

Combined Oregon-California Trails Association and Old Spanish Trail Association conference-field trip, Parowan, Utah, October 11, 2013 and on into Piute and Sevier Counties October 12, 2013

ITINERARY-SCHEDULE-PROGRAM

5:15 P.M. Friday, exit 100 from I-15 between Beaver and Parowan. Those interested and able will meet and travel east some five miles on gravel road to where some inscriptions from the 1850 Parley P. Pratt expedition were carved in the rocks (on an poor third choice of routes between the Sevier River and Parowan area).

7:00-9:00 P.M. Friday evening at Parowan, conference meeting at the Iron County Fairgrounds, from first Parowan off-ramp exit to 50 North 600 East. Program includes 1) Power Point presentation by Bob Leonard, the main modern re-discoverer and promoter of the Fish Lake Cut-off on the Old Spanish Trail (about an hour with questions); 2) Steven Heath speaking on his expertise-discovery area, the Old Spanish Trail variant routes from the Sevier River to the Parowan area; David Evans, on his theory-discoveries of the likely Wolfskill-Yount route (the original one on the main OST) in 1830-31 from the Sevier River to Braffits Canyon (where we will go Saturday morning); and, if there is any time left, Leo Lyman will speak about Jedediah S. Smith the original (known) explorer of the main Old Spanish Trail route from the east end of Salina Canyon through the rest of Utah heading southwest, through the corner of Arizona, through southern Nevada and down the Colorado River to Needles, California, thus blazing half of the entire OST.

LODGING: At Parowan, (careful Main Street is under construction) or on into north or central Cedar City (some good older motels bypassed by through traffic on the frontage road west of I-15, at first Cedar City exit-off ramp from the highway on opposite side from Love's service station).

Have good breakfast so you can last (with whatever snacks you need) until about 2:00 P.M. in the Circleville area for lunch.

9:00 A.M. Saturday meet at the Summit exit-off-ramp from I-15 (south of Parowan) to caravan southeast to Braffit's Canyon for an almost 1/2 mile hike up to a possible rock inscription from the William Wolfskill-George Yount expedition of 183-31 (the blazers of the main Old Spanish Trail, although slightly off the main route at this particular point).

11:00 A.M. Saturday meet in front of the Paragoonah LDS chapel to caravan up Little Creek Canyon to examine some Anglo-American inscriptions by trail travelers in the 1830's including California pioneer, William Knight. This is on the best and most frequently-utilized OST route from the Sevier River to the Parowan area. Then those with high enough clearance on their vehicle will continue on east and north over a mountain ridge into Bear Valley and on northeast toward the Sevier River at the junction of Highway 20 with Highway 89 at Orton Junction (near the old ghost town of Spry). Those who feel safer backtracking to Interstate 15 will go north to the Bear Valley Cut-off (Highway 20) where they will turn right (east) and meet the rest of the group again at the junction with Highway 89. Approximately 1:00 P.M. we will head north by caravan on 89 to a safe place near Circleville, adjacent the highway, where Steven Heath will speak briefly about the mistaken routes taken by the Fremont and Parley P. Pratt expeditions (both in deep snow, with wagons).

1:45-2:30 P.M. lunch break, probably best at Circleville. Hoover's near Marysville recommended on some other trip, but not on our route today.

2:30 P.M. Saturday We will resume caravanning north on Highway 89 to Junction, where we will turn right on Highway 62 which is near where the south end of the Fish Lake Cut-off of the Old Spanish Trail turned away from the main pack mule trail, which went on northward through the Salina area. The cut-off was utilized to drive up to 20,000 horses and mules originating in California on the return trip to Santa Fe and many then on to Missouri (all in a period from 1831 through 1848). At a point one mile east of Kingston we will meet Bob Leonard near the pack mule silhouettes he has erected there to mark that part of the trail. He will speak about the trail use and perhaps visible remnants thereof in that area. The caravan will then proceed on to Otter Creek Reservoir (almost) where Highway 62 turns north to traverse Grass Valley. We will here be very close to the continuing OST Fish Lake Cut-off route, which followed close to Koosharem Creek. After passing the town of Koosharem, we will turn right onto Highway 24, which jogs back to the south then turns east. After climbing a grade, we will turn left (north) onto Highway 25 and continue up a mountain grade toward Fish Lake.

At approximately 4:00 P.M. near the summit at a saddle in the hills where there is a good view back to the southwest, we will meet David Ogden, a part-time resident of that area near his grey diesel pickup truck. He will show us the route followed by the horses and mules and their drover-wranglers up that grade from Grass Valley. Then the most dedicated and persistent caravaneers will proceed northward past Fish Lake and right, then past Johnson Reservoir to Bob Leonard's other silhouettes of mule packers. There will meet area rancher Steve Taylor, who will explain and substantiate his theory that at least in some years, the trailing livestock were driven from there eastward into Steve's hometown of Fremont, Wayne County for pasturage less obstructed by snow than was sometimes the case even in early summer at Fish Lake's higher elevation.

Then try to get off the mountain and toward Sigurd and Interstate 70 before full darkness of night. The cross highway from Aurora to Scipio and I-15 is recommended, but going on Interstate 70 to Salina then taking Highway 89 to Gunnison, then taking the cross highway toward Levan, then Nephi and Interstate 15 is also a good route. Hope you make the journey, you will be glad you did!