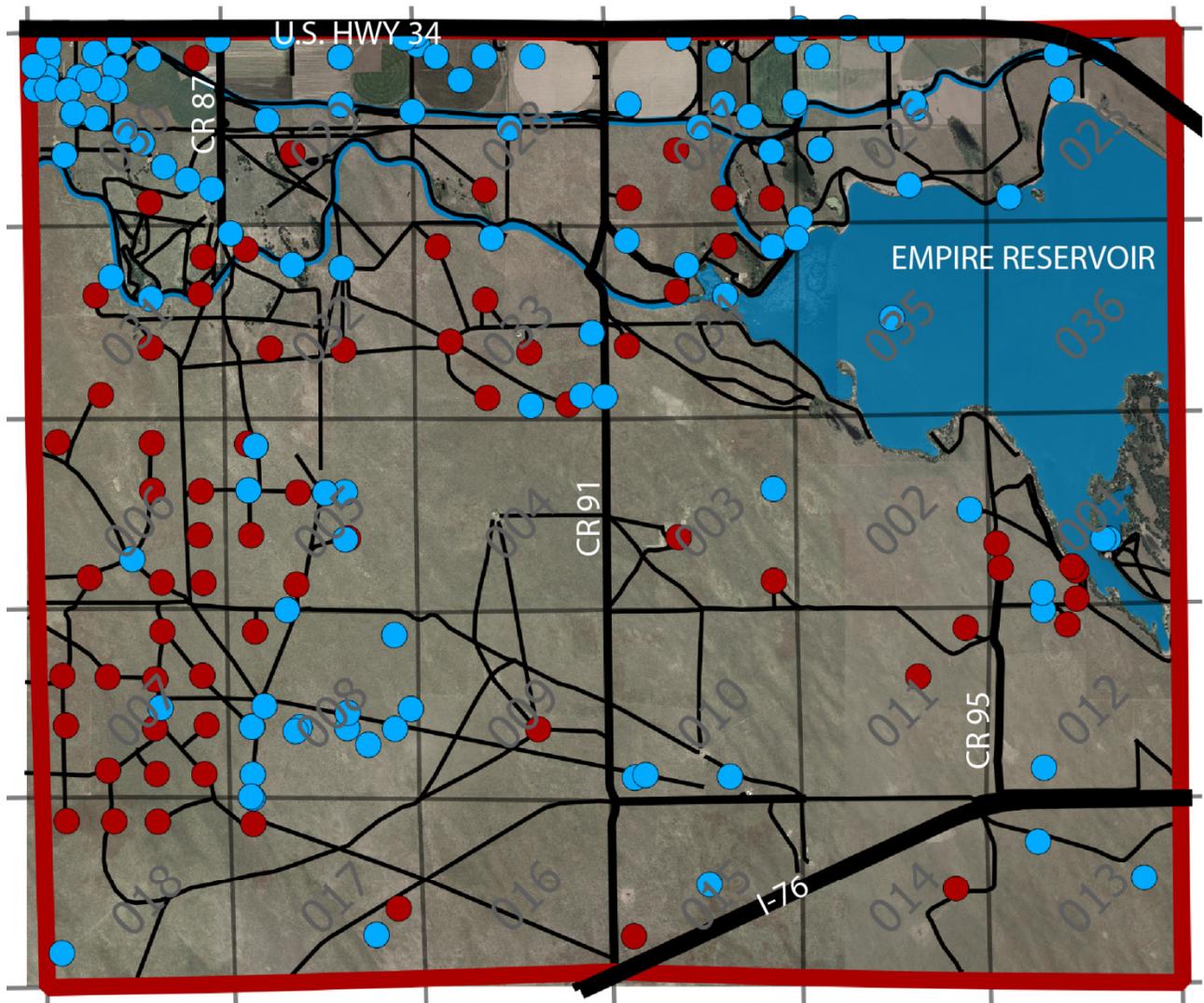


SECTION NUMBER  
(1 SQUARE MILE)

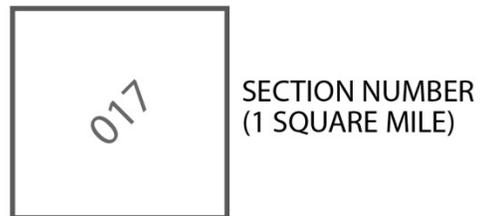


**Dearfield Agricultural Colony Survey Area – Original Homesteads (Patent Dates)**

Data Sources: Waddell 1994; United States Geological Survey 2010a , 2010b, 2010c, 2010d;  
 Imagery from the National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP), June 2009

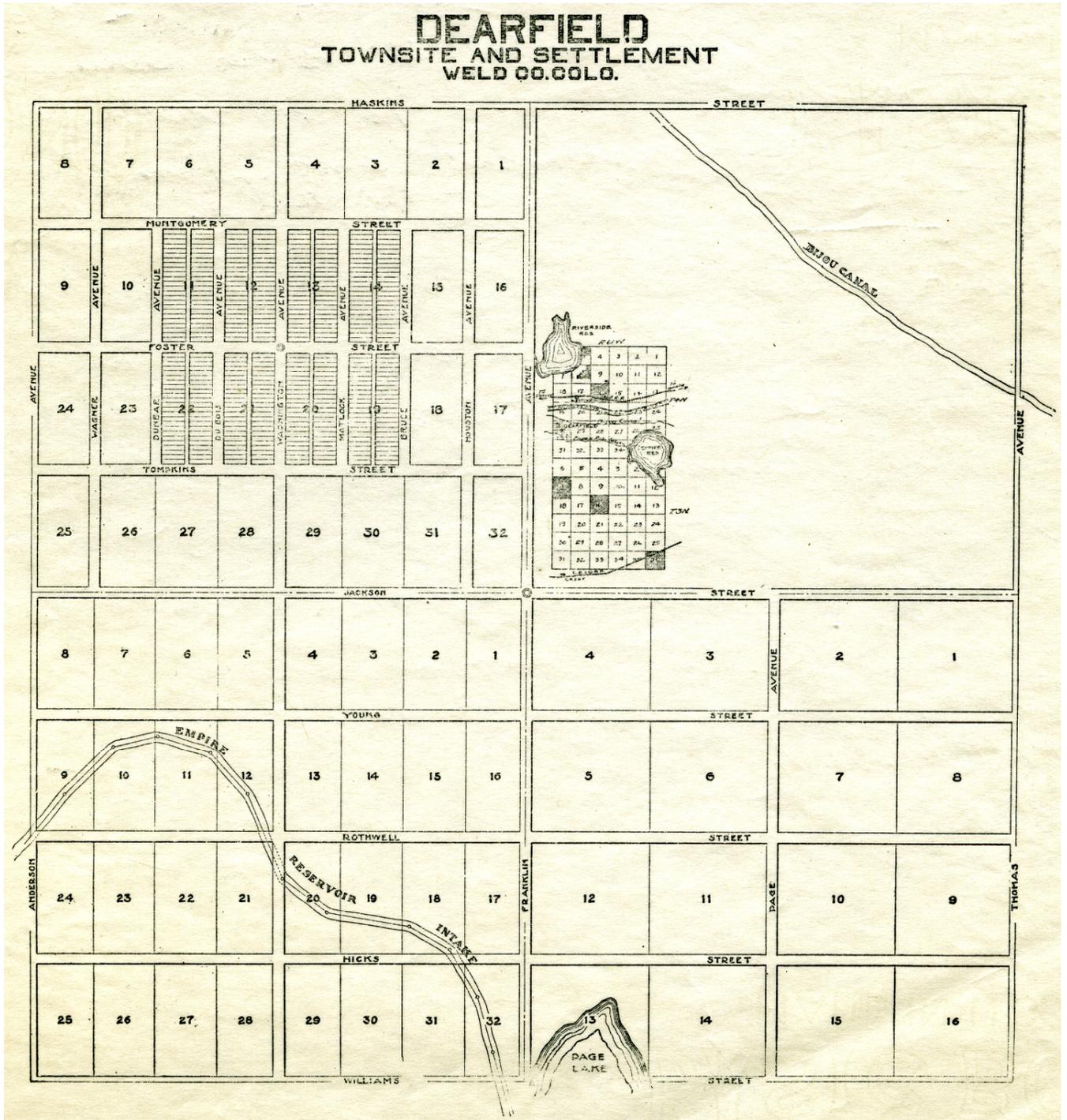


- WATER WELL
- OIL & GAS WELL
- LOCAL ROAD - UNIMPROVED
- COUNTY ROAD - IMPROVED
- U.S. HIGHWAY



**Dearfield Agricultural Colony Survey Area – Roads, Oil & Gas Wells, Water Wells**

Data Sources: Colorado Division of Water Resources 2011c; COGCC 2011; United States Geological Survey 2010a, 2010b, 2010c, 2010d; Imagery from the National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP), June 2009



1910 Map of the Dearfield Townsite, Section 30 (Jackson ca1910)

Courtesy of James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, reprinted with permission.



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# THE TOWN OF DEARFIELD WELD COUNTY



DEARFIELD LODGE

*A  
Valley  
Resort*



DEARFIELD LUNCH ROOM

Now that we have the best of accommodations here, the next thing is  
“Where shall we go for a little recreation and a good country lunch or dinner?”



FILLING STATION



## DEARFIELD IS THE PLACE!

LOCATED about 70 miles east of Denver on the Lincoln Highway 38, paved road all the way, this beautiful little town is an ideal spot for a summer outing. A beautiful 2-hour drive from Denver through many interesting towns and the finest farming section of Colorado. You can order your dinner in advance by phoning Weldona 68-R-5, and it will be ready when you arrive. After a splendid dinner you can—



BARN PAVILLION

*DANCE*  
at the  
**BARN PAVILLION**  
*GOOD MUSIC*



GAS, OIL and AUTO SERVICE

If you care to fish or hunt in season, you will find this territory well adapted to these sports. If you care for a swim, there are many lakes and canals close at hand. If you are on your vacation you can find no better place to stop. FREE camp grounds, camp cottages for rent; and everything to make your outing enjoyable. Fine drives on every hand—through beautiful farming communities and the famous Eastern Colorado Oil Fields.

*Soft Drinks  
Sandwiches  
Ice Cream*



DENVER BRANCH SERVICE STATION, 728 E. 26th AVE.

*Cigars  
Cigarettes  
Candy*

DEARFIELD is just an old-fashioned country visiting place of interest in Colorado.  
Don't miss a trip to Dearfield. You'll find a true western welcome awaiting you here!

**O. T. JACKSON and MINERVA J. JACKSON, Proprietors**  
Postoffice Address: Dearfield, Masters, Colorado Phone Weldona 68-R-5

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Promotional poster, circa 1919-1921 (Jackson 1919)

Courtesy of James A. Michener Library, University of Northern Colorado, reprinted with permission.

All photos taken by Kevin Lyles of Confluent Design, September-October 2011.



PHOTO 1: Dearfield Lodge / Jackson Residence



PHOTO 2: Filling Station and Modern Outbuildings



PHOTO 3: Blacksmith's Shop and Hunter's Cabin (to left); White Poplar with offspring; modern overhead utilities



PHOTO 4: Ornamental Plantings: Lilac (foreground), Siberian Elms (background)



**PHOTO 5:** Washington Avenue looking north towards structures near U.S. Highway 34.



**PHOTO 6:** Extant section of Haskins Street / Lincoln Highway, looking east (U.S. Highway 34 left of photo)



**PHOTO 7:** Bijou Canal as viewed from County Road 87 looking east (downstream)



**PHOTO 8:** Empire Intake Canal (dry) as viewed near County Road 91 looking east (Empire Reservoir behind trees in background)



PHOTO 9: Windmill for stock watering in Section 15 near Interstate 76;  
note communications towers in background



PHOTO 10: Rural Electric power line west of townsite



PHOTO 11: Unimproved road in Section 4 as viewed from County Road 91 looking west



PHOTO 12: Concrete lined ditch and siphon tubes for surface irrigation, Section 29 as viewed from Highway 34



**PHOTO 13: Plains Cottonwood at site of Thomas and Marie Russell Debris Scatter & Well**



**PHOTO 14: Plains Cottonwoods below Empire Intake Canal (right of photo)**



PHOTO 15: Empire Reservoir, looking east from dam, Section 34;  
note mature cottonwoods along perimeter of reservoir



PHOTO 16: Modern residence, Lot 25 to 30 of Block 14, Dearfield townsite



PHOTO 17: Foster Street, townsite – improved gravel road; local electric service line



PHOTO 18: Historic fence line in Dearfield townsite

All photos taken by Kevin Lyles of Confluent Design, September-October 2011.