



**THE FIFTY-NINER**  
**Newsletter of the Colorado Chapter**  
**Oregon-California Trails Association**  
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### *OCTA Preservation Training Program*

The national organization is presently considering various locations at which to conduct the Preservation Training Program during 2006. Dave Welch, OCTA's National Preservation Officer, is in charge of the program. Three sessions are held in different parts of the country during the year. If there is a sufficient level of interest among members of our chapter, one of the sessions could be held in Colorado. Dave Welch has provided the following description of the program:



The program covers three aspects of trail preservation work: mapping, marking and monitoring (the 3Ms). It is presented over one to three days depending upon the requirements of a given audience. It includes lectures and classroom discussions and field problem solving when possible.

OCTA's Mapping Emigrant Trails (MET) Guide is the basis for the mapping portion of the program. The MET guide describes techniques for identifying, classifying and documenting emigrant trails. Types of trails (ruts, swales and traces) are defined as are a set of classifications (Class 1 through Class 5) for determining the quality of the resource. Preservation efforts are focused on the highest quality remnants, Class 1 through 3.

The mapping program also includes instruction on the use of USGS maps for documenting trails both in paper and computer-based formats. Instruction also includes use of Global Positioning System (GPS) units for documenting the trail location on maps.

Monitoring is the process whereby volunteers keep track of what is happening to the trails by periodic visits and photo documentation. The training program includes information on laws and regulations that protect historic resources and how they are applied. Interactions with both public and private landowners are examined. Chapter-based groups to conduct trail monitoring are defined.

OCTA's approach to trail marking is covered by our "Trail Marking Policy," OCTA's official guide to markers and their placement. Markers include carsonite posts, Novalloy interpretive panels, and others. The contents of the marker policy and procedures for selecting, designing and installing a marker are reviewed.

In the field session, the lessons learned in the classroom are tested in the field. Students map and classify a trail segment applying MET techniques and establish marking and monitoring plans. The field session is only offered with a two- or three-day training program.

The preservation training program is intended to provide a basis for chapter mapping, marking and monitoring activities. The final aspect of the program is to develop an action plan to guide the chapter program that follows. The program is supported by a challenge cost-share grant from the National Parks Service's National Trails System Office.

Preservation training is open to OCTA members who are seriously considering involvement in one of the three Ms. This participation can range from home-based computer research to field installation of markers. It is designed to offer something for members of all capabilities and interests.

- For further information about the program, contact Dave Welch: [welchdj@comcast.net](mailto:welchdj@comcast.net) or 253-584-0332.
- If you would like to participate, contact Camille Bradford: [bradford@driggfoundation.org](mailto:bradford@driggfoundation.org) or 303-460-0371. If you are interested, please do so at your earliest convenience so that we may ascertain the preliminary level of interest in this program. We need to notify the national office in February of the final number of members who would be interested.

## ***Report on the Colorado Trails Symposium*** **By Travis Boley**



From September 22 – 24, I had the great pleasure to attend the Colorado Trails Symposium in Broomfield at the Omni Interlocken Resort. Trail leaders from across the state gathered together during these three days to share experiences, learn from national-level trail leaders and build alliances and partnerships. I attended three primary seminars designed to help me learn about possible opportunities for the Oregon-California Trails Association in Colorado.

The first session was largely an overview discussion entitled “The Economic Impact of Trails – Hype or Substance?” hosted by Dr. Roger Moore of North Carolina State University. Although this discussion focused on the big picture, one could extrapolate from some of Dr. Moore’s macro-conclusions and draw on them when making the case for funding on a very specific project.

The key thing to remember, according to Dr. Moore, is that we want to talk about economic impacts when seeking funding from governmental agencies. Avoid the term “economic benefits,” as this term is used by economists to describe total social value. We want to look at actual effects on real spending, which is the definition of economic impacts. This includes visitor trip expenditures (such as lodging, food and fuel), user expenditures on durable goods (items like tents, GPS units, hiking boots and

*Photo: Travis Boley (right) speaks with visitor to OCTA booth at the Colorado Trails Symposium.*

backpacks), expenditures on the construction, development, operation and maintenance of a trail, and finally, recreation and use fees.

Trails are increasingly being seen by city, state and federal authorities as infrastructure for attracting visitors. This is especially true for trails that can attract festivals and re-enactments, things that OCTA does often and well. And though historic trails have long been relegated to funding's back seat vis-à-vis scenic and recreational trails, I would suggest a paradigm shift to put historic trails on an equal or greater footing than that staked out by our friends in the business of scenic and recreational trails. That is, I would suggest that it is time for historic trail folks to begin thinking of themselves in terms of their trail's scenic and recreational qualities as well as its historic qualities. Why not rebuild the trail along the historic corridor of the Cherokee and Smoky Hill Trails? Why not utilize this corridor to connect those historic sites and trail remnants that still remain? Why not show Colorado communities on the High Plains and Front Range how these historic trails could serve as an impetus for the development of new tourism industries? And why not, at the same time, show these same communities how trails can improve the quality of their own lives via increased access to entertainment, recreation, better health and safer routes to school?

While Dr. Moore's talk was heavy on theory and light on practical applications, his talk was well-augmented by Jeff Ciabotti's discussion on "Successful Strategies for Trail Development." Ciabotti hails from Washington, DC where he works for the Rails to Trails Conservancy, an agency dedicated to helping state and local governments convert their abandoned rail lines to pedestrian and biking trails. His talk was heavy on where money could be found once you had your economic impact statements in hand.

For example, the new Transportation Enhancements bill that was just passed by Congress this past summer includes \$370 million for land acquisition and trail development. It also includes \$612 for a program entitled "Safe Routes to School," which will allow for trail development from neighborhoods to schools. There are many schools that lie along the historic trail corridors of Colorado and this program could prove a useful tool for OCTA in its quest to redevelop historic trails and preserve those remnants and sites which still remain.

In addition to these funds are the "high priority projects" (also affectionately known as "pork") delineated in the bill. The \$9 billion worth of projects includes \$1 billion specifically for biking and pedestrian trails. These projects are already earmarked and will be available for public viewing on the Department of Transportation's website in the near future.

The other key thing to keep in mind as you develop trail projects in Colorado is that politicians are becoming increasingly concerned about the epidemic of obesity in America and are beginning to address this problem by providing more funding for creating healthful opportunities, including the building of trails. As of 2002, 60 percent of all adults in America were overweight or obese and 78 percent of children are largely sedentary, virtually guaranteeing that the problem of obesity in adults will only get worse in the short-term. When one considers that 80 percent of all chronic diseases are preventable with good diet and regular exercise, and when one further considers the fact that \$117 billion a year is spent on treating problems associated with obesity, it is no wonder that politicians are beginning to address this epidemic with funded opportunities for better health.

This means that funding for healthy lifestyles is likely to become available in specific mandates in future appropriations. These programs will likely be administered by Health & Human Services, HUD and the CDC. But there is funding available immediately for projects in the state of Colorado.

The third program I attended focused on Colorado State Parks and their program that gives grants for trail projects in the state. It is called the Colorado State Parks Trails Program. Applications are available on August 1 and the deadline for submission is November 1. Award decisions are made on May 15. Non-profit organizations can request funds for construction, reconstruction, maintenance or enhancements to an existing or new trail or trailhead and land acquisitions. They give small grants (under \$15,000, which need a 25 percent match) and large grants (\$15,001 - \$200,000 which need an equal match).

Federal agencies and state, county and local governments are also eligible to apply. And best of all, all three entities (not-for-profits, agencies and governmental bodies) can partner to apply for funds. The partnership applications can be made for trail planning, feasibility, trail inventory, trail use studies, analysis of existing and proposed trails, training in trail design, maintenance and/or construction, building a volunteer organization,, adding volunteers to a program, mapping projects, adopt-a-trail development, trail use education, and trail signage. This partnering program is for trails on lands open to the public. Typically, the partnering grants for planning or special projects are for \$20,000 or less and require a 25 percent match. Partnering grants for equipment can be made up to \$100,000 and requires an equal match.

Needless to say, this is an incredible opportunity for the Colorado Chapter to gain excellent funding and develop wonderful partnerships with other organizations and governmental bodies around the state. There are a couple of possible partnering opportunities already shaping up, but they are still in their infancy and Camille Bradford will likely share news when news becomes available.

I am personally excited about these opportunities. You should know that they are unique to your state and I hope that you take full advantage of them. Of course, you can rely on the national office to help prepare grant applications or assist in any other way your chapter deems necessary. It seems incredible to me that, after only being reconfigured for about six months, that the Colorado chapter is so well-poised to make an immediate and lasting contribution to the preservation of our nation's historic trails. I look forward to seeing the incredible results begin to pour out of Colorado!

## ***Chapter development***

**By Camille Bradford**

***Your help is needed in the expansion and development of the chapter.***

- We need to expand our membership and I hope that all OCTA members in Colorado who have not yet joined the chapter will do so in the near future. Please send your dues for \$10 per year to the national office. A copy of the new OCTA membership brochure is enclosed which provides for payment of both national and chapter dues. (The national office is now going to collect both, in order to synchronize the expiration dates.) One of the best means of recruiting new members is through



personal contact from existing members. Please tell your friends and family members about OCTA and encourage them to join.

- The national office has made a large supply of the enclosed brochure available to the Colorado chapter. We have already placed a supply in the Colorado History Museum in Denver and need your help placing them in other key facilities which attract visitors interested in the trails. Please contact me by e-mail if you are willing to do so. Let me know which facilities you can take them to and how many copies you would like and I will mail them to you.
- Questionnaire: We also need to involve more members in planning events and handling other responsibilities associated with running the chapter. I have prepared the enclosed questionnaire to learn what responsibilities might be of interest to you. I welcome any other comments and suggestions you may have and would appreciate your completing this questionnaire and returning it to me at your earliest convenience.

### ***Meritorious Achievement Award presented to Jack and Pat Fletcher***



Former Coloradans Pat Fletcher (left) and Jack Fletcher (right), who now live in Sequim, Washington, were honored with OCTA's Meritorious Achievement Award. They are pictured with OCTA President Vern Gorzitze (center) at the presentation on August 19, 2005 at the OCTA convention in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Meritorious Achievement Award is the highest honor given by OCTA.

Both Dr. and Mrs. Fletcher are graduates of Aurora High School. They were honored for their work in identifying, locating and documenting significant sites and segments on the Cherokee Trail. The Cherokee Trail was first used by a group of emigrants, including Cherokee Indians, headed for the California goldfields in 1849. It ran through northeastern Oklahoma, through central Kansas, up the Front Range in Colorado and west across Wyoming to Fort Bridger. From there, it joined other trails to California.

Their studies were published in three volumes of *Cherokee Trail Diaries - Vol. I: 1849, A New Route to the California Gold Fields; Vol. II: 1850, Another New Route to the California Gold Fields; and Vol. III: 1851 - 1900, Emigrants, Goldseekers, Cattle Drives, and Outlaws*. In addition, the Fletchers' research and maps were turned over to the National Park Service's Long Distance Trails Office to qualify the Cherokee Trail as a branch of the California National Historic Trail. This designation will now require the approval of the U.S. Congress.

Jack Fletcher is a former science professor at the University of Guam, University of Northern Colorado, University of British Columbia and Eastern Washington University. Pat Fletcher taught history and geography in Guam, Arizona State in Yuma and supervised teachers at Eastern Washington University. Both are active members of OCTA and Jack serves on OCTA's national Board of Directors.

## *17 Mile House restoration project*



The historic 17 Mile House property in Arapahoe County, which was acquired by the County as part of its Open Space program, is presently undergoing restoration with funds provided by the Colorado Historical Society's State Historical Fund. The property is listed on the National



Register of Historic Places. The house (left) was originally an inn that was an important stage stop on the Cherokee Trail. The property, located at 8181 South Parker Road, also includes a barn (right) built around the same time in the late 1860s. The Trail passed between the house and the barn. The site was the first feed lot in the region and had the first Swiss cattle and registered horses in the area. The restoration project is expected to be completed in two years and will include a Visitors Center. A farm south of the property, owned by the town of Parker, will become a trailhead for a connecting trail to the Cherry Creek Valley Ecological Park and Cherry Creek Trail, which eventually will connect to Cherry Creek State Park on the north. Camille Bradford recently visited the property with Lynn Wodell, Open Space Manager for Arapahoe County, and Jeffrey Baker, the County's Project Manager for the restoration. We hope to plan an upcoming chapter event centered around this project.

## *Chapter name*

When the national organization reactivated the chapter this year, it did so pursuant to the original charter for the Colorado Chapter. In the interim, various members of the national board have suggested that the name be changed to the Cherokee Trail Chapter to recognize the significance of that trail and its route through Colorado. Such a change would entail amendment of the charter, requiring a majority vote of members present at a chapter meeting and final approval by the national board. This matter will be brought up for discussion and a vote at the next chapter meeting, which is tentatively planned for January. Further details will be mailed to chapter members and posted on the website.



*Plan now to attend next year's OCTA convention in St. Joseph, Missouri – August 8-12, 2006.*