



TRAIL DUST



Idaho Chapter
Oregon-California Trails Association

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HUDSPETH CUTOFF REMARKED AFTER ONE YEAR'S DELAY

EDITOR

The October 23-24, 2004, planned marking field trip to monitor and replace carsonite markers across the Hudspeth Cutoff in Idaho had been delayed because of cold weather, rain, and earlier than usual snow across some of the passes. This year the I-OCTA Board set a date for marking six weeks earlier, September 10-11, but it appeared for a time on the morning of Saturday, the 10th, that the two-day trip might need to be delayed again! As the eight I-OCTA members and two guests gathered and waited in a parking lot at Lava Hot Springs, ID, the rain fell heavily. The discussion considered possibly having to skip the first ridge a bit south of Lava, and seeing what the trail was like on to the west. Almost on schedule, at nearly 9:00 a.m., the rain began to end its threat, and the trip was on—hardly delayed! The amount of rain proved to be just right to settle the dust and make the first morning a pleasant experience.

Before the second day, rain fell also during the night of the 10th, at least on the miles of the trail to the west from where the marking had started, and when the second morning began the condition of the roads to the west of Daniel's Reservoir was unknown. That also proved to be a good rain. The roads that needed to be used that day were hardly effected. That day would soon lead to the double passes over the Pleasantview Hills, routes before emigrants would enter the Arbon Valley to the west.

SE of Lava the first trail-pass over the Fish Creek Range is mostly private property, and that part of the trail will be investigated later. We will then work with Dr. Randy Seed who has ranch land in the area. Thus the first morning's climb up the second ridge, on a present road south of the peak of Mt. Mon and following the *northern branch* of two, took the group to some deep ruts that rise up east to the pass. The alternate trail/pass over this second ridge, further south of Mt. Mon and about 1.5 miles from the first pass, will also be checked later.

Seven carsonites were installed along the road back to the west, all crossing private land, and the crew found one of Fred Dyke's early installed markers near the cemetery at the bottom. Bailey Creek Eightmile Rd. crosses the trail area there. Pristine ruts were evident near that early marker, east and north of the cemetery.

The trail is very much covered by farmland to the west, and the only evidence, now 4 miles away, is the path of E. Sublette Road, covering the trail SW and West to Marsh Valley. At the top of the low Sublette pass Fred Dykes pointed out a deep swale on the south side of the road that had once been the Hudspeth. **McGill Photo**



THIS DEEP SWALE UP FROM THE GRAIN FIELD, FULL OF LARGE BRUSH, WAS MARKED BY I-OCTA MEMBERS

Another of Fred's early markers was standing a bit SW from the pass on the corner of some BLM land that borders the north side of the road. Across all of the Hudspeth several markers were still in place as Fred had set them, but many areas needed new markers.

The next place that showed more evidence was the most

southern branch of the trail, which had crossed Marsh Creek to the east on a gravel bar—according to the private land owner. That was south of present Arimo along Marsh Creek Road. According to the account of Lynn Bastian who lives along that road, Marsh Creek was not very easy to cross to the north during some times and the emigrants came to that crossing where the road turns SW from the area of Interstate 15.

Mr. Bastian stopped at the site when some members were looking for the evidence of the trail near a present ranch road that goes west from Marsh Creek Road. The members of I-OCTA do appreciate the accounts and information afforded by local land owners who are able to supplement known trail information! A Hudspeth diary quote that defines this route would be of interest!



A SWALE NEAR THE ROAD AND OVER TOP OF THE HILL

The next existing trail was found 7 miles almost straight west where the Hudspeth crossed Cedar Mountain. Only three new markers were used to fill the spaces between the existing seven, two of them badly broken.



BYRON KNUTSEN, LYLE LAMBERT, DOUG JENSON AND FRED'S GUEST, ALEEN SHEARER, HIKED ON CEDAR MT.

In Hawkins Basin to the west of Cedar Mountain some old ruts follow the present Hermitsville Rd., SW out of the basin opposite the side of a deep ravine/wash. There one marker was placed. A few other markers were found along Sheep Creek and Dairy Creek roads, which cover much of the trail south toward Little Malad Springs—an emigrant camp area.—and Daniels Reservoir on Little Malad River. That finished the first day's travel.

The second day took the marking party west toward the double passes of the Hudspeth over the Pleasantview Hills and into the Arbon Valley. A greater need for new markers was found, only four old markers found in 7 miles total of trail. There we were able in the softer soil to plant some of the “wet noodle” Greenline post, a very limber post that will not drive into hard soil. Fifteen new markers replenished the ruts with preserving aides.



CARL SMITH, VISITOR, MARKING THE NORTHERN PASS

Across the Arbon Valley where few evidences of the trail exist, the workers finally started across the area of the Forest Service's Curlew National Grasslands near Idaho Highway 37. Both on the east side of the highway and on across from the west side several miles of ruts are apparent. Spaces were filled between old markers, and Byron Knutsen's good contributions were found there.

Exploring from his home in Malad City, he had found 2 loops of the trail route with deep ruts that had not before been marked. One nearer the road was an alternate route NW and over the initial ridge, and the second was a loop more westerly. It appeared to drop into a small valley (below) with good feed and possible water, a good camp area, and then back to the main route. The deep brush in several areas had obscured both of the new trail variants.



DEEP, ERODED RUTS INTO THE VALLEY CAMP AREA

The last length of marked Hudspeth is mostly covered by present dirt and improved roads. It starts from 3 miles west of the grasslands, crosses 2 miles of BLM land where the Shepherd/Wright Massacre occurred, and then winds west, NW, and west across about 12 miles of Forest Service land. On the first 8 miles of combined lands several markers were placed, but the group found most old markers still in place across the last 5 miles.

That finished the two days of work on the trail leaving only a couple of lengths of BLM land to check, west of I- 84, before it ended at the California trail near Malta. These will be checked in a later planned marking trip.

FALL I-OCTA BOARD MEETING.

On September 17, 2005, the Officers and Board met at Fairfield, ID. One highlight was the final editing and approval of the revised I-OCTA By-Laws. For members with an interest in reading these, a copy will soon be posted on the Web site—IdahoOcta.org.

General business was conducted after staff reports. Bill Wilson has been handling most membership related duties and so consented to be appointed as I-OCTA's Membership Chairman. The text of the sign that has been requested by Eulalie Langford, to be place in Montpelier at the original spot of the Ezra Meeker sign, was referred to Larry Jones for final editing. There was some discussion about contributing support for the City of Rocks land purchase. It was determined, instead, to look now at the possible purchase of a second land acquisition—mentioned at the Salt Lake Convention.

Lyle Lambert, Kay Coffman and Don McCarter were appointed by President, Doug Jenson, to be the **nominating committee** for the next elections. They will present a slate of candidates to I-OCTA membership at the Mountain Home meeting, October 22, 2005. **New candidates are especially needed for a Board Officer from eastern Idaho and a Secretary. Please volunteer if you are interested!** All positions need to be filled!

An **abbreviated copy of the Board Minutes** of all the business will be printed in *Trail Dust* when received. We are hoping to communicate more of the important things that are done by I-OCTA for members and others who cannot attend meetings, to stimulate more interest in getting involved in the work and field trip pleasures.

.& GOODALE CUTOFF MARKING

After the Board meeting it seemed convenient and expedient to use the opportunity to add and or replace some markers on part of the Goodale Cutoff, which once ran west about 2 miles north of Fairfield. A trip across that area a few years ago proved that little evidence of the trail can be found there. However there are present roads that follow the route in places to the west of Fairfield. One object of the effort was to mark some key places to offer the locals the knowledge about the route.

We are sometimes hesitant about marking where ruts are no longer evident, but eventually even those areas will be mapped, and many with the new GIS equipment. We need to continue to indicate trail areas where they are known, which will be MET mapped and indicated as Class 5 trail, sometime only a road crossing, And we

know that educating the public about historic trails is important as well!

A few area county road-crossing Goodale locations were Marked. Two crossings of land sections by dirt roads at half-mile areas, from east to west, are still on the trail locations. One is a farmer's lane. Ten miles west of Fairfield on the road past Arnold Springs, an emigrant camp area, a carsonite marker was placed for the first time.



ARNOLD SPRING, NOW DRIED UP MOST OF THE YEAR

Three miles west of the spring and 3 miles north of Hill City an extension of Harrison Road follows the Goodale for almost 4 miles past Cow Creek Reservoir. Some parallel ruts were very evident, and marked. Near the end of that road one old marker was found, and one more 3 miles west of that--two old markers in 21 miles!

There are some deeply-worn, pristine ruts for 2 miles across private land beyond that first old marker. At the through road to Negro Creek, across that segment of trail



RUTS CROSSING NEGRO CREEK RD, PRISTINE & WEEDY

one marker was placed to indicate the location of those never-before marked ruts. The land owner's permission to mark the whole route would be an opportunity to preserve some of the best ruts across the whole route!

The next 2 miles of BLM land that partly follows Wild Horse Creek is traversed by a gravel road on top of much of the trail, and there the second old marker still stands. Five more markers were added along the route, the fourth upon a quarter mile of deep ruts that loop away from the road on the south and over a rocky ridge. The fifth was at the end of Wild Horse Road, where again some undisturbed rut segments can be found crossing 3 miles of private land. A total of 14 new markers will help define this part of the Goodale route.

CONTINUED...VALE TO BAKER, OR.

(In the last issue of *Trail Dust* we indicated that Suzanne Hornbuckle would report the finish of the marking of the Oregon Trail on Aug. 23-30, which this Editor and Patti were not privileged to finish, on to Baker, OR.)

September 2, 2005

“The hot, weary group waved good bye to Jim and Patti as they departed for home. Even though it was hot, dusty and mercilessly bright, the crew all forged ahead with enthusiasm. Group leaders Gail Carbiener and Stafford Hazelett spent many hours planning, contacting land owners, pounding the ground in preparation for the trail marking effort. Gail had divided the group into the "post" group and the metal detector group, with a small crew of GPS users who learned much about the Trimble during the project. [New GIS units that NPS provided]

The post group placed and replaced concrete posts, as well as Carsonite posts. Everyone was given the opportunity to drive a Carsonite into the dusty soil off the side of the Oregon Trail, man the post hole digger, lift the heavy concrete posts and tamp the soil around them to keep them in place. Equipment always included gloves to protect hands from the fiberglass splinters or the rough surface of the concrete posts. The post group's responsibilities included placing BLM, Oregon Trail and OCTA stickers on each new Carsonite.

The metal detectors were vital in proving the location of the trail. Many interesting items were found with *200 pictures taken of relics, sites, features and views*. With determination, the metal detector crews trudged up steep hills, rummaged through prickly dried grasses, followed swales and completely forgot how hot, tired, dry and dirty they were when a special find materialized.

The GPS group ranged far and wide, using the artifact locations marked by the metal detector group to prove the location of the trail. The time spent was valuable as practical aspects were hashed out and experience led to more expertise. By the conclusion of the trail marking, both groups had merged for a final search of the area near the Farewell Bend interchange and Birch Creek.

While the group shared a shade canopy at lunch time, the small size of Vale meant meeting at local restaurants. Some nights, folks brought their meals and shared a table in the RV park, reliving the exciting finds and remembering how the trail 'just disappeared'!

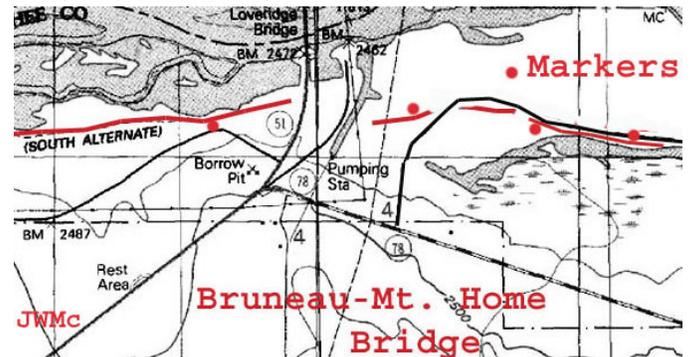
The combination of excellent planning and preparation, unbelievable assistance of the BLM, local citizens and land owners, and the cooperation and life experiences of OCTA members produced an infinitely satisfying experience.”

Suzanne Hornbuckle

OT SOUTH ALT.—FIELD TRIP UPDATE

In preparation for the **two-day visit** to the remaining South Alternate trail segments, listed in all the I-OCTA activities as “**South Alternate FT** west of Glens Ferry, joint with Owyhee County Hist. Society,” Oct. 8-9 this Preservation Officer made a pre-trip run on September 22. The main object was to investigate some possible remaining ruts near the Loveridge Bridge, Snake River, Hwy. 51, between Bruneau and Mountain Home, ID.

The maps showed a sportsmen's road following a loop to the east from the bridge, but it is known the South Alternate once passed through there. Since the road was cabled, preventing vehicle use, a 3 mile hike across the present BLM land and back was in order. Rewardingly, some good deep ruts were found paralleling the road across part of the area. The BLM map indicated that the present built-up gravel road was on the trail, but it had missed them by 25 yards or so along much of the route. These were marked for the first time.



Wally Meyer responded to the email announcement, saying that he once visited the area but was not sure if it wasn't private land! (We knew it would have been strange had he not been there and checked all that sometime—the BLM officer that did most of the marking on all of this area's trails.) Remaining rut segments were also rechecked on to the west to Castle Butte. Since the last year or two when these ruts were remarked a few decals needed to be added with a couple of post replacements.

The field trip will begin at the south end of the Hammet area, Snake River Bridge, Highway 78 crossing, at 9:00 am, Saturday, Oct. 8, 2005. That is about 6-7 miles west of Glens Ferry, ID, off of the old highway route. OCHS is the major sponsor, and will sign people up there.

High clearance vehicles will be required on some of the trip, and we will finish the first day of the two at the Loveridge Bridge described above. The second day will begin at 9:00 am at this same bridge, Owyhee County, south side. There will be a **potluck lunch on the trail the first day**. This is always an OCHS hallmark! Bring something to contribute and your own eating ware.

FALL I-OCTA MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Mountain Home, ID, will again be the location of this year's **Fall Membership Meeting**. On **Saturday, October 22, 2005**, the membership will meet at the location of the Elmore County Historical Society building, in the old Carnegie Library building, **180 S. 3rd. E., Mt. Home**. The time is 10:00 am, and after the meeting there will lunch together and then a field trip to the east from the city, to mark a short portion of the Oregon Trail near Hot Springs Reservoir.

Members and visitors are encouraged to plan this time into their schedules, and if you need a ride to Mountain Home and/or on the field trip some member will probably have room for you to go and save on Gas. **Send a request to me soon** and I will forward it to members that go from your area!

There will be a short Board meeting before all of the membership take care of necessary business. Here we mention again that **some candidates for I-OCTA** positions are needed, at least a new **Secretary** and **Board member** from the eastern side of the State of Idaho! If you are interested contact the nominating committee: **Lyle Lambert**, Antiquesaz@aol.com, 208 681 0562, **Wally Meyer**, wallywanch@worldnet.att.net, 208 939 0504, or **Kay Coffman**, 208 336 5383.

Membership, if you want to help and are *interested in any other position* let them know and you will be nominated for consideration! Copies of the new I-OCTA By-Laws will be made available at the meeting.

If some are interested and want to get a taste of the new mapping procedures, using the Tremble GIS system on which training was offered in Salt Lake City this spring, *Doug Jenson* and this *Preservation Officer* will be practicing on some pristine ruts near Mountain Home. That will be on Friday, Oct. 21, the day before the member meeting. Contact us for details. This will be a hike on some ruts that have been seen by very few people, in an area that does not have vehicle access—oh yes, and the **resting place of the old ox shoe--last issue**.

Sharon Prager, GPS specialist who now works for the Canyon County Parks Department (Idaho), is familiar with the Tremble GIS equipment and has consented to work the trail area with I-OCTA members on Oct. 21. This Editor recently got acquainted with Sharon and from the first she had shown a great interest in the work of I-OCTA. She had early volunteered to assist us.

We have had the Salt Lake training, but it is quite another thing to get out on the trail and use this complicated equipment, and to remember all the data about artifacts, markers, sites, graves, etc., that is required to be entered for the mapping to be done

appropriately. (Kay Threlkeld, NPS, who planned and assisted in the training got out with the Tremble equipment at the August Vale to Baker, OR, marking and mapping. She also found that on the trail was much different than in classroom discussing and teaching the procedures!) We are happy for Sharon's knowledge and assistance in the usage of the Tremble mapping unit.

MAKING A IMPACT ON THE TRAILS

One worker that can be counted on to be out on the trails when there are ruts to be marked, from January through December, is a person that will soon be available for full time dedication to the work of I-OCTA. In April 2006, after 40+ years of working in the Operating Rooms of Mercy Medical Center, Nampa, ID, this lady will *quit all of her meticulous scrubbing until after the work is done*. Such is one change that makes the difference between assisting in working on the internal parts of a human being and carrying a heavy pounder and/or driving down carsonite posts and on one of our historic trails!

On September 29, at a recognition dinner, the Mercy Hospital administration gave her a 40-year award for her service. Her co-workers and two of her immediate nursing supervisors *picked her up and carried her* to the front of the banquet room for the award. A few joyful tears, along with her *embarrassment* (many of you know her), punctuated the ceremonies as most of the 300 recipients and guests, many hospital workers who knew little about her, arose to their feet and gave her due recognition. She was the single recipient of the 40-years of service award!

The records indicate that in the last 4-5 years, often with moderate winter weather in southern Idaho, every month during one or more of those years trails have received new markers—her finger-prints upon them! Several hundred miles of trails hold her footprints.



PATTI KING-MCGILL: COOL JUNE DAY ON THE SOUTH ALTERNATE—PREVIOUSLY UNMARKED PRISTINE RUTS
That this quiet and unassuming lady could have worked all those years as *an operating room nurse* is a surprise to some people! It is factual and *without a hint of her* boasting. “That’s no brag, just facts!” (Walter Brennan)

JEFFREY-GOODALE MARKING

Saturday, October 1, fourteen I-OCTA members and guests met in Arco, ID, and then spent the day marking some segments of the Jeffrey-Goodale Cutoff, NW of Big Southern Butte and along the dry Lost River. This was the largest marking/field trip group of this season.

On the first 1.5 miles of the northern Lost River variant, Clayton Marler, an Advisory Scientist at INL, escorted the group across the portion of the trail on the restricted Governmental INL land. Then 5-6 miles of the southern, oldest trail route was followed and remarked.

Space will not permit the information and photos that would illustrate this closing of two prior gaps in the marking of the trail, which have been waiting to be finished for some time. The next issue of Trail Dust will feature a longer story with photos of recognition and appreciation for the all co-assistants on this trip.

BILL WILSON has a most recent I-OCTA membership list available. ma_bill@msn.com, 208 343 7301, 5204 Waterwheel Dr., Boise. ID 83703-3130

The Utter Disaster on the Oregon Trail* and *The Boise Massacre on the Oregon Trail available from Donald Shannon, snakecountry@mindspring.com 208 459 9233, 16748 W. Linden, Caldwell, ID 83607-9270

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All volunteer time, travel costs, motels, etc. should be reported to Doug Jenson. Catch up on all summer/season donations. Doug has forms available (See above email). This includes trail research time, writing articles, contributions of equipment and materials, etc, all toward trail identification, marking, mapping, and preservations. This will benefit I-OCTA and OCTA!