



CROSSROADS

News of the Utah Crossroads Chapter

Oregon-California Trails Association

Vol. 26, No. 1, February 2015

Installation of a New Chapter President

Terry Welch—New OCTA Crossroads President

T*rails is in my blood—a metaphor spoken by many. Each has their own reason for making such a statement. For me, I suspect that it would begin with my father. There are likely not many of us around whose father drove a team and wagon across South Pass. Doing so would not define him as a “pioneer” as the date was 1909. The reason was simple economic necessity. My grandfather died. The family needed to leave Cowley, WY and return to Morgan. The women & small children took the train at a Montana railhead fifteen miles from their home. Household items were loaded in the wagon. My father (age 21) and his brother (age 14) drove south through Lander, over the pass, through Kemmerer to Morgan.*

My earnest involvement began in the mid-1990s. I was assigned to arrange for porta-potties for the travelers and potable water for man and beast from Henry, NB to Salt Lake. (All water was hauled in various types of tanks. No animal took a drink from a stream or ditch as per agreements with ranchers and the BLM.) Such arrangements necessitated numerous trips along the trail and becoming acquainted with trail land owners and local community resources.

This experience was followed by several years of personal trips as well as accompanying groups of teachers along the trail from Scottsbluff, NE to Salt Lake. It was Gar who invited me to become a part of OCTA and to enjoy a whole new world of trails and stories of people. The animals pulling the wagons made the trails but it is the people who leave the legacy whether they are our relatives or not.

My personal enjoyment of OCTA activities became heightened by the interaction with members of the Crossroads Chapter. Each has their own stories and each shares in the vitality of following, marking and preserving trail heritage. Again, it is people who give life to

our endeavors. I would invite each of you to look for friends, family or strangers who may not know of the satisfaction that comes from participating with us.

Have a fine day!

Terry

Trails Access & Resources Threatened

OCTA Headquarters

A Department of Defense proposal to significantly expand the Utah Test and Training Range (UTTR) in Western Utah could significantly impact National Historic Trails, according to T. Michael Smith, preservation officer of the Utah Crossroads Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association.

The test range—already the largest supersonic restricted airspace in the continental U.S.—would expand through an administrative transfer of some 625,000 acres of Bureau of Land Management land, and an additional 85,000 acres of other federal land,

to the control of the Department of Defense, according to news reports that surfaced in October.

The Hastings Cutoff of the California National Historic Trail—traversed by the ill-fated Donner Party and others in the late 1840s—goes right through the heart of the proposed expanded range area. The Utah west desert segment of the Pony Express National Historic Trail and the Central Overland trails traverse the southern edge of it.

“Despite the DOD’s words to the contrary, we only need look at the present fences, policing, and stay-out signs on the existing test range to see where this might go,” Smith reports. “These could include accidental or intended ordnance drops, road closures, grazing, recreation, mining, geothermal, wildlife and proposed wilderness area losses. As important as the historic trails are, they are hardly the only reason people need to better scrutinize this proposed transfer.”

A recent amendment by Utah Senators Orrin Hatch and Mike Lee to the 2015 Defense Appropriation Bill to transfer the lands to the DOD is an effort to push the transfer through without adequate public debate or environmental review, according to Smith.



Pilot Peak & Great Salt Lake Salt Desert on the Hastings Cutoff of the California National Historic Trail.

“The playa out there is one of the few places in the entire historic trail system where the view and the experience today is just as dramatic as it was for the pioneers who took this so-called short cut to California over 160 years ago,” states Smith. “You can still see traces of it out there today. It’s an important piece of our nation’s historic legacy.”

The Oregon-California Trails Association, headquartered in Independence, MO, is the nation’s largest emigrant trail preservation organization. The Salt Lake City-based Crossroads Chapter of OCTA will be closely monitoring the test range expansion proposal as it moves through the legislative process, Smith assures. Additional information can be found in dreadful Senate amendment SA3819 (SB 2410- sponsor Utah Senator Hatch)

In addition, we need to provide special consideration for the world famous Hastings Pass east of Aragonite in the Cedar Mountains. Native Americans used these springs for thousands of years as did the wagon trains 'going west' getting their first glimpse of the formidable Great Salt Lake Desert with the majestic Pilot Peak in the distance. It must be protected and kept open for visitors.

February UTTR UPDATE with Senator Hatch

Pat Hearty

Back from the Washington DC trip, and most of a half hour with John Tanner and Matt Jensen. That is pretty long, as DC office visits go. I didn’t learn any new and earth shaking stuff, but the fact that the trails community had a presence in Washington for a face-to-face meeting, I think, makes a valuable statement which can be followed up here at home.

Matt Jensen is the UTTR lead guy, and I mostly listened to him. He re-explained much

of the information found in the fact sheet which he sent to us in December. Test and training ranges are evaluated by DOD, and the one in Utah has been found deficient, in that the area available for test flights is not adequate for testing things like the new generations of smart bombs. The target area is Wildcat Mountain, and nowhere near our trail corridors. Expansion of the test range will allow test flights for newer weapon systems and support jobs at Hill AFB – hence, Sen. Hatch’s desire to push this.

Closure of the expansion areas will be for short periods only (3 hours or so, did I hear), and not on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, or Federal holidays. ‘Thirty-day’ notice will be provided to us and to the public prior to any closure. If, for any reason, closure is planned for a weekend or holiday, 90-day notice will be provided. Before any testing begins, military personnel will be in the area to try to clear it of anyone found (rabbit hunters, rock hounds, tourists, etc.) and will certainly be out on the XP road at any time they want to test. A 3-mile safety radius around the interlopers will be maintained.

Chapter Activities:

T-Rail Project Update

Gar Elison, Past President

During the January 22nd Leadership meeting, 15 new T-Rail sites were approved for installation in 2015. Because of a considerable cost difference, aluminum quotation plates and rivets were also approved for use on future installations and for replacing damaged plaques.

Due to a significant contribution by Wollam Construction Co., of Sandy, Utah we have the exchange of Rail completed as the Company provided a driver and truck to haul the scrap rail from Tooele to Springville and then return to Tooele with a load of cut rail ready to be welded into T-Markers for marking more of the Trails the Crossroads Chapter of OCTA has been working on.

Wollam Construction Company does specialty Fabrication for many industries such as mining and refining. Both Kennecott and Chevron are Companies which have utilized their services.

A “stand-off area” will be maintained between the Pony Express road and the test range expansion area along the road to Simpson Springs, the area of highest traffic volume. An advisory board including BLM, the Military, ranchers, and as a result of our voices, the historic trails groups, will be formed to keep everyone on the same page as this test range expansion goes forward.

It appears that Senator Hatch’s people are approaching this with a sincere desire to protect our interests and those of other involved segments of the public. The above provisions will be written into the documents establishing the UTTR expansion.

These issues and our concerns were also discussed with Sean Stewart in Senator Mike Lee’s office. He is up to date on the issue, and now also on our thoughts on it.

The Crossroads Chapter recognizes Wollam as a Business partner of the Oregon California Trails Association and thanks Wollam for facilitating our efforts to both mark and interpret the National Historic Trails which transverse Utah. Our deep appreciation for this Contribution! A special thanks to our own chapter members who helped in a variety of ways with the follow through to get the rail materials in usable shape and location. I am personally aware of at least the following members: Jeff Pashley, Roy Tea, Oscar Olson, Vic Heath and Jess Petersen. If I have missed someone I apologize in advance. It truly takes a whole community to accomplish all we strive to do as a Chapter.

Update on Old Spanish Trail Research

Dr. Stan Kitchen, Dendrochronologist—Fishlake National Forest
Shared by Gar Elison, Past President

The Fish Lake National Forest in central Utah has been working for the last 5 years on remarkably preserved Old Spanish Trail (OST) and Fish Lake Cutoff (FLCO) corridors 40 miles east of the Sevier River Valley. Coupled with landmarks, descriptions and mileage by Capt. John Gunnison, plus numerous linear features, cairns, inscriptions, fords and tree ring dates, we are confident about the location of the OST in our area.

The Dendrochronologist is Dr. Stan Kitchen of the USDA Forest Service Shrubs Lab in Provo. The BYU professor who excavated the wickiup village on the north end of Fish Lake is Dr. Joel Janetski. We also have an excavated wickiup village on the north end of Fish Lake that produced trade goods, including c.1840 glass trade beads, 100 ft. from the Fish Lake Cutoff. Three of our dendro dates are in the 1790's indicating early trade on both the OST and FLCO.



had a great view and visible trail was near by.

Because George D. Brewerton, who came into Santa Fe with Kit Carson, went up this trail in 1848, we thought that you might be interested in our findings. And I suspect that a lot of the human and four-legged traffic from California would have gone over the Santa Fe Trail. There is a video now on YouTube. In the search engine type "Old Spanish Trail" and click on "Gunnerson Version." You should see a young man in white suspenders and a red shirt writing on parchment.

Of interest to those who were on the field trip in Red Canyon, the pillared cairn you looked at is oriented magnetic north-south.

Some of those on the field trip hiked to this feature so we had an idea about how high on the ridge it was located and what it looked like. The photo will be of interest to those who did not make the hike as it was strenuous, but once at the cairn we

Volunteer Activities Report:

Coordinator: Nila Eldredge
nila@trailbuff.com
801-870-4765

Donations of time, talent, funds, and equipment to volunteer organizations like ours make what we do possible. Many have been generous, and we thank them. OCTA is a 501c3 so be wise and utilize the tax laws and your favorite financial advisor in making the most of your tax-deductible donations. We remind you to consider making any final donations you may find needful before the end of the year to simplify our Crossroads paperwork and meet the end of 2014 year IRS requirements. Because of tax law, Crossroads does not appraise the value of equipment you may be or have donated.

Those who want to further help our Crossroads program can earmark funds for the purchase of plaques to go on our many T-markers. In 2014 we will probably

need to raise a little more money, volunteer labor and transportation to purchase additional plaques and place the many markers we have in the works.

Besides making the various donations, each of us should also be reporting those donations. Please send Nila Eldredge at: (nila@trailbuff.com) the hours, miles and dollar amounts you may have spent assisting Crossroads trails programs during 2014. Each year we compile those figures for OCTA. That report is used in various ways to directly assist our efforts in identifying and preserving historic trail.

Utah Crossroads Chapter
Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA)
<http://www.utahcrossroads.org>

Chapter Officers:

Terry Welch, President	thtwelch@msn.com 801-936-9835
Michael Landon, Vice President, Public Programs Coordinator	LandonMN@ldschurch.org 801-240-5923
Craig Fuller, Secy/Historian	cfhistory3@aol.com 801-467-2259
Drew Wanosik, Treasurer/Membership	dwanosik@xmission.com 801-595-6902
Gar Elison, Past President, Hensley Trail Coordinator	garelison@gmail.com 801-850-8014
T Michael Smith, Preservation Dir.	RKologyTMS@aol.com 801-487-9115
Linda Turner, Public Relations Dir.	lindat.crossroads@gmail.com 801-953-0370

Chairpersons & Coordinators

Roy Tea, Western UT, Hastings Trail Coordinator	teatrails@yahoo.com 801-943-5891
John Eldredge, Eastern UT, CA Trail Coordinator	john@trailbuff.com 801-870-4765
Jess Petersen, T-Rail Marker Project Chair, COT Cord.	jesspetersen@comcast.net 435-882-6581
Leo Lyman, SLSCR Trail Coordinator	lionman011@gmail.com 435-879-2345
Nila Eldredge, Volunteer Activity Coordinator	nila@trailbuff.com 801-870-4765
A. Oscar Olson, Field Trip Chair, and "News from the Plains" Rep.	(No eMail) 801-485-0862
Chuck Milliken, Newsletter Editor	c-m.milliken@att.net 801-840-0817

CROSSROADS is published three times a year
Send features, articles, letters, or suggestions via eMail to:
Chuck Milliken at c-m.milliken@att.net

OCTA-CROSSROADS
Chuck Milliken, Editor
6659 S 3380 W
West Jordan, UT 84084

Upcoming Events & Workdays:

Mid-March

OCTA Mid-Year Board Meeting—Crossroads President Terry Welch will be attending.

March 19th: Spring Chapter Meeting at the Salt Lake County Commission Chambers scheduled for 7:00 pm in the North building of the county office complex. Scott Christensen, who has done extensive research on the native Indian populations in Northern Utah/Southern Idaho—a prelude to our spring tour of sites and trails in the northern Utah area. The tour date is yet to be determined.

September 21-25th 2015

Convention will be held at Lake Tahoe, Stateline, NV.

2016 Convention

Will be in Pocatello, ID.