



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Parks and Recreation Department

Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Council

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September 29, 2006

Douglas County Commissioners
1036 SE Douglas
Roseburg, OR 97470

OK OCT 06 2006

RE: Jedediah Smith Party 1828 Massacre Site near Reedsport, Oregon

Dear Commissioners,

The Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Council had the pleasure of visiting Reedsport on the weekend of September 22 and 23 as part of our study of the Jedediah Smith Route. The Council is a group of nine citizen volunteers appointed by the Governor to oversee 16 designated historic trails in the State.

We met at the Umpqua Discovery Center and heard from Jedediah Smith scholars/historians James Auld, Jim Hardee, and Barton Barbour. We also heard from Don Whereat, former historian for the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians. In addition, Wayne Knauf of the Jedediah Smith Society, guided us on a field trip to see the area believed to be the 1828 massacre site of the Smith Party where 15 men died and are buried.

The National Park Service noted in its feasibility study for a Jedediah Smith National Historic Trail that Smith's accomplishments as an explorer have not been adequately recognized – further, they **recommended markers and exhibits should be placed at significant sites.**

It appears that this massacre site may come under development. **We strongly encourage all parties concerned to work cooperatively to conserve, preserve and appropriately interpret this site (Master Site # 35 DO) as that of Historic Significance as part of the Jedediah Smith Trail.** If avoidance is not possible, then mitigation should be the goal. The existing interpretive resource located on Bolon Island ½ mile north of Reedsport is dated and lacks perspective and a site closer to the actual massacre location would be desirable. It appears that the Douglas County Planning Department issued septic tank permits and deferred any responsibility for historical sites. And, further, that the site has now been paved over without any study into historical significance of the site or consultation with Tribal members.

Thank you for looking into this matter.

Sincerely,

Copy

Keith F. May

Chair Oregon Historic Trails Advisory Council

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Yes I agree. I am disappointed in the conduct of the three. WK

DONALD WHEREAT <ohwintl@msn.com> wrote:

Sorry this has deteriorated. The actual site can never be pin pointed exactly or to everyone's satisfaction. All we can go on is two Umpqua Indians pointing it out after the fact 30 years later. Nevertheless, it is certainly that area. It was clearly evident to me after listening to that bunch at Reedsport that their idea is mainly for the glorification of Smith. Getting the support of our Tribal Council on that score would be all but impossible.

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I am in the process of running down info. on the "middle panel." I have seen several references concerning the "wives" being molested. I will look that up too. One source might be Douthit's chronicle of the event. He would have got it through the same sources I have seen. I myself have never put too much credence in it because the Indian sources told it a hundred years after the fact. One of them, Frank Drew, was good on language but most of his historical info. was hear say and what he thought happened. It was he who said the massacre took place across Smith river and upstream a ways. He even drew a crude map of it. I did not bring that up before because there is enough controversy. Will get back to you.

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[Alert](#)**To:** "'Wayne Knauf'" <wknauf@sbcglobal.net>**Subject:** RE: Reedsport maps**Date:** Tue, 7 Nov 2006 16:53:23 -0800

Thanks again Wayne for the book. I assume the maps I sent you could be opened, is that right? Next time I'll buy lunch!

Joe

-----Original Message-----

From: Wayne Knauf [mailto:wknauf@sbcglobal.net]**Sent:** Tuesday, November 07, 2006 12:05 PM**To:** Joe or Linda Molter**Subject:** Re: Reedsport maps

Thanks it is cheaper to buy you a book than lunch. No reimbursement. I had lunch with Bill Swagerty and he is interested in the Enterpriz project. WK

Joe or Linda Molter <joenlinda@snowcrest.net> wrote:
Wayne ,

Did you order me **Across the Great Divide**? That was awful nice of you to do. I really appreciate that! The price was pretty reasonable, the total with shipping being only \$5.64! Be glad to reimburse you for this.

I'm sending you the maps which Al requested from me, but I've Overlaid them. I also just sent these others to Al. It's the Gordon map overlaid onto a current Topo map I used to create the UTM's. I also just overlaid it onto the aerial you gave me. I'll send both. If you have problems opening them, let me know and I will send one at a time. As you will notice on the Topo map, the mark that Gordon made is close to the mark which I made, i.e. on the eastern portion of the flat you are pursuing. With approx. 300 head of horses and 19 men, we know a large portion of this flat was being utilized at the time this contact occurred.



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AI

Regards your first question. I am not sure what you are referring to. Because of having to make sure things were arranged for the meeting, driving the field trip, keeping things on schedule and trying to find out about the development, I did not have much time to spend time in the Discovery Center.

Second question "new GPS coordinates and location" I have no information on this. GPS coordinates and Location, You may want to look at the Manual of surveying instructions, United States Dept of Interior, Bureau of Land Management.

AI in my email of Oct 07, 2006 I asked you and Jim Hardee to share with me "other issues perpetuated about the massacre are incorrect" and the basis for locating the site further east of the GPS location Hardee established? Hardee email Oct 05, 2006.

I have set aside Dec 2 and 9.

With out the answers to the above questions it will be hard for me to adequately prepare to discuss and address incorrect issues and the new Massacre location site.

WK

Haworth Clover <drclover@hesperiapress.org> wrote:

Dear Wayne,

I visited the Discovery Center in Reedsport a couple of weeks ago when we were driving through OR. There were three panels telling about Jed. The one on the right and left are factual according to traditional research. The middle panel is presented in a different style. No citation or reference to its' origin. It says that the Indians were upset with the trappers for sleeping with their wives – hence the massacre. (or something to this effect)

Do you know the source of these remarks? Who prepared these remarks? Is this from Indian tribal info or lore? There was no one present that I could ask. We were there on a Saturday.

Also I talked to Joe Molter on the way through Redding. He said something

about hearing from Jim Auld as to the "new" GPS coordinates and location. It was supposedly addressed to me. I don't have any correspondence from Auld, e mail or snail.. Do you?

I am looking at the calendar for a Board Meeting on this subject possibly the Sat Dec 2, or 9. What are your thoughts?

Hope to make Westerners this week in Stockton.

Always,
Al

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Wayne, Here's what happened from my point of view. I had no idea at the time that it would cause a letter to be sent from Al, or any other kind of immediate controversy.

While we were unloading at the last site of the Sat. tour (the "Horse Barn" site), Joe Molter came up to a small bunch of us with a map, that I understood he made by laying the Gordon map over a modern topo map or equivalent. He had apparently come up with a "rough" estimate of the "X" that was on the Gordon map. Then, shortly, a man, who I do not know, came up with a GPS device, and he and Joe talked for a while and got the coordinates entered into the device.

The gentleman then started walking east. I looked and saw the other people on the tour go into the site up to the drainage, where you and I had been before.

I didn't think twice about following the man with the GPS and everyone else was too far away for me to shout or run over. We walked for a while and then he announced that the "spot" was going to be over near the road. At that time, I went to get my car and drove over to the road, where he was standing with a few others.

After some time, the gentleman stood on the road and said that his reading showed the coordinates to be on the road. I seriously don't think he was aware that he was challenging any hard fact of history at the time. We looked around by the side of the road and Jim Hardee noticed a marker, with data on it, which I believe he wrote down or committed to memory. In any case, the marker could be relocated by Tom Huebner or Don Whereat easily enough.

Later in the evening after dinner, Jim Hardee and his wife Lea, called Bart and I to meet him for a beer in Westchester. We met them and talked for a while about alot of things, the GPS information included.

So that's what happened from my point of view. I'm not sure why I would get a letter from Al about this.

I'm sincerely sorry if this has caused a problem for you. That was certainly not my intention, and I look forward to continued collaboration on this quest for the bones of those American trappers.

Jim

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