
Using The Composite Trail Description Method

The *Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee (Trails Committee)* was formed to bring together all those who want to learn more about the early transportation in the area, from the casual admirer to the dedicated researcher.¹

The goal of the Trails Committee is to preserve our cultural assets through documentation.

An effective means of applying diaries, journals, and/or

government reports, especially general land office (GLO) maps, to locate and verify particularly vexing segments of emigrant trails (no more than a few miles in length) is creating a composite trail description.² You begin by gathering together as many accounts as possible that describe in any way the trail segment under study. Descriptions, for example, could include references to springs, a particular rock formation, creeks, a rocky part of the trail, sand hills, ridges, ravines, forks in the trail, and any distances or directions recorded. Look for similarities and discrepancies among the various accounts. Then arrange all of these descriptions--really clues-- in some kind of sequential order that will reveal the course, direction, and location of the trail. In this way, you will have created a detailed composite description of the trail segment under study.

1. Hugo Neighborhood. 2005. Public Outreach & Educational Brochure Program: Hugo's Emigrant Trails. Hugo, OR.

2. Office of National Trails Preservation & Oregon-California Trails Association (P.O. box 1019, Independence, MO, 64051-0519, 816-252-2276, octa@indepmo.org). July 2002, 4th edition. *Mapping Emigrants Trails MET Field Manual*.

3. Emerson, William. 1996. *The Applegate Trail of 1846*. Ember Enterprises. Ashland, OR.

Diaries and Journals

Diaries/Journals

The following quotes are from "The Applegate Trail of 1846" by William Emerson.³

*"About the time they reached the Rogue River, Margaret Garrison, Rev. Garrison's wife, was feeling better. She had taken sick back on the desert. When they reached the Rogue River, she was getting up and around."*⁶¹

*"The wagon company traveled north about eight miles and crossed Jump Off Joe Creek. They traveled along the creek on approximately the same route as present day Russell Road north of Merlin and camped in Pleasant Valley."*⁶² Pringle mentions that it was a good camp.⁶³

*"From here the emigrants had to cross Sexton Mountain. The road builders traveling before them had done little to cut a road for the wagons. The wagons could not go any further without doing more to provide a road. Virgil Pringle, Levi Scott and others had to take their axes and cut through the undergrowth to clear a way for the wagons to cross."*⁶⁴ In some places, the emigrants had to take down the wagon bows to get through.⁶⁵ They edged their way along in single file as Levi Scott and others cleared a path for the wagons to follow. They worked through the day and into the night. Sometime after dark they stopped having managed to make a total of about six miles through Sexton Mountain and beyond.⁶⁶ They chained their oxen to trees to camp for the rest of the night.⁶⁷

General Land Office Survey Field Notes

GLO Subdivision Lines, T. 34 S., R. 6 W., Surveyed March 31, 1856

Page 589 - Subdivisions of T. 34 S., R. 6 W. - North Between Sections 34 & 35

Chains

70.50 Spring branch 2 Lks wide. And enter prairie
79.20 Road to Jacksonville Enter openings
80.00 Widow Niday's house. Surface nearly level. Pine & Oak timber. Some greasewood & Manzanita.

Page 609 - Subdivisions of T. 34 S., R. 6 W. - North Between Secs 27 & 28

Chains

47.25 Indian Trail
56.35 Branch 3 Lks wide c S.W.



Want more information? Contact an officer of the *Hugo Neighborhood*, or a member of the *Trails Committee* on how you can become involved in this trail project.

61. Garrison. *Reminiscences*, p.24.

62. Helfrich. *Applegate Trail II*. 1976. Vol. 14, p. 23.

63. Morgan. *Overland in 1846*. Vol. 1, p. 185.

64. Scott. *Independence*, p. 155.

65. Cornwall. *Capt. Dunbar's Co. 1846*. OHS Mss #1509, p. 35.

66. a) Morgan. *Overland in 1846*. Vol. 1, p. 185; b) Carter. *Pioneer Days*, p. 74.

67. Carter. *Pioneer Days*, p. 74.

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society's Mission

This information brochure is one of a series of documents published by the Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (*Hugo Neighborhood*). It is designed to be shared with neighbors for the purpose of helping protect our rural quality of life by promoting an informed citizenry in decision-making. The *Hugo Neighborhood* is an informal nonprofit charitable and educational organization with a land use and history mission promoting the social welfare of its neighbors.

Land Use & History

The *Hugo Neighborhood's* land use mission is to promote Oregon Statewide Goal 1 — Citizen Involvement, and to preserve, protect, and enhance the livability and economic viability of its farms, forests, and rural neighbors. It will act, if requested, as a technical resource assisting neighbors to represent themselves.

Its history mission is to educate, collect, preserve, interpret, and research its local history and to encourage public interest in the history of the Hugo area.

Volunteer membership dues are \$10.00 annually per family and normally used for paper, ink, envelopes, publications and mailings. Make checks to the *Hugo Neighborhood* and send them to our Treasurer

Hugo Neighborhood Association

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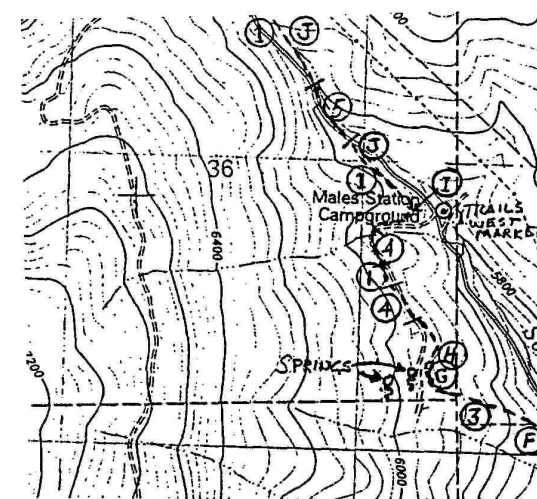
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HUGO APPLGATE TRAIL COMPOSITE TRAIL DESCRIPTION METHOD

Brochure 13 in
Emigrant Trails Series



ASCENT FROM TRUCKEE RIVER TO DOG VALLEY SUMMIT

Emigrant Trail 1845-1850

Example of Composite Trail Description Method
for Truckee River

February 18, 2005

Public Outreach & Educational Brochure
Committee for Hugo's Emigrant Trails

Hugo Neighborhood Association &
Historical Society