



# TRAIL DUST



Idaho Chapter  
Oregon-California Trails Association

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## I-OCTA MEMEBERSHIP MEETING AND NEW OFFICERS—October 9, 2004

On October 9, the membership of I-OCTA met in Mountain Home for the fall business meeting. One of the highlights of the meeting was the presentation to Fred Dykes by Bill Wilson of the OCTA award, given to Fred during the Convention in August. The award was for Fred's long-time historical contributions to both OCTA and I-OCTA, and his many efforts that have helped in documenting and preserving the historic trails. Fred was unable to attend the Convention for the first time in many years, at Vancouver, and the award seemed to have been kept quiet until it was presented at Mountain Home. Congratulations and thanks to Fred from the membership.



FRED DYKES, RIGHT, ACCEPTED HIS OCTA AWARD

A second item of business and interest was the election of officers for the coming year. This Editor was replaced as President of I-OCTA by last year's Vice President, Doug Jenson, Idaho Falls! This writer thanks the membership for the opportunity to serve in that capacity for the last three years, and will support the new President as much as possible! It is hoped the whole membership will be dedicated to such support for all the officers.

This year the membership elected two Vice Presidents, one from each of eastern and western Idaho, to help in leading members from across the State. Lyle Lambert, Pocatello, and Jerry Eichhorst, Boise, both having been very active and involved in I-OCTA activities and trail marking trips, are these new officers. Your past President hopes to continue involvement in the leaders' communications loop with present officers, and to offer

Assistance during their learning and adjustment period.

Bill Wilson was reelected as Treasurer and Afton Patrick as Secretary. Wally Meyer traded his position as Preservation Officer and was elected to the I-OCTA Board, replacing Don McCarter of Boise. Fred Dykes' term on the Board expired, but no candidate was found to replace him at the present time. Officers and members will be looking for a replacement, if possible from the eastern side of the State. Peggy Cristobal and Clair Ricketts remained on the Board, and Gil Wylie agreed to remain for at least another year though his term had expired.



FRONT, L-R, AFTON PATRICK and JANE WYLIE. STANDING, L-R, BILL WILSON, WALLY MEYER, PEG CRISTOBAL, DOUG JENSON, LYLE LAMBERT, JERRY EICHHORST, CLAIR RICKETTS, GIL WYLIE, JAMES MCGILL.

Both Peg Cristobal and Jane Wylie continued in their appointment as I-OCTA co-Historians and Jerry Eichhorst was again approved as the [IdahoOCTA.org](http://IdahoOCTA.org)

Webmaster. This Editor was retained to lead in producing the *Trail Dust* paper, and traded the presidency for election to the position of Preservation Officer. Wally had kidded that the President had been doing his job anyway, so he gave it to him! Wally's contribution, however, to trail marking and preservation over many long years will not be equaled by anyone else!

New forms for recording volunteer hours, miles, and related costs for members who attend meetings and are involved in all manner of trail preservation efforts were distributed. This keeping of records helps the local Chapter in any financial related reimbursement for involved members from grants, or the same amounts can be gifted back to the Chapter for other expenses. The same volunteer contributed hours and costs are also shared with and kept by OCTA for requesting money reimbursement from the Federal Government under the support for the Trail Preservation Acts.

Regular business was conducted at the membership meeting, which included some reports from the OCTA Convention. Wendy Miller, Canyon County Historical Museum Director and relatively new I-OCTA member, had met with Jeannie Watson of OCTA concerning the possibility of looking into an extension Mattes Library in Idaho. She reported on that meeting, and the process of gathering information and continued communications with Watson on that matter. Jeannie is looking for input from Chapters on organizing such extension libraries.

Wendy Miller and Jim McGill reported on some follow-up information gathering and communications with community leaders and others concerning the possible OCTA Convention in Idaho. It was reported that information will be gathered until the spring member meeting and presented to the group so that an informed decision can be made about the possible Convention. OCTA will be told after that meeting whether a 2004 Convention in the Treasure Valley is even feasible.

Another OCTA Convention award that this Editor had before neglected to report, was given to the Huntington, OR, School District for their involvement in the Utter Project, and for their total school commitment to Oregon Trail education. Lance Dixon, High School Principal, went to Vancouver to accept the award for the school. Superintendent and Grade School Principle, Gerald Hopkins, was equally involved in leading the school into this trails related commitment. I-OCTA congratulates these men and the District for their involvement and for sharing with students the great history of the trails story.

A report was given by Virginia Ricketts on the run-down condition of the Rock Creek/Stricker Station Cemetery, which in the past I-OCTA helped fence and care for.

Virginia and Claire Ricketts will be looking into the situation to see if I-OCTA can again be involved in preserving the graves there. This will also be reports to Randy Brown, OCTA Graves Committee Chairman for possible assistance.

It was also reported that at a future meeting of the Idaho State Historical Society on October 21, 2004, Virginia would be receiving an "Esto Perpetua Award" for her contributions to historic preservation and her dedication over the years to many duties and voluntary work. That award was given, and Bill Wilson offered a picture of the award event. Congratulations to a lady who deserves all the accolades and awards she can be offered for her work. Claire deserves much credit too. WILSON PHOTO



ESTO PERPETUA AND MANY THANKS VIRGINIA RICKETTS

We appreciate our members who traveled the farthest to have part in the I-OCTA fall meeting, Muriel and Gail Carbiener from Bend, Oregon! Members from across Idaho attended and finished the work at hand for the Chapter, and set in motion a year with good leadership!

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After the membership meeting a group of members took an afternoon field trip to the head-waters of Ditto Creek, and the Jeffrey-Goodale Cutoff, where it begins to descend from the Danskin Peak area into the valley to meet again with the Oregon Trail. This was Wendy Miller's first trail field trip experience. The Willow Creek fording



TOWING LYLE BACK ACROSS THE CREEK--DOUG JENSON  
proved to be too much for the van driven by Lyle Lambert, Pocatello, and the engine was flooded out!

We know Lyle spent considerable time, effort, and expense to remediate the situation, including getting Lyle's rider's back to their homes, towing the van the next day, and repairs to get it running again. Lyle and passengers, Fred Dykes and Doug Jensen, did get to continue the trip in others' vehicles and enjoy the trail hike, also helping to place several markers on the ruts. However, Lyle then had the responsibility of getting everyone home and getting the van running again. Others helped Lyle.

Our thanks to Lyle for not only being a dedicated host to his riders, but for all the contributions he has made toward trail preservation. We all feel badly that the trip became a financial burden for him, and for the trouble that we helped lead him into at Willow Creek! You can be sure that on October 30, during a trail marking trip near Arco along some more Jeffrey-Goodale ruts, Lyle drove his big rig, his 4 wheel drive Maroon-Monster!

(Of course the experience at Willow Creek was probably planned in advance by Wally Meyer, including the initiation of one of our new Vice-Presidents, Lyle!) But there were pleasant parts of the trip too, visiting the trail and seeing the remains of the old Willow Creek ranch where many journals described the experiences of travelers after crossing central Idaho. Thanks Wally!

The use of the new forms for reporting individual volunteer contributions of time, gas, and other expenses for trail preservation was a success! The editor has received a host of completed forms for the meeting and field trip, for recording the contributions of our members. The totals for this year will be compiled, and the final report will be sent to Bill and Jeannie Watson by this past President, to finish this year's business. Thanks all!

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## TEAPOT DOME TRIP TRAVELERS

The scheduled Teapot Dome field trip, on September 25, and the hike on the North Alternate was a bit low in attendance, nevertheless at least two people got to visit and view the Dome from the south who had never been on those ruts. Patti McGill went along on that trip and walked those ruts for the first time. A visitor from Florida, Joe Dines, whose children live in the area of Homedale, ID, also hiked along! He had not expected to



JOE DINES HIKES THE RUTS TOWARD TEAPOT DOME

go as far as the 2.5 or 3 miles covered, but made it successfully and enjoyably.

(On October 5, this Editor then met Joe at the Walters Ferry site and took him along many miles of the South Alternate Trail, from east of the Castle Creek area to Guffey Butte and Rabbit Creek. Of course he was able to experience some of the Utter Disaster sites, and follow many miles of trail ruts that are seldom seen by others except during the Utter related field trips. His pleasure was strongly expressed over an experience that could never occur near his home, and his delight was apparent in hearing the history and seeing the little-changed ruts.)

After the hike, for which Wally Meyer graciously dropped off hikers on the south end and picked them up on the north end, and after lunch, the group drove back to the south, and from the northern part of Ross Road finished the random marking of the North Alternate. All the miles from King Hill to the Teapot Dome rejoining with the main Oregon Trail are now finished.

There remains only 3-4 miles of the existing North Alternate ruts to be remarked near the Elmore-Gooding Counties line, and a couple of miles near Bliss, ID. It is pleasurable to announce this accomplishment by I-OCTA members! Fellow markers are always welcomed!

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## PROGRESS ON "GOODALE NORTH"

The project of researching and *very probably* mapping and marking the route of the 1862, Goodale Train, from Boise to the Brownlee Ferry site on the Snake River is progressing. This has turned out to be a long-range and detailed project, which will probably more than rival the work on the Utter Disaster signing project two years ago.

Research is continuing and this author has begun writing up this documented and trail-interesting story. It includes Tim Goodale's contribution to Idaho that effected part of the State's transportation and settlement north of Boise for years thereafter, and the access to the gold fields from 1862 on. Many before undisclosed and unpublished facts of this history are being brought together.

On October 12, by invitation, your new I-OCTA Preservation Officer made a last minute BLM-planned trip north of Emmett and to Little Willow Flat, a trip also made earlier this year by several I-OCTA members and Dean Shaw, BLM. This time Dean and this writer took Stan McDonald, the BLM State Officer for Cultural Resources Program, out to view what has before been discovered, and to help obtain his support/enthusiasm for this project.

Stan is a valuable BLM ally for I-OCTA, and cares much about trail preservation! Last year he went all the

way from Boise to Big Hill with Dick Hill, BLM Field Officer from Idaho Falls, and this Editor to see about the trail remarking there. We also looked into the possibility of the Trails Center in Montpelier putting an extension center at the base of the Big Hill ruts, offering to help!

Stan led the I-OCTA-BLM meeting and with other related groups, in January 2004, which started a new chapter in cooperation, funding, and a new Memorandum of Agreement between I-OCTA and the BLM. Stan, fortunately, discovered a new archeological site, a native tool making location with a lot of tool chips and broken points, as we hiked on Goodale North area on the trail!

After looking during the first trip in summer for the trail ruts where the BLM land and ruts begin up the foothills, 6 miles north of Emmett, and the results leaving some questions about that possible section of the Goodale North, we looked again a bit more extensively. The area is very soft and steep, and it appeared that erosion had about obliterated most evidence of the trail there. Little evidence of that part of the road left many questions.

Upon the return home Patti and this writer studied again the old 1867, land plat of the area, the 5 year later marked trail, and found that we had been looking too near the present road over the first foothills. The trail was indicated to have gone over those hills almost .5 mile to the east. Curiosity and hope led Patti and this writer back to those foothills on October 22, after the Hudspeth marking trip needed to be cancelled because of rain and snow across southeastern Idaho.

To our delight, right where the land plat indicated, we found a continuous trail over a gradual grade and small pass for almost 2 miles, to a private ranch in the first valley beyond the hills. Satellite pictures from the Internet also offered the evidence of that route. The later-used and evident first part of about .5 mile of trail, running a true NW from a corner on some private land, was soon surmised to be a probable improvement when the stages and/or other vehicles finally began to run on that road.



GOODALE ROUTE RUTS COMING NORTH FROM HAW CR.  
With only a little search and hiking, it was discovered that the oldest route and ruts appeared to have begun just

east of Haw Creek from the present road, and went almost straight north along the stream before joining the remainder of the trail, which turned NW *and crossed Haw Creek*. That early route had been a bit steeper with small rocky hills, and the road was probably changed to the more eastern route with a longer but more gradual rise, and without the rocks. The ruts go over a low pass and proceed on another .75 mile to the ranch land. Thus the prior questionable part of existing ruts was found.

After that morning hike the same two volunteers went on north, back to Little Willow Flat, and for the first time in many, many years, no doubt, traveled about 1.5 miles of a well-worn and distinguished part of the trail on north. It crosses BLM land and follows up the Little Willow drainage near the stream bed. A few blank Greenline markers were placed on both of these sections of the trail, to mark the ruts until a decision about the proper decal name will be made in the future. That will be done by a group and interagency decision after all necessary research is in and shared with all involved.

Volunteers who have seen parts of this route do look forward to sharing with other I-OCTA members, and exploring more northerly toward Crane Creek Reservoir. Permission from ranchers and other private property owners must be obtained for much of the route on north. We are also in communication with Gary Franklin, Cambridge, ID, early Goodale North researcher and I-OCTA member, who will be fully involved with others from that area in mapping and marking the route north of Crane Creek Reservoir, and NW from that valley to the old Brownlee Ferry site on the Snake River.

*In a few days this Preservation Officer will be traveling with Wally Meyer to see some of the old ruts that led the Goodale Train from Boise to the Emmett area. Wally, a former Preservation Officer, BLM employee, and long-time trail marker, is now one of the I-OCTA Board members. He has been on some of those ruts, and in fact his home, NW of Eagle, sits on one of the variants, if not the original route. Miles of ruts still exist a bit NW of his and other's developed private land.*

None of the trail NW from Boise has been very well identified, except that Hill Road now sits on top of the trail that immediately left Boise. All the areas to the north need identification and mapping as accurately as possible, and the making available of all the information that can still be discovered about that important part of the original trail as well as one early developed variant from Emmett and on through Crane Creek.

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The "in a few days" recorded above was yesterday, November 8. In spite of a persistent fog that has been dominating the Boise Valley for days, Wally's ruts were

shared with your Preservation Officer! We were able to hike up about .75 mile north from Wally's home, and we fairly well agreed that the deep trail ruts that followed the ridge over in to Big Gulch we probably the main



SOME GREAT "WALLY" RUTS ON TOP OF THE RIDGE

Goodale North ruts. Oh yes, a section of swale that passes along the road in front of Wally's home toward the upper ridge ruts is probably a trace of the trail too!

Of course the agreement about these ruts was augmented by our travel on north, and east in through Big Gulch, and discovering the continued ruts dropping in on the southern side and following out the northern side of that fine flat valley. Driving almost a mile on a parallel road to the NW, we also followed some good old ruts that do continue on a line from Big Gulch on the route, indicated in the old land plats, toward Emmett. Then they proceed down a long valley toward Willow Creek.

By 1867, this route was identified as the "Boise City and Umatilla Road," recorded on one of the old plats, because this was being used extensively by stages and freight wagons (1863) from Umatilla, OR. In a phone conversation a few days ago Larry Jones, Idaho State Historian, agreed that this Road probably followed along on the old Goodale route.

Wally also shared some deep and multiple ruts that run parallel to the Umatilla Road, on the west. The amount of use evident does indicate that these are probably a variant to the Goodale/Umatilla, and may have been the first to pass nearer to the Highway 16 route to Emmett.



ORIGINAL "FREEZEOUT" ROAD DOWN FROM CAMEL BACK

The fog hindered all the exploration that may have been done otherwise, but the success of the day was topped-

off by examining and verifying the only route possible down to the Payette Valley, down a ridge just north of the Freezeout Hill Road. The road is quite steep there.

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Volunteers who would like to assist in any part of this long-range Goodale North project are surely welcomed. Contact this Editor, President Jenson, or other officers.

### **MORE JEFFREY-GOODALE MARKING**

On October 30, Dick Hill, BLM at Idaho Falls, and three I-OCTA members, including Lyle Lambert, V. P., and the new President, Doug Jenson, V. P., with this Editor, met at the Stoddard Homestead site, 12 miles west of Arco along Hwy. 20-26. A report had been given to Dick that someone may be putting a pipeline in near the Jeffrey-Goodale ruts that run beside the old 1912, Homestead cabin.

A time had been set some weeks before to make sure the trail was well marked so that pipe layers would not disturb the ruts there, but that trip had to be cancelled. On that last Saturday of the month almost 2 miles of the trail was remarked, resetting 2-3 old markers that had been pulled out of the ground and placing about 15 more, mostly Greenline posts, across the route. No one could now miss seeing the exact route of the trail there!

From the eastern edge of the Josephine Spraker private property, for which we had permission to cross and remark in 2003, during a college class, markers were placed rather close to each other back to the east to the fence of the old Phillip Bliss, 1906 Homestead land.

Following that the group drove on to SE of Arco, to the intersection where the two branches of the J-G Cutoff rejoined, on the east side of the INEL Federal Government land. The southern route almost straight from Big Southern Butte toward Arco had been finished during an I-OCTA field trip in 2002.

Part of the northern Lost River route had been remarked, from east to west, to within 1.5 miles of the west border of the Federal land, with a security escort, during the 2003 college class. An undrivable road and lack of hiking time during the class prevented marking further west inside, and also about another 1.5 miles outside the restricted land, to the intersection. That portion of the trail was the object of the second effort during this trip.

From the intersection the group was able to drive east on the BLM land outside the INEL land for about half the distance to the Government fence, and then hiked the remainder of the extremely rocky trail. Not one marker still stood along that route, but 3-4 old markers were reset because though they were discolored from the weathering they had been pulled up, not broken.

Several new markers were placed along the route, purposely trying to mark the areas where the trail was not as evident because it once had crossed large-rock infested areas. Now the earth has eroded around them so much that they are not a very apparent part of the ruts. But the extreme rock wear over those boulders is unmistakable, as the old iron-rimmed wheels once scarred them severely and continuously for many years!

Members discussed the possibility of leading a field trip for I-OCTA members and guests over part of the area during 2005. There is another section of several miles of the oldest part of the Cutoff, from the intersection back to the first Arco Stage Station site (1879), which has not been checked for several years. This route was used before the town of Arco was moved to its second site along the Lost River, at Kennedy's Crossing, in 1881. (Arco was moved a second time when the Railroad came through to Mackay in 1902.)

Finishing that section of ruts, and with an INEL escort marking the short section still inside the restricted land, would complete the marking of the oldest and continuing route all the way across to the end of the Craters Monument land. There are many more miles on west that will, hopefully, be rechecked and finished in the next few seasons.

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The new President and eastern Idaho Vice President will lead in scheduling the calendar of activities for I-OCTA for next year were on this marking trip. They will call for the assistance from other Officers, and will be requesting input from members for the trips and other functions that will be planned for the 2005 calendar!

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## PRESERVATION TRAINING FOR 2005

Some activities are being planned soon, and for next spring, for preparation and training of members who want to learn more about the MET Mapping, and the use of the new GIS equipment furnished by the National Parks Service. First, on December 8-9, you Preservation Officer will travel to Salt Lake City, to meet with other OCTA Officers and staff members. As the OCTA Mapping Chairman, this writer will be given the opportunity to be involved in the planning session for the mapping training that will begin for Chapters next year, and cycle for at least 3 years.

At the least the Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah Chapters of OCTA will be given that training session in 2005. Idaho has scheduled this training for this Chapter April 14-16, 2005, three days of training and on-the-trail use of the training in mapping. We will be learning the system that is outlined in the *Mapping Emigrant Trails Manual* (MET), and applying the concepts to our maps.

No location for that training has been set, but it will be offered in a location that will benefit the maximum number of I-OCTA members who want to attend. But members and/or visitors who receive this free training will be then asked to make a commitment of volunteer days and hours to be involved in mapping areas across Idaho! Much help is needed to complete our maps.

Other Chapters are being asked to set three-day training periods also, so that trainers can go and train all members who want to be involved. We are encouraging other groups with like-minded interests to be involved, and it appears that some of the BLM trails people will attend the Idaho training.

On May 10-12, 2005, GIS training will be offered in Salt Lake to a few of the I-OCTA Officers. These people will become trainers to train others in the Chapters. This will be the new thrust in accumulating GPS/GIS data for NPS, and will be very comprehensive in the data gathered from the old trails across the west.

One can understand the amount of volunteer services that will be needed for the next few years when he or she also knows the miles of trails in Idaho that still exist! NPS grants will be sought to help in training costs, to reimburse expenses when requested by participants, and/or to be gifted to Chapters by participants in lieu of reimbursement to help with related preservation expenses. Such gifts of any individual's reimbursement back to the Chapter, rather than accepting the money, are tax deductible

Each training and involvement event in the work to be done will be unique in what moneys, if at all, will be available to assist and reimburse participants. This depends upon approved grants for specific projects, and would require the Idaho Chapter to solicit some of the grants from NPS ahead of time. People who choose to participate need to *find out ahead of time* if any money will be made available, if they plan to later request time and travel reimbursements!

Grants are available to assist with the cost of training that will be offered by OCTA and NPS. Chapter grants will be necessary to extend the training and to do the work of mapping and marking to all people that would like to be involved.

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**THE NEXT ISSUE OF *TRAIL DUST* WILL CONTAIN SOME OF THE EMIGRANT STORY OF THE FAMILY OF JEAN THOMAS, POCATELLO MEMBER. WE INVITE OTHERS TO SHARE THEIR ANCESTORS' HISTORY ALSO! PLEASE COMMUNICATE WITH THIS EDITOR IF YOU HAVE A STORY.**