

# MONDAYS MAKE HISTORY

Part 1 of 2

## Mapping and Marking The Applegate Trail



by Mike Walker and Karen Rose, Co-Project Leaders of the *Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee*  
Edited by Jean Boling, Historic Sites Chair, Josephine County Historical Society.

*Editor's Note: In September 1846, the first wagons full of emigrants turned away from the Old Oregon Trail and started west from Ft. Hall, Idaho, on a new southern route, The Applegate Trail. One hundred and sixty-five years later, a group of people joined together to mark a segment of that Trail in order to preserve and protect the remnants for future generations.*

On August 11, 2011 the General Land Office Field Review Subcommittee, Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee, placed professional carsonite markers with information decals at five 1850s surveys sites along the Jacksonville Road of the Applegate Trail (Trail). This Subcommittee work has six co-sponsors: Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society, Josephine County Forestry, Josephine County Historical Society, Josephine County Public Works Department, Josephine County Sportsman Association, and the NorthWest Chapter of Oregon-California Trails Association.

The five Trail locations are administered by Forestry (JCF), Public Works (JCPWD), or the Sportsman Association (JCSA) See Map. The carsonite markers were donated by NWOCTA, and the installation was done by members of HuNAHS and JCHS. Harris Road 3 (Pond) JA-6A (JCSA); Harris Road 4 (Office) JA-7A (JCSA); Monument Drive JA-10A (JCPWD); JR Of Applegate Trail: Niday DLC Survey JA-10B (JCF); and JR Of Applegate Trail: Niday DLC Survey JA-10D (JCPWD)

A wealth of information on the Trail can be found at the *Hugo Neighborhood's* web page [www.hugoneighborhood.org/applegat.htm](http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/applegat.htm). Site specific information on the five marked sites can be found at [www.hugoneighborhood.org/inventorybrochures.htm](http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/inventorybrochures.htm). Please be respectful and *do not trespass*. Many Trail sites are located on private property not open to the public.

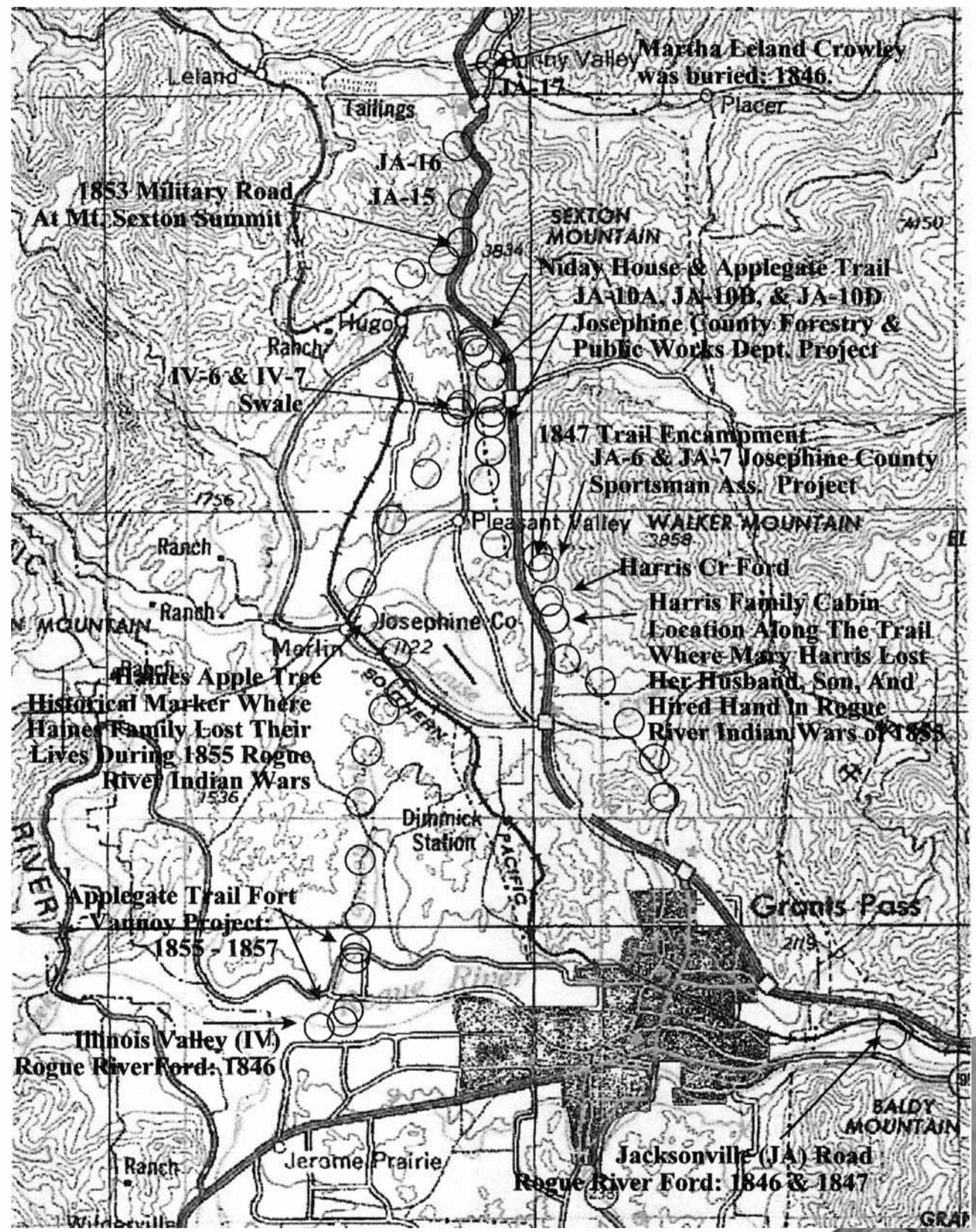
This marking action is one of the last steps of the seven-member GLO Subcommittee in researching, inventorying, and marking the Trail in northern Josephine County from the Rogue River in the south to Grave Creek in the north: Glen Campbell, Jim Ford, Rene Ford, Joe Neiderheiser, Kelly Rarey, Mike Walker, and Chris Wytcherley. The sites are researched, located, mapped, and marked by the Subcommittee using the inventory methodology described in OCTA's *Mapping Emigrant Trails Manual* (MET), including the composite trail description method of integrating diaries, journals, reminiscences, aerial photographs, and government reports.

The first step in locating the Trail sites is through the use of accurate historical and modern government survey notes (i.e., the 1850s GLO survey notes and maps, 1850s donation land claim (DLC) survey notes and maps, modern local Josephine County surveys (C.S.) and maps, and the GPS, including bearing and distance measurements). This method is being used because after 150 years the Trail in wet western Oregon is usually buried beneath 6-12 inches of soil and debris. In the field what is usually seen is the participant's imagination. Ruts are gone and traces are few, but a verified "surveyed" Trail site can make sense of the local terrain where there are several skid roads, and faint traces aligned along the recorded course of the Trail which clear up otherwise normally appearing swales.

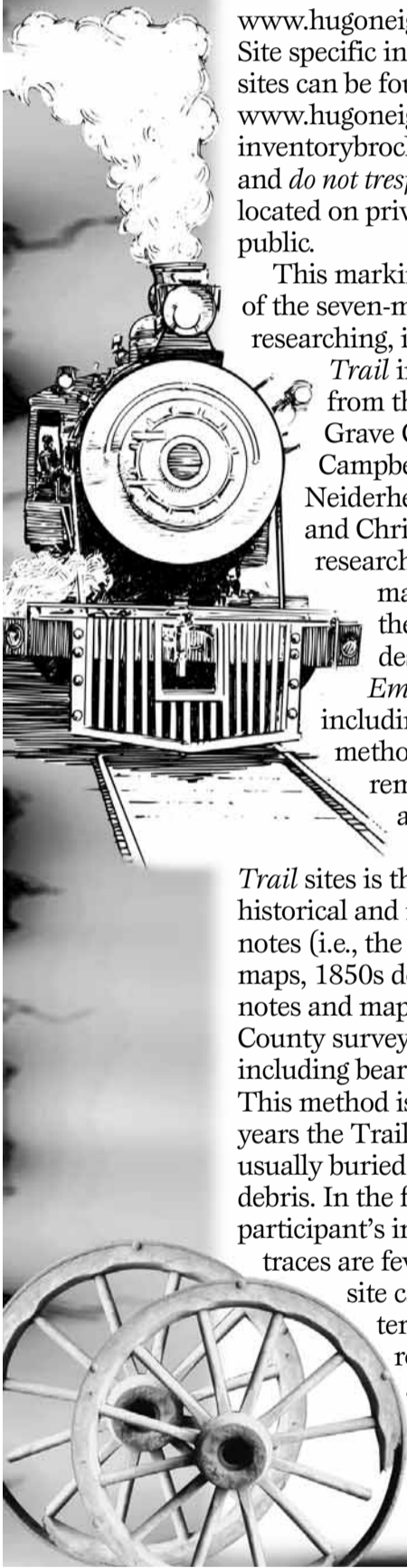
And, on occasion, the mystery of a cairn appears at the end of a GPS or C.S. track.

Eventually mother nature and/or development will bury all our historic emigrant trails, even those in the high dry deserts. However, the archeological approach is accepted and treasured by people, especially urban dwellers, as it opens up the excitement of the scientific method and the imagination of the modern pioneer trail discoverer. Of great excitement is a recent Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) sponsored survey conducted by University of Oregon archeologists. In the process of their using the archeological approach, they corroborated the Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee's use of the MET (i.e., artifacts supported MET and MET surveys supported artifacts for a more conclusive picture of the Trail). In April of this year the UO published the results of this survey undertaken as part of the ODOT's Chancellor Quarry Stockpile Project (Museum of Natural & Cultural History, University of Oregon. April 2011. University of Oregon Museum of Natural and Cultural History's Report No. 2011-002, *Subsurface Reconnaissance of the 1-5 Chancellor Quarry Stockpile Project, and Metal Detector Survey within the George and Mary Harris 1854-55 DLC (35J0246), Josephine County*).

Save this page/map to go with next week!



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