

## Appendix B. Fiber Optics Line In Rat Creek & Applegate Trail

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GLO Field Review Committee  
Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee



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This analysis of the fiber optics route in Rat Creek is part of a larger analysis on the “*Location Of Applegate Trail in Upper Rat Creek: A Work In Progress*”.<sup>2</sup>

### I. INTRODUCTION

On August 31, 2010 Chelsea Rose, Staff Archeologist, Southern Oregon University (SOU), was the trip leader for a SOU Applegate Trail (*Trail*) field group (i.e., Rose, Julia Johnson, Staff Archeologist, SOU; Roger Roberts, Volunteer; Chuck Eccleston, Volunteer; Kelly Rarey, Volunteer; and Mike Walker Volunteer) trip into the Rat Creek drainage of northern Josephine County, Oregon. The group’s purpose was to visually look for traces of the *Trail* within the I-5 corridor on the north side of Mt. Sexton Pass in the South Fork of Rat Creek. The team conducted a pedestrian survey of the terrain of a surveyed 1855 General Land Office (GLO) site, JA-15 South Rat Creek, and north approximately .4 miles (Section 14. T.34S., R.6W., WM, Josephine County, Oregon; Map 15<sup>2</sup>).

On this field trip the issue was raised concerning the location of the *Trail* in Rat Creek. Was the *Trail* located on the east side of Rat Creek, or was the *Trail*, or parts of the *Trail*, located west of Rat Creek, and/or did it, or parts of it, evolve to be located west of Rat Creek?

### II. ISSUE

The preponderance of the significant evidence is that the *Trail* was located east of Rat Creek with significant segments within the present I-5 corridor. However, there was still the question from the August field trip. Was the *Trail*, or parts of the *Trail*, west of Rat Creek and/or did it, or parts of it, evolve to be located west of Rat Creek. For example, in the northern part of the study area (i.e., northern .15 miles of the .4 miles - Map 15<sup>2</sup>) the team



Photo 1. Fiber Cable Route Sign South of JA-15

viewed the terrain as steep and mountainous on the east slopes of Rat Creek from the bottom of Rat Creek uphill to where two major old logging skid trails were located parallel to the creek.



*Photo 2. Fiber Cable Route  
In Head Of Rat Creek*

The ground was also steep here with the fill of I-5 adjacent, the section where the two skid roads were, and just uphill of the skid roads.

In this .15 mile long area there was almost zero bottom lands surrounding the creek. The terrain had a dense understory of vegetation and large down firs making it difficult to travel and see any traces, if they were there. It was also difficult for the team to visual a slope meeting the “non-sideling” criteria necessary for covered wagons without tipping over. A short distance above Rat Creek to the west was a dirt road paralleling the creek. On August 31, 2010 Chuck Eccleston observed a buried fiber optics route sign and walked the road associated with it for a short distance. The ground in this area below the west road was dense and natural (Map 15<sup>2</sup>).

It is a given that later communication lines followed the only road through northern Josephine County, Oregon, the *Trail* (i.e.,

1864 Collins Telegraph Line and parts of the 1886 - 1887 Postal Telegraph Line). Later lines such as the buried fiber optics line might have also following the right-of-way (ROW) of the *Trail*, or portions of the ROW where it made the job easier.

### III. FIBER OPTICS LINE IN RAT CREEK

#### A. Fiber Optics Line At 1893 JA-15 South Rat Creek and 1855 JA-16 Old Stage Road

##### 1. February 5, 2010 Field Trip to JA-15 South Rat Creek

The fiber optics cable route was clearly marked (Map 17<sup>2</sup>; Photo 1) and visible approximately 100 yards south from JA-15 South Rat Creek. It was also clearly visible from this point upstream to the head of the South Fork of Rat Creek at a plowed field next to I-5 (Photo 2 & Photo 3).



*Photo 3. Fiber Cable Route In Head Of Rat  
Creek*

**2. March 18, 2010 Field Trip to JA-16 Old Stage Road**



*Photo 3. Fiber Cable Route Sign Near JA-16*

The GLO Subcommittee members located a “K-tag” on a Douglas fir tree along the west side of Old Stage Road. There was an east-west fence line at the “K-tag”. This indicated that the NE private property corner No. 1 of C.S. 207-69 was on the section line.

The fiber optics cable route is clearly marked with a sign (Map 17<sup>2</sup>; Photo 3; Photo 4) in the ROW of Old Stage Road along the east-west fence and section line where the K-tag is located.

The fiber optics route continued north across Old Stage Road (Photo 5).



*Photo 4. Fiber Cable Route Sign Along Side Old Stage Road*

site is south of the Copper Queen Mine Road junction (BLM Rd No. 34-6-11.1) with Old Stage Road.

The 1855 GLO JA-16 Old Stage Road Trail

The I-5 ROW boundary is 47.9' east of the Old Stage Road center line (i.e., 60' ROW). C.S. No. 207-69. JA-16 Old Stage Road is a further 2.74' east within the I-5 ROW. The C.S. records Oregon State Highway Department (ODOT) monument (P.O.T. 536+10.12) to be 21.6' south of the section line at private property corner No. 2.



*Photo 5. Fiber Cable Route North Of Old Stage Road*

The fiber optics cable route sign is two signs approximately 65' from the 1855 GLO JA-16 Old Stage Road site.

Orange Sign: “*WARNING Fiber Cable Route*”

Yellow Sign: “*WARNING BURIED CABLE Before Digging In This Vicinity PLEASE CALL (COLLECT) OR NOTIFY PACIFIC NORTHWEST BELL TELEPHONE Toll Free Oregon 1-800-332-2344 USWest FOR CABLE LOCATING ASSISTANCE*”

## **B. Fiber Optics Route Between 1893 JA-15 South Rat Creek and 1855 JA-16 Old Stage Road**

On August 31, 2010 a pedestrian survey occurred of the terrain from a surveyed 1855 GLO site, JA-15 South Rat Creek, north to the I-5 corridor boundary approximately .4 miles (Section 14. T.34S., R.6W., WM, Josephine County, Oregon; Map 15<sup>2</sup>).

A short distance uphill from Rat Creek to the west was a dirt road paralleling the creek. in the northern part of the study area (i.e., northern .15 miles of the .4 miles - Map 15<sup>2</sup>). Chuck Eccleston was directed to a buried fiber optics route sign by Kelly Rarey as he walked across Rat Creek. After Chuck arrived at the sign he then walked the road associated with it for a short distance (Map 17<sup>2</sup>; no pictures were taken). Katie Johnson was standing next to Kelly and possibly Chelsea; all were looking at the sign.

In this .15 mile long area there were almost zero bottom lands surrounding the creek. The terrain had a dense understory of vegetation and large down firs making it difficult to travel and see any traces, if they were there. It was also difficult for the team to visual a slope meeting the “non-sideling” criteria necessary for covered wagons without tipping over. The ground in this area below the west road was dense and natural (Map 15<sup>2</sup>).

## **C. Fiber Optics Route In Section 14 & Applegate Trail**

The fiber optics route in Section 14. T.34S., R.6W., WM. has been located in three small areas both east and west of Rat Creek (Map 17).

The fiber cable route south of JA-15 was east of the South Fork of Rat Creek. It was west of the South Fork of Rat Creek approximately .25 - .4 miles north of JA-15. The fiber cable route near JA-16 was again east of Rat Creek. Why did it start on the east side of Rat Creek and cross the creek to the west side of Rat Creek and then cross the creek again back to the east side of Rat Creek?

It is a given that later communication lines followed the only road, the *Trail*, through northern Josephine County, Oregon (i.e., 1864 Collins Telegraph Line and parts of the 1886 - 1887 Postal Telegraph Line). A working hypothesis is that the later buried cable route might have followed the ROW of the *Trail*, or portions of the ROW where it made the job easier.



**Photo 6. GLO Subcommittee Members At JA-15 South Rat Creek**

Left to right - Joe Neiderheiser, Mike Walker, Chris Wytcherley, & Kelly Rarey

**D. Research & Future Field Works Needed To Locate Fiber Optics Route In Section 14**

A field trip is needed to the area to GPS the fiber optics route in Section 14.

Pacific Northwest Bell Telephone needs to be contacted for information about the fiber optics route in Section 14 and why that route was selected (Toll Free Oregon; 1-800-332-2344 USWest). The GLO SubCommittee members need to explain that they are researching, locating, and marking the Trail in Section 14. Therefore, cable locating assistance is desirable as unknown future earth disturbance and digging are possible.

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Footnote 1.

Kelly Rarey, Member (Photo 6)  
GLO Field Review Sub-Committee  
Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee  
275 Canyon Oak Drive  
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

Mike Walker, Member (Photo 6)  
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Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee  
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Footnote 2. Walker, M. and Rose, K. September 20, 2010. *Location Of Applegate Trail in Upper Rat Creek: A Work In Progress*. For GLO Field Review Committee, Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee, Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society. Hugo, OR.

## Oregon Utility Notification Center

**Update:** On December 30, 2011 Mike Walker telephoned the number on the yellow sign (Photo 3, Page 3).

Yellow Sign:        “*WARNING BURIED CABLE  
Before Digging In This Vicinity  
PLEASE CALL (COLLECT) OR NOTIFY  
PACIFIC NORTHWEST BELL TELEPHONE  
Toll Free Oregon  
1-800-332-2344 USWest  
FOR CABLE LOCATING ASSISTANCE*”

He made contact with the Oregon Utility Notification Center

Oregon Utility Notification Center (OUNC)  
1-800-332-2344 (coverage Area: The entire state of Oregon).  
Web Page. <http://www.callbeforeyoudig.org/>

American Public Works Association Uniform Color Code