



CROSSROADS

News of the Utah Crossroads Chapter
Oregon-California Trails Association
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Proposed Solar Farm on the West Side of the Stansbury Mountains

Joel Boomgarden, State of Utah, School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration

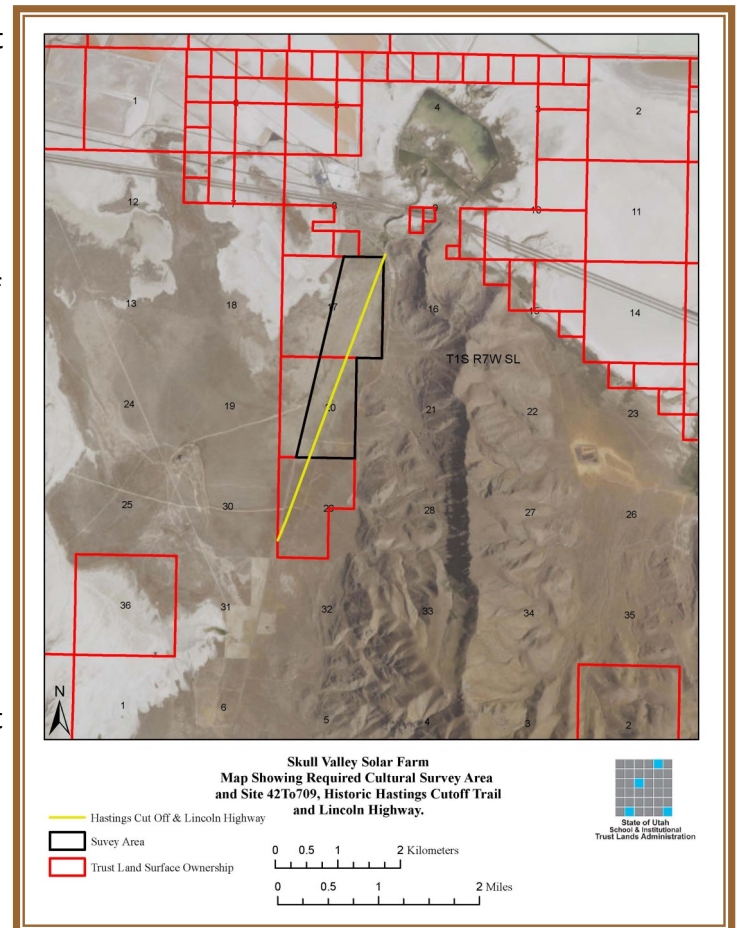
August 4, 2017

All - I am an archaeologist working for the (SITLA). I'm writing to let you know that SITLA is in the planning stages of a proposed solar farm to be located on the west side of the Stansbury Mountains on the north end of Skull Valley near the junction of SR-196 and I-80 (see attached map). Unfortunately, this proposed development will effect a section of both the Lincoln Highway and the Hastings Cutoff Trail (in this location I suspect the two sites may actually use the same alignment). As associations with deep interests in these resources, I'd like to open a conversation on how to best approach this project. I'd like to start this process by meeting with you all out at the project area some time in the next few weeks for a site inspection and to get a general feel for space involved.

The California NHT will be significantly and adversely effected by a proposed solar farm project. Some of those impacts do not appear to be successfully mitigatable. The developer may point to the many existing disturbances, but those could be minor compared to what this windfarm project could do.

1. Viewshed: Looking from the extant highway toward the Stansbury Mountains one presently enjoys a relatively raw, more original view of the countryside the trail passed through. Most of the time you cannot see the trail hidden in the sage plane. Putting a windfarm between those slopes and the oil road completely changes this viewshed. Importantly, this raw view still remains relatively close to major population areas.

The eastward view from the trail itself shows more of the service road at the base of the slopes than the highway viewpoint does, because the trail is sometimes close to or those service roads cross trail path. However, wind farming through the area will bring more such roads, not less. Once the trail crosses to the west of the highway south of the project area, the westerly view from the road to the trail often shows evidences of modern ranching/farming activities. That is, in terms of old view shed, the trail is set in a more original environment when it is in open range, east of the road than when it is west of the road south of the project area. Putting windmills up would destroy that more natural setting east of the highway.



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2. Roads & Pads: No information on where the platforms and road systems was given me, but we can be confident that such will be on or near NHT, as those mills are big and there is not that much room between the highway, NHT, and slopes. When one walks the trail through the considerable sage he is interrupted with an occasional dirt road. We will not want any direct disturbance to NHT trail and I fear that might not be possible with a wind development road system in this diagonal ling project area.

3. Other Users: In addition to the CA NHT and Lincoln Highway concerns, other extant land uses like four wheeling, ATVs, grazing, etc. are also concerns the project will need to address.

Skull Valley Solar Farm

Crossroads Preservation Director, T. Michael Smith Follow-up, Aug 16, 2017

I'm just back from the SITLA meeting at Big Springs on the western Hastings. I made the meeting. Jess Petersen also attended, representing Lincoln Highway. Here is my brief report.

The developer is ENYO. Currently, the project is called in their document, somewhat confusingly, Horseshoe Solar. It is not close to Horseshoe Springs. The SITLA title is Skull Valley Solar Farm. This being a State of Utah property undertaking, we have less interaction capability than in a Federal project setting.

Proposed are densely placing panels sited on SITLA land east of the Highway up to the slope/boundary of the BLM land, and running north-south from just below present Big Springs for 2-3 miles south. As proposed, the project would basically remove from public access this trail area, and cover the Lincoln Highway/Hastings Trail corridor with panels, save maybe for the actual visible trace path.

I spoke to the need to define a corridor that would include both the adjacent and possibly overlapping Lincoln Highway and Hastings usages, and defining them as best possible in the upcoming assessment work. Also of the need to protect and preserve extant visible trace, and anticipating a corridor wide enough to cover immediately adjacent no-longer visible path. That is, as this trail resource is not untouched Class 1 trail, but previously driven upon road path. Presently I consider it more a Class 2 stretch in need of more protection which left to its own could become a Class 1. We should also anticipate likely adjacent non-visible Hastings path. The difficulties distinguishing post Hastings/post Lincoln Highway era traffic impacts on these two period routes are considerable. Preserving a corridor wide enough to preserve and protect will simplify our assessment/preservation responsibilities and require extending the length of the panel layout southward. Of course, the Hastings is part of the California National Historic Trail/National Landscape Conservation Land/National Register eligible. The Lincoln Highway is similarly National Register quality.

I mentioned my desire to eventually see some BLM development around the Big Springs similar to what has occurred over the years at Horseshoe Springs, the need to coordinate this sizable project with adjacent BLM management plans, and the need to coordinate with other recreational users. That latter two of these could not be witnessed as having presently occurred. Shooting and ATV communities would be at the top of my "other" recreation users list, now that the trails people are involve. I should have also mentioned NPS, and will cc them on this when I do so to BLM. I should have also mentioned BLM grazing leases as there is no fencing between the BLM and SITLA acreages.

August 20 Follow-up:

In our recent meeting with SITLA (School Institutional Trust Lands Administration) they indicated that ENYO would consider making a contribution to OCTA's upcoming 2018 convention as part of the necessary project mitigation. Given what SITLA and ENYO are presently trying to do to the Hastings Trail within their Skull Valley solar project, I oppose offering either one of them favorable publicity. That restraint would not necessarily preclude accepting a donation to the conference, but it would preclude offering them favorable publicity until the very significant adverse impacts of the solar project are mitigated to our satisfaction.

**August 23, Additional Remarks
from Crossroads Preservation Director:**

As you know SITLA has a Utah State operational mandate to accent funding for public education. Doing so, it has built a reputation of poor treatment of cultural resource (CR). For instance, during the talk their CR man had with Jess and myself, it was mentioned they do not have to take public comment. I think they spoke to us because their CR person knew OCTA and Lincoln Highway had a long-term interest in those resources and had done significant work with those resources.

Having now considered what I presently know of the project, I oppose the project as presently envisioned as it removes important trail from public access, removes trail from ongoing OCTA usage, study and monitoring, adversely effects the non-visual and visual on-ground trail and severely adversely affects visual resources. I also oppose the project as the project has hither to not consulted with other land uses, agencies and the public. I shall be interested in following the developing CR field assessments and the addressing of these problems as the project advances.

Among the many potential mitigations I would presently like to see considered is the formulation of a long-term Big Springs usage strategy. The project area is immediately south of the spring and, therefore, actually part of its area. Big Springs, unlike Horseshoe Springs, is a landscape hither to lost to a mixed, competing, multiple-agency management that suffers from the lack of a common purpose. This project does nothing if not provide an opportunity to develop a common plan. We need a good, multiple-land-use plan for the Big Springs locality!

Important land elements are owned by Utah and the U.S., so to these entities' agencies I ask: Are there other owners? What are the easements, existing leases, water rights, etc.? What is the list of planners who should be involved in developing this badly needed planning?

The Big Springs locality is an historically important, publicly accessible, multiple-use area that should be much better managed.

August 22, 2017, BLM Salt Lake Field Office, Comment:

This SITLA solar project would most definitely have a significant impact not only on the NHT corridor, but on access and use of adjacent public lands. Aren't they aware that Timpie Point is HEAVILY used by target shooters? Putting a solar field at this location would probably result in vandalism and displacement of shooters causing heavier impacts in other areas. Also seems like a strange location for a solar project with the mountains immediately adjacent to the east; would think the area would get a lot of morning shade most of the year.

Ray Kelsey
2370 S. Decker Lake Blvd, West Valley City, UT 84119
Ph: 801-977-4300

Crossroads Chapter Activities:

Annual Crossroads BBQ— Thursday, September 14th

At the **Ft Douglas Museum** [32 Potter Street Salt Lake City, Utah 84113 Phone: (801) 581-1251] (south side of the parade grounds) The cost will be **\$18.00 per person**. Dinner will serve at **6:00 p.m.** after which Beau Burgess, curator of the Ft Douglas Museum will be giving a PowerPoint presentation on the "**Lucin Cutoff**" for the evening.

There will be a convention committee meeting at 3:30 pm (any chapter members who might be willing to participate because we need help) at the same facility followed by short chapter board meeting at 5:30 pm

Please email Drew dwanosik@xmission.com if you're planning to attend, with your name(s) and how many dinners you want, no later than **Tuesday September 12th**. *Come and enjoy the evening together.*

Crossroads Chapter Activities Con'td:

- ◆ Under Jess Peterson's direction five additional T-rail markers have been installed with more pending.
- ◆ Council Bluffs Convention report. A fine convention was enjoyed and Crossroads well represented with 13 members attending.
- ◆ Several observations were noted for our 2018 Ogden convention and passed on to Gar and the convention committee. Visits were had with our national leaders, including Pat Traffas, the incoming OCTA President. They were most complimentary of the progress and status of our 2018 plans.

Jedediah Smith Monument Replaced, Linda Turner

August 30th, several Crossroads members replaced the 'stolen Jedediah Smith monument at the south end of the Great Salt Lake with a brand new T- Rail Post. It was pretty emotional for me, as my mom Lynne Turner was instrumental in getting the first JS monument in for the NSDAC. We remember it well as the Utah Mountain Men shot their powder guns over the Great Salt Lake to celebrate. They buried a pack of 'possibles' nearby as speeches were delivered.

Seven members of the Oregon California Trails Association - OCTA including our President ,Terry Welch and T-Rails Director - researcher and historian, Jesse Peterson put in the 400 pound monument at the I-80 overlook stop west of Salt Lake City.

We thank the Jedediah Smith Society and the National Society of the Daughters of the American Colonists for partnering with us. Luckily, we now have a monument in that is very difficult to steal.



L to R: Terry, George, Oscar, Linda, Jess, Victor, (and Bryce taking the picture) from OCTA 'planting' the Jedediah Smith Monument Aug. 30th 2017

Best always,
Linda Turner
OCTA Crossroads PR
Salt Lake City, Utah

***** YOUNG ARTISTS NEEDED *****

Elementary Students & Teachers Take Note

We need the participation of you and your students, Vern & Ilene Gorzitze

Each year the Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA) produces a special western calendar based on a particular theme or topic. The calendar will be created using the original artwork of elementary students. Prizes will be awarded to each child whose artwork is selected.

The Oregon-California Trails Association is dedicated to the study, preservation, interpretation, appreciation and enjoyment of the western pioneer trails. This is one of its educational projects. The project integrates history and art. We hope that teachers will see the value of this, incorporate it into their class work and encourage their students to participate. Hopefully it will also increase their students' interest in learning about the West, an important part of our history.

Calendar – It will run from January-December 2019.

Theme for the artwork – Emigrant and Indian – Types of Dwellings

People the world over have designed and built structures for living. Some structures are permanent and are meant for longer term living. Other dwellings have been developed for more mobile living. Most dwellings have been designed to deal with different climatic and geographical conditions of the areas the people live in or move through. Some types of structures are more associated with certain cultures or groups of people. Emigrants came from a variety of places, traveled across the country through Indian lands and settled in different areas. The west, including the Great Plains, the mountains, the Great Basin, the Southwest and the Pacific coastal areas, was populated by many different of Indian tribes. Enjoy your research as you learn about the variety of dwellings used, and then select the dwelling you wish to draw.

Prizes – Each student whose artwork is selected will receive a copy of the calendar and a check for \$50.00. The school which the student(s) attends will also receive one calendar. Additional copies of the calendar will also be available for purchase. Prizes will be mailed no later than September 2018.

Specifications – The artwork must be an original drawing/painting – not a photo or computer generated art. It must be on an 8 ½" x 11" paper. Landscape presentation is preferred, but not mandatory. Twelve to fourteen drawings will be selected. One selection will be made for each month and two others may be used for the cover and the back.

Two types of information must be on the back of the entry:

- The first relates to the drawing. It must identify the type of dwelling depicted and who used it.
- The second refers to the student: It must identify the student by providing all of the following:
A) student's name B) school's name C) teacher's name D) student's grade E) school's address and G") school's phone number. This will enable OCTA to contact the selected students.

If you are a student who wishes to enter the contest independently of your school's participation, please use your home information with your parents' permission & name, but also include the name of your school or note if you are being home schooled.

Deadline – The entries for artwork are due by April 15, 2018. Judging should be completed in June. The calendar should be available by August 2018.

Visit OCTA's website at: www.oct-trails.org

Entries will not be returned and must be sent to:

OCTA-Calendar Project

P.O. Box 1019

Independence, MO 64051-0519

For questions/concerns call: OCTA headquarters @ [\(816\)-252-2276](tel:816-252-2276) or William E. Hill @ [\(631\)-585-2592](tel:631-585-2592)

Scheduled Events:

September 14, 2017

- 2018 Convention Planning Committee meeting at the Ft. Douglas Museum: 3:30 pm
- Crossroads Chapter Members meeting at the Ft. Douglas Museum: 5:30 pm
- Crossroads Annual BBQ at Ft. Douglas Museum: 6:00pm

August 2-6, 2018

- OCTA's National Convention, Ogden, UT



Utah Crossroads Chapter

Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA)

<http://www.utahcrossroads.org>

Chapter Officers:

- President, Terry Welch thtwelch@msn.com 801-936-9835
 - Vice President - Marcia Buckalew monty.buckalew@gmail.com 435-840-8377
 - Past President, Hensley Trail Coordinator, & 2018 OCTA Convention Planning Chair, Gar Elison garelison@gmail.com 801-850-8014
 - Secty/Historian (Laura Anderson) rosemarycraiganderson@yahoo.com 801-898-9085
 - Treasurer/Membership, Drew Wanosik dwanosik@xmission.com 801-595-6902
 - Preservation Dir. and Hastings Trail Coordinator, T Michael Smith RKologyTMS@aol.com 801-487-9115
 - Public Affairs Director, Vacant xxxxxx@xxxxx.xxx xxx-xxx-xxxx
- Chairpersons & Coordinators
- Public Programs Coordinator, Vacant xxx-xxx-xxxx
 - Eastern UT, CA Trail Coordinator, John Eldredge john@trailbuff.com 801-870-4765
 - T-Rail Marker Proj. Chair, COT Crd., Jess Petersen jesspetersen@comcast.net 435-882-6581
 - SLSCR Trail Coordinator, Leo Lyman lionman011@gmail.com 435-879-2345
 - Field Trip Chair, & "News from the Plains" Rep., A. Oscar Olson bigswede555@gmail.com 801-485-0862
 - Newsletter Editor, Chuck Milliken c-m.milliken@att.net 801-840-0817

OCTA-CROSSROADS

Chuck Milliken, Design Editor
6659 South 3380 West
West Jordan, UT 84084