

# Trail Dust

Newsletter of the Oregon-California Trails Association, Idaho Chapter  
Vol. XXIII Issue 1 *Suzi Pengilly, Editor* May 2011



## Mark Your Calendars! 2011 Activities

Officers and directors of the Idaho Chapter, Oregon-California Trails Association (IOCTA), scheduled this year's activities at a meeting in Boise on April 23. More specific information will be presented, as needed, in future *Trail Dust* issues, on the IOCTA website, or emailed out before the event. Additional Trail-marking outings may be planned throughout the year.

**We hope you will join us!**

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<b>May 8</b>	<b>Mother's Day at Stricker Homesite</b> and Opening of the new <i>Rock Creek Interpretive Center</i> , 11:00 am-2:00 pm, Hansen, Idaho
<b>May 21</b>	<b>Chapter Meeting 10:00 am</b> , Carmella Winery, Glens Ferry Presentation 11:00 am Lunch 12:00 pm Tour of the Byway 1:00 pm
<b>June 25</b>	<b>North Alternate Oregon Trail Hike</b>
<b>July 23</b>	<b>California Trail Tour—Oakley to Hwy. 93</b>
<b>August 8-13</b>	<b>National OCTA Convention and Chapter Meeting</b> , Rock Springs, Wyoming
<b>September</b>	<b>Hudspeth's Cutoff Tour</b>
<b>October</b>	<b>IOCTA Chapter Meeting</b>

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Re-enactment of emigrant crossing at Three Island Crossing

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**Gateway West Transmission Line  
Programmatic Agreement Meeting**  
*by Bill Wilson*

I attended the Gateway West Transmission Line meeting on 8 February 2011 at the Boise Centre on the Grove. (I also attended their first such meeting on 3 Dec 2009.) Gateway West is the electrical transmission line proposed for construction across southern Idaho, with possible alignment into a small part of northern Nevada over Granite Pass of the California Trail. This meeting was billed as an "Interested Parties Meeting" and included the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Forest Service, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, National Park Service (NPS), State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) for Idaho, Nevada and Wyoming, Idaho Power and Rocky Mountain Power. The focus of the meeting was the development of a Programmatic Agreement (PA), a document that outlines compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. It becomes a vehicle for agreement among the signatory parties.

The morning was spent revising goals and guidelines for the PA, and discussing issues that need to be included and addressed in the PA (such as contemporary cultural sites for Native Americans).

A "Work Group" was established to continue working on the draft PA. Seven members volunteered, which will work together under the overall lead of Walt George, BLM Lead for the Gateway West project. Their goal is to complete the draft PA by mid- June.

The afternoon focused on "Visual Resource Considerations and Strategies." Bob Mutaw, URS, gave a presentation on analyzing visual resources using a protocol established by the Wyoming SHPO. Wyoming uses a five-mile view shed on each side of the Trail, with simulations of the view shed from key points of historical interest. In other words, at NPS-defined High Potential Historic Sites and Trail Segments, the view shed would be photographed with the transmission line simulated to depict the project's effect at that location.

Mr. Mutaw's presentation was followed by a presentation by archaeologists Tanya Johnson and Lindsey Kester. They are working on a project to assess visual impacts to cultural resources from a large wind generator farm in Utah.

These three presentations were an eye-opener for me. Up to now it has been my impression that OCTA has focused only on a 1/4 mile swath on each side of the Trail as a view shed to preserve. Here people are apparently thinking in terms of five miles (and sometimes even more) on each side of the Trail. This appears to be a whole new discipline for historic preservation: View Shed Preservation. I wholeheartedly concur!



Twin Sisters at City of Rocks National Reserve

## **Message from the IOCTA President**

*by Jerry Eichhorst*

The chapter's elected officers and directors gathered in Boise on Saturday, April 23, to identify the activities desired of the chapter, plan how we are going to provide these activities, and schedule the outings for the upcoming year. As part of this meeting, three committees were created to focus chapter activities in each area of the state. These committees are intended to serve as a means to allow local people to engage in preservation issues and plan the activities for that area. There will be committees for eastern Idaho, south-central Idaho, and western Idaho.

Each committee will sponsor one chapter outing a year in their area. This will enable IOCTA to spread the activities across the state and have local experts involved in the planning and execution of these activities. In addition, regular chapter meetings will be rotated among the areas, and the committees will be involved in arranging for the meetings.

All elected officers and directors will be part of the committee for their area. However, my hope is that other chapter members will join these committees. They will be a great way to get involved with Trail activities in your area and help set the direction and activities for the chapter. Please contact any of the officers or directors to learn more about the committee in your area and the activities being considered. We need your help to make IOCTA as vibrant an organization as it can be!

I look forward to our first chapter meeting and outing of the year coming

up on Saturday, May 21, in Glens Ferry. I hope to see you there!

Welcome to IOCTA's newest members:

**James Armstrong,  
Sacramento**

**John Briggs,  
Boise**

**David John Taylor,  
Boise**

**Ronald Tugby,  
Mountain Home**

Please join us in the chapter activities this year.

## **Spring Chapter Meeting**

Join IOCTA for the spring chapter meeting, slide show, lunch, and tour at Carmella Winery in Glens Ferry on Saturday, May 21. A brief chapter meeting will start at 10:00 am to catch up on important business. Jerry Eichhorst will then present a slide show on the Main Oregon Trail Back Country Byway. After lunch at the winery, a caravan tour will follow the byway to the south side overlook of the Snake River, then along the Oregon Trail to Highway 20 north of Mountain Home. Stops will be made at Oregon Trail crossings and interpretive sign locations along the way. Total time of the tour is expected to be about 2.5 hours. Those people wishing to only join the tour should meet at the winery by 1:00 pm.

## Spreading the Word about the Oregon Trail

Three adult education classes about the Oregon Trail were conducted in March and April by Jerry Eichhorst as part of the Boise Schools Community Education program. Two classes were on the Main Oregon Trail Back Country Byway, the other on the North Alternate Oregon Trail. Over 40 people signed up for the classes with several taking both classes. Many expressed an interest in joining IOCTA for outings and continuing to learn more about the Oregon Trail in Idaho. One person has joined the chapter, another was already an IOCTA member but is now interested in attending outings. Class participants were invited to join the byway tour on May 21.

Future plans being considered are to develop a class for the Oregon and California Trails across the state which will be offered every spring.

Community Education is an excellent means to easily provide visibility for IOCTA and the emigrant trails to a large segment of the Idaho population. The program is well-established and provides all facilities, equipment, publicity, scheduling and organization. Once registered and approved, an instructor may continue to teach through the years. Community Education has long wanted to offer a class on the Oregon Trail. Judging by the response, these classes have been a success.

### Main Oregon Trail Back Country Byway Update

As winter slowly begins to disappear, activity begins to heat up for the Main Oregon Trail Back Country Byway. Last year was a great year as the byway began to take shape. Signs were installed along much of the route and the byway booklet was republished.

This year promises to be exciting as the byway project wraps up. Boy Scouts installed the remaining concrete OT marker posts along the

byway on April 16. The last directional signs and interpretive sign frames are being installed by the Mountain Home and Ada County Highway Districts from Highway 20 west to Bonneville Point this spring. The interpretive sign panels have been fabricated and will be installed as part of the tour on Saturday, May 21.



This project has taken a lot of time and consumed several years but is a great opportunity to share the Oregon Trail from Glens Ferry to Boise with many travelers.

Booklets containing driving directions and historical information for the byway route are available at BLM offices in Boise, the Desert Mountain Visitor Center and city offices in Mountain Home, and city offices and Three Island State Park in Glens Ferry.



## **City of Rocks National Reserve General Management Plan Update**

The City of Rocks National Reserve is in the process of completing a General Management Plan (GMP). The GMP will guide the management of the Reserve over the next 15-20 years. Many of you have received the Reserve's newsletters regarding the GMP. The latest newsletter presents a "no action" and three preliminary alternatives for future management of the Reserve.

The preliminary alternatives presented in Newsletter #3 were developed by the GMP planning team to explore different options for the future of City of Rocks National Reserve. These alternatives represent different approaches to address specific issues identified by Reserve staff, Reserve visitors, and other interested parties. Together, these alternatives can be evaluated for their advantages and disadvantages.

The next step in the GMP process is to select a preferred alternative. The selection process is based on analysis of the impacts, the advantages of the alternatives, costs to implement the alternatives, and *your comments*. The NPS preferred alternative will be identified in the City of Rocks National Reserve Draft General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (Draft GMP/EIS).

### **We Want to Hear from You!**

A copy of the newsletter is available at the Reserve's Visitors Center or on the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment System (PEPC). As you read through the newsletter, think about what alternatives, or parts of the alternatives, you like best and let us know. Your

written comments are welcomed and encouraged. Comments can be submitted electronically through the address below, sent by mail using the postage-free comment form enclosed in the paper copy of the newsletter, or posted on the PEPC site. Please consider the questions listed on the comment form in addition to any other thoughts and ideas you may have. Receiving your comments by June 1, 2011, will allow us to incorporate your ideas and suggestions as we continue to develop the Draft GMP.

### **How to Comment**

A comment form is available online at the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment System (PEPC) at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/ciro>.

- Comments can be emailed to the Superintendent at [wallace\\_keck@partner.nps.gov](mailto:wallace_keck@partner.nps.gov).
- A postage-free comment form is enclosed in hard copies of the newsletter available at the Visitor's Center.

If you are not currently on the GMP mailing list, but would like to be, please fill out the back of the comment form in the newsletter or posted on PEPC and place it in the mail or send an email to us.

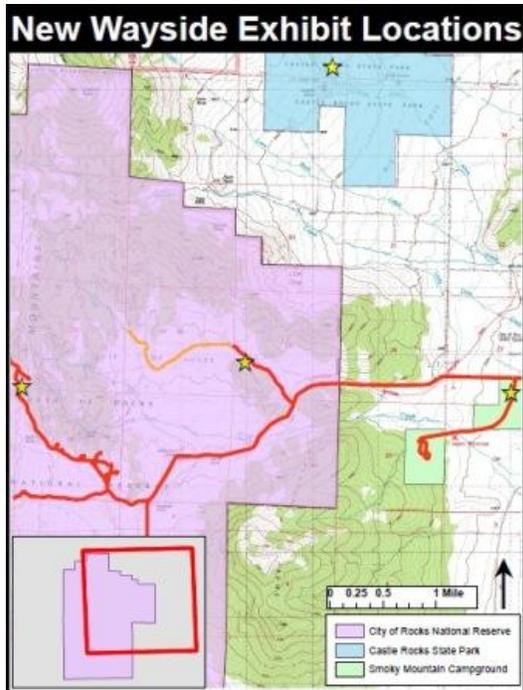
***Please Submit your Comments by June 1, 2011.***

*[ City of Rocks National Reserve was established in 1988 at the urging of IOCTA members interested in preserving the Trail and cultural landscape of this National Historic Landmark. IOCTA's voice needs to be heard again! ]*

## City of Rocks National Reserve New Wayside Exhibits

The City of Rocks National Reserve and Castle Rocks State Park are excited to announce that four new wayside exhibits will be installed in 2011. Two of the wayside exhibits will be placed in Castle Rocks State Park and two in the City of Rocks National Reserve. The wayside exhibits provide information on the California Trail, the Circle Creek Overlook, Climbing, and the Pictographs.

No details about the content of the waysides are provided here (it would spoil the surprise). The locations of the waysides are noted on the map below. Come and see them!



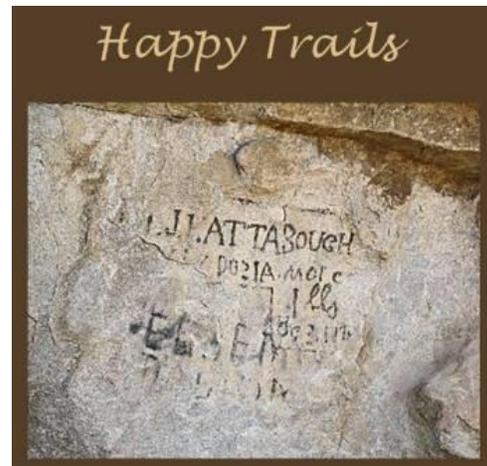
## Oregon, California, Mormon Pioneer, and Pony Express National Historic Trails Feasibility Study Update

The National Park Service (NPS) is seeking public comments concerning 64 historic routes that are being evaluated for possible addition to the existing

Oregon, California, Pony Express, and Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trails. This NPS study, which is in its initial information-gathering phase, will address trail study segments in more than a dozen states from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Coast. If included, the routes would add thousands of additional miles to existing national historic trails.

*A public meeting will be held in Boise, Idaho, on June 1, 2011, from 6-8 pm at the Idaho History Center, 2205 Old Penitentiary Road.* Fifteen other public meetings are scheduled throughout the country. The purpose of these meetings is to gather information, comments, and concerns in communities along the existing national historic trail routes. The NPS invites everyone with an interest in the trails and their histories to attend one or more of the public meetings.

Interested persons may also submit their written comments online <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/FourtrailFS> until July 31, 2011. Comments may also be submitted via email or in writing to [email us](mailto:emailus) or Gretchen Ward, National Trails Intermountain Region, National Park Service, P. O. Box 728, Santa Fe, NM 87504.



# *Diaries Across Idaho*

## **Two Island Crossing (Rosevear Gulch)**

*by Jerry Eichhorst*

After spending two long days crossing the desert with no direct access to water, Oregon Trail emigrants reached the Snake River at the mouth of Rosevear Gulch, across the river from present-day Glenns Ferry. Here they could rest and water their animals. Some decided to cross the Snake River at this location. Because the river was too deep to ford, wagons were converted to boats and holes were plugged with cork or clothing. Men often swam across the river with a rope which was then used to pull the wagons across. Some wagons were rowed across using makeshift oars.

*A Mr. Koone started to swim Snake River with a horse to take a rope across to make a ferry to take over women and children in a wagon bed. The teams to ford the river two or three miles farther downstream. As I said, Mr. K., was swimming when it was supposed the horse struck him with his foot; at any rate he sank in the treacherous stream in the presence of his wife and four small children.*

*"Reminiscence of Emma Ruth  
Ross Slavin, Pioneer of 1847"*

*Thursday [July] 24th Traveled 13 miles struck the [Snake] river 2 miles above the ford Here we found a company ferrying in wagon beds we unloaded two of our best waggon [sic] beds and commenced calking them got them finished and ferried their loads that night The next day we finished crossing and were ready to roll out*

*Susan Amelia Cranston, 1851*



*July 30.—This day we traveled twelve miles. The first four or five miles were very hilly and sandy, then four miles of level sandy plain. Then down a ravine to a dry channel, that has the appearance of being a large creek at times, but is at this time perfectly dry. We followed the channel down to the [Snake] river. Here camped, but had to swim our cattle across the river to grass. This is now called the upper crossing of Snake River. Here we decided to cross over to the north-side.*

*July 31.—This day we spent in arranging for and crossing the river. We accomplished this by corking two wagons and lashing them together. By this means we were able to ferry over a wagon and its load at each trip. By noon we had our boat ready and began operations, but found it slow business, but succeeded in getting all over safely, but not the same day, for we had to lay by on account of wind. Leaving part of our camping on each side of the river, here we had both sides to guard.*

*August 1.—This day we completed crossing our fifteen wagons before night. Last night we had three horses stolen, and three more shot in the shoulders with arrows. Grass is good here, but Indians are very bad.*

*P. V. Crawford, 1851*

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