

Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Council

2014 Annual Report

The Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Council (OHTAC) serves as an advisory body for activities and policies relating to Oregon's 16 Historic Trails. OHTAC consists of nine citizen volunteers appointed by the Governor by Executive Order 98-16. OHTAC typically meets three times annually. These meetings consist of:

- (a) On site research of a segment of one of Oregon's 16 Historic Trails. Experts and local residents are invited to accompany the membership in order to contribute information and perspectives on the history, use and protection of the segment in question.
- (b) A business meeting to update the membership on various OHTAC related activities and to plan for future events. All OHTAC business meetings are open to the public and time is set aside on the agenda for public comment.

OHTAC members also participate in a variety of additional activities, including meetings, teleconferences, webinars and site inspections in order to assure that the organization's responsibilities are fulfilled.

SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR 2014

OHTAC participated in the Oregon Heritage Conference in Albany Apr. 22-25 , 2014. Business meeting, and Field Trip along the Santiam Wagon Road Apr. 23rd.

OHTAC was represented at the state Capitol for the Preservation Month Fair on May 29, 2014.

Toured Emigrant Springs State Park near LaGrande, June 28th 2014. Business meeting in LaGrande June 29th 2014.

Toured Oregon Trail In Sherman County and followed the likely route of Benjamin Bonneville up the John Day River. Toured the new Cottonwood Canyon State Park.

Corresponded with and gave advice to Daniel Stallings of Partner Engineering & Science, Inc. This was in regards to American Towers LLC proposal to construct telecommunication towers along the Oregon Trail near Meacham, Oregon.

OHTAC applied for and received a grant from OCF. Through an agreement with Shared Context Consultants, LLC, the grant will fund a pilot project to use digital technology to photograph and preserve important landmarks along the Barlow Road portion of the Oregon Trail.

Monitored projects that may have impact on the trails: Boardman to Hemingway Transmission Line Project, BPA Big Eddy- Knight project and the Oregon Trail.

New members appointed to OHTAC: Pat Davis, Wamic; Jennifer Karson, Portland; George Seymour, Enterprise.

2014 Meetings

Albany, Oregon- April 22-25th, Oregon Heritage Conference and Santiam Wagon Road Field Trip.

The Oregon Heritage Conference was the backdrop for the spring field trip, and business meeting, of OHTAC in Albany. The first morning was spent in meetings with the Oregon Heritage Commission and the Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries. OHTAC met as a group for a business meeting afterwards. In the afternoon we toured the Santiam Wagon Road with archaeologists Ann Rogers and Marsha Morris. Members of the Heritage Conference joined us on the trip.

The following day was spent in workshops and an award dinner in the evening.

LaGrande, Oregon June 27-29, Emigrant Springs Segment of The Oregon Trail

The field trip was led by Brenda Garrick, the Emigrant Springs State Park Visitor Services Ranger. We were taken to private property, surrounding the State Park, that exhibited segments of what is believed to be the Oregon Trail. It is the wish

of many that a land swap be pursued with the private adjacent landowners; Westminster Presbyterian Church and Hancock Timber Co. The idea would be to incorporate the private property with the existing Emigrant Springs State Park, to make a large interpretive facility for the traveling public along I 84. OHTAC endorses this goal. A letter was written to Ms. Garrick, complimenting her for the passion she brings to Oregon Trail preservation.

The Dalles, Oregon Sept 5-7, 2014 Oregon Trail-Benjamin Bonneville Route, Sherman County.

This Field Trip consisted of two different segments located in the same areas. The Oregon Trail, Barlow Road Cutoff, and Benjamin Bonneville Route along the John Day River were both explored. We started in Wasco, Oregon and traveled east along the Oregon Trail Route to the John Day River to visit the BLM kiosk at McDonald's Crossing. This was the site of the Emigrant Crossing that was one of the steepest along the Trail. The pioneers crossed the John Day River and then had to follow a route that was both steep and rocky. Many diaries make mention of the arduous climb. Just to the south of the route is located the Barlow Cutoff of the Oregon Trail that Emigrants took to Tygh Valley.

The fenced gated entrance to the kiosk at McDonald's Crossing is in need of repair. The viewing area and interpretive panels are in marginal condition and should be cleaned and probably will need to be replaced.

It is noted also that the John Day River was the route Benjamin Bonneville most likely took on his way out of the Oregon Country in 1834. With that in mind we made our way to the Cottonwood Canyon State Park in Southern Sherman County. This is the newest and 2nd largest State Park in Oregon. It sets next to the John Day River and is surrounded by large cliffs and escarpments that make for a very scenic area. Tom Peterson, Park Manager, gave us a tour of the facilities and showed how they have incorporated themes of early ranch life, along with Native American habitat. We in turn, asked that he consider another theme, that of the explorer Bonneville, on his way out of Oregon, returning to the United States. We suggested an interpretive panel to go along with the other two themes of Emigrant and Native peoples. He was very receptive to the idea.

On the return to The Dalles we stopped at an historic Oregon Trail Marker just west of Biggs on Hwy 30. The monument is made of a metal plaque placed in a basalt column next to the Hwy. It denotes the spot where the Emigrants first saw the Columbia River. It was put in place by the Wasco County Pioneer Association in 1940. Somehow it was knocked over by a heavy object, and sets leaning backwards. Pat Cimmiyotti, ODOT manager for the area was contacted and he agreed to put the Marker back in place in the Spring of 2015.

The Business meeting was held at the Shilo Inn in The Dalles, Sept. 7, 2015.

Discussion included the ongoing B2H project

Barlow Road Film Project and Grant

Jedediah Smith Marker and Sign

Letter of support to Tom Peterson, Cottonwood Canyon State Park

2015 Field Trips and Dates

April 24-26 Applegate Trail, Grants Pass

June 26-28 Fremont/Whitman/Wyeth, LaGrande

Sept 11-13 Barlow Road (The Dalles to Tygh Valley)

Projects with potential impact on the 16 Oregon Historic

Trails

American Towers LLC – Proposed Tower Site

This refers to a telecommunications tower project that is proposed at Pendleton Ranch of the Oregon Trail, Meacham, Umatilla County. The letter received from Daniel S. Stallings, of Partner Engineering and Science, INC. notes that Oregon State's Archaeologist Dr. Dennis Griffin, RPA and Historic Preservation Specialist Jason Allen, have reviewed the project and with some revisions have

approved it. After discussion amongst the Council we agreed to follow the expert preservationists' findings.

The B2H project

2014 was the year that all of the variables to the project were brought together. It is scheduled to be signed in the Spring of 2015. OHTAC will be a signature on the project.

OHTAC receives OCF Grant for Barlow Road video technology project

OHTAC received a \$19,450 matching grant from OCF (Oregon Community Foundation). It is for a pilot project to preserve the remaining important landmarks of the Barlow Road portion of the Oregon Trail. It will use a new technology called 360-DISC (Digital Interactive Storytelling Capsules). Each DISC is a 360 degree panorama embedded in a website page, and is designed to provide users context and information about the Barlow Road, both remotely and on site. Photographs, documents, audio files, films, and reenactors can be accessed and tell stories about the trail. This is a pilot project and the same format can be used in the future for other like projects.

The Project lead is Dr. Erica L. Risberg President, Shared Context Consultants,LLC. She will be working with OHTAC, and will complete the project in 2015.

Council Members in 2014

Wendell Baskins (until Oct. 31, 2014)	Lindon B. Hylton
Connie Colton (until Oct. 31, 2014)	Loren D. Irving
Sam Woolsey (until Dec. 31, 2014) Chair	William Symms
James R Ford	Jennifer Karson (begin Nov. 2014)
Glenn R. Harrison	Patrick Davis (begin Nov. 2014)
John R. Hayes	George Seymour(begin Dec. 2014)