

SOUTHERN UTAH CHAPTER OF THE OLD SPANISH TRAILS ASSOCIATION

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Chapter Website: http://www.three-peaks.net/spanish_trail.htm
National Website: <http://www.oldspanishtrail.org/>
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President's Message

By Rob Dotson

Greetings!!! Summer is marching in....finally. With good weather comes the desire to be outside and our area provides many opportunities for adventure. We invite all of you to join us on our fieldtrips. Not only in enjoying the activities, but also in the planning. We thank all of you who already make great efforts to support the organization.

Plans for a museum are still in the works. When the design work is completed, we will be working hard towards funding. Special thanks to New Horizons Engineering for their work in surveying and preparing a site map for the proposed location in Enoch.

Old Spanish Trail Days will be an exciting opportunity to inform others about the great heritage left to us in this area. We invite all to volunteer for the numerous activities that will take place. Much planning has to be done.

We ask that those who took assignments for the upcoming Old Spanish Trail Days come to the April 11th chapter meeting prepared to report their plans.

Please feel free to join us and invite all your interested friends and family.

Your servant,
Rob Dotson

Meeting Schedule

Meetings are generally held at 7PM on the second Wednesday of each month in the Enoch City Office Building, 900 East Midvalley Road, Enoch, UT. Old Spanish Trail. The next

chapter meeting will be April 11, 2007 at 7:00 PM.

Those who took assignments for the upcoming Old Spanish Trail Days will report their plans at this month's chapter meeting on April 11th.

In addition, the chapter plans regular fieldtrips to Old Spanish Trail sites. These field trips will be announced at the chapter meetings, local newspapers, and this website. See the chapter website for dates and times.

Trail History

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Spanish_Trail_\(trade_route\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Spanish_Trail_(trade_route))

The eastern areas of the Old Spanish Trail, including southwest Colorado and southeast Utah, were explored by Juan Maria de Rivera in 1765. Franciscan missionaries Francisco Atanasio Domínguez and Silvestre Vélez de Escalante unsuccessfully attempted the trip to California, leaving Santa Fe in 1776 and making it all the way into the Great Basin near Utah Lake before returning via the Arizona Strip. Other expeditions then explored and traded in the region, finding shorter and less arduous routes through the mountains and deserts.

Little evidence exists that round-trips to California occurred before about 1829. Thereafter, regular caravans traveled the Trail, trading Native American slaves and woolen goods from New Mexico for high quality horses in California. John C. Frémont, "The Great Pathfinder," named the route in 1844. Trade continued until the mid-1850s, when a shift to the use of freight wagons made the old route obsolete. Additionally, both New Mexico and California had become U.S. territories as a

result of the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848, and large numbers of Mormon immigrants were settling in Utah, affecting both trade interests and tolerance for the slavery of American Natives.

The central route of the Old Spanish Trail ran northwest from Santa Fe through southwestern Colorado, past the San Juan Mountains, Mancos, and Dove Creek. Entering Utah near Monticello, it proceeded north through difficult terrain to Spanish Valley near Moab, crossed the Colorado River, then turned west to cross the Green River. The route then passed through (or around) the San Rafael Swell, the northernmost reach of the Trail. Entering the Great Basin via Salina Canyon, it turned southwest, crossing southern Nevada (near Las Vegas) and the Mojave Desert before reaching Mission San Gabriel Arcángel and El Pueblo de Los Angeles in California. Alternate routes for this journey existed through central Colorado and through the Arizona Strip.

Although few traces of the early traders remain, the Trail is now commemorated in many local street and road names, and numerous historical markers in the states that it crossed. It is listed as the Old Spanish National Historic Trail by the Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service. Portions of US 160 in Colorado and US 191 in Utah are similarly designated. In 2001, the section of the Trail that runs across Nevada from the Arizona border to California (known as the "Mormon Road Historic District") was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Spanish Trail near Enterprise, Utah