



Northwest Trails

Newsletter of the Northwest Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association

Volume 33, No. 4

Fall 2018

NW OCTA Annual Fall Picnic

Saturday, September 29, Vancouver, Washington

The chapter's annual fall picnic meeting was again held at the Clark County Genealogical Society Annex in Vancouver, WA. President Rich Herman opened the meeting. Highlights included:

- Sharon Brown, Western Region Representative, reported on the Partnership for the National Trails System and its upcoming national conference in Vancouver.
- Polly Jackson disclosed she is leaving the chapter membership and secretary positions but will stay on as webmaster.
- Gail Carbiener gave an update on B2H, which is continuing its progress toward being approved.
- Plans will be made for the annual meeting next March to be held at the Columbia Gorge Interpretive Center, Stevenson, WA.
- Robert Baker gave an interesting PowerPoint presentation on three exploratory hikes on Laurel Hill on the Barlow Road.
- Roger Blair shared his photographs of the 2018 OCTA Convention in Ogden, with special effects.
- After lunch Dave Welch concluded the programs with an informative presentation on the Whitman Mission route and cutoff to Fort Nez Perce/Walla Walla.
- The ever-popular raffle ended the meeting. A board meeting followed.



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Help Wanted!

There is opportunity for a few octa folks to get involved in saving the Oregon Trail. The last segments of the Oregon Trail that were listed in the National Register of Historic Places were in the 1970s. It is time we attempt of bring some of the special trail spots up to date.

It is not difficult, but the Oregon SHPO does have many detailed requirements, just in completing their forms. The fun part is going out in the field to record a segment of the Trail. A GPS reading, several pictures, and of course landowner's permission. Both the Forest Service and BLM have good trail segments as well.

Four-Mile Canyon on BLM land is a prime segment for listing. Just look at the picture on the Northwest OCTA website. A team of two or three works very good.

No prior experience required! No pay, all volunteer!

Contact Gail Carbiener, 541-678-5634,
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Gail Carbiener at the fall picnic.

President's Message

By Rich Herman

Well, no one can say that our chapter didn't try to make our Oregon Trail presence known to the Oregon community. Our chapter had an information booth at five Oregon major events this season, with the last being at the End of the Oregon Trail's 175th Anniversary festivities in Oregon City. A large number of chapter members were present both days to meet with the public and answer questions about the trail in general and give them maps and information to take home. OCTA members Marge Harding and Wendel Baskins both made interesting presentations during the event. A big THANK YOU to all who participated and made the two-day event both fun and successful.

We had a very successful Annual Picnic on Saturday, September 29, at the Clark County Genealogical Society. The business meeting was highlighted with reports by both Sharon Brown, with headquarters and NPS-related information, and Gail Carbiener, informing the chapter of B2H related preservation opportunities. Highlight of the picnic was three very informative presentations given by chapter members. We started off with Roger Blair showing interesting slides of the OCTA annual convention in Ogden, UT. This was followed by Robin Baker presenting a very interesting trail-marking report of research activities on Laurel Hill in the Government Camp vicinity on the Barlow Road. Robin is a member of Henry Pittock's Trail Marking and Mapping team, which has spent many days on very steep terrain trying to locate and verify the many routes coming off the mountain. Dave Welch also made an excellent report summarizing his trail mapping work of the Whitman Mission route of the early Oregon Trail. The route of this original segment of the trail has always been a mystery, which his work has finally located.

The homemade individually prepared meals were a hit and there were no complaints about the quality of the food. Thanks to Lethene Parks for her assistance with the meeting set-up. Thank you to all who made our picnic a success.

The Partnership for a National Trails System is holding their annual meeting at the Hilton Hotel in Vancouver, WA, the week of October 21st. OCTA is a member of the Partnership, and the NW Chapter has been asked to lead a bus tour of the OT. We have chosen to lead a bus tour of the Barlow Road route beginning at Hood River and following the original route through Government Camp and points west until we run out of time. Our HQ President Pat Traffas will be in Vancouver for the Partnership meeting and has asked our chapter to have a meet-and-greet informal dinner with her at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 23. I do not have a location yet, until I get a head count, so please email me or call 360-977-8184 to let me know if you are interested in joining us.

Chuck Hornbuckle has volunteered to act as our new Membership Chair beginning the end of this year. Polly will continue her duties as our Web Editor.

Gail Carbiener continues his involvement with saving the trail and activities with the B2H power line project in eastern Oregon. He always welcomes assistance and would appreciate any help you may provide. Contact him directly if you are interested.

Photos from the Annual Fall Picnic



Sharon Brown talking about the Partnership for the National Trails System.



Robert "Robin" Baker.



Roger Blair.



Raffle table.



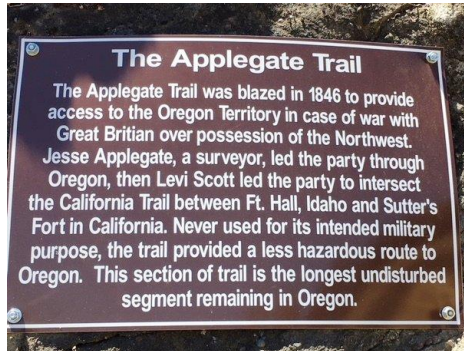
Dave Welch.



NW Chapter board meeting.

Applegate Trail Ruts

Steve Ludeman took these photos of the Applegate Trail ruts at Myrtle Creek, along I-5. These are some of the best-preserved trail ruts.



Oregon Trail 175th Commemoration, End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center

By Sharon Brown

OCTA NW Chapter members participated in an Oregon Trail 175th anniversary commemoration on August 25–26 in Oregon City, Oregon, meeting with visitors and sharing the trail’s legacy. Hosted by the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive & Visitor Information Center, the “The Road West” Living History Days was held on the historic Abernethy Green, an emigrant camping ground. This was a well-attended, fun event with interactive activities that OCTA members and visitors enjoyed!



NW OCTA table and display.

B2H Activities

By Gail Carbiener

Boardman to Hemingway seems to slowly progress toward approval. OCTA has made some progress, but it has been a long and sometime discouraging trip. Hard to believe the fight began in earnest in 2008. OCTA has made many new friends, including those working for Idaho Power, also BLM and Forest Service, as well as Oregon PUC and Energy Facilities Siting Council. Landowners and County officials along the route have generally been very supportive of OCTA's efforts to protect the trail. Some of the most special times have been with landowners walking over the trail on their property.

So, what is next? We have been able to get the Forest Service to change their Record of Decision to state that there may be indirect effect to the trail depending upon tower size. This may be helpful in determining mitigation.

Oregon Public Broadcasting and Associated Press have expended public awareness of the B2H and its effect upon the Oregon Trail. Newspapers as far away as Miami, Florida, and Kansas City, Kansas, and everywhere in between, published the article written by Mr. Mason of the La Grande newspaper.

Idaho Power and PacifiCorp have begun their 2019 Integrated Resource Plans. This is the ridiculously technical twenty-year plan that is presented to the Oregon PUC. It includes B2H as necessary to provide service to their customers. We believe there are better alternatives.

Perhaps most important is the Energy Facilities Siting Council. This seven-member group appointed by the governor and their staff, is responsible for overseeing the development of large electric generating facilities, high voltage transmission lines, gas pipelines, radioactive waste disposal sites, and other projects. B2H must undergo a thorough review and meet the council's siting standards to receive a site certificate. Standards cover issues such as land use, environmental impacts, noise concerns, and cultural and archeological artifacts. If the council approves a site certificate, the Idaho Power is authorized to construct and operate the facility. OCTA will be involved with testimony in what is expected to be a long process.



This is a simulation of the B2H towers made by Idaho Power's consultants to show what it would look like at the Sand Shed, which is on Interstate-84 across from the Blue Mtn Crossing. We would see the tops of the towers in this area from the trail in the park.

New Oregon Trail T-Rail Marker in La Grande, OR

An iron T-rail marker was recently installed in George S. Birnie Memorial Centennial Park in La Grande, OR. The plate on the railroad rail reads:

“Came to a very steep long hill It is 2 miles long ... to descend it ... Then we came to the Grand Round Valley surrounded with mountains on every side” —Absalom B. Harden, Aug. 2, 1847.

Donated by Trails West and Oregon-California Trails Association 2018



Oregon Trail Commemorations in Oregon

On October 5, Oregon Governor Kate Brown issued a state-wide proclamation honoring the 175th Anniversary of the Oregon Trail and marking the arrival of the Great Migration in October 1843. The year 2018 is also the 50th Anniversary of the National Trails System Act (1968) and the 40th Anniversary of the Oregon National Historic Trail (1978). Now more than ever, the Oregon Trail in Oregon needs protection and its legacy shared with this and future generations.



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Material may be submitted via email, on disk, or as email attachment in Word or Text format. Pictures (JPG format) may be sent via email, on disk, or originals for scanning. **Please send pictures separately from text document.**

MASTHEAD: Replica of *The Old Oregon Trail* bronze relief sculpture created in 1924 by Avard Fairbanks for Oregon Trail monuments.



*2018 is the
175th Anniversary
of the
Oregon Trail
1843–2018*

Celebrate!