

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

3388B Merlin Road #195
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526
541-471-8271

Email: hugo@jeffnet.org

Web Page: <http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/>

August 29, 2012 Letter/Email

Henry Pittock, Mapping and Marking Chair
NWOCTA
616 NW 34th Street
Corvallis, Oregon 97330
541-752-6139 Home would be best
Cell 541-619-0906
Email: hpittock3@mac.com
Email: hpittock3@me.com



Subject: Responses to Henry Pittock's June 27, 2012 Email Clarification Questions to Mike Walker, Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee (HETC)

Dear Henry:

Good clarification questions/statements (Appendix A). We apologize for taking so long in preparing a response. We have been struggling with this idea of when the Applegate Trail/Road was an "emigrant" wagon trail/road for some time (see 4H - *Applegate Trail/Road Emigrant Year Definition: 1846 - 1883* at <http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/inventorybrochures.htm>).

Consensus View of HETC. Our research has led us to the consensus alternative for the Applegate Trail that its primary emigrant use was from 1846 - 1883, even though small parties and individual families continued their overland migrations by covered wagon into the twentieth century until the dominate use of the motor vehicle. This is also the view of the Oregon Trail Coordinating Council (Oregon Trail Coordinating Council. May 1998. *Oregon Historic Trails Report*. Compiled by Karen Bassett, Jim Renner, and Joyce White. page 11. Salem, OR.).

Our responses to your seven question/statements follow.

1. Henry Pittock (HP) Question/Statement No. 1. As I read the literature, the origins of the trail began in 1845 with some preliminary explorations. The main travel was in 1846-1847 and the last substantive wagon train was in 1847.

1. Hugo Applegate Trail Smith Hill Pass Group (SHPG) Response No. 1. Our research has led us to the consensus alternative for the Applegate Trail that its primary emigrant use was from 1846 - 1883, even though small parties and individual families continued their overland migrations by covered wagon into the twentieth century until the dominate use of the motor vehicle.

2. HP Question/Statement No. 2. I assume that for the next few years, there was occasional travel, but not by organized wagon trains.

2. SHPG Response No. 2. See response No. 1 (also see Appendix C on Historic Applegate Transportation Corridor).

3. HP Question/Statement No. 3. Then it was in 1853 that the military road construction began and lasted several years.

3. SHPG Response No. 3. There were three main federal appropriations and construction periods on the U.S. Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart: 1. 1853 - 1854, 2. 1857 - 1858, and 3. 1879 - 1880. The main effort was from 1857 - 1858 (see Appendix B).

4. HP Question/Statement No. 4. I'm not clear from some of your wording in your recent Appendix D2 about the June 8 field trip. On page 6 you use the wording " old 1853-1854 trail", "1853 trail", and "Trail ca., 1853-1855". On page 7, you have "original 1853 trail", and "Trail ca., 1853 - 1855".

4. SHPG Response No. 4. We understand the confusion and your clarification question. See what follows.

1. "old 1853-1854" refers to the first federal allocation and construction from 1853 - 1854.
2. "1853 trail" refers to the first federal allocation and the year Major Alvord was assigned the responsibility to survey and construct the military road which he did from 1853 - 1854.
3. "Trail ca., 1853 - 1855" refers to the first federal allocation year in 1853 to first federal survey of the Applegate Trail in our area in 1855 (Oregon General Land Office survey). The 1855 GLO survey recorded an improved road through the Grave Creek Hills surveyed and constructed in 1853 - 1854.
4. "original 1853 trail" - same as 4.2 above.
5. "Trail ca., 1853 - 1855" - same as 4.3 above.

In summary, see responses to question/statements 3 and 5.

5. HP Question/Statement No. 5. Couple of question for you here --- is there a reason for these differences? It seems like by saying 1853 (or 1854 or 1855), that you are not including the 1846 and 1847 routes? Or is there a substantial difference in locations between 1846-7 and 1853-54-55 routes? Would you want to change to something like 1846-1855?

5. SHPG Response No. 5. The simple answer, is that the 1,060' segment was originally the old Lowland Takelma Indian Trail, that became the Hudson Bay Trapper's Trail, that became the Applegate Trail from 1846 - early 1853, that became the Applegate Road as the U.S. Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart: late 1853 - 1880.

We do not have surveyed historical road information for 1846 - early 1853. We had assumed that in most places, except where there are cut-bank roads out of the bottom lands at Sexton Mountain Pass beyond the threshold of the narrow sidling corridor (i.e., see response to question/statement 6 for the 310' segment) that the 1855 surveyed GLO "Road from Willamette Valley to Jacksonville" over Sexton Mountain Pass was in the same route locations as the 1846 - early 1853 Applegate Trail (see what follows that we believe proves this assumption).

To the best of our knowledge and the topographical limits of the pass we do not believe that the 1846 - 1847 trail and the 1853 - 1855 trail are substantially different. Numerous on the ground clues such as the cast -a- side line of rocks, smaller trees lining the trail indicating packed soil due to repeated use and perhaps iron deposits, and linear alignment of the trail from known points verified by diaries and reminiscences all help draw the conclusion that this is the Applegate Trail of 1846 which evolved into the U.S. Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart.

We also believe that “year-around-use” by Native Americans, Hudson Bay Trappers, and other per-1846 use would have left some traces that the 1846 - early 1853 emigrant use followed where those traces were higher than the known marshes below the 1,060' segment as presently identified on the ground and on the 1940 highway map (Oregon State Highway Department. August 1940. *Right of Way Map, Sexton Mt. Section. Pacific Highway, Josephine County*. Scale 1" = 100'. Part 1 of 2, Drg. No. 5B-28-11).

During mid-August 2012, the Hugo Native American Team (HNAT), was analyzing a new paper it had received on the Lowland Takelma Indians published in 1933 (Harrington, John Peabody. 1981. *The Papers of John Peabody Harrington in the National Anthropological Archives of the Smithsonian Institution, 1907-1957*. Reel number 28, Frames/Pages Nos. 0001 - 0889. Kraus International Publications. Millwood, New York). In summary, some of the HNAT's preliminary results recorded in the *John Peabody Harrington's Takelma Indian Field Notes: Outline* paper find the 1,060' segment of the *Trail* identified as “*Applegate Trail I North Sexton Pass I-5 East*” (i.e., Sexton Mountain Pass in south to Applegate Trail site near I-5 sign in north) to be the old emigrant Applegate Trail as it evolved into a wagon road on top of the original Indian Trail.

“*Applegate Trail I North Sexton Pass I-5 East*”

http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/NORTH_SEXTON_PASS_PAPER_I_013012.pdf.

Hugo Native American Team for Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society & Josephine County Historical Society. August 2012. *John Peabody Harrington's Takelma Indian Field Notes: Outline*. Pages 21 - 22. Hugo, OR.

http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/Harrington_Papers_Outline_082312.pdf

Frances Johnson was the 1933 Lowland Takelma Indian informant for linguist and ethnographer Harrington. Her Takelma name was Gwisgwashan. Mrs. Johnson's native village was located somewhere north of the Rogue River, the NNAT believes it was in the Hugo area. In 1906 linguist and ethnographer Sapir gives the name of Dak'ts!asin in the neighborhood of Jumpoff Joe Creek, and near a local medicine rock (dan-mologol) as her native village. The rock was at the Sexton Mt. Summit. In Harrington's notes Johnson says she was born at Rib Creek (i.e. Grave Creek), a place just the other side of Medicine Rock, or maybe at the falls of the Rogue River. She stated that she was a young girl at the time of the Rogue River Wars during the 1850s.

Some might find the memories of a young girl (c.a., 10 years old) suspect. However, she was born at Grave Creek or Ranie Falls on the Rogue River. Her village was probably in Hugo and she would have personally traveled over the Sexton Mountain Pass along the Indian Trail by medicine rock. She had many personal memories of the Rogue River, her village, Ranie Falls, the medicine rock, and Grave Creek. If she was 10 years old in 1856 when her tribe was moved to Silitz reservation, she was c.a., 77 years old in 1933 when she was interviewed by Harrington. Most importantly she was accepted by two professional linguists and ethnographers, Edward Sapir (1906), and John Peabody Harrington, (1933), as a credible informant.

Map 5. Harrington Map 583 Medicine Rock/Old Indian Trail

John Peabody Harrington's Takelma Indian Field Notes: Outline. Map 583 at page 30
http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/Harrington_Papers_Outline_082312.pdf

Map of Medicine Rock at Sexton Mt. Pass. (Harrington 1981: 0583). Comments by Francis Johnson (see Map 5. Harrington Map 583 Medicine Rock).

“Summit of grass; Maple Tree Rock; Red barn; med rock.”

“Tompson’s fence; old Ind. Trail on old road; Pac - Hw.”

Map 5 is unique in that it identified the old road as the Takelma Indian Trail location over Sexton Mountain Pass in 1856 when Francis Johnson and the remaining Takelma Indians were moved out of the Rogue River to the Slitz Reservation after the Indian War of 1855. Maps 4 - 6 (sketches) are not to scale, but they are extremely important in providing geographic relationships. This is because the HNAT also has the nine foot 1940 engineered map of the Sexton Mountain Pass at 1" - 100' that shows all the same geographic features that maps 4 - 6 identify (Oregon State Highway Department. August 1940. *Right of Way Map, Sexton Mt. Section. Pacific Highway, Josephine County.* Scale 1" = 100'. Part 1 of 2, Drg. No. 5B-28-11. Oregon Water Resources Department, Grants Pass Office. 1939. October 20, 1939 Aerial Photo CIZ 26-92).

The three Harrington maps and the 1940 Oregon highway map are definitive proof that the 1,060' segment of the *Trail* identified as “*Applegate Trail I North Sexton Pass I-5 East*” (i.e., Sexton Mountain Pass in south to Applegate Trail site near I-5 sign in north) is the old emigrant Applegate Trail as it evolved into a wagon road on top of the original Indian Trail.

1846 - Early 1853 Applegate Historical Trail (very few improvements except extensive brushing and marking completed by the 1846 South Road Expedition; improvement by the actual 1846 emigrants, including rocks and trees in Canyon Creek; improvements by Peter Burnette’s 1848 wagon train (see *Peter Burnette’s Ragged Regiment: 1848.*

http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/BROCHURE_12_Burnette's%20Ragged%20Regiment_052508.pdf)

Late 1853 - 1880 Applegate Historical Trail/Road was an improved road, especially by 1857 - 1858 (U.S. Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart: 1. 1853 - 1854, 2. 1857 - 1858, and 3. 1879 - 1880 (see Appendix B)).

6. HP Question/Statement No. 6. Do you feel that what we see on the ground at the 310' segment is the original 1846-47 trail, or an 1853-54-55 improvement to it?

6. SHPG Response No. 6. We definitely do not believe the 310' segment was part of the original location of the 1846 - 1847 Applegate Trail. We think that mostly brushing and tree falling occurred in the federal appropriation and construction during 1853 - 1854 and that the major cut-bank construction out the creek bottoms occurred during the 1857 - 1858 allocation and construction period. The 310' segment was definitely an improved road by the time of the 1864 Collins Telegraph Line and the 1874 Josephine County road survey.

7. HP Question/Statement No. 7. For the 1060' segment, are we on the original 1846-47 alignment, and/or the 1853-54-55 improvements? When do you think, what I will (unofficially) refer to as the central portion that appears graded and has the rocks on the west side, was constructed?

7. SHPG Response No. 7. See our response to question/statement 5.

Sincerely,

Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee (HETC)

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (HNA&HS)

- Bob Black, Member
HETC, HNA&HS
- Jean Boling, Historic Sites Chair, Josephine County Historical Society &
Member, HETC, HNA&HS
- Jim Ford, Member
HETC, HNA&HS
- Rene Ford, Member
HETC, HNA&HS
- Joe Neiderheiser, Member
HETC, HNA&HS
- Leta Neiderheiser, Member
HETC, HNA&HS
- Kelly Rarey, Member
HETC, HNA&HS
- Karen Rose, Co-Project Leader
HETC, HNA&HS
- Mike Walker, Co-Project Leader
HETC, HNA&HS

Appendices

Appendix A. June 27, 2012 Email to Walker, HETC

Appendix B. Appendix J. Draft Executive Summary Of Paper: “*United States Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart: 1853 - 1880*”

Appendix C. Historic Applegate Transportation Corridor

Appendix A. June 27, 2012 Email to Walker, HETC

From: "Henry Pittock" <hpittock3@me.com>

To: "Mike Walker" <hugo@jeffnet.org>

Subject: Appendix D2 etc

Date: Wednesday, June 27, 2012 1:39 PM

Mike,

I haven't forgotten you; just a whole bunch of stuff going on all at once.

I think I might need a brief history lesson. I'm not considering Indian or trapper trails here. So please correct me if I am wrong.

HP Question/Statement No. 1. As I read the literature, the origins of the trail began in 1845 with some preliminary explorations. The main travel was in 1846-1847 and the last substantive wagon train was in 1847.

HP Question/Statement No. 2. I assume that for the next few years, there was occasional travel, but not by organized wagon trains.

HP Question/Statement No. 3. Then it was in 1853 that the military road construction began and lasted several years.

HP Question/Statement No. 4. I'm not clear from some of your wording in your recent Appendix D2 about the June 8 field trip. On page 6 you use the wording " old 1853-1854 trail", "1853 trail", and "Trail ca., 1853-1855". On page 7, you have "original 1853 trail", and "Trail ca., 1853-1855".

HP Question/Statement No. 5. Couple of question for you here --- is there a reason for these differences? It seems like by saying 1853 (or 1854 or 1855), that you are not including the 1846 and 1847 routes? Or is there a substantial difference in locations between 1846-7 and 1853-54-55 routes? Would you want to change to something like 1846-1855?

HP Question/Statement No. 6. Do you feel that what we see on the ground at the 310' segment is the original 1846-47 trail, or an 1853-54-55 improvement to it?

HP Question/Statement No. 7. For the 1060' segment, are we on the original 1846-47 alignment, and/or the 1853-54-55 improvements? When do you think, what I will (unofficially) refer to as the central portion that appears graded and has the rocks on the west side, was constructed?

Hope this finds you well and happy trails to all of you.

Henry.

Appendix B. Appendix J. Draft Executive Summary Of Paper: “United States Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart: 1853 - 1880”

The United States military wagon road from Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart from 1853 to 1880 was earlier the emigrant Applegate Trail from 1846 - 1853. It officially became a military road assigned to the U.S. War Department in 1853 by an act of Congress. The purpose of the U.S. “Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart” from 1853 through 1880 was officially for the military. However, regardless of this ostensible purpose, the real goal of road improvement was to attract civilian populations and to aid indirectly in the development of the agricultural, timber, and mineral resources of the territory. The Secretary of War, Jefferson Davis wrote in his “Report of the Secretary of War, War Department, Washington, December 1, 1853, which accompanied the annual message of the President of the United States, to both houses of the Congress” the following.

“Contracts have been made for the continuation of roads in Minnesota agreeable, agreeable to the act of January 7, 1853, making appropriations therefore. An act of the same date directs construction of two military roads in Oregon. Each of these was placed in charge of a competent officer, with instructions (copies of which are annexed) to locate and mark the line of the road as speedily as possible, and so direct his operations as to secure a practical wagon road for the benefit of the **fall emigrants** and other travel. The commencement of one of these works was delayed by the difficulty of the Rogue River Indians; but a contract was made for rendering the other, from Walla Walla to Steilacom, passable by the 15th of October last, and it is presumed its conditions have been fulfilled.” (emphasis added)

Transportation improvements were key to the economic development and population growth in the Rogue Valley during the time period from 1853 - 1880 . The period began with limited transportation options into and through the valley. Ships came into the Umpqua estuary and delivered goods destined for the gold mines of Southern Oregon and California. Goods moved from the estuary inland along the Scottsburg-Camp Stuart Wagon Road. Camp Stuart (also identified as Camp Stewart) was a temporary military post occupied in 1851 in the Rogue River Valley. This route passed through Winchester and then into California following the Applegate Trail. Congress funded improvements to the Scottsburg-Camp Stuart Wagon Road and to the old Oregon-California Trail from 1851 through 1879. These road improvements led to the beginning

of stage travel from Portland to Sacramento in 1860. The Oregon and California Stage Company began offering daily stages through the Rogue Valley in 1860.

Applying National Register Criteria. The Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA) has developed a methodology for mapping emigrant trails which includes applying national register criteria and aspects of integrity to emigrant trails. The Smith Hill Pass Group is exploring applying *National Register Criteria and Aspects of Integrity* to emigrant trails, and how they might apply them to that portion of the 1.8 mile segment of the *Trail* at Smith Hill Pass through the Grave Creek Hills administered by ODOT.

What was the role of the federal government in the location, survey, and improvement of routes for wagons in the West before the railroad era? Among the earnest pleas addressed to the United States Congress by the first legislature of Oregon Territory was a request for federal aid to improve transportation. Long before the creation of territorial government the transportation question had been of primary interest to Oregon's officials. Among the records of the provisional government, 1843 - 1849, six to seven hundred documents, including bills, memorials, and petitions, are related to the problem of road improvement. Yet the Oregon roads did not meet the basic needs of the sparse population at the beginning of the territorial era. The surfacing of routes through forested areas to make them all-season roads was a primary concern of the citizens.

The purpose of the U.S. "Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart" from 1853 through 1880 was officially for the military. However, regardless of this ostensible purpose, the real goal was of road improvement by the local residents was to attract civilian populations and to aid indirectly in the development of the agricultural, timber, and mineral resources of the territory. The following purposes were officially identified by the federal government.

- 1850 Umpqua River Road to connect California of the newness of the country and in consideration of its small and scattered population. It is most obvious that an appropriation is much needed for the construction and improvement of its roads and bridges.
- 1851 Civil and military purposes.
- 1853 Construction of a road; construction of military road; secure a practical wagon road; and secure a practical wagon road for the benefit of the fall emigrants and other travel
- 1856 Its utility in military operations is sufficiently evident from the fact that it forms a part of the only inland route of communication between California and the Columbia River, Connecting the Settlements Extending Between the Water of the Bay of San Francisco and the Columbia River
- 1857 Completion of military roads in Oregon Territory
- 1858 Operations on the military roads in Southern Oregon
- 1879 Improvement of the old Scottsburg-Camp Stuart Military Road.
- 1880 Half the appropriation expended on Scottsburg-Camp Stuart Military Road

Types of road improvements on “Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart” from 1857 through 1858 included the normal, but also included some of the most expensive. The normal included surveying and constructing roads. Direct supervision went to the Army Engineers. Trained military men made the surveys, or assigned them to civilians and, in turn, inspected and approved their work. The jobs of clearing the forest, grubbing out the stumps and underbrush in the right of way, the grading of the route and its drainage, including the building of ditches and culverts where necessary, were tasks performed by civilians under contract. Technical decisions involving the construction of bridges or culverts of masonry and the laying of segments of “McAdamized meta,” or stone surfacing, were handled by the Army Engineers.

The expensive improvements resulted from the principal features of difficulty in the northern canon of about one mile where the walls of the cañon become almost vertical, and the southern end, some four miles in length, where the mud had collected to great depths. For examples of expensive improvements in the Umpqua cañon there were two: road relocated on the side of the mountain, and installation of major drainage features in the form of drains and culverts. In the first instance the road was relocated and placed on the side of the mountain where before the road was previously located in the creek, and was but a succession of small precipices and huge boulders. This has involved a great expense, as the road was been literally blasted out of the hard basaltic rock. The improvement, however, was of the most permanent character. Improvements on the southern end was the removal of the deep mud and the correction of why it had collected - the entire lack of drainage. The drainage was corrected by the construction of frequent drains and culverts, while other portions were bridged.

The character of the “Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart” after the 1858 construction season, including the Grave Creek Hills, was 16' in width, free of roots and stumps, the timber cut down to width of 30' to 60'. The width was reduced where there was heavy rock or earth excavation, but in all places it was easily practicable for a 6-mule team.

The national government's contribution to western transportation was continuous and dominant throughout the nineteenth century. The constitutional controversy over internal improvements early highlighted the importance of this phase of federal activity. With the opening the Great West after the Mexican War, the cry for government assistance in establishing communication lines over vast distances grew ever louder. Through contracts for forwarding supplies to the Army posts, and subsidies for mail delivery and the transmission of telegraphic dispatches, the government attempted to the financial success of private enterprise. Although the grants-in-aid were temporary and the effects transitory, without them communication and transportation in the West would have been not only inadequate but almost impossible.

More important than these indirect government aids was the program of reconnaissance, exploration, survey and improvement of routes usable by emigrants, traders, mail carriers, and soldiers. Throughout the period 1846 - 1869 [1883 - 1887 in Southern Oregon], there was a constant search by government agents for passages through the western terrain whereby wagons could travel from the Mississippi to the Pacific. Where movement was not blocked by swift

flowing rivers, where mountain grades were not too steep for mules or oxen to pull a heavily loaded wagon, where the terrain did not undulate sufficiently to overturn the load, where the soil was not so marshy to bog down the wheels, and where the timber and underbrush were not too dense to hinder transit, the wagons were free to roll. More emphasis was placed on the discovery of a natural passage than on construction.

“Individualism and adaptability characterized all those who participated in American’s westward movement. Frontiersmen evinced this as they sought out new routes toward the West and more convenient means of transport. Despite this individualism, the Westerner always sought the aid of the federal government in solving his transportation problem. The principal instrumentality for the earliest road construction by the federal government was the United States Army. Existing Indian trails were usually followed through the wilderness to Army outposts, and only necessary improvements made for the movement of artillery or supply trains. First roads on the frontier were often known locally as military roads. More important for western development, these routes became the migratory wagon roads for early settlers, and when a community was occupied they were quickly used for commercial purposes. Many roads built by the War Department in the western territories, politically justified on the basis of national defense, were much greater significance in facilitating access to public lands.

There were three main appropriations and construction periods on the U.S. Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart.

1. 1853 - 1854.
2. 1857 - 1858.
3. 1879 - 1880.

This executive summary is a work in progress for the draft evolving paper entitle “*United States Military Wagon Road From Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart: 1853 - 1880*”; it is not compete.

Appendix C. Historic Applegate Transportation Corridor

by Jim & Rene Ford
August 16, 2012

Prior to 1829 Indians probably used this route.

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1829 | Alexander McLeod of the Hudson Bay made the first written account of the trail through this corridor while traveling from Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River to the central valley of California. |
| 1941 | U.S. Exploring Expedition under the leadership of George Emmons made scientific observations along this route. |
| 1846 | Jesse Applegate and company followed this route when opening up a Southern route to Oregon. This route was known as the Applegate trail. |

- 1848 Gold miners traveled to the gold fields in California and Southern Oregon along this route. Peter Burnet led 150 men and 50 wagons from Oregon City to California gold fields.
- 1851 Hills-Riddle wagon train followed by the Shook wagon train later (same year).
- 1852 - 1861 Emigrants arrive in the Rogue Valley and settle or pass through.
- 1852 Several wagon trains moved North and South by this route.
- 1852 Major Phil Kearny passed south to California with 200 men.
- 1853 Jesse Applegate laid out the route for the Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart Military Road.
- 1854 The Myrtle Creek to Camp Stuart military road improvements were made.
- 1855 Government Land Office started to survey and map this region.
- 1855 Pacific Railway surveyed a route to serve this area.
- 1858 - 1858 Military Road appropriation for construction.
- 1860 - 1883 Stage coaches were major form of transportation to and from California
- 1864 Collins Telegraph used this route to put in a telegraph line
- 1872 - 1873 A large amount of military movement during the Modoc War. James Clark Tolman wagon train with 20 men and 10 wagons arrived in the Rogue Valley
- 1874 County Roads were surveyed in Josephine County
- 1876 - 1877 The Postal Telegraph Co. put in a North/South telegraph line.
- 1879 - 1880 Military Road appropriation for construction.
- 1883 Oregon-California Railroad service reached this area and stage coaches went out of service.
- 1887 Interstate connection of railroad
- 1893-1894 Second Government land Office Survey was made.
- 1913 With the slogan "*Get Oregon Out of the Mud,*" the 1913 Oregon Legislature established the Oregon Highway Department and the Pacific Highway.
- 1920-1921 Paved Pacific Highway over Mt. Sexton was constructed.
- 1926 The Pacific Highway became U.S. 99.
- 1941 A new right-of-way on Smith Hill (i.e., Sexton Pass) was cleared along with the old 1890s Smith house overlooking the summit.
- 1958 The I-5 freeway between Grants Pass and Jumpoff Joe Creek Road was completed and opened in the fall of 1958.
- 1960 I-5 through northern Josephine County was completed in 1960. By September 1960, about 105 miles of the 308-mile Interstate 5 had been completed and opened to traffic in Oregon.
- 1961 - 1962 I-5 opened from Grants Pass to near Rock Point, in the Gold Hill area.
- 1965 - 1966 I-5 was completed from Mount Sexton to Canyonville.
- 1966 Completion of 308-I-5 to four lanes across Oregon was dedicated on October 22, 1966.