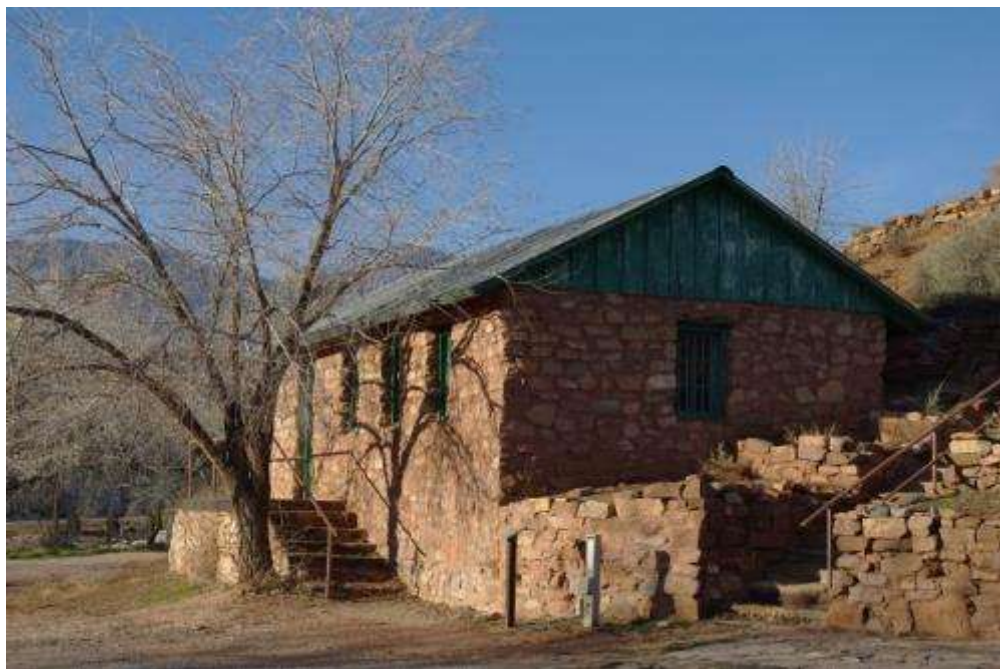


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“A Project of Interest”: *The Civilian Conservation Corps*’

Washington Fields Project, 1937-1938

Saturday, August 25 at 10 AM - 12 PM

Please register: <https://tinyurl.com/CCCamp> or call 435.879.2254

Cost: \$4. ea at the door, includes a museum tour, mine tour, and shootouts.

About the Lecture:

Although the Civilian Conservation Corps’ primary purpose was to provide work for many young single men, many of their projects fulfilled the needs of the communities they served. Residents in the small southern town of Washington sought the CCC’s assistance to protect their community’s most precious resource, the irrigation water for their fields. In the spring of 1937, leaders of the St. George and Washington Canal Company invited an engineer from the federal Soil Conservation Service where they discussed plans to upgrade the Washington Fields Canal. The engineer encouraged them to petition the service to assist in protecting the canal. Within the year, members of the local Leeds CCC camp swarmed the hillsides constructing several structures intended to minimize the damage caused by flash floods, soil erosion and debris. Since Washington’s founding in 1857,

Annual flooding destroyed dams and silted up ditches resulting in frustrated farmers frantically digging out and repairing the irrigation systems to restore the water's flow before the desert sun left their crops shriveled and dead. The Soil Conservation Service showed these farmers their canal was part of a more complex ecological system. This scientific approach was the impetus behind new technologies the CCC used in the hillsides overlooking the canal. The CCC boys used a series of dikes, terraces and rock spreaders to slow and disperse flood waters while at the same time forcing it to drop sediment and debris before they reached the canal. This project illustrates how science and technology helped solve an environmental problem that plagued Washington residents for several decades. This lecture is also a case study of how local residents were able to work with and influence federal agencies during the New Deal.

ABOUT THE PRESENTER:

Michael Shamo is a PhD Candidate of western American and environmental history at the University of Utah working on a dissertation titled "Federal Playgrounds: Tourism and Community on the Colorado Plateau." He has worked at Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' Church History Library and as a researcher for the American West Center at the University of Utah on projects for the U. S. Forest Service, the State of Utah, and local Native American groups. He also teaches courses on American and LDS Church History at Utah Valley University and Brigham Young University.

More FUN after the Lecture:

After the lecture, stay for our Old West Celebration, Old West characters, shoot outs and Jerry Anderson's private sculpture studio is open across the street!

Silver Reef Museum/Ghost Town

1903 Wells Fargo Rd

Leeds, UT 84746

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