The early pioneers in Ada County found a broad river valley surrounded by fertile but arid sage brush covered terraces. By 1864 small-scale irrigation projects began on Eagle Island bottom lands to raise stock and crops to supply the miners in the Boise Basin.

By the 1890s this area had seen the development of private irrigation companies and thus larger canal systems, such as the Phyllis Canal, supplying a much larger area. This coupled with the arrival of the railroads providing easy shipment to distant population centers resulted in this area becoming a center for fruit production. One of the most important products was dried prunes.

The creation of the Interurban Loop railway in 1911 connecting Boise, Nampa, and Caldwell made the rapid delivery of fresh dairy products possible. This resulted in a major dairy industry being formed in the area.

The city of Eagle began as one of the small farming communities serving the commercial needs of this area.

As noted in the 1999 Phase II Ada County Study:
“The urbanization of Ada County farmland and small farming communities has increased as market prices for farm goods have decreased. The value of farmland for housing developments is far higher than its agricultural value. Small pockets of historic farmsteads remain, but are imminently threatened by complete destruction of their rural character.”

We seek to call attention to the historic background of this area by designating the included properties as County Treasures.

Ada County HPC
May 2010
**About the Council**
The Council was created on August 25, 1988 to preserve and enhance cultural and historic sites throughout Ada County and to increase awareness of the value of historic preservation to citizens and local businesses. Currently the Council is comprised of nine volunteer members that commit to serve a three-year term and are appointed by the Board of Ada County Commissioners. This and other publications of the Ada County Historic Preservation Council are available from our website at http://adaweb.net/hpc.

**Johnson Barn**
This barn is the only remaining structure of an historic farmstead. According to an ITD study, it is one of only a few remaining Gothic arch barns which were popular during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It is reported that it may be a Sears and Roebuck kit or from an S&R plan. It is located about one quarter mile down a well maintained gravel canal road heading east just below the Phyllis Canal bridge on Joplin Road.

**Simonson House**
This house was built in 1910 and has some characteristics of the four square style. It may have been a farm house originally but its nearness to the community of Eagle could indicate that it was an urban dwelling. The red star is not historic but serves to honor the birth of the family’s daughter.

**Ross House**
This house was built around 1905 on a nearby site as a farm house and was recently moved to the present site. According to an ITD study, the main house and tenant house have been significantly altered and are not part of the County Treasure designation. The barn was built around 1890 and is typical of the 1890s-1910 barn style. It contains the original materials and workmanship.

**Ross Farm**
This farm is part of a still existing historic farmstead which also has an historic main house and tenant house as well as several non-historic structures. According to an ITD study, the main house and tenant house have been significantly altered and are not part of the County Treasure designation. The barn was built around 1890 and is typical of the 1890s-1910 barn style. It contains the original materials and workmanship.

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