



Northwest Trails

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

Volume 35, No. 2

Spring 2020

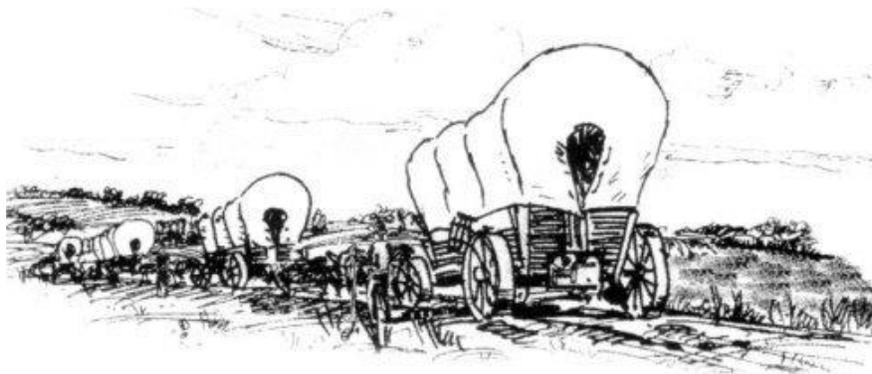
We are in the midst of a pandemic that has dramatically changed our lives. In this time of uncertainty and being confined to limited spaces and Stay-at-Home orders, life seems to be on hold and time is suspended.

It must have been much the same for Oregon Trail travelers. They, too, faced the uncertainty of not knowing what lay ahead. Although they knew where they were going, they did not know what life would be like in their “new normal” in the months and years after they got there. They, too, were confined to limited spaces. unable to stray far from their wagons and sheltered in place at each camp.

While emigrants didn’t need to socially or physically distance themselves from each other, they were confined to their mobile groups. We are fortunate to be living in a time that in spite of physical distancing, with technology we can virtually connect with each other over time and space.

Until we can resume trail activities and outings,
stay in your “wagons” and stay healthy.

—Susan Badger Doyle, Newsletter Editor



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President's Message

By Sallie K. Riehl

Well, here we are staying in our homes more than a month after our spring meeting in Oregon City. The pandemic has sidelined a lot of what we thought we might do this spring, but I hope you are all still planning to get out on the trail when we are all released. We can hope that the weather will be mild enough for us to still have our planned hikes and our fall chapter meeting. We will just have to shift our dates further into the summer.

I was very pleased with the lovely facility in Oregon City where we held the March 7th meeting. Thanks go to Marge and Rolla Harding for making it all possible. In her performance, Marge gave us a look back at the impact on the wives and daughters who came along the Oregon Trail. These women didn't always want to go "Out West." About 30 of our members attended the meeting. As usual, the raffle was a success, and we didn't have to carry too many things home with us.

Jenny Miller and Marlea Shurtleff suggested that we should share the chapter minutes with all our members, and I hope you have all received your copies. We want to keep everyone informed of what we are planning this year.

We also were treated with a short digital show of pictures taken along the Barlow Trail. Robert Baker found the pictures that were taken in the 1940s by a person trying to find the old trail around Laurel Hill. Robert has made his show available to the members online.

OCTA headquarters personnel are still working on the convention planned for Elko, Nevada. They are all working from home because their state is under the same restrictions as the rest of the country. I do hope that we will be able to have the convention because it allows us to be with many of our Oregon Trail enthusiasts.

Jim and I attended a meeting in Puyallup, Washington, the week before our chapter meeting. It was held for the Naches Trail group at the Meeker Mansion. Andy Anderson and Dave Welch are working very hard to include other local historical groups in the area to support each other in spreading the word about preserving the past. It was an interesting meeting and we met a number of enthusiastic people who wanted to know what other groups are finding successful in the matter of fund raising and the promotion of historical sites.

We hope that everyone is well and protected during this stressful time.

NW OCTA Annual Meeting, March 7, 2020 Pioneer Community Center, Oregon City, OR



Sallie Riehl, NW OCTA President.



Wendell Baskins receiving Richard and Trudy Ackerman Award from Roger Blair.



Sharon Brown, Western Region Representative.



Drew Harvey, Mapping and Marking.



Gail Carbiener, Preservation Officer.



Robin Baker, presenting program on "Barlow" Bill Williams.



Rich Herman, NW OCTA Past President.



Marge Harding presented an interesting and informative program on three Oregon Trail women.

Preservation Report

By Gail Carbiener

A number of energy projects are being followed that either will or may affect the trails. The current “Stay at Home” due to the virus has slowed but not stopped progress on each project. Most work is now done via computer.

Boardman to Hemingway (B2H): B2H is a proposed 500-kV power line from near Boise, Idaho, to Boardman, Oregon, near the Columbia River. It will be a 500-foot wide new corridor, running parallel to the Oregon Trail most of the way, crossing the trail eight times. Two key locations are Birch Creek and National Historic Oregon Trail Interpretive Center at Flagstaff Hill near Baker City.

BLM & USFS: In November 2019 a legal complaint was filed requesting a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. I was named as one of the plaintiffs. The schedule has been set, and after back and forth between parties, a court date is set for December 2020. The virus will likely set this back into 2021. A link to the legal document is on the NW OCTA webpage.

Energy Facilities Siting Council: The staff has recommended approval, and no doubt the Council will issue a permit (Proposed Order). We expect this in April or May. The Administrative Law Judge has some time to review and set the period for those who are eligible to present their case to be included for a hearing. Perhaps in July or August for the hearing and October for the decision, with possible extended time because of the virus.

Oregon Public Utilities Commission: Idaho Power must present an Integrated Resource Plan every two years that shows the four-year (near term) and twenty-year (long term) plans. The four-year plan must show the “lowest cost – least risk” menu of resources and has for the last several years included B2H. In public testimony, I have always included the potential damage to the Oregon Trail.

Encouraging news is that BPA is still working on their “business case” to determine if they are going to be a partner in constructing and operating the B2H. There is a construction agreement deadline on March 17, 2020, where all three parties, Idaho Power, PacifiCorp, and the BPA, are supposed to sign the financial agreement to fund and build the B2H, results not shared. What is especially interesting is that Idaho Power filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) a notice that they were setting aside an additional \$354M in their “Potential Long-Term Rate Base” which they call, “hypothetical doubling of ownership of the B2H.” This is just about equal to BPA’s portion of the line. Also encouraging is that PacifiCorp does not have the B2H in their short-term plan of action (next 4 years), as they are concentrating on wind from Wyoming going to Utah.

Several proposed wind farms and solar projects that also may affect the trails are being followed in terms of trail preservation.

Nolin Hills Wind Power Project: A wind energy generation facility is being proposed with 116 turbines located within a site boundary of approximately 48,077 acres of private land zoned exclusive farm use. The proposed facility would be located in Umatilla County, south of I-84, approximately 4 miles south of Echo, and 10 miles west of Pendleton. Tetra Tech shows the records review identified that both transmission line alternatives cross the route of the Oregon Trail. OCTA has been in contact with the developer.

Bakeoven Solar Project: The facility is located within a site boundary of approximately 10,615 acres with an 11-mile, 230 kilovolt transmission line along Bakeoven Road that no doubt crosses the Meek Trail, one of the recommended trails to be added to the National Trails System. There are multiple power lines and a substation in this area. We will follow development.

Blue Marmot Solar Energy Facility: The site is located near the town of Lakeview, with some facility components within the city and near Goose Lake. The proposed facility encompasses up to five separate solar array sites. On November 11, 2019, the applicant submitted a request for the council to extend the Notice of Intent (NOI), and at the November 22, 2019, EFSC meeting the council granted the extension. The NOI expiration date is now January 19, 2021. I will contact the archaeologist for both the Forest Service and BLM for information. This is in the same general location of the Ruby Natural Gas Pipeline approved in 2013.

Obsidian Solar Center: The Obsidian Solar Center would be located in north Lake County, Oregon, approximately eight miles northwest of Christmas Valley and seven miles southeast of Fort Rock. The proposed solar facility would be on approximately 3,921 acres, providing a generating capacity of approximately 400 megawatts plus potential addition of battery energy storage. There are no trails in the area. However, 1860s military roads are present but not yet mapped. Will follow progress.

The Jordan Cove Energy Project: This project consists of a proposed liquefied natural gas export facility in Coos Bay and an approximately 230-mile pipeline connecting Coos Bay and Malin. FERC recently approved this project, but in its comments stated: “The Commission has not yet completed the process of complying with the National Historic Preservation Act. Consultation with Indian tribes, the Oregon State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), and other applicable agencies is still ongoing.” Oregon SHPO comments have been direct; “The facility has changed, pipeline routes have changed, staffs have changed, and our understanding of effects to historic properties have become more informed.” The Applegate Trail folks said the pipeline crosses only once near Myrtle Creek and will not have significant impact.

Mapping and Marking Update

By Drew Harvey

We have had an OCTA information table at the Oregon Lavender Festival in previous years. The festival is scheduled for June 27-28, 2020. I don't yet know if it will be cancelled or postponed. We have several volunteers to help at the table, and I'll be contacting them.

Philip Foster Farm is currently open for events. I'll be contacting them about events when we might be able to set up a table.

Sandy Mountain Festival is July 11–12, 2020. I'll contact them about any schedule revisions and possible arrangement for an OCTA table.

Other trips to install trail markers have been put on hold.

The trail mapping and preservation workshop planned for June in Salt Lake City is still being considered. But plans are subject to change due to coronavirus restrictions.

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**PUBLISHED QUARTERLY, SUBMISSIONS DUE
January 1, April 1, July 1, October 1**

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.



2020 OCTA Convention

*Through the Lens of History
- Preserving the Past -
Focusing on the Future*

September 19-23

Elko, Nevada