

# **INTERPRETIVE PLAN**

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## **CALIFORNIA NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL INTERPRETIVE CENTER**

**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
ELKO, NEVADA**



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# INTRODUCTION

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The California Trail commemorates important aspects of American history in the 19th century. It facilitated the settlement of a large portion of the western United States, fostered commerce, and encouraged the development of a transportation and communication network that brought the country closer together. While the trail helped to open the West to settlement, it also dramatically affected Native American culture, resulting in the loss of much of their land and resources. The trail inspired romantic movements in art, literature, and cinema that have had a tremendous impact on American popular culture. The extensive resources associated with the trail offer the opportunity to understand the emigrant experience and its broad historic context. Travel on the California Trail became an international experience, as the world flocked to the gold fields. Here the interactions of a variety of cultures occurred. America would be changed forever.

No one entity can provide adequate protection for these extensive resources. The preservation of historic trails depends upon information sharing and mutual assistance among trail partners in both the public and private sectors.

The California and Pony Express National Historic Trails were established by Congress in 1992. This legislation directs the Secretary of the Interior to:

*... provide for the development and maintenance of [these] trails within federally administered areas.*

The legislation also directs the secretary to:

*...cooperate with and encourage those states through which the trails pass to operate, develop, and maintain any portions of these trails which are located outside the boundaries of federally administered areas.*

In 1995, the National Park Service (NPS) established the Long Distance Trail Office in Salt Lake City, Utah, to improve interstate and interregional coordination. Specific responsibilities of this office include coordinating and supporting the protection of trail resources, marking and interpreting the trails, designating and marking an auto-tour route, and identifying and certifying high-potential sites.

*INTRODUCTION*

The NPS, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the U.S. Forest Service—the agencies that manage most of the federal land crossed by the trails—signed a memorandum of understanding in 1995 designed to ensure and expand continued long-term coordination and cooperation in planning, preserving, administering, and managing national historic trails. The 1995 memorandum was updated and renewed in 2001. It now includes the USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Federal Highway Administration, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Adapted from the California National Historic Trail Comprehensive Management and Use Plan, 1999.



## BACKGROUND

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The California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center has been a vision of many people in northeast Nevada for the past decade. The California Trail Center Advisory Board (CTCAB), founded in 1999, has been at the forefront of this movement, and is the privately funded local organization charged with seeing that the vision becomes a reality.

Over the past three years, the CTCAB has completed several project tasks. The first was to set preliminary goals and to complete a conceptual fundraising design for the interpretive center. The second was the selection of a site. Using their extensive knowledge of the trail resources and project goals, the board members selected a site for the center. The CTCAB also developed local, regional, state, and federal support for the project. Funding commitments from the City of Elko, Elko County, and the State of Nevada have been granted. Federal support, sponsored by Senator Harry Reid and Congressman Jim Gibbons, includes two funding measures for initial studies and preliminary design of the center. Bill S -2749 authorizes federal funding for development of the center and named the BLM as the owner of the center, with obligations and the authority to develop, operate, and maintain the center.

In addition, the CTCAB has conducted negotiations for the donation of the land for the center, and its members have actively participated in the development of the primary interpretive themes, visitor experience goals, and media recommendations.

The current proposal is to construct an interpretive center of approximately 16,000 square feet on the north side of I-80 near the Hunter exit. The project also includes construction of a network of wayside exhibits to interpret specific historic sites along the trails. This document is the result of two planning workshops that identified the intended audiences, visitor experience goals, primary interpretive themes, and developed media recommendations.

# PURPOSE AND SIGNIFICANCE

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The following purpose and significance statements were developed for the California National Historic Trail Comprehensive Management and Use Plan.

The purposes of interpretation of the trail are to:

- enable all people to envision and experience, in a coherent and convenient way, the heritage and impacts of the western overland migration
- encourage preservation of its history and physical remains.

The trail is significant because:

- it is one of the major highways of the 19th century, which provided a 2,400-mile path for emigrants to the West (multiple routes and cut-offs total 5,839 miles across the country). The resulting settlement by emigrants significantly contributed to changes in peoples, cultures, and landscapes
- one of the largest overland migrations in American westward expansion used the trail, fueled by the California gold rush
- the route, followed earlier by Native Americans and western explorers and travelers, provided a foundation for American transportation and communication systems west of the Mississippi River.



# PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE

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Primary interpretive themes are those ideas/concepts about the California Trail and the Hastings Cutoff through eastern Nevada that hopefully will help visitors gain an understanding of this colorful story. The themes, which are based on the purpose and significance of the trails, provide the foundation for all interpretive media and programs. The themes do not include everything that may be interpreted, but they do address those ideas that are critical to understanding and appreciating the area's importance. All interpretive efforts (through both media and personal services) should relate to one or more of the themes, and each theme should be addressed by some part of the overall interpretive program. Effective interpretation results when visitors are able to connect to concepts that enable them to derive a meaningful experience from their encounter with the trails.

The themes and the many topics associated with them exhibit some redundancy. This illustrates how integrated the primary concepts are, and how it is nearly impossible to present one theme without incorporating elements from the others.

The following primary interpretive themes were developed for the sections of the California Trail and the Hastings Cutoff covered by this project (see Project Area Map).

- 1. Western Shoshone and other Native American societies lived in the Great Basin for thousands of years before the first Euro-Americans made contact. The encounters between the tribes and travelers on the California Trail generated cooperation and conflicts.**

Interpretation of this theme will help visitors to better understand and appreciate:

- how the differences in cultures and associated value systems affected relationships
- what cultural differences led to conflict
- the Native American perspectives toward westward expansion
- the changes westward expansion brought to the Native American life ways
- how the different cultures impacted the environment
- the even greater impacts of the ranchers and miners who later settled these lands

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

- the dependence of everyone on available water supplies
- specific examples of cooperation and conflict
- that a lot of "wealth" was going through the area, i.e., emigrants had many possessions they continued to discard
- the difficulty of telling the stories from different perspectives (including the reliance on oral histories and diaries)
- the value of archaeology in helping to tell the stories
- how impressions, misconceptions, and racism affected relations among the different cultures
- the endurance, adaptability, survival of the native peoples to the present day
- incidents of whites raiding wagon trains disguised as Native Americans, and resulting impacts on the native people (i.e., the Haws family).
- the lifestyle of the Western Shoshone - their ability to adapt to this harsh environment
- the nature of the Great Basin itself and the important connections to the Humboldt River
- the importance of some areas as sacred sites to the Western Shoshone people and the need to protect and preserve these places
- the impacts of disease (brought by emigrants) on native populations
- Northern Paiute Chief Truckee showing emigrants safe passage across the Forty-Mile Desert to the Truckee River
- the role of newspapers of the era in spreading stories
- how past events in the East (such as the Black Hawk War and other conflicts) fostered emigrants' fear of Native Americans
- the impact of stories told by early fur traders and trappers (some of which found their way into print)
- that all emigrants came prepared for potential conflict
- that the trail experience developed its own mythology regarding the Native Americans
- how many stories and experiences were exaggerated over time (sensationalism; romanticism).

**Note:** See Appendix D for additional information about Newe "Shoshone" history as excerpted from *The Road on Which We Came, a History of the Western Shoshone* and *Newe: A Western Shoshone History*.

**2. The California Trail became a path of western expansion during the period 1841 through 1869. The most difficult part of the journey was the trail across the Great Basin and over the mountains.**

Interpretation of this theme will help visitors to better understand and appreciate:

- that this was a journey parallel to modern-day trips along much of the same route
- why the emigrants attempted this long journey
- what physical challenges were encountered along the way
- how the routes were chosen (paths of least resistance)
- that the Great Basin was once referred to as "the great unknown"
- noted contributions of early explorers in finding the routes
- the importance of making the right choices along the way
- what it was like when they reached this area in the summer
- that from here the trail only gets more difficult (physically, mentally, medically)
- that the Humboldt River was a lifeline across this area
- the earlier use of these routes by native peoples and others—for mobility, trade, seasonal food gathering, visits to sacred sites, etc.
- how the trail fanned across the Sierra Nevada
- that the Humboldt Road was also a route to Oregon.

**3. More than 250,000 sojourners, including explorers and adventurers, the rich and the poor, families and fugitives, the Donner Party and the gold rushers, and people of varied heritage crossed the Great Basin on the road to California.**

Interpretation of this theme will help visitors to better understand and appreciate:

- that the trail would have seen use, even if gold had not been discovered in California, but it was gold that caused a mushrooming of emigrant travel
- that the story of the Donner Party is, in a larger context, a case study of Manifest Destiny
- the importance of good leadership (along with scouting out forage, water, etc.) during the trip west
- the lack of unity found in many parties

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

- that survivors of the Donner Party accepted responsibility for their actions
- contrasts with Stephens-Townsend- Murphy party and others that did most things right on their trip
- that the Donner Party was not "ill-fated"
- that the Donner story first became "popular" in 1878-1882, which coincided with the beginning of trail remembrance and commemoration activities by the emigrants
- that the Donner tragedy was not the only trail disaster, but it was the blockbuster
- that if it hadn't been the Donner misfortunes, it would have been someone else who pushed the limits to get over the trail
- that the Donner disaster led to efforts to prevent similar events in the future
- the lessons learned by the emigrants to stay on main trail (not taking shortcuts). The trail history is a history of finding quicker ways
- how promoters and marketers persuaded people to go west and to choose one route over another
- some of the many reasons people had for heading west, including:
  - getting away from cholera and malaria
  - avoiding the consequences of the 1837 panic (new start) and also the desire to avoid the coming depression at the end of the War with Mexico.
  - adventure (perhaps inspired by authors such as Cooper, Dana, Irving)
  - the accounts of Lewis and Clark and Fremont
  - achieving Manifest Destiny (planting the flag)
  - greener pastures and a new start
  - religious freedom
  - healthier (salubrious) climate
  - getting rich
  - escaping the law
- that some left their families back east and started anew in California
- that almost 50% of emigrants departed from Missouri
- the concept of buying/selling land at a profit as they slowly moved west

- the mobility induced by Mexican War
- that this was one of largest peacetime migrations in history
- that most of the '49ers did not plan to settle in California but planned to return home
- the impacts on the Humboldt during the big emigration years which included:
  - opening of trading stations
  - environmental degradation
  - impacts on Native Americans
  - increased conflicts with Native Americans (e.g., 1862 U.S. forces kill Shoshone: Ruby Valley to Pine Nut Canyon)
- that many people went back east (some permanently, others to get their families), making the trail a two-way road
- that there was a lot of commercial traffic in addition to emigrants
- "California or Bust" vs. "Busted by God"
- that the 1860s saw continued travel and impacts on the trail; more impacts on Native Americans; development of treaties; increased settlement; establishment of stagecoach routes; mining; and surges of travel during and after the Civil War
- that about 14% of the emigrants were foreigners who came to America specifically to go west
- that many African Americans headed west, knowing that California was a free state
- that many Cherokees participated in the gold rush
- that travelers included single women and working women
- that many families traveled west before the gold rush; mostly men went during the gold rush; and, that families dominated again after the rush for gold
- the role of drovers and other commercial endeavors in taking livestock and goods to California
- that many travelers (1849-52) were middle/upper class, including many professional people
- that numerous state, community, and fraternal groups traveled together
- that Mormons made up a significant group of travelers
- some of the many unique stories associated with those who followed the trail (e.g., folks from Notre Dame going to raise funds for the school)

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

- that many young men hired on as workers on the wagon trains to gain free passage west
  - that 19th Century American Culture was different from today—e.g., gender relations, economics (slavery), religion, politics, defunct practices such as dueling, etc.
  - how people got to Missouri; few travelers were born there.
4. **Landforms, landmarks, forage, wood, and water dictated the paths of migration. Although crooked, shallow, muddy, and monotonous, the Humboldt Highroad cut across the ranges of the Great Basin and made wagon travel to California possible.**

Interpretation of this theme will help visitors to better understand and appreciate:

- the physical geography of the trail
- the concept of "carrying capacity"—what was needed to support travelers on the trail and dealing with what was there
- that geography and topography determined not only the route, but also the distances traveled each day
- necessary adaptations to changes in daily, seasonal, and yearly climatic conditions and weather, feed, and so on
- tasks involved in caring for livestock and wagons
- how weather conditions affected windows of opportunity for travel from year- to -year (such as the Donner Party as a worst case)
- the importance of key landscape features in guiding travel along the routes
- how ruts, camps, signature rocks, and other physical evidence help researchers determine where the trail went
- the importance of the Humboldt River to getting through the area
- the fascination (enchantment) of emigrants with features like the hot springs, mirages, scenery
- that the Native Americans had their own names for landscape features
- emigrant names for landscape features
- that the emigrants brought most of their food with them, but did supplement with things found along the trail
- that most did not face starvation on the trail
- the impacts of dead animals along the trail (such as fouling waters).

5. All 19th century overland travelers shared similar experiences while heading west: the drudgery of walking hundreds of miles, suffocating dust, violent thunderstorms, mud, temperature extremes, bad weather, poor forage, fear of Native Americans, accidents, sickness and death. These experiences were frequently recorded in journals, diaries, and letters and became a part of our national heritage.

Interpretation of this theme will help visitors to better understand and appreciate:

- aspects of life on the trail
- what many emigrants meant by "seeing the elephant"
- the experiences of children on the trail
- that not all experiences on the trail were hard—there were dances, marriages, religious services, games, songs, etc.
- that what is perceived as "difficult" is a matter of perspective
- that medical treatment on the trail was not necessarily much different from that in the cities
- that the mortality rate sometimes reached as high as ten percent
- disagreements over trail leadership
- that the early emigrants were traveling outside the U.S., but they held onto many democratic principles
- the abundance of errors in Hollywood depictions of the trail experience
- that there were lots of people on the trail—no one traveled alone
- what became of the people who recorded their life on the trail
- the letters, diaries, journals, memoirs, poems, artwork, and photos, etc., which give us the basis for what we know today
- that some of the songs of the trail are still alive today
- the variety of trail occupations: scouts, map makers, soldiers, traders, blacksmiths, guides, and ferrymen
- the physical records of the trail: name rocks, registers, encampments, graves, ruts, and grass tufts in the desert where livestock fell
- remembrances of the pioneers, which led to various forms of commemoration
- the many books, films, artist depictions, and re-enactments about the trail experiences
- the myths and exaggerations of the trail

PRIMARY INTERPRETIVE THEMES

- the development of trail societies, centers, and a National Trail System as means of preservation and commemoration
- the great variety of people on the trail
- the types of equipment needed for traveling on the trail
- the critical importance of timing in traveling the trails.

**6. Railroads, modern highways, pipelines, and powerlines still follow the general routes of the California Trail.**

Interpretation of this theme will help visitors to better understand and appreciate:

- changes in the nature of travel (i.e., emigrant wagon trains to railroads to cars)
- change in speed of travel
- changes in routes used to reach California
- changes in the purposes of traveling (i.e., Pony Express, stage)
- changes as areas along the trail were "settled"
- changes from early to late travel (i.e., from finding your way to following well-established routes)
- the continuum of transportation and communication along these routes
- that not everyone came with a wagon-some traveled on foot or with pack animals, etc.
- the various names for the trails
- how modern researchers have discovered remnants of the historic routes
- the development of trading stations, ferries, and other services along the trail.

# VISITOR EXPERIENCE GOALS

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Visitors to the California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center and related sites will have opportunities to:

- have an enjoyable and entertaining experience
- learn something about each of the major interpretive themes
- have a hands-on (or feet-on) experience
- experience the actual trail resources
- be encouraged to understand the story in the context of a trail site and its features (ruts, swales, views, etc.)
- understand the significance of the trail in the Elko area and the Hastings Cutoff
- make emotional connections with the history and resources of the trail
- make personal connections with the people and events associated with those who traveled the trail
- develop a feeling of stewardship toward the protection and preservation of the resources
- identify with individuals who took the journey
- learn about trail sites and resources
- easily find sites related to the trail
- learn how to recognize trail resources
- learn more at their own pace
- develop an awareness of National Historic Trails
- get information about the trail before leaving home and after they return
- see the relevance of the trail in their own lives
- get a sense that history can be exciting, adventurous, and fun
- experience a people-friendly and family-oriented facility
- meet friendly and knowledgeable staff
- develop a desire to visit other area attractions
- understand things from different points of view (such as cultural differences)
- choose from a variety of interpretive programs and special events

*VISITOR EXPERIENCE GOALS*

- plan their visit based on individual time constraints, interest levels, and abilities
- gain an awareness of the roles of individuals and government agencies responsible for preserving trail resources (that the trail crosses both private and public lands)



# INTENDED AUDIENCES

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Some of the audiences who will be served by the interpretive center and related trail sites include:

- interstate 80 and U.S. Highway 93 travelers
- relatives/descendants of trail emigrants and returnees
- western Shoshone people and other connected tribes
- "Rut Nuts"
- people who have heard about some of the popular stories, such as the Donner Party
- school groups
- families with children
- local convention goers
- local residents
- elderhostel participants
- retirees
- foreign Visitors (i.e., large numbers of Japanese and European tourists are interested in Western American History)
- film production crews
- organized tour bus companies.

Although difficult to accurately determine, earlier visitation estimates to the interpretive center were estimated at approximately 40,000 people per year. However, since the nearby Elko Museum currently sees between 50,000-60,000 people per year, this planning team felt that visitation for the trail center should be estimated accordingly.

Also based on the Elko Museum figures, a high volume of school group visits can be projected for October-November and for April-May. Another visitation peak in late January, corresponding to the Annual Cowboy Poetry Convention in Elko, should be anticipated. Higher visitation in summer (with traveling families and vacationers along I-80) and lower visitation in winter can also be predicted.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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The following recommendations address the interpretive media and programs for the California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center and related trail sites in northeast Nevada. Each recommendation is designed to further define, support, and communicate the resource significance, primary interpretive themes, and visitor experience goals. Implementation of these recommendations also will facilitate connections between visitors and the tangible and intangible resources.

The discussion of the program and media proposals identifies the purpose, special considerations, and sometimes suggests ideas about their presentation. It is important to remember that these are only suggestions, and should not in any way limit the creativity essential during the media or program planning and design processes. On the other hand, the proposals will be specific enough to provide guidance and define the parameters in which these creative energies can flow.

It is critical that construction of the facility and the development of the interpretive media be closely coordinated. Both of these roles can require an enormous amount of time to ensure high quality and on-time delivery. Consequently, it is recommended that the BLM consider hiring, appointing, or contracting with someone to be the media support person/interpretive media coordinator. Among the many duties would be to research and provide reference materials to media contractors. This person also would obtain the necessary graphics, display objects, possibly draft label copy, and be heavily involved in review processes. Once the project starts, this can be a full-time job. This person also could visit the Harpers Ferry Center to learn more about media development processes.

A number of proposals address Native Americans peoples (past and present) who have strong associations with the trail and adjacent resources. It is essential that the BLM initiate and maintain continuous dialogue and active participation with area tribes regarding the planning, design, and production of theme-related interpretive media and programs.

There are other trail centers and interpretive locations that tell other aspects of the California Trail story and can complement the experience that visitors will have at the Elko facility. Some of these centers go into much more depth on some topic areas which could make for a good handoff to their facilities, sites, web pages, etc.

## California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center

The following recommendations are based on the premise of constructing an approximate 16,000-square foot interpretive center near the Hunter Exit of I-80 west of Elko, Nevada. The building design also is based on an estimated annual visitation of 60,000-65,000 people.

It is not within the scope of this plan to define the architectural style, the total building program, or the various non-public program areas. However, some suggestions in the form of conceptual drawings and process outlines appear in Appendix B. The recommendations in this plan deal primarily with those spaces and program areas directly related to the visitor experience, the interpretive program, and visitor information.

BLM will produce a separate marketing and business plan that will address facility staffing requirements and the development of various information and advertising products to inform the various audiences about the center, both before they leave home and upon arrival into the area. This will include recommendations for the development of highway signs, low-watt radio broadcast messages (such as a Travelers' Information Station), a web site, brochures, and advertisements in prominent tourism literature, etc. The business plan also will include recommendations for creating partnerships with other local attractions, as well as with regional, state, and national tourism and travel agencies. The business plan will also address the income or budget stream for Interpretive Center operations, maintenance, etc. The marketing plan is key to the success of the Center.

## Experience Narrative

### Approach

In addition to highway signs alerting I-80 travelers of the exit for the interpretive center, a visual element in the landscape will highlight the building's location and create further interest. This feature (perhaps one or more wagons) also will help to identify the site's connection to the story of the California Trail.

Once travelers exit I-80, the goal will be to create a natural approach to the facility that will slow people down and begin the experience of going back in time. Although the entrance road must meet modern safety standards, the character of the road can evoke a feel for traveling along the California Trail. This can include the use of native vegetation, a change in the road surface to create the illusion of a trail (such as wagon

## RECOMMENDATIONS

tracks), and perhaps the placement of additional trail features in the landscape. Examples of the latter might include sculptural elements (or reproductions) depicting broken wagons or items discarded by the emigrants.

A gate at the entrance will allow the approach road to be closed during off-hours; however, it could be opened for special evening activities. A turn-around will be provided at the entrance to accommodate large vehicles.

The approach road will lead to visitor parking. Upon exiting their vehicles, visitors will easily see the walkway(s) to the building entrance. The design of the walkways also will convey aspects of the emigrant trail experience without adversely impacting accessibility requirements. As the deceleration continues, people will feel closer to the natural environment (its sounds and smells) and be curious about what lies ahead. Natural sounds must be tempered by noise abatement from the highway.

This is not a time for in-depth interpretation, but interpretive features/markers along the walkway can begin to illustrate aspects of the trail across Nevada or from Granite Pass to Battle Mountain. Visitors will discover that each foot/yard/meter of the walkway represents so many miles on the trail. They also will get a feel for the amount of time required for the emigrants to cover this distance.

The approach to the building also is a time when many visitors will want to know where the restrooms are located. Clear signing will direct visitors to the restrooms, which should have outside entrances. Inside access also can be provided, but the exterior entrances will help decrease congestion inside the building. This would also be a good spot to have a bulletin board with weather reports and road conditions, as well as travelers' emergency messages. Trash and recycling containers would be appropriate in this vicinity.

### **Lobby**

As a means of initial orientation, the lobby will offer a view to the south, toward the junction of the main route of the California Trail with the Hastings Cutoff Trail. Interpretive panels with graphic elements will highlight the trails, the Humboldt River, and other prominent landscape features. The goal is to give visitors an initial sense of place and time, setting the stage and piquing interest to explore further. Linking this view with an outside observation deck also could be considered.

The view will be associated with some type of map that places this segment of the trail in an overall context. Illustrations connected with this "map" might show images of the emigrants and of the Native Americans who were living here. In addition to its primary orientation and stage-setting roles, this exhibit will offer at least some level of understanding to those who may opt out of paying the entrance fee.

A staffed information desk will be located in the lobby. Although the desk usually will be staffed by one person, during peak times it may need to accommodate two employees. The desk will be situated so that the staff can welcome visitors as they enter the building, answer questions, and give a brief introduction to the center. The entrance fee operation (cash register) will be conducted at the information desk. Staff at the information desk also may be required to handle bookstore/gift shop sales. This function may necessitate a second cash register to keep these monies separate from the entrance fees.

The information desk will have a telephone, sufficient storage for maps and brochures, and a remote start switch for the audiovisual program in the theater. Space to open maps for giving directions also is essential.

From the lobby, visitors will be able to get a glimpse into the exhibit area. This view will be compelling, helping to sway those who may be reluctant to pay the entrance fee.

The lobby area could also have a thematic feel using Native American crafts, paintings, murals, trail artifacts, etc.

Other features in the lobby will include:

- A brochure rack or exhibits to highlight other area attractions. This will emphasize the connections between the interpretive center and the local communities; however, some mechanism of selecting which attractions to highlight will need to be developed.
- A framed display of brochures available in limited quantities with a label stating "Available Upon Request." This will reduce the waste that often results from simply putting out stacks of brochures on a table or counter.
- A "stamping station." Many people like to collect stamps (like those developed for the National Parks) of destinations visited during their travels. This recommendation presumes that a unique stamp for the center will be created.
- A return box for brochures. This may be especially useful with brochures developed for any interpretive trails or activities at the center.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- A computer station to allow visitors to explore elements of the center's website, or perhaps view a Power Point program. Visitors could take a virtual tour of the trail interpretive sites, or examine about other related websites for additional emigrant trail information.
- A people counter (to record daily visitation).
- A visitor register so people may "sign in" and comment about the center.
- A donation box.

### Bookstore

A bookstore will be an integral part of the interpretive experience at the trail center. Sales items really represent "exhibits" that people can purchase and take home. Operated by a yet-to-be-established friends group (or Cooperating Association), the store will occupy space adjacent to the lobby and to the information desk. It will be seen easily by visitors entering and exiting the building.

Except possibly during periods of peak visitation, the staff at the information desk will handle bookstore sales, and this may require having a second cash register in this location. Information desk staff also will need to provide visual security for the sales items. Consequently, the sales displays should be within direct line of sight from the desk. If another employee can be hired during peak times, the cash register could be set up immediately adjacent to the sales area. This might be a portable counter that could be moved out of the way when not in use.

A professional bookstore designer should be consulted early in the planning of the interpretive center to ensure the best size, display techniques, and use of the space. Since the building may be used periodically for evening functions (possibly in the theater), the bookstore design should enable it to be locked. Separate storage for sales stock and an office with a safe should be provided adjacent to the store. The storage area also should be accessed easily for receiving deliveries.

To ensure that only high quality theme-related materials are sold, a review board will be created to approve all sales items. Likewise, an evaluation process called a "scope of sales" will help assess each potential sales item in terms of audience, theme, and cost. This tool, available through many cooperating associations, can provide the means to identify and fill gaps in the overall publications program.

## Exhibit Areas

The entry to the exhibit area needs to be compelling, motivating people to pay the entrance fee and learn more about the emigrant trail experience. During this planning process, Lois Whitney of the Western Shoshone Tribe related a moving story of her great-great grandfather who saw the first wagon train through this area as an advancing cloud of dust—a snake of dust. This image, and the story associated with it would captivate visitors, and introduce the trail experience from the perspective of those who lived here first.

Other elements of this entry exhibit might include the smell of sagebrush, background sounds of the desert and/or the sounds of the Humboldt River or one of its tributaries, and perhaps the voice of a Shoshone person relating the story or singing about the water. If the story were told here, it would be best to tell it both in Shoshone and in English.

Pursuit of this exhibit concept, along with other media proposals in this document, will require the active involvement of the Western Shoshone Tribe throughout the planning and design process, including obtaining permission to tell any stories.

Another introductory experience might include having visitors "adopt" an actual historic figure connected with the trail. This might include various emigrants who traveled west on the trail, Native Americans who lived here, or early European explorers who came to

this area, etc. Using some basic information about each person, visitors could then move through the exhibits where they would learn more about their chosen individual.

Once in the exhibit area, visitors will encounter four major exhibit concepts dealing with (1) the people, (2) the trail, (3) the Great Basin, and (4) the area today. Each of these basic concepts may have multiple panels, cases, and objects, including audiovisual and/or interactive elements. Text in multiple languages will be provided through printed handouts, or possibly via hand-held audio devices. A sign near the information desk would inform visitors of this service.

These four exhibits should not be viewed as isolated entities. It may be possible (and even desirable) to develop "connecting" exhibits that will link the major concepts in exciting ways. Some concepts may even be linked visually or physically to displays outside the building. Each of

## RECOMMENDATIONS

these main concepts and some "connecting" exhibit options are further described below. Please consult the Primary Interpretive Themes section of this plan for other potential story elements.



**Exhibit 1. The People.** This exhibit will introduce many of the individuals who journeyed west and the Native Americans who encountered them. Visitors will see the incredible diversity of emigrants, and discover some of their motivations for making the long trip. Examples of unique and common travelers will be illustrated along with the changes in demographics before, during, and after the gold rush. Visitors will discover how various promoters and marketers persuaded people to go west and to select one route over another. The exhibit will also describe the roles of earlier Euro-American explorers opening wagon roads across the Great Basin.

Elements of the exhibit (perhaps including interactive components) will give visitors a feel for the preparations needed for the journey. Visitors also will experience the emotions associated with saying goodbye, realize that there were lots of other people on the trails, and that almost no one traveled alone.

In contrast with the emigrants, this exhibit also will introduce the Western Shoshone, Northern Paiute, and other American Indian people

who encountered the emigrants, and relate some of the impacts the emigrants had on Native American lives. Visitors will see examples of conflict and cooperation, and how cultural differences often led to fear and inaccurate perceptions. Viewers will understand the difficulties encountered in researching these stories and accurately presenting them from multiple perspectives.

**Exhibit 2. The Trail.** Two of the primary goals of this exhibit will be to graphically show the California Trail and the Hastings Cutoff in a broad context, and to relate some of the many experiences associated with the journey. Some type of "map" will likely be needed to show the trail corridors, topography, the numerous cutoffs, the "frayed rope" effect in California, and to emphasize that along the Humboldt the trail was essentially a single route. Designers must realize that many people (especially children) do not relate well to standard maps, and that they may not attract or hold visitor interest. Such a "map" needs to be engaging, possibly interactive, and perhaps include audiovisual or three-dimensional components.

The "map" will depict changes over time, and illustrate that earlier and later modes of transportation followed many of the same routes. Visitors will be able to see the changes in the nature, purpose, and speed of travel, changes in the routes taken, and changes along the routes as areas were "settled." Various names for the trails and the critical importance of weather in timing the journey also will be presented.

More than a map, the trail was an experience. Other elements of this exhibit will present examples of life on the trail, especially the portion of the journey through northeast Nevada and the Great Basin. In addition to daily routines, visitors will learn about the importance of good trail leadership, the variety of occupations needed, and what was meant by "seeing the elephant." Encounters with Native Americans will be presented from both perspectives.

Visitors also learn that while traveling on the trail was very difficult, not all experiences were hard. There were dances, songs, weddings, religious services, games, and debating societies. Many emigrants took time to explore, record their names and messages on rocks, and keep diaries and journals. Depictions of any "register rock" inscriptions will include an explanation of their fragile nature and of the need to protect them.

Although not the only trail disaster, the story of the Donner Party is certainly one of the most well-known. And while it does not represent the experience of most emigrants, the story must be told. Here, visitors will see that what happened to the Donner Party is, in a larger context, a case

study of Manifest Destiny. They will discover that if it had not been the Donner's experience, a similar disaster would have occurred to someone else who pushed the limits to reach California. The exhibit will focus on the experiences of the party as they traveled through northeast Nevada and encourage people to visit other sites, such as wayside exhibits in the Elko area and the Donner Lake Interpretive Center, that tell additional aspects of the story.

This exhibit also will convey the concept that the trails ran both ways. Visitors will learn about some of the people who returned back east—some permanently, others to get their families. They also will learn that others settled in northeast Nevada, further changing the character of the trail and of the lives of Native American inhabitants.

**Exhibit 3. The Great Basin.** This exhibit will focus visitor attention on the Great Basin and how this environment influenced the lives of those who lived here and those who traveled through. Visitors will gain a basic understanding of the geology, topography, climate and weather, flora and fauna of the Great Basin, and why many travelers chose to go around rather than through the region. Flora and fauna of the Great Basin should be addressed—sagebrush, pinyon pine, juniper, types of plants found along the riparian zones (such as the Humboldt River), wildlife (large and small game), types of fish, etc.

The exhibit will show that although the region is harsh by many standards, it was home to a number of Native American tribes. Visitors will learn how people like the Western Shoshone and Northern Paiute were well adapted to life in the area, and closely connected to the Humboldt River and other permanent water sources. The exhibit will show that life for the Native Americans here was much more than just surviving, and that the people had strong emotional and spiritual ties to the land—ties that continue to the present. Visitors also will discover how the emigrant trails changed the delicate balance of life in the desert and threatened the traditional life ways of the inhabitants.

For the emigrants, this exhibit will show what it was like traveling through here during the summer. Visitors will learn how the wear and tear of the long journey, intense heat, choking dust, bad water, and fear of conflicts with Native Americans, etc. all had physical, mental, and medical impacts on the wagon trains. One example might be to display various emigrant trail objects as they appeared when new with how they looked by the time they reached the Great Basin.

Journal quotes about the dust, such as that from Leander Vaness Loomis, could offer a different perspective from the story told by Lois Whitney's great-great grandfather:

*"The road along this river, is so dusty, that it makes traveling very disagreeable. As a general thing the dust along the river is 6 to 8 inches deep, being of the very lightest kind, so that the least wind will stir it up, and almost blind a person. I have seen it so thick that we could not see wagons that were not more than 4 or 5 rods ahead.*

(1850)

Visitors will see that the river was a lifeline for the emigrants just as it was for the Native Americans. The exhibit will show that these links to the water were also sources of encounter, impact, and conflict. And although by the time they reached this area fewer emigrants took the time to explore, visitors will discover that there are examples of rock inscriptions and journal entries describing the scenery. Visitors also will learn that the Native Americans have their own names for many features in the landscape.

**Exhibit 4. The Area Today.** A key goal of this exhibit is to motivate visitors to go see some of the actual historic sites along the California and Hastings Cutoff Trails. The exhibit will show many of these sites (perhaps using video), and will be supplemented with a brochure/map that will serve as a self-guiding tour publication. The exhibit also may reference an audio tour (if developed) that visitors could purchase in the bookstore.

The exhibit will help visitors identify various types of trail resources. For example, samples of the different classifications of trail remnants could be simulated, perhaps as an outdoor exhibit component. Visitors will discover how archeology, satellite imaging, oral history, and other scientific and historic research activities continue to reveal more of the trail-related resources and stories.

Other exhibit components will enable visitors to identify and appreciate the many group, organization, and individual efforts that help preserve and commemorate trail resources and experiences. Visitors also will learn how they can become more involved as interested citizens and stewards. In addition, the exhibit will identify other trail-related sites in the area and beyond northeast Nevada where people can visit and learn more.

Visitors will see how some trail experiences became romanticized, exaggerated, and sensationalized, and in later depictions in film, art, stage, and literature. This could be contrasted with the wealth and diversity of accurate and scholarly material that continues to be developed.

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Still other aspects of this exhibit complex will show how subsequent changes in the settlement of northeast Nevada still illustrate connections to water and to earlier trail corridors. Visitors will see that tribes such as the Western Shoshone are still here, and despite the many impacts to their traditional ways of life, they actively protect their long and cherished association with the land.

A concluding graphic might show a railroad train passing one of the last wagon trains, symbolizing the coming end of the emigrant trail experience.

**"Connecting" Exhibits.** Since each of the four major exhibit concepts contain elements that overlap, the following represent ideas that would link the main concepts in compelling ways.

- Visual elements such as wagons (maybe depicting a "new" one in one location and a wagon that has been "used up" by the time it reached the Humboldt in another spot) would illustrate the hardships of the trail and show visitors what items were essential for the journey. Parts of this display could be hands-on.
- An interactive computer station would allow visitors to access the OCTA census of overland emigrant diaries. People could use this database for genealogical research, or to get more information on the person they "adopted" on entering the exhibit area.
- A low-volume "soundscape" of various trail sounds will add to the visitor's trail experience, and offer audible links to the exhibits. However, caution will be needed to avoid creating an overabundance of sound that could be an annoyance to both visitors and staff.
- A separate Special Events Room is proposed in the center. This space will be used for a variety of functions, including meetings, workshops, lectures, and indoor interpretive and cultural demonstrations. While some demonstrations are best conducted outside, others would benefit from this indoor space. This will be especially important during inclement weather and for school groups that may visit in the colder months. To ensure the highest quality, selection criteria will need to be developed, which should include relevance to the primary interpretive themes and visitor experience goals.
- An outdoor demonstration area also is proposed. This likely will involve various types of living history programs, some perhaps using livestock. While the same criteria should be used for selecting appropriate activities, the location of the area should allow for easy visitor access, group assemblies, safety for visitors and demonstrators, and visual/noise screening from traffic. The activities should be visible from the center, but once people reach the site, they should feel that they have stepped back in time.

- Exhibits outside the building might include an area to recreate trail remnants and show visitors how to differentiate the various classifications. This idea could be associated visually and physically with the Exhibit 4 concept above.
- Options for a trail to the top of the hill above the center and/or to the nearby tuff rocks will be explored. The rock formation and views from the top of the hill might be interpreted with one or more way-side exhibits. Plant identification markers would add to the experience and help visitors become more familiar with the desert environment.

## Theater

The center will contain an audiovisual theater. A new 12 to 20-minute audiovisual program will be produced that will be an integral part of the interpretive media experience. The theater must be dedicated primarily to showing this film during the day. (The Special Events Room (see above) will serve as a multi-purpose facility for meetings, workshops, and other special activities. However, the theater will be an excellent place to hold a variety of evening programs).

The new audiovisual program will be of high quality, originating in a video format, such as HDTV, or a film format, such as 35mm or Super 16 film (which would be transferred to HDTV or Digital Betacam). The program will be presented via a DVD or HDTV player and video projection. The theater must also be a high quality. This includes proper sound and projection systems; an acoustically balanced room; a properly sized and placed projection screen; a properly sized projection booth; fixed seating; sloped floor; and captioning, assistive listening, and audio description hardware.

The size of the theater should be factored in multiples of bus groups. Teachers and tour bus leaders generally prefer to keep their groups together, and this includes the theater experience. This concept also helps the center staff, if they choose to give some introductory remarks prior to starting the film.

Audiovisual media is excellent for conveying emotions and for telling linear/chronological stories. However, the story of the California Trail is not a single story. It is many stories combined of diverse people and landscapes. Some tell of human struggle across an unfamiliar land with the reward of a better life at the end of the trail. Others recount a different struggle, one in which the goal was not to reach a better place, but merely to hold on to a way of life and the place where they had lived for hundreds of years.

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The proposed audiovisual program for the California Trail Visitor Center will tell the stories through the perspectives of the Western Shoshone, Northern Paiute, and the emigrants. The program will show the unique natural environment of the Great Basin and recount the human stories, beginning with the first contact between the Western Shoshone and the emigrants, up to the arrival of the railroad. The program also will highlight the importance of the river to all who lived in the area or who passed through it. Through the use of historical reenactments, first person accounts, original photography, and contemporary interviews, the film will provide visitors with a look into the past where the rich history of the California Trail will be revealed.

One scenario might begin by showing Shoshone women singing as they gather willows at the river. The scene could then switch to the approaching snake of dust and the story told by Lois Whitney's great - great grandfather. From inside the wagon train visitors might hear a journal entry being read- one that describes the dust cloud from within.

With this introductory concept (or something similar) other stories will emerge. The primary goals are to have visitors experience aspects of this period of history from multiple perspectives and to appreciate how the emigrant trail movement changed the nation.

### Support Functions

Adequate space for some interpretive support functions sometimes gets overlooked in building designs and determinations of size and functional requirements. The following will serve as a partial checklist of interpretive support needs for the new trail center:

- Storage for the official center brochure and other free literature
- Storage for bookstore supplies and sales stock
- Storage for interpretive and education activity materials (props, etc.)
- Meeting room(s)
- Staff offices (including bookstore and other center partners)
- Project work space
- Reference library for staff
- Lunch/break room
- Private restroom for staff
- Direct phone line for changing Traveler Information Station (TIS) messages

- Space to store and do minor maintenance on electronic equipment such as tape/CD players or audio wands used by visitors

Other essential building program areas may include:

- Storage for custodial and maintenance equipment and supplies
- Security systems
- Fire detection and suppression system

## TRAIL SITES

One of the primary goals of the trail center is to encourage people to visit some of the historic trail sites in the area. From hundreds of possibilities, a list of 34 sites with high interpretive value was developed (see Pages 34-52 and the associated map in Appendix A). Many of these sites are currently visited during special group tours of the area, and some already have interpretive wayside exhibits in place. However, other than the iron Trails West markers, most of the sites do not provide adequate interpretation or visitor/vehicle access.

BLM management wanted guidance from this planning team in phasing the development of key interpretive sites. Using the list of 34 sites, a nominal group selection process was conducted to get a collective feel for the relative interpretive value of these sites. Only team members with knowledge of the trail sites were encouraged to participate and identify the sites with the greatest interpretive potential.

Of the 34 sites considered, 21 received a score of one or higher. It is to be stressed that the scores only represent an expression of relative interpretive value of the sites by the planning team. Other factors, such as cost of development, land ownership issues, etc., will need to be considered for all the sites and are listed below. Further analysis could result in changed priorities and possibly the development of alternative sites.

Additional wayside site selection criteria factors should include:

- visitor safety
- quality of the experience (Is it rewarding?)
- something exciting/interesting to see
- variety of interpretive experiences (such as ruts, river crossings, ridge crossings, springs, camping areas, nooning areas, death, encounters with Native Americans, the relevance of certain trail sites to Native Americans, views of the trail route, passes, natural landmarks, etc.)

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- vandalism potential
- ease of maintenance
- visitor accessibility (ADA)
- proximity to the trail interpretive center
- potential visitation
- sensitivity of the resource
- cost of development
- available references and resources to interpret the site
- politics/economics
- land ownership.

As each of the trail-related sites is developed, the primary means of interpretation will be through wayside exhibits. This type of interpretive media works well when the interpretive message relates directly to something the viewer can see in the landscape and/or something that happened at a specific location. The addition of graphic material (i.e., photos or artwork) helps people to visualize a scene in an earlier time or to highlight features for identification. To hold visitor interest, the interpretive messages must be brief and well written. Also, since modern access roads can get people "turned around," each exhibit should orient visitors to where they are on the trail.

The interpretive themes and associated story elements need to be consulted when developing the texts for the wayside exhibits. The list below is taken from the master theme list presented earlier in this document. The numbers and letters below are used in the description of each potential trail site to identify each site's interpretive potential.

### Theme 1

- a. Changes westward expansion brought to Native American life ways
- b. How the different cultures impacted the environment
- c. The greater impacts caused by the ranchers and miners who later settled here
- d. Everyone's dependence on available water supplies
- e. Specific examples of cooperation and conflict, i.e., the interaction of cultures
- f. The value of archeology in helping to tell the stories
- g. The lifestyle of the Western Shoshone-their ability to adapt to this environment

- h. The importance of some areas as sacred sites to the Shoshone people

### Theme 2

- a. What physical elements were encountered along the way
- b. How trail routes were chosen (paths of least resistance)
- c. Noted contributions of early explorers in finding the routes, along with the contributions from traders, trappers, and Native Americans
- d. The importance of making the right choices along the way
- e. What it was like when emigrants reached this area in the summer
- f. The earlier use of these routes by native peoples and others

### Theme 3

- a. Lessons learned by the emigrants to stay on the trail (not taking shortcuts)
- b. That this was one of the largest peacetime migrations in history (a global migration to California)
- c. The impacts on the Humboldt during the big emigration years which included:
  - opening of trading stations
  - environmental degradation
  - impacts on Native Americans
  - increased conflicts with Native American peoples
- d. That many people went back east (some permanently, others to get their families) making the trail a two-way road
- e. That there was a lot of commercial traffic in addition to the emigrants
- f. That the 1860s saw continued travel on the trail; more impacts on Native Americans; development of treaties; increased settlement; establishment of stage routes; mining; and surges of travel during and after the Civil War
- g. That many Cherokees participated in the gold rush
- h. That travelers included single women and working women
- i. That many families traveled west before the gold rush; mostly males went during the gold rush; and the families dominated again after the gold rush
- j. The role of drovers and other commercial endeavors in taking livestock and goods to California

#### Theme 4

- a. The physical geography of the trail
- b. Climate and weather affected travel
- c. The concept of "carrying capacity"-what was needed to support travelers through this area
- d. How geography and topography determined not only the routes, but also the distances traveled each day
- e. Tasks involved in caring for livestock and wagons
- f. The importance of key landscape features in guiding travel along the routes
- g. How ruts, camps, signature rocks, and other physical evidence help researchers determine where the trail went
- h. The importance of the Humboldt River in getting through the area
- i. The fascination of emigrants with features like hot springs, mirages, and scenery
- j. That the Native Americans had their own names for landscape features
- k. Emigrant names for landscape features
- l. That the emigrants brought most of their food with them, but did supplement their supplies with things found along the trail
- m. The impacts of dead animals along the trail (such as fouling waters)

#### Theme 5

- a. Aspects of life on the trail (i.e., nooning and camping sites)
- b. Experiences of children on the trail
- c. The abundance of errors in Hollywood depictions of the trail experience
- d. That there were lots of people on the trail-you were not traveling alone
- e. What became of the people who recorded their life on the trail
- f. The letters, diaries, journals, memoirs, poems, songs, artwork, and photos which give us the basis for what we know today
- g. The physical records of the trail: name rocks, registers, encampments, graves, ruts, and grass tufts in the desert where livestock fell
- h. Remembrances of the pioneers which led to various forms of commemoration

- i. The mythology of the trail
- j. The types of equipment needed for traveling on the trail

### Theme 6

- a. Changes in the nature of travel
- b. Changes in the speed of travel
- c. Changes in the routes to reach California
- d. Changes in the purpose of traveling
- e. The continuum of transportation and communication along these routes
- f. That not all travelers came in a wagon-some traveled on foot or with pack animals, etc.
- g. How modern researchers have discovered remnants of the historic routes
- h. The critical importance of timing in traveling the trails
- i. The development of trading stations, ferries, and other services along the trail



The following is a list of the 34 trail sites that were examined within the context of this interpretive plan. For each site, the numbers and letters listed after *Potential Interpretive Themes* refer to the list above. Also, the diary quotations were taken from: *Emigrant Trails West, A Guide to the California Trail*, Richard K. Brock, Editor, Trails West, Inc., Reno Nevada, 2000, and "*Hastings Longtripp*," *A Hastings Cutoff Trail Guide from Donner Spring to the Humboldt River*, Roy D. Tea, Utah Crossroads, Oregon-California Trail Association, Salt Lake City, Utah, 1996.

## Potential California Trail Interpretive Sites

[Note: the site numbers below correspond to the Project Area Map in Appendix A.]

### 1. Stony Point

Nominal Group Score: 10

Resource Description:

Rock alignment dating back to post trail era. Significant site for emigrant/Shoshone encounters. Many diary entries about this site. Trails West (TW) marker.

*"Came to the point of a mountain, on going around which we found the road stony and bad for a mile. After that every step was in dust ankle deep."*

Alzono Delano, August 6, 1849

Potential Theme Interpretation: 1a, 1e, 1g, 2e, 4a, 4f

Ownership: Private-Approximately four miles of graded road after leaving pavement.

### 2. Beowawe Rest Area Eastbound & Westbound

Nominal Group Score: 7

Resource Description:

Overview of Humboldt River east. Take advantage of existing location. Good view, especially from eastbound rest area. Beowawe Geysers area could be interpreted for Native American significance.

*"We now find our team so fairly give out that we are going to leave our wagon... We lay here all day making pack saddles. We cut up a wagon wheel to make them, using the spokes for cross pieces and knocked a board out of the side of the body for side pieces; the balance of the body we used for firewood; this was all the benefit we got out of our wagon after getting it this far. From this time on we will have to lie out in the open air, for we have to leave our tent, taking nothing but our provisions and a blanket apiece and the*

*best of our clothes. I have one new suit, besides the one I have on; this I have worn for weeks and expect to wear it in to California."*

James A. Payne, July 17, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation: 1c, 1d, 1h, 2b, 4a, 5j

Ownership: Private-NDOT right-of-way. NDOT could be a potential partner.

### 3. Gravelly Ford

Nominal Group Score: 8

Resource Description:

Main crossing of Humboldt River. Maiden's grave (Lucinda Duncan). Many diary entries. Emigrant/Shoshone encounters. Good viewpoint near cemetery. Could interpret river crossings in general (they were avoided), and when they did cross it was at gravel bars. Gravesite offers potential to interpret death on the Trail (disease, accidents, drowning, etc.).

*"We traveled seventeen miles and come to the rive again [at Gravelly Ford] The Native Americans are very thick They have killed to men to day and took their amunition and horses and left them for the buzards."*

Sarah Davis, September 17, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1e, 2a, 3

Ownership: Public (?) - Cemetery recently deeded to Crescent Valley.

### 4. Emigrant Interchange

Nominal Group Score: 2

Resource Description:

Complex of springs and large trees. Important "nooning" and camp spot for emigrants after crossing Emigrant Pass.

*"We nooned on the summit ... then drove down a caneon past a small spring ...it is not fit to drink on account of the dust in it as it*

*is near the road side"*

Jonas Hittle, August 9, 1849

Potential Theme Interpretation: 2i, 4f, 5a, 5e

Ownership: Private - In NDOT right-of-way. NDOT could be potential partner.

## 5. Emigrant Pass

Nominal Group Score: 0

Resource Description:

Top of Emigrant Pass at truck parking area. Trail traces visible nearby, parallel to I-80. Opportunity for short walk, but dangerous due to present traffic patterns. TW marker.

*"Gradually ascending to the foot of the second and ... long ascent...up this it was first steep for about one half mile, and then three and a half miles...found us on the summit of the mountain."*

James P. Yager, August 14, 1863

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2a, 4d

Ownership: Private - In NDOT right-of-way.

## 6. Carlin Hot Springs

Nominal Group Score: 2

Resource Description:

Hot springs at the Humboldt River. Last stop on the river before going over Emigrant Pass. This was the first time the emigrants left the river corridor since intercepting it at Wells/Deeth. Continuing on the river through Palisades Canyon was too rough for wagons. Steam rises from the springs year-round.

*"The trail or road. . . ascends a considerable hill 1/3 mile ahead of us. . . The water here is cool, but too alkaline to be agreeable. Hot springs in the river-bank, Sulphur, &C."*

J. Goldsborough Bruff, September 7, 1849

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2b, 4f, 4h, 4I

Ownership: City of Carlin. Road to private ranch. The land N. of the road is Carlin's, too.

## 7. Carlin Canyon

Nominal Group Score: 5

Resource Description:

Existing BLM interpretive site that could be expanded. Existing large pullouts; no traffic. Visitors can view the river and trail ruts from overlook. Two crossings of the river were required to negotiate the canyon. Other resources include Victory Highway (old U.S. 40), rock wall built by the CCC, route of Central Pacific Railroad. TW marker.

*"We have to cross the river four times ... on each side of you there is a perpendicular wall of vast rock ... overhanging the road so one has a feeling very near bordering onto fear as he passes under those precipices."*

Lewis Beers, August 3, 1852

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2b,2f, 4d, 6e

Ownership: Public- In NDOT right-of-way. Traffic from I-80 is routed this way during work on tunnel.

## 8. Hunter Exit

Nominal Group Score: 0

Resource Description:

Existing Humboldt Highroads interpretive site on north side of I-80. Great view of South Fork Humboldt River Canyon, Ruby Mountains as a backdrop, and Humboldt River corridor. Junction with Hastings Cutoff Trail visible. This is the exit for the new interpretive center. TW marker is located 100 yards to the north.

*"We started this morning and come 8 m heare the road forks one gose down the bottom to the left and crosis the river probably it wood be the best road late in the seson but the river is hy now we took the right hand road over the mountains and come 10 mils to*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

*a smal creek [Susie Creek] plenty of water and grass no wood 2 m  
dow it and camp plenty of wood water and grass and curants to  
make pys."*

Peter L. Bransetter, July 15, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2c, 3a, 3b, 3d, 3e, 3f, 3h, 3i, 4c

Ownership: Private - Maggie Creek Ranch. In NDOT right - of- way.

### 9. Hot Hole

Nominal Group Score: 3

Resource Description:

Hot Hole (a.k.a. Chicken Soup) Spring. Not actually on the Trail, but some references by emigrants visiting the area. Much of the history associated with this site is post Trail. This site is on the way to South Fork Canyon. TW marker. Because the Hot Hole is a local feature associated with emigrant journals and may be part of a "river walk" experience someday, it may have additional future use.

*"We reached the 'Hot Springs.' They are situate on the left side of  
the river ... on its immediate bank ...there was a large lake imme-  
diately over the bluffs, the waters of which were equally as hot."*

Amos Steck, August 20, 1849

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2a, 4i, 4j, 4k, 5f

Ownership: Elko City property. Future development of the site is part of the Humboldt Area River Project

### 10. South Fork Canyon Overlook

Nominal Group Score: 4

Resource Description:

Dead end road overlooking the canyon is accessed from bladed county road. "Aerial" view of the Hastings Cutoff, and Humboldt River Valley. Several alternative sites are possible. Good place to give visitors a feel for the canyon, the troubles encountered by Hastings Cutoff travelers, the Donner Party

story, and entice people to explore further into the canyon or further along the Hastings Cutoff.

*"We have traveled in this canion all day and onley come ten miles we have traveled in the creek half the time I believe or more and some of the banks ware vary steepe the water is vary clear we found plenty of good wood here and grass in a bundance and some fissh ... got out of the canion and camped."*

Sarah Davis, September 14, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2a, 2c, 2d, 2f, 5f, 6c, 6d  
Ownership: Public? Access road would need to be bladed and turn-around improved.

## 11. Osino Hill near Rydon

Nominal Group Score: 0

Resource Description:

Trail traces visible. Long access route development needed, which would pass through housing area. No key trail stories to interpret other than the emigrants' desire to avoid the canyon.

*"We have to cross hills along here to avoid bends in the river & also cannons."*

James Pritchard, July 14, 1849

Potential Theme Interpretation - 4d, 4g Public. 1.5 miles of private lands need to be crossed to access the site.

Ownership: Public- 1.5 miles of private lands need to be crossed to access the site.

## 12. KOA Campground

Nominal Group Score: 1

Resource Description:

Former emigrant camp site is located near the current KOA campground. Opportunity to interpret aspects of camping for the night along the Trail.

RECOMMENDATIONS

*"This encampment was again upon said Mary's River. This river I think has entirely a wrong name. Instead of Mary, it should be called "The Demon's Alkali" for in reality the water is so strongly impregnated with this that it will eat up leather, directly. In places you can obtain the pure lye, sufficiently strong to make soap."*

William Riley Franklin, June 29, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation - 4l, 5a, 5b, 5c

Ownership: Private?

**13. Halleck Exit #321**

Nominal Group Score: 9

Resource Description:

Existing historic marker for Fort Halleck here. Actual Fort was located 20 miles south. Trail passed close to this location. This is the exit to Hwy. 229, which leads over Secret Pass and into Ruby Valley. Good place to interpret Shoshone, early trappers and explorers, and pack strings that used the pass. A Chinese camp was located in this area TW marker at Halleck Post Office.

*"...we encamped this being the point whare Mr Freemant intersected the wagon Trail last fall [actually Lt. Talbot's party] on his way to california and Mr Hastings our pilot was anxious to try this rout [via Secret Pass] but my beleef is that it [is] verry little nearer and not so good a road as that by fort Hall [main California Trail via Raft River]*

James Clyman, May 21, 1846

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1b, 1c, 1g, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2f, 3a, 3c, 3f, 4c, 4d, 6f

Ownership: Private - In NDOT right-of-way.

**14.1000 Springs at Winecup Ranch**

Nominal Group Score: 4

Resource Description:

Existing BLM kiosk on Back Country Byway that could be expanded. This is the entrance to the Byway and an opportunity for visitors to explore further along the Trail. Major camping area for emigrants. Hot and cold springs. TW marker 300 yards to south.

*"We... came to springs that were boiling hot. Only five feet from them was another as cold as ice. Here were men engaged in washing their clothing."*

Margaret Frink, July 21, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation - 4a, 4b, 4i

Ownership: Private

### 15. Highway 93 at Willow Creek

Nominal Group Score: 10

Resource Description:

Key junction for the two major branches of the Trail that re-join near Deeth. Good ruts. Good views of Bishop Creek Canyon; East Humboldt Range; route to Humboldt Wells. Opportunity for visitors to explore further east and go to the trail junction. Potential to interpret how the Trail is identified today. TW marker one mile east.

*"After the crossing the ridge the road forks, which our Mormom guide book does not mention. After much conjecture as to the meaning of it, we took the left hand road by chance [to Humboldt Wells]. And found the next day, after joining some that took the other road, that we had much the best of it. The roads come together in about 20 miles, but the right they describe as being the worst they had travelled, crossing a rocky branch 9 times, and upsetting one wagon [in Bishop Canyon]"*

James F. Wilkins, August 20, 1849

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2b, 2d, 4f, 4h, 5g, 6g

Ownership: Private - In NDOT right-of-way.

## 16. Bishop Creek Canyon

Nominal Group Score: 7

Resource Description:

Paved road intersects Trail. Original route for party led by Joseph Walker in 1843. Bishop Creek Cutoff was the most used route. Visitors could explore further east in the canyon, or stop at nearby ghost town of Metropolis. TW marker.

*"Kanyon Creek [Bishop Creek] extends along our route all day, occasionally touching it sufficiently to furnish us most of the time with good water."*

James Shepherd, July 15, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1c, 1d, 2d, 6h

Ownership: Private.

## 17. Radar Road

Nominal Group Score: 6

Resource Description:

Great overlook of Humboldt River Valley towards Elko and Humboldt Wells. Site is in the Trail (class 2 ruts). Interpretation here could focus on reaching the Humboldt Highroad. TW marker.

*"We had to descend a bad hill to get down to the creek, where we nooned near some well springs."*

Byron McKinstry, August 10, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2b, 2e, 3c, 6a thru f

Ownership: Private.

## 18. Colony Site

Nominal Group Score: 7

Resource Description:

On old Hwy. 40 overlooking Humboldt Wells. Interpretation here could focus on the importance of Humboldt Wells springs, major camping site, and the importance of the area to Native Americans.

*"Left the valley, sweeping round to the right, and crossed a flat sage ridge and came into the valley again which had now a small creek in it."*

Elijah Howell, August 6, 1849

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1f, 1g, 1h, 2f, 4h, 4m

Ownership: Private.

### 19. West Wells

Nominal Group Score: 5

Resource Description:

Great Trail ruts (class 1) parallel to the old Central Pacific Railroad. Access by driving along CPRR bed. Interpretation could include the coming of the railroad, marking the end of wagon travels to reach California.

*"This afternoon we ascend and descend a hill 2 miles across & cross a slough that aids in forming Humboldt River & moved down a tributary of the Humboldt for 8 miles & camped. On our left ranges along the Humboldt Mountains, the summits of which are covered with snow."*

James G. Shields, July 16, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation - 4g, 4h, 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d, 6e

Ownership: Public?

### 20. Silver Zone Pass-Shafter Exit #387

Nominal Group Score: 10

Resource Description:

Good site to give overview of the Hastings Cutoff (Donner Party route). Much to interpret here, including the Bidwell-

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Bartleson party abandoning wagons at Johnson Ranch, Mad Woman Spring, Flowery Pass, and Little Lakes Pass. This is a place to invite people to travel further south or east to take the trail to Pilot Peak.

*"...since ten this morning is vary colde but the air crisp and clear we are here right in a large canion [Silver Zone Pass] barely enuf of rume for the wagons to pass each other and vary ruff roads and we starte on in a few minets we have now started on and found grass in to miles and stoped to grase our catle we have a vary dusty roads we have now traveled twelve miles [to Big Springs]"*

Sarah Davis, September 1, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2b, 2d, 2e, 3j, 4c, 4d, 4g, 6f

Ownership: Public- In NDOT right-of-way. Big area that can be developed for parking.

### 21. Warm Springs Ranch

Nominal Group Score: 9

Resource Description:

Hastings Cutoff crosses Hwy. 93 here (south of the ranch). TW marker. Good vista back toward Spruce Ridge, Flowery Lake Pass, and Little Lakes Pass. Also a good view of the direction the emigrants were headed toward Ruby Valley. Opportunity to interpret route over East Humboldt Range used by pack trains and early explorers. Opportunity for people to walk from here to Site 22 (about 3 miles).

*"We found a spring at the foot of these mountains, and to the extent that the water moistened the ground, a scanty supply of grass. Of sage there was no lack."*

Heinrich Lienhard, August 29, 1846

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1h, 2b, 2c, 4c, 4f, 6b, 6c, 6f

Ownership: Public- In NDOT right-of-way. A pullout will need to be developed here.

## 22. Ruby Valley Pass

Nominal Group Score: 4

Resource Description:

Hastings Cutoff crosses Hwy. 229. Good ruts nearby for exploring and hiking and getting a feel for the Trail experience. Great view to the east to see where the Trail came through Spruce Point and Flowery Pass. Visitors could hike 3 miles to Site #21. TW marker.

*"On August 30 we took up our journey again, starting off in a southwesterly direction. The low place where we crossed the mountains was rather steep. The [Ruby] valley lying before us was again broad, in most respects resembling those crossed earlier. Our road during the day proceeded in a southwesterly direction across this flat valley; the mountains [Ruby Mountains] we were approaching rose from it high and precipitous."*

Heinrich Lienhard, August 30, 1846

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2f, 4d, 5c, 5e, 5i

Ownership: Public- Access road will need to be improved (bladed) and a turnaround area built.

## 23. CCC Road

Nominal Group Score: 2

Resource Description:

Close to paved roads. Key site to interpret the Hastings Cutoff, Ruby Mountains, pack trails, etc. Good Trail ruts and opportunity for visitors to walk along the Trail. Two-track road parallel to Trail would allow others to pick up hikers to the west. Harrison Pass, Secret Pass, and Overland Pass visible from here. Potential to interpret Native American connections to the area, including the Treaty of Ruby Valley. TW marker.

*Sample of Shoshone oral history supplied by Evelyn Temoke - Roche: Along the CCC road adjacent to the road, a mineral spring will be found where the Shoshone drank the water to survive. The spring is named "medicine springs" because of its medical powers of healing. The emigrants were introduced to these waters by the*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

*Shoshone people for drinking purposes and other reasons. The settlers were also introduced to the Shoshone staple food "wada" (rice grass). The settlers were asking for water and because the Shoshone did not speak English they interpreted the water for wada. Can you imagine the surprise of the settlers when they were given "wada" gravy instead of water.*

*"Wada Duca" is also the name of the Shoshone people of Ruby Valley. We are so named because we are rice grass seed eaters. The Shoshone people of Nevada all had names for the different clans.*

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e, 1g, 2c, 4c, 4d, 4l, 5g

Ownership: Public-Good access on graded/gravel road.

### 24. Sulphur Hot Springs

Nominal Group Score: 0

Resource Description:

Springs not accessible, but may be possible to develop a trail. Good view of Hastings Cutoff. Steam rises off the springs in fall, winter, and spring. Potential to interpret Western Shoshone connection to the site. TW marker.

*Sample of Shoshone oral history supplied by Evelyn Temoke - Roche: These Sulphur Hot Springs were used by the Shoshone for soaking away their ailments. These Sulphur Springs were also used in the winter for heating the brush homes of the Shoshone Elders who were too feeble to migrate to the warmer foothill areas for winter.*

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1d, 1g, 1h, 4f, 4i, 4j

Ownership: Private - County road provides good access to viewpoint. Turnout would need to be developed.

### 25. Wines Ranch

Nominal Group Score: 0

Resource Description:

Trail follows county road at this point. Potential to interpret Western Shoshone connections to the area. TW marker.

*"...we traveled southward down this valley, not, however, making a very long day's journey. The road led for the most part over a pretty, grassy, gradually flattening plain. Several large springs made fertile a considerable area; nevertheless, the large springs soon exhausted themselves after reaching the flat valley, so that close by we could see another waste of barren earth."*

Heinrich Lienhard, September 2, 1846

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1a, 1b, 1c, 1h

Ownership: Private-County road provides good access to viewpoint. Turnout would need to be developed.

## 26. Cave Creek

Nominal Group Score: 4

Resource Description:

Located near Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Headquarters. Cave Creek is noted in emigrant journals. A trail exists along Cave Creek where the water can be seen gushing out of the rock. Potential partnership with Ruby Lake NWR to interpret sites. Visitors could continue south and cross Overland Pass (high clearance vehicles), or spend time exploring the Refuge, and visiting the Gallagher Fish Hatchery. TW marker.

*"Sat 19 this day mad[e] in Mineral Vally 16 and encamped at a large Spring breaking out of from the and part of large Rock Stream la[r]ge enough to turn one pr [pair] Stone passed in the evening about 10 Spring Branches Springs Rising about 300 Yds above where we Crossed."*

James Reed, September 19, 1846

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1d, 1f, 4j, 4k

Ownership: Public (NWR). A trailhead from the parking lot to the Cave Creek trail needs to be developed for visitor safety.

## 27. East Harrison Pass

Nominal Group Score: 5

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Resource Description:

The Bidwell-Bartleson pack train (1841), who abandoned their wagons at Big Springs, and Fremont's expedition are notables who crossed here. Visitors could continue over Harrison Pass west to Huntington Creek and Jiggs, or south following the Hastings Cutoff to Ruby Valley Lake NWR and Overland Pass, looping around the Ruby Mountains to Huntington Creek, and then north toward Jiggs. TW marker with plaques for both Fremont's route and the Hastings Cutoff.

*"This morning the Native Americans all left us. We traveled westward (and) crossed the mountain on our right [Harrison Pass]. Traveled about 20 miles today and camped on the bank of small creek, the head of the south branch of Marys river. Here we caught a few small trout."*

James John, September 23, 1841

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2c, 2f, 5f, 6f

Ownership: Public (USFS). Intersection with two Elko County roads and within right-of-way. Small pullout would be needed.

## 28. Huntington Valley

Nominal Group Score: 2

### Resource Description:

There are several potential interpretive sites up and down the Huntington Valley. Fremont named the Humboldt River when his expedition hit the South Fork Humboldt near here. There are several TW markers.

*"Sunday morning as it was we continued our journey, our leading down the little creek in an almost due North direction. After traveling eight or ten miles we came to where the water sank, but the grass continued. We had not gone much farther before we met several Native Americans ... hunting hares. They appeared very friendly and each one would come up and shake hands, at the same time asking for some present."*

Madison Berryman Moorman, August 11, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1e, 5a, 5d, 6g

Ownership: Public (TW marker near Cord Ranch). Other sites could be public or private.

### 29. South Fork Dam

Nominal Group Score: 0

Resource Description:

A six-sided interpretive panel is to be erected in 2002 that discusses a variety of resources. One panel interprets the Hastings Cutoff, and visitors can look from the dam to view the trail. People also can hike from the dam along the Trail, parallel to the South Fork Humboldt River. Another panel interprets Native American use of the canyon. This site would primarily be visited by people already enjoying the State Park. TW marker is located about a half mile from the dam.

*"Today we traveled about 16 miles down the creek through a deep valley with high cliffs on each side [South Fork of the Humboldt River Canyon]. We found the banks dry today for about 8 miles and camped on its bank this evening.*

James John, September 25, 1841

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2b, 3a, 4f, 6f, 6g

Ownership: Public (South Fork State Park). Access is through the park to a large parking area, and then a ¼ mile walk to the interpretive site.

### 30. Rock Springs

Nominal Group Score: 3

Resource Description:

Located midway on the California Trail Backcountry Byway. This was the first spring emigrants encountered after leaving Goose Creek. The spring emerges from under a rock that has been blasted and/or excavated by post-trail mining operations. A freighting line ran through here that connected Toano (CPR freighting station about 50 miles to the south) with the southern Idaho area. A general store was located at Rock Springs - only

## RECOMMENDATIONS

the ruins of the root cellar remain. A ranch also was located here, but only an old hay derrick and some large willow trees remain.

*"We passed on over a ...barren road...to the Rock Springs. The springs rises on the right from under a ledge of rock at the point of a mountain ridge... it is generally crowded with footmen, horses, cattle & wagons."*

A.R. Burbank, August 7, 1849

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1e, 1f, 4d, 5a, 6i, 6e

Ownership: Private - The BLM would eventually like to acquire the entire 80 acres of this site and develop the area as a primitive campground and picnic area.

### 31. Emigrant Springs

Nominal Group Score: 0

Resource Description:

Approximately five miles south of Rock Springs and slightly off the Main Trail. The site is another watering hole with good water.

*"...after a drive of seven miles across a barren lawn of sage. Here we expected to find feed for the teams but were obliged to drive till three o'clock down the valley of a spring stream [Emigrant Spring], where we found poor feed."*

William Swain, August 29, 1849

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1d, 2e, 4m

Ownership: Private.

### 32. Pilot Peak

Nominal Group Score: 0

Resource Description:

This 10,700-foot peak, named by John C. Fremont, served as a landmark to all emigrant parties moving west in this part of the

country. From the top of the peak, it is possible to get an overview of the Hastings Cutoff from the Utah border to Silver Zone Pass. It also offers a good view of the salt flats. This was the route taken by Bidwell-Bartleson (1841), Fremont (1845), Bryant-Russell and the Donner Party (1846), and others.

*"...For six or eight miles from the point we struck at the desert are plenty of grass and water; after which we entered an arid sand region - destitute of water and producing nothing in the way of vegetation but hardy clusters of dwarfish sage. - We travelled on, with no light but that of the stars to show us our road, which was very difficult to keep in this sandy region, for about fifteen miles which took us till near 11 o'clock."*

Madison Berryman Moorman, August 4, 1850

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2a, 2c, 2d, 3i, 4b, 4f, 4j

Ownership: Public.

### 33. Bidwell Pass

Nominal Group Score: (o)

Resource Description:

Although not officially named, the Bidwell-Bartleson party was the first emigrant company to come through this pass. In 1846, Edwin Bryant discovered the Bidwell-Bartleson wagon tracks and followed them for two to three miles. A nice section of the trail that remains can still be found near the Wendover-to-Lucin Road, about one mile east of Bidwell Pass, heading west.

*"Following this old trail some two or three miles, we left it on the right and crossed some low and totally barren hills, [Bidwell Pass] which appear to have been thrown up by the action of volcanic fires at no very remote period of geological history. They are composed of a white, imponderous earth, resembling ashes, intermingled with fragments of scoria, resembling the cinders from an iron-foundry, or a blacksmith's furnace."*

Edwin Bryant, 1846

Potential Theme Interpretation - 2b, 2c, 4g

Ownership: ?

### 34. Fort Ruby

Nominal Group Score: (New)

Resource Description:

Located at the south end of Ruby Valley, this is where the Hastings Cutoff of the California Trail and Pony Express Trail meet and overlap for about six miles before separating again. Fort Ruby, established in 1862, was the first military outpost in the northeastern portion of the Nevada Territory. A Pony Express station was also located near this site (the reconstructed station is located at the NE Nevada Museum in Elko). Fort Ruby was abandoned in 1869, and all property and troops moved to Fort Halleck (established 1867).

*Sample of Shoshone oral history supplied by Evelyn Temoke-Roche: South of Cave Creek was Fort Ruby where the 1863 Treaty of Ruby Valley was signed. Also seen is a large boulder, along the right side of the road, which had been rolled onto the settler's wagon train. This was after the Shoshone people realized that the "dybo" were not going to stop coming and that they were going to destroy the life that the Shoshone's were accustomed to.*

Potential Theme Interpretation - 1a, 1e, 1g, 2, 3f

Ownership: Public (NWR).

## INTERPRETIVE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL TRAIL WAYSIDES

It is recommended that the wayside exhibits themselves be of a low-profile design, allowing visitors to read the message, then look up to see the landscape. Vertical formats can block the view of what is being interpreted. All of the wayside exhibits developed for the trail-related sites should be of a common design and perhaps include an identifying logo. Each wayside exhibit also should make a tie in with the California National Historical Trail Interpretive Center. Some visitors may learn about the trail sites by visiting the interpretive center first; others may first discover one of the trail sites and learn about the center. The key wayside exhibits also need to orient visitors to their location on the trail.

A "Wayside Exhibit Proposal" is recommended to further study the potential of each site. Next, a formal "Wayside Exhibit Plan" needs to be developed that will produce the actual text and graphics for each exhib-

it. Both of these documents need to be developed by a professional wayside exhibit planner and designer. Design of the actual exhibits may also require an illustrator. It may be possible to use the person who developed the illustrations for City of Rocks.

A landscape architect should be employed to work with the installation of the wayside exhibits. This person can evaluate each site and develop plans for exhibit installation, site improvements, safety, and accessibility.

It also may be possible to group some of the trail sites into one or more linear or loop tour routes. In these cases, the wayside exhibits could be supplemented with a self-guiding tour booklet and/or an audio tour. If developed, these tour options will need to be advertised at the interpretive center, in the lobby, in the exhibit area, and in the bookstore. With many newer vehicles' having CD players, both CD and audiocassette formats should be available. CD versions offer the potential for people to visit the sites in any order they choose, quickly accessing appropriate audio tracks.

It also is strongly recommended that in addition to the trail sites listed above, the BLM will encourage partnerships with communities, agencies, and individuals west of the project area in Nevada to develop additional interpretive sites. Some of the specific sites mentioned during this planning process include:

- Button Point
- Winnemucca
- The Applegate Trail
- Rye Patch Dam Site
- Lovelock Courthouse, (historic museum, back country byway kiosk, and Lovelock Cave interpretive site overlooking Humboldt Sink)
- Trinity Rest Stop (Carson Trail)
- Fernley
- Mogul or Birdseye
- Ragtown (Carson River)
- Fort Churchill
- Dayton
- Carson City
- Mormon Station at Genoa

## PLANNING TEAM

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Gerald Dixon	Native American Coordinator, BLM, Elko, NV
Steve Dondero	Cultural/Recreational Team Lead, BLM Elko, NV
Ralph Gamboa	Humboldt Highroads, Elko, NV
Mary Gibson	Elko County Library & Western Shoshone, Elko, NV
Charles Greenhaw	Writer, Elko, NV
Rich Helman	Wayside Exhibit Planner, Harpers Ferry Center, NPS, WV
Gene Kaplan	Wells, NV
Peg Kaplan	Wells, NV
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Lois Whitney	Western Shoshone, Elko, NV

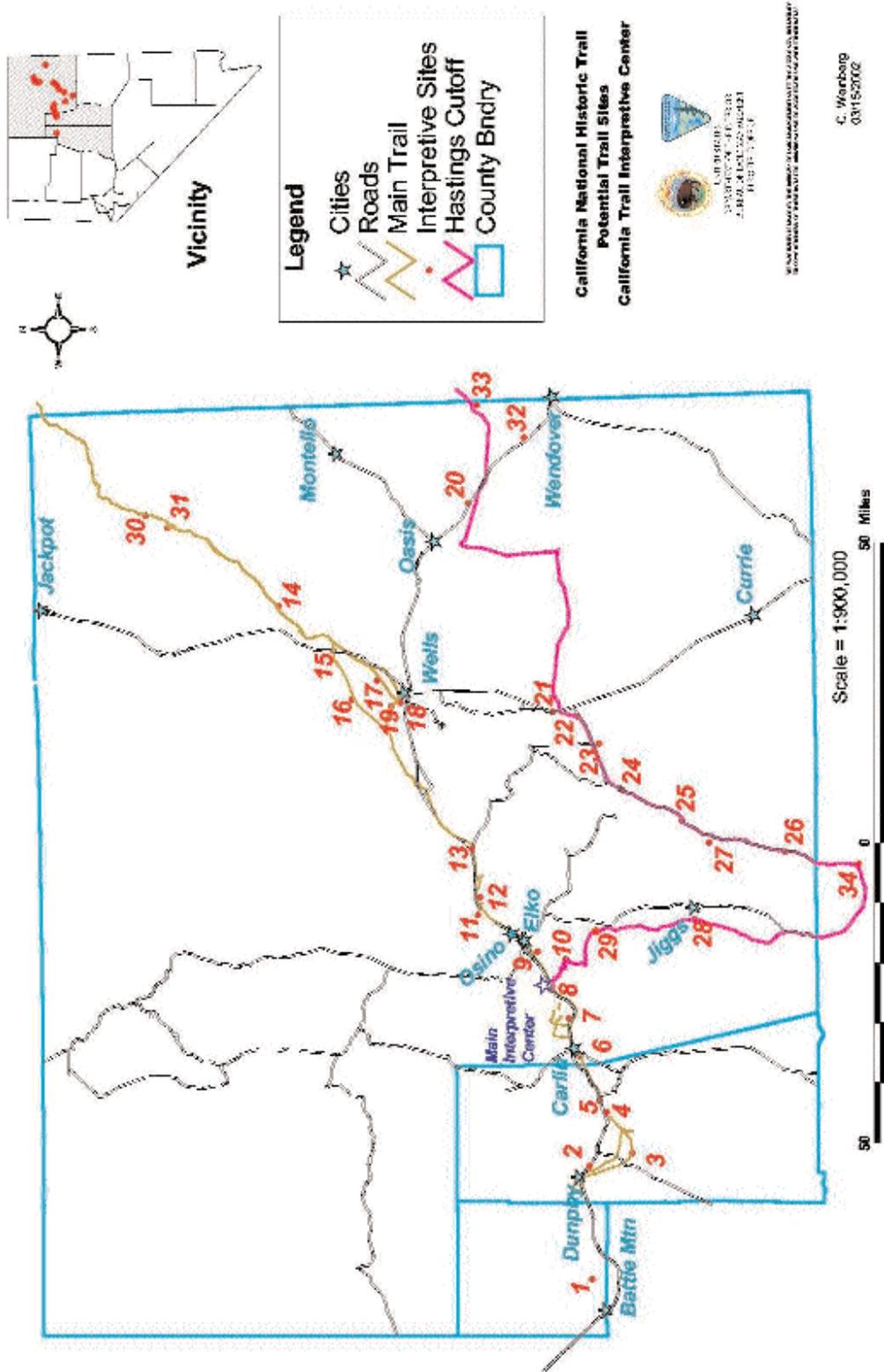


# APPENDIX A

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## Map of Project Area & Potential Trail Interpretive Sites



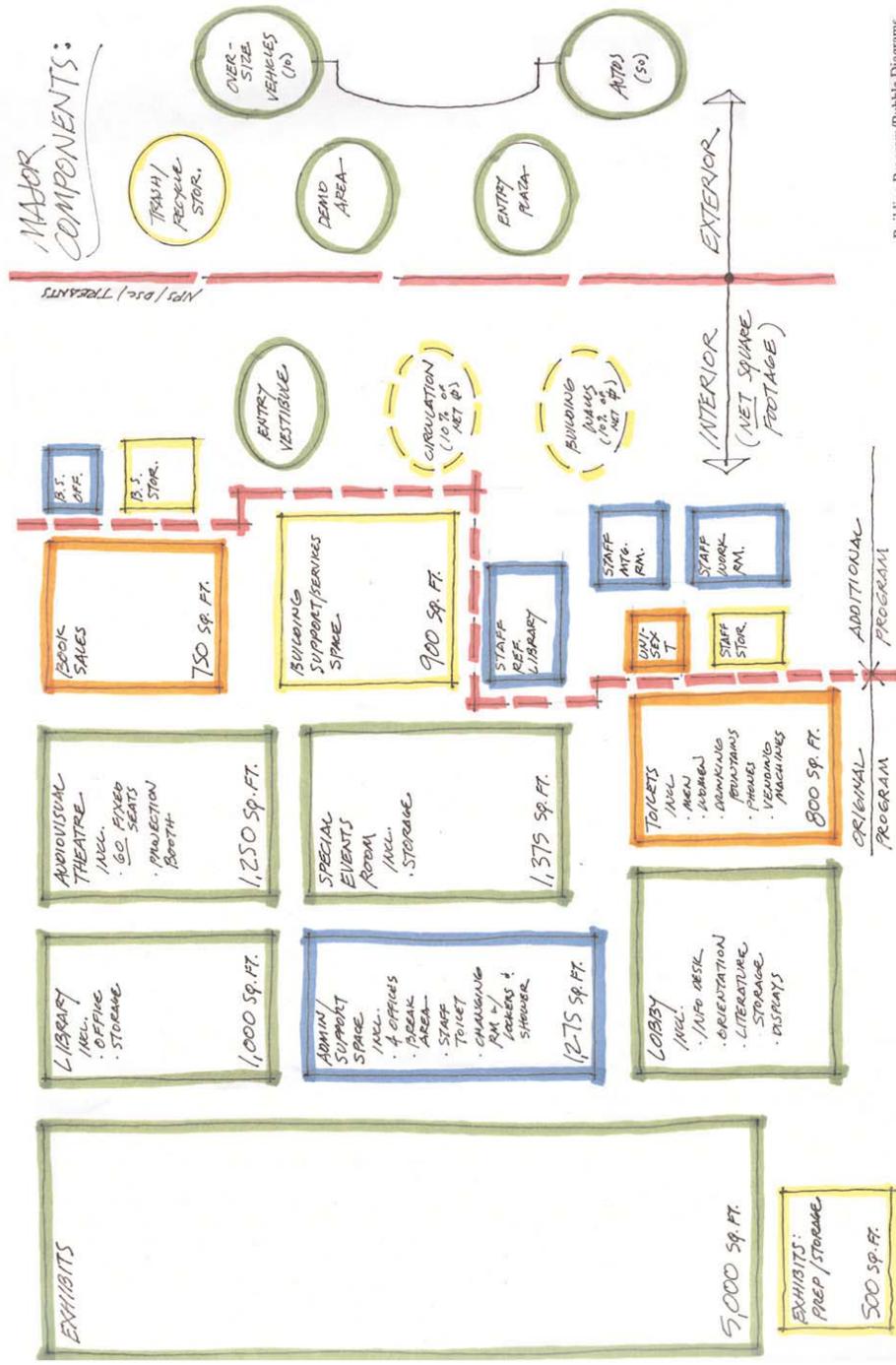


# APPENDIX B

## California National Historic Trail Interpretive Center Architectural Concepts

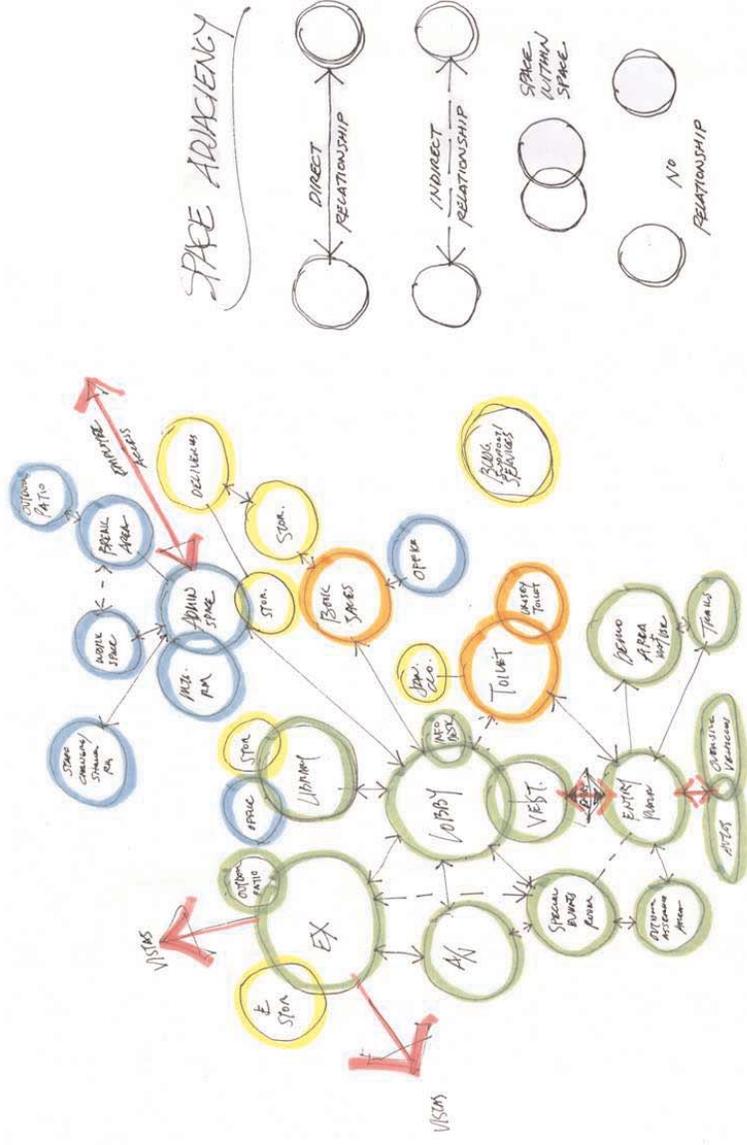






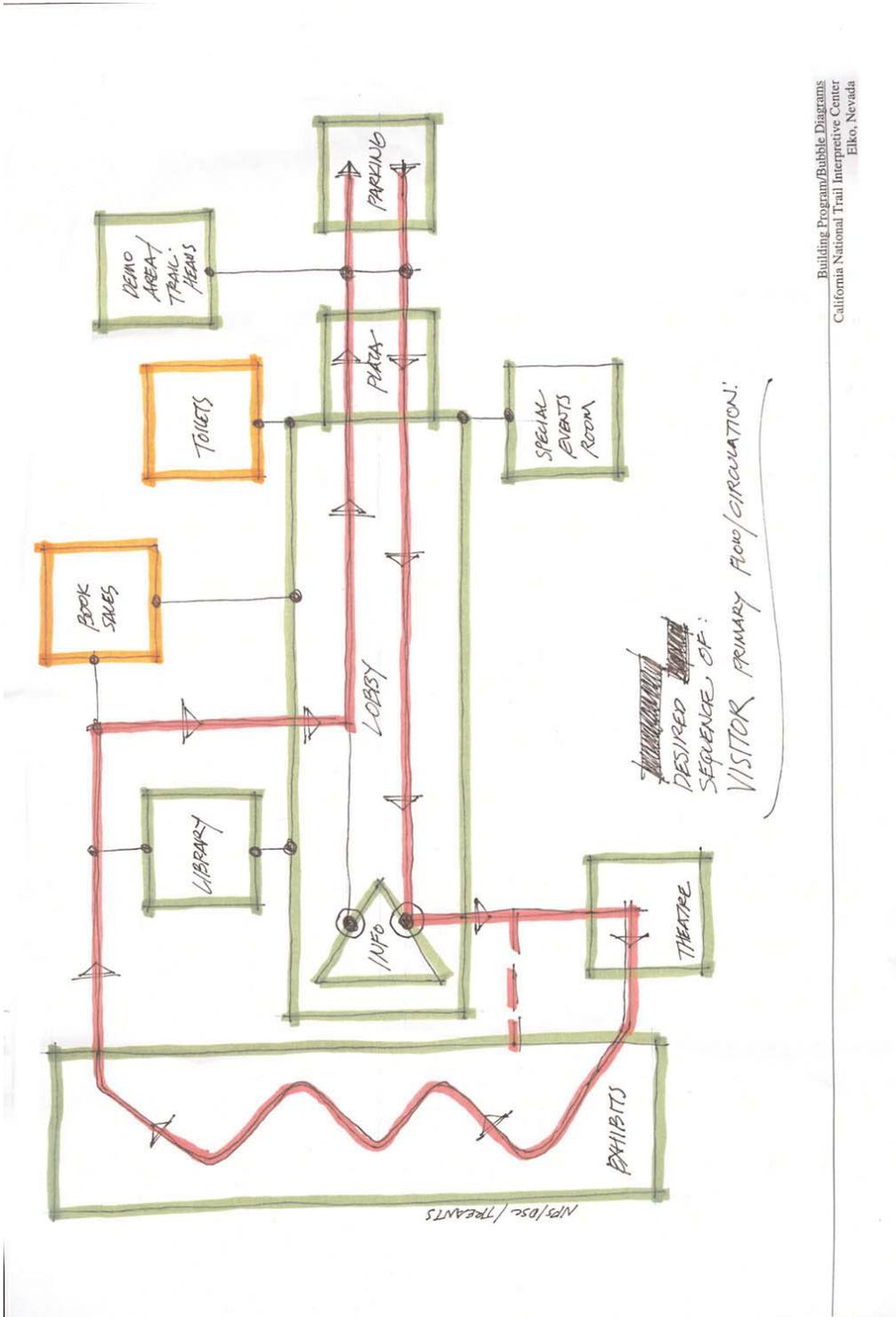
Building Program/Bubble Diagrams  
California National Trail Interpretive Center  
Elko, Nevada





NDS/DSC/TREATS  
 Building Program/Bubble Diagrams  
 California National Trail Interpretive Center  
 Elko, Nevada





Building Program/Bubble Diagrams  
California National Trail Interpretive Center  
Elko, Nevada



# APPENDIX C

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## Western Shoshone History



There was some very helpful information in the book: **The Road On Which We Came, a History of the Western Shoshone** by Stephen J. Crum (who is a Western Shoshone and had permission and assistance from the tribe to publish this history and agree on its authenticity). Some of the history was taken from another tribal history publication produced in the 1970s called **Newe: A Western Shoshone History** published by the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada. Most of the newer tribal history focuses on the 20th century and tribal life on the reservations after the 1880s. But there was some valuable insights into how the Shoshone were effected by early emigrant groups and gold seekers in 1849 and later. There is a fair amount of the tribal history that focuses on the extended family lifestyles of the Newe, seasonal food gathering, songs, stories, dances and other rituals or leisure activities. This information would be very helpful in assisting visitors to the center and some trail sites understand the Shoshones' complex and well established culture and how it was affected by early trappers, explorers, and the stream of emigrants through the middle of Shoshone territory. The following are some major points brought out in the book. Perhaps some these with concurrence of the tribe could be incorporated into exhibit planning.

### The Newe

- 1) The origin of the word "Shoshone" is a mystery to the Newe. Newe is the Shoshone word for "the people." The label "Shoshone" was likely coined by Euro-American trappers or traders who encountered the Shoshone in the 1830s or early 1840s. The name stuck however and many modern Newe refer to themselves as Shoshone.
- 2) The Western Shoshone occupied a large area from southern Idaho across eastern and central Nevada south to Death Valley California.
- 3) The Newe were placed in their Homeland by the Creator, Pia Sokopia (Earth Mother). Coyote was responsible for carrying the Newe across the Great Basin in a basket, periodically opening the basket out of curiosity which is when the beings jumped out and peopled the area in small groups.
- 4) The Newe lived in extended family groups which included first cousins and grandparents. These small bands or groups were separated into valleys or areas large enough to sustain themselves with mostly local food sources but readily traded or shared resources with other bands. Their harvest and hunting areas often overlapped. The bands would gather together at certain times of the year like the pine nut harvest to sing, dance and celebrate the harvest or event, however they did not have a central organization and had no need for one.

5) Family groups had different names for themselves usually named for a local food resource or a geographic place. Various types of game were hunted to supplement their diet of pine nuts, berries, edible roots, and other collected food. The Newe had a healthy diet, and moved around inside the boundaries of their valley or area to be closer to food resources, in such, they didn't occupy permanent houses but used temporary structures and more durable winter structures.

6) The Newe were and are very spiritual people, guided by medicine men and women. These medicine people led healing ceremonies and provided spiritual guidance for their harvests, prayers, and other activities. Newe medicine people had extensive knowledge of pharmaceutical plants and healing concoctions.

7) The Newe did not have a written language but relied on oral tradition to pass along stories, histories, and other tribal culture and tradition. Newe tradition was passed down during winter storytelling. Stories included real events, humor, entertainment, and taught proper behavior to children. The newe had an extensive collection of stories, songs, and other cultural/societal tradition.

8) The Newe were basket makers. They used baskets (instead of pots) for all kinds of receptacles.

9) The Newe kept cordial relations with neighboring tribes, e.g., the Northern Piutes

### **The affects of Euro-Americans on the Newe**

1) Although Spain and later Mexico claimed the Great Basin, there was little if any effect or contact with the Newe until trappers and traders entered the Great Basin in the 1820s. Neither the Spanish or Mexican people tried to settle this area.

2) Jedediah Smith was the first known Anglo to enter the territory and encounter the Newe. His account of the Newe digging for roots and living very simply may have given root to the perception of the Newe as "diggers" described as "most miserable." Smith's contact had apparently little effect on the Newe.

3) Peter Skene Ogden's expedition in 1828-29 certainly had some impact on the Newe. Ogden's trappers competing with the British settled into the area to trap out the beaver. The Newe depended on the beaver for winter clothing, and Ogden's horses and stock depleted some of the scarce forage in the area.

4) Ogden's impact on the Newe was apparent from the record of the Walker expedition in 1833. Joseph Reddeford Walker entered the area and found it devoid of beaver. Some of Walker's men killed about 1/2 dozen or more Newe, which led to deep dislike and suspicion of these white intruders.

5) The 1841 Bidwell-Bartleson Party was one of the earliest emigrant groups to pass through the Newe territory. These emigrants were passing through and purchased some food from the Newe, who were friendly to these first groups of emigrants as they were not perceived as a threat.

6) By the mid to late 1840s, emigrant groups were having a great impact on the Newe as their stock had severely depleted the forage and vegetation along the Humboldt River. The Newe had to go farther in search of food and subsist on food sources not sought after or impacted by the emigrants. By this time there were major cultural changes to the Newe way of life as some of the Newe acquired horses, secured guns, and other items foreign to their culture. The life ways and culture of the Newe were changing drastically. The Newe adapted the best they could to these changes.

7) The mass hysteria of the gold rush in 1849 brought a different type of emigrant. Fewer families and mostly men, some that were quite rowdy and hostile to the native people they encountered. Violent encounters increased and some robbers and villains posed as Native Americans to rob emigrants. The Newe began defending their homeland by the early 1850s as conflicts increased.

8) In the late 1850s and early 1860s, Mormon and non-Mormon settlers began the first small settlements in Nevada Territory further impacting the Newe.

9) A treaty with the Newe was proposed in 1855 but not approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. However, Indian agents tried to coerce the Newe into reservations and teach them to farm, a venture that was mostly unsuccessful at first but later changed the way of life for the Newe from primarily gatherers to farmers.

10) By the early 1860s, encounters between Native Americans and settlers had led to the construction of a Fort (Fort Halleck) in Ruby Valley and more attempts at defining reservations as the pressure of white settlers and land claims further ate away at traditional Newe lands.

ii) Although the affects of emigration and settlement along the California Trail for three decades had severe and permanent impacts, the Newe continued many of their traditional lifestyles, ceremonies, and cultural/spiritual beliefs.

# APPENDIX D

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## NPS Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for Interpretive Media



# Special Populations: Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for Interpretive Media

National Park Service  
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**[These guidelines (pages 71-83) were prepared by the National Park Service, but are fully acceptable by the Bureau of Land Management for this project].**

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This document is a guide for promoting full access to interpretive media to ensure that people with physical and mental disabilities have access to the same information necessary for safe and meaningful visits to National Parks. Just as the needs and abilities of individuals cannot be reduced to simple statements, it is impossible to construct guidelines for interpretive media that can apply to every situation in the National Park System.

These guidelines define a high level of programmatic access which can be met in most situations. They articulate key areas of concern and note generally accepted solutions. Due to the diversity of park resources and the variety of interpretive situations, flexibility and versatility are important.

Each interpretive medium contributes to the total park program. All media have inherent strengths and weaknesses, and it is our intent to capitalize on their strengths and provide alternatives where they are deficient. It should also be understood that any interpretive medium is just one component of the overall park experience. In some instances, especially with regard to learning disabilities, personal services, that is one-on-one interaction, may be the most appropriate and versatile interpretive approach.

In the final analysis, interpretive design is subjective, and dependent on aesthetic considerations as well as the particular characteristics and resources available for a specific program. Success or failure should be evaluated by examining all interpretive offerings of a park. Due to the unique characteristics of each situation, parks should be evaluated on a case by case basis. Nonetheless, the goal is to fully comply with NPS policy:

**"...To provide the highest level of accessibility possible and feasible for persons with visual, hearing, mobility, and mental impairments, consistent with the obligation to conserve park resources and preserve the quality of the park experience for everyone."**

NPS Special Directive 83-3, Accessibility for Disabled Persons

### **Audiovisual Programs**

Audiovisual programs include video programs, and audio and interactive programs. As a matter of policy, all audiovisual programs produced by the Harpers Ferry Center will include some method of captioning. The Approach used will vary according to the conditions of the installation area and the media format used, and will be selected in consultation with the parks and regions.

The captioning method will be identified as early as possible in the planning process and will be presented in an integrated setting where possible. To the extent possible, visitors will be offered a choice in viewing captioned or uncaptioned versions, but in situations where a choice is not possible or feasible, a captioned version of all programs will be made available. Park management will decide on the most appropriate operational approach for the particular site.

### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Mobility Impairments**

1. The theater, auditorium, or viewing area should be accessible and free of architectural barriers, or alternative accommodations will be provided. UFAS 4.1.
2. Wheelchair locations will be provided according to ratios outlined in UFAS 4.1.2(18a).
3. Viewing heights and angles will be favorable for those in designated wheelchair locations.
4. In designing video or interactive components, control mechanisms will be placed in accessible location, usually between 9" and 48" from the ground and no more than 24" deep.

### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Visual Impairments**

Simultaneous audio description will be considered for installations where the equipment can be properly installed and maintained.

### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Hearing Impairments**

1. All audiovisual programs will be produced with appropriate captions.
2. Copies of scripts will be provided to the parks as a standard procedure.
3. Audio amplification and listening systems will be provided in accordance with UFAS 4.1.2(18b).

### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Learning Impairments**

1. Unnecessarily complex and confusing concepts will be avoided.
2. Graphic elements will be chosen to communicate without reliance on the verbal component.
3. Narration will be concise and free of unnecessary jargon and technical information.

## Exhibits

Numerous factors affect the design of exhibits, reflecting the unique circumstances of the specific space and the nature of the materials to be interpreted. It is clear that thoughtful, sensitive design can go a long way in producing exhibits that can be enjoyed by a broad range of people. Yet, due to the diversity of situations encountered, it is impossible to articulate guidelines that can be applied universally.

In some situations, the exhibit designer has little or no control over the space. Often exhibits are placed in areas ill suited for that purpose, they may incorporate large or unyielding specimens, may incorporate sensitive artifacts which require special environmental controls, and room decor or architectural features may dictate certain solutions. All in all, exhibit design is an art which defies simple description. However, one central concern is to communicate the message to the largest audience possible. Every reasonable effort will be made to eliminate any factors limiting communication through physical modification or by providing an alternate means of communication.

### Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Mobility Impairments

Note: The **Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)** is the standard followed by the National Park Service and is therefore the basis for the accessibility standards for exhibits, where applicable.

1. Height/position of labels: Body copy on vertical exhibit walls should be placed at between **36"** and **60"** from the floor.
2. Artifact Cases:
  - a. Maximum height of floor of artifact case display area shall be no higher than **30"** from the floor of the room. This includes vitrines that are recessed into an exhibit wall.
  - b. Artifact labels should be placed so as to be visible to a person within a **43"** to **51"** eye level. This includes mounting labels within the case at an angle to maximize its visibility to all viewers.
3. Touchable Exhibits: Touchable exhibits positioned horizontally should be placed no higher than **30"** from the floor. Also, if the exhibit is approachable only on one side, it should be no deeper than **31"**.
4. Railings/barriers: Railings around any horizontal model or exhibit element shall have a maximum height of **36"** from the floor.
5. Information desks: Information desks and sales counters shall include a section made to accommodate both a visitor in a wheelchair and an employee in a wheelchair working on the other side. A section of the desk/counter shall have the following dimensions:
  - a. Height from the floor to the top: **28** to **34** inches. (ADAAG 4.32.4)

- b. Minimum knee clearance space: **27" high, 30" wide** and **19" deep** of clearance underneath the desk is the minimum space required under ADAAG 4.32.3, but a space **30" high, 36" wide** and **24" deep** is recommended.
  - c. Width of top surface of section: at least **36 inches**. Additional space must be provided for any equipment such as a cash register.
  - d. Area underneath desk: Since both sides of the desk may have to accommodate a wheelchair, this area should be open all the way through to the other side. In addition, there should be no sharp or abrasive surfaces underneath the desk. The floor space behind the counter shall be free of obstructions.
6. Circulation Space:
- a. Passageways through exhibits shall be at least **36" wide**.
  - b. If an exhibit passageway reaches a dead-end, an area **60" by 78"** should be provided at the end for turning around.
  - c. Objects projecting from walls with their leading edges between **27"** and **80"** above the floor shall protrude no more than **4"** in passageways or aisles. Objects projecting from walls with their leading edges at or below **27"** above the floor can protrude any amount.
  - d. Freestanding objects mounted on posts or pylons may overhang a maximum of **12"** from **27"** to **80"** above the floor. (ADAAG 4.4.1)
  - e. Protruding objects shall not reduce the clear width of an accessible route to less than the minimum required amount. (ADAAG 4.4.1)
  - f. Passageways or other circulation spaces shall have a minimum clear head room of **80"**. For example, signage hanging from the ceiling must have at least **80"** from the floor to the bottom edge of the sign. (ADAAG 4.4.2)
7. Floors:
- a. Floors and ramps shall be stable, level, firm and slip-resistant.
  - b. Changes in level between **1/4"** and **1/2"** shall be beveled with a slope no greater than **1:2**. Changes in level greater than **1/2"** shall be accomplished by means of a ramp that complies with ADAAG 4.7 or 4.8. (ADAAG 4.5.2)
  - c. Carpet in exhibit areas shall comply with ADAAG 4.5.3 for pile height, texture, pad thickness, and trim.
8. Seating - Interactive Stations/Work Areas: The minimum knee space underneath a work desk is **27" high, 30" wide** and **19" deep**, with a clear floor space of at least **30" by 30"** in front. The top of the desk or work surface shall be between **28"** and **34"** from the floor. (ADAAG 4.32, Fig.45)

## Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Visual Impairments

1. Tactile models and other touchable exhibit items should be used whenever possible. Examples of touchable exhibit elements include relief maps, scale models, raised images of simple graphics, reproduction objects, and replaceable objects (such as natural history or geological specimens, cultural history items, etc.).
2. Typography - Readability of exhibit labels by visitors with various degrees of visual impairment shall be maximized by using the following guidelines:
  - a. Type size - **No** type in the exhibit shall be smaller than **24 point**.
  - b. Typeface - The most readable typefaces should be used whenever possible, particularly for body copy. They are: Times Roman, Palatino, Century, Helvetica and Universe.
  - c. Styles, Spacing - Text set in both caps and lower case is easier to read than all caps. Choose letter spacing and word spacing for maximum readability. Avoid too much italic type.
  - d. Line Length - Limit the line length for body copy to no more than **45 to 50 characters per line**.
  - e. Amount of Text - Each unit of body copy should have a maximum of **45-60 words**.
  - f. Margins - Flush left, ragged right margins are easiest to read.
3. Color:
  - a. Type/Background Contrast - Percentage of contrast between the type and the background should be a **minimum of 70%** .
  - b. Red/Green - Do not use red on green or green on red as the type/background color combination.
  - c. Do not place body copy on top of graphic images that impair readability.
4. Samples: During the design process, it is recommended that samples be made for review of all size, typeface and color combinations for labels in that exhibit.
5. Exhibit Lighting:
  - a. All labels shall receive sufficient, even light for good readability. Exhibit text in areas where light levels have been reduced for conservation purposes should have a minimum of 10 footcandles of illumination.
  - b. Harsh reflections and glare should be avoided.
  - c. The lighting system shall be flexible enough to allow adjustments on-site.

- d. Transitions between the floor and walls, columns or other structures should be made clearly visible. Finishes for vertical surfaces should contrast clearly with the floor finish. Floor circulation routes should have a minimum of 10 footcandles of illumination.
6. Signage: When permanent building signage is required as a part of an exhibit project, the ADAAG guidelines shall be consulted. Signs, which designate permanent rooms and spaces, shall comply with ADAAG 4.30.1, 4.30.4, 4.30.5, and 4.30.6. Other signs, which provide direction to or information about functional spaces of the building, shall comply with ADAAG 4.30.1, 4.30.2, 4.30.3, and 4.30.5. Note: When the International Symbol of Accessibility (wheelchair symbol) is used, **the word "Handicapped" shall not be used** beneath the symbol. Instead, use the word "Accessible".

#### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Hearing Impairments**

1. Information presented via audio formats will be duplicated in a visual medium, such as in the exhibit label copy or by captioning. All video programs incorporated into the exhibit, which contain audio, shall be open captioned.
2. Amplification systems and volume controls should be incorporated with audio equipment used individually by the visitor, such as audio handsets.
3. Information desks shall allow for Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDD) equipment.

#### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Learning Impairments**

1. The exhibits will present the main interpretive themes on a variety of levels of complexity, so people with varying abilities and interests can understand them.
2. The exhibits should avoid unnecessarily complex and confusing topics, technical terms, and unfamiliar expressions. Pronunciation aids should be provided where appropriate.
3. Graphic elements shall be used to communicate non-verbally.
4. The exhibits shall be a multi-sensory experience. Techniques to maximize the number of senses used in the exhibits should be encouraged.
5. Exhibit design shall use color and other creative approaches to facilitate comprehension of maps by visitors with directional impairments.

#### **Historic Furnishings**

Historically refurbished rooms offer the public a unique interpretive experience by placing visitors within historic spaces. Surrounded by historic artifacts visitors can feel the spaces "come alive" and relate more directly to the historic events or personalities commemorated by the park.

Accessibility is problematical in many NPS furnished sites because of the very nature of historic architecture. Buildings were erected with a functional point of view that is many times at odds with our modern views of accessibility.

The approach used to convey the experience of historically furnished spaces will vary from site to site. The goals, however, will remain the same, to give the public as rich an interpretive experience as possible given the nature of the structure.

#### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Mobility Impairments**

1. The exhibit space should be free of architectural barriers or a method of alternate accommodation should be provided, such as slide programs, videotaped tours, visual aids, dioramas, etc.
2. All pathways, aisles, and clearances shall (when possible) meet standards set forth in UFAS 4.3 to provide adequate clearance for wheelchair routes.
3. Ramps shall be as gradual as possible and not exceed a 1" rise in 12" run, and conform to UFAS 4.8.
4. Railings and room barriers will be constructed in such a way as to provide unobstructed viewing by persons in wheelchairs.
5. In the planning and design process, furnishing inaccessible areas, such as upper floors of historic buildings, will be discouraged unless essential for interpretation.
6. Lighting will be designed to reduce glare or reflections when viewed from a wheelchair.
7. Alternative methods of interpretation, such as audiovisual programs, audio description, photo albums, and personal services will be used in areas which present difficulty for visitors with physical impairments.

#### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Visual Impairments**

1. Exhibit typefaces will be selected for readability and legibility, and conform to good industry practice.
2. Audio description will be used to describe furnished rooms, where appropriate.
3. Windows will be treated with film to provide balanced light levels and minimize glare.
4. Where appropriate, visitor-controlled rheostat-type lighting will be provided to augment general room lighting.
5. Where appropriate and when proper clearance has been approved, surplus artifacts or reproductions will be utilized as "hands-on" tactile interpretive devices.

#### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Hearing Impairments**

1. Information about room interiors will be presented in a visual medium such as exhibit copy, text, pamphlets, etc.
2. Captions will be provided for all AV programs relating to historic furnishings.

### **Guidelines Affecting the Visitors with Learning Impairments**

1. Where appropriate, hands-on participatory elements geared to the level of visitor capabilities will be used.
2. Living history activities and demonstrations, which utilize the physical space as a method of providing multi-sensory experiences, will be encouraged.

### **Publications**

A variety of publications are offered to visitors, ranging from park folders, which provide an overview and orientation to a park, to more comprehensive handbooks. Each park folder should give a brief description of services available to visitors with disabilities, list significant barriers, and note the existence of TDD phone numbers, if available.

In addition, informal site bulletins are often produced to provide more specialized information about a specific site or topic. It is recommended that each park produce an easily updatable "Accessibility Site Bulletin" which could include detailed information about the specific programs, services, and opportunities available for visitors with disabilities and to describe barriers which are present in the park. A template for this site bulletin will be on the Division of Publications website for parks to create with ease, a consistent look throughout the park service. These bulletins should be in large type, 16 points minimum and follow the large-print criteria below.

### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Mobility Impairments**

1. Park folders, site bulletins, and sales literature will be distributed from accessible locations and heights.
2. Park folders and Accessibility Site Bulletins should endeavor to carry information on the accessibility of buildings, trails, and programs by visitors with disabilities.

### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Visual Impairments**

1. Publications for the general public:
  - a. Text
    - (1) Size: the largest type size appropriate for the format.  
(preferred main body of text should be 10pt)
    - (2) Leading should be at least 20% greater than the font size used.
    - (3) Proportional letterspacing
    - (4) Main body of text set in caps and lower case.
    - (5) Margins are flush left and ragged right
    - (6) Little or no hyphenation is used at ends of lines.
    - (7) Ink coverage is dense

(8) Underlining does not connect with the letters being underlined.

(9) Contrast of typeface and illustrations to background is high (70% contrast is recommended)

(10) Photographs have a wide range of gray scale variation.

(11) Line drawings or floor plans are clear and bold, with limited detail and minimum 8 pt type.

(12) No extreme extended or compressed typefaces are used for main text.

(13) Reversal type should be minimum of 11 point medium or bold sans-serif type.

b. The paper:

(1) Surface preferred is a matte finish. Dull-coated stock is acceptable.

(2) Has sufficient weight to avoid "show-through" on pages printed on both sides.

2. Large-print version publications:

a. Text

(1) Size: minimum 16 point type.

(2) Leading is 16 on 20pt.

(3) Proportional letterspacing

(4) Main body of text set in caps and lower case.

(5) Margins are flush left and ragged right.

(6) Little or no hyphenation is used at ends of lines.

(7) Ink coverage is dense.

(8) Underlining does not connect with the letters being underlined.

(9) Contrast of typeface and illustrations to background is high (70% contrast is recommended)

(10) Photographs have a wide range of gray scale variation.

(11) Line drawings or floor plans are clear and bold, with limited detail and minimum 14 pt type.

(12) No extreme extended or compressed typefaces are used for main text.

(13) Sans-serif or simple-serif typeface

(14) No oblique or italic typefaces

(15) Maximum of 50 characters (average) per line.

(16) No type is printed over other designs.

(17) Document has a flexible binding, preferably one that allows the publication to lie flat.

(18) Gutter margins are a minimum of 22mm; outside margin smaller but not less than 13mm.

b. Paper:

(1) Surface is off-white or natural with matte finish.

(2) Has sufficient weight to avoid "show-through" on pages printed on both sides.

3. Maps:

a. The less clutter the map, the more visitors that can use it.

b. The ultimate is one map that is large-print and tactile.

c. Raised line/tactile maps are something that could be developed in future, using our present digital files and a thermaform machine. Lines are distinguished by lineweight, color and height. Areas are distinguished by color, height, and texture.

d. The digital maps are on an accessible web site.

e. Same paper guides as above.

f. Contrast of typeface background is high. (70% contrast is recommended)

g. Proportional letterspacing

h. Labels set in caps and lower case

i. Map notes are flush left and ragged right.

j. Little or no hyphenation is used as ends of lines.

k. No extreme extended or compressed typefaces are used for main text.

l. Sans-serif or simple-serif typeface.

4. The text contained in the park folder should also be available on audiocassette, CD and accessible web site. Handbooks, accessibility guides, and other publications should be similarly recorded where possible.

5. The official park publication is available in a word processing format. This could be translated into Braille as needed.

### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Hearing Impairments**

Park site bulletins will note the availability of such special services as sign language interpretation and captioned programs.

### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Learning Impairments**

1. The park site bulletin should list any special services available to these visitors.

2. Publications:

- a. Use language that appropriately describes persons with disabilities.
- b. Topics will be specific and of general interest. Unnecessary complexity will be avoided.
- c. Whenever possible, easy to understand graphics will be used to convey ideas, rather than text alone.
- d. Unfamiliar expressions, technical terms, and jargon will be avoided. Pronunciation aids and definitions will be provided where needed.
- e. Text will be concise and free of long paragraphs and wordy language.

**Wayside Exhibits**

Wayside exhibits, which include outdoor interpretive exhibits and signs, orientation shelter exhibits, trailhead exhibits, and bulletin boards, offer special advantages to visitors with disabilities. The liberal use of photographs, artwork, diagrams, and maps, combined with highly readable type, make wayside exhibits an excellent medium for visitors with hearing and learning impairments. For visitors with sight impairments, waysides offer large type and high legibility.

Although a limited number of NPS wayside exhibits will always be inaccessible to visitors with mobility impairments, the great majority are placed at accessible pullouts, viewpoints, parking areas, and trailheads.

The NPS accessibility guidelines for wayside exhibits help insure a standard of quality that will be appreciated by all visitors. Nearly everyone benefits from high quality graphics, readable type, comfortable base designs, accessible locations, hard-surfaced exhibit pads, and well-landscaped exhibit sites.

While waysides are valuable on-site "interpreters," it should be remembered that the park resources themselves are the primary things visitors come to experience. Good waysides focus attention on the features they interpret, and not on themselves. A wayside exhibit is only one of the many interpretive tools which visitors can use to enhance their appreciation of a park.

**Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Mobility Impairments**

1. Wayside exhibits will be installed at accessible locations whenever possible.
2. Wayside exhibits will be installed at heights and angles favorable for viewing by most visitors including those in wheelchairs. For standard NPS low-profile units the recommended height is 30 inches from the bottom edge of the exhibit panel to the finished grade; for vertical exhibits the height of 6-28 inches.
3. Trailhead exhibits will include information on trail conditions which affect accessibility.

4. Wayside exhibit sites will have level, hard surfaced exhibit pads.
5. Exhibit sites will offer clear, unrestricted views of park features described in exhibits.

#### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Visual Impairments**

1. Exhibit type will be as legible and readable as possible.
2. Panel colors will be selected to reduce eyestrain and glare, and to provide excellent readability under field conditions. White should not be used as a background color.
3. Selected wayside exhibits may incorporate audio stations or tactile elements such as models, texture blocks, and relief maps.
4. For all major features interpreted by wayside exhibits, the park should offer non-visual interpretation covering the same subject matter. Examples include cassette tape tours, radio messages, and ranger talks.
5. Appropriate tactile cues should be provided to help visually impaired visitors locate exhibits.

#### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Hearing Impairments**

1. Wayside exhibits will communicate visually, and will rely heavily on graphics to interpret park resources.
2. Essential information included in audio station messages will be duplicated in written form, either as part of the exhibit text or with printed material.

#### **Guidelines Affecting Visitors with Learning Impairments**

1. Topics for wayside exhibits will be specific and of general interest. Unnecessary complexity will be avoided.
2. Whenever possible, easy to understand graphics will be used to convey ideas, rather than text alone.
3. Unfamiliar expressions, technical terms, and jargon will be avoided. Pronunciation aids and definitions will be provided where needed.
4. Text will be concise and free of long paragraphs and wordy language.

### Nevada Department of Transportation Planning

The Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) will be directly involved with several issues in the project. The access to the interpretive center located at the Hunter exit as well as many of the remote sites will be a primary concern. This will require the identification of impacts related to the traffic generated at the sites. The Department recommends that a qualified traffic engineer should be included in the planning and design processes. The traffic engineer should be tasked to determine the volume and impacts of the additional vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The impacts will need to be addressed in the design phase, so that there is compliance with federal, state, and local requirements.

It is also apparent that signing will become a critical issue as sites are constructed. The Nevada Department of Transportation has a Tourist Information Sign Committee that works on these types of problems. Communications should be developed between the various agencies and NDOT's committee to be working on the signage issues. It is important to develop consistency in signing over the entire State. The committee could develop sign strategies and work toward standard logos for the entire trail.

The project may also have funding impacts in NDOT and other transportation agencies that provide access to the various sites. Cost estimates should be developed for the offsite improvements that may be required or needed. If NDOT participation is expected, the cost estimates will need to be programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan for future funding.

