

GJSentinel.com

 site web

 Web Search powered by
YAHOO! SEARCH
 Subscribe to The Daily Sentinel

 XML

 Mobile Ac

HOME

NEWS

OPINION

OBITUARIES

SPORTS

BUSINESS

BLOGS

LIFESTYLES

- [→ CLASSIFIEDS](#)
- [→ CARS](#)
- [→ REAL ESTATE](#)
- [→ JOBS](#)
- [→ MERCHANDISE](#)
- [→ PLACE AN AD](#)



OPINION

[Editorials](#) | [Letters to the Editor](#) | [You Said It!](#) | [Archives](#)
[E-mail this page](#)
[Print this page](#)
[Most E-mailed/Most printed](#)
 [Type size](#)

On the trail of the Old Spanish Trail across Orchard Mesa

Advertisement


[Click-2-Listen](#)

Friday, March 28, 2008

Here's something Mesa County could add to its list of events to celebrate as it recognizes the county's 125th birthday this year: Some of their earliest county muckety-mucks — the county commissioners in 1886 — took care to preserve a trail that remains important today, though for much different reasons now.

Where herds of horses and mules once traveled, and wooden wagons rumbled a few decades later, hikers, horseback riders and other modern-day recreationists now travel. And efforts to protect that area — a section of the Northern Branch of the Old Spanish Trail — have been under way for more than a decade.

But recently rediscovered documents indicate the Mesa County Commissioners already protected this trail — in 18

Back then, it may have been part of the wagon road to Salt Lake City, a route that ran all the way from Del Norte in Valley to Utah's largest city.

What brought all of this to the forefront in 2008 is the possibility of development around the Old Spanish Trail. Two property on Orchard Mesa have been discussed for development this year, both of them near the trailhead for a pc Spanish Trail. A much larger section further down the trail also could be at issue. And suddenly, there were fears th trail could be restricted.

That caused some residents of Orchard Mesa to mobilize and form a group called OMNIA (Orchard Mesa Neighbo People like Vicki Felmllee, Pamela McQuirk and Victoria Gibson began researching the public records for the Old S contacting public officials about their concerns for the trail.

The potential for development has also led to several community meetings, the most recent one just last week, bet of the area and those planning development.

Although the trail runs near or through several of the possible development properties, no one has proposed closin trail entirely. Instead developers have talked of expanding the county road that leads to the main trailhead into a lai

service development and rerouting part of the trail. That idea doesn't sit well with the OMNIA folks.

The owner of the largest bloc of land in the immediate area — Mark Strodman of Greeley — may have suffered a development plans last week when he was indicted by a Weld County grand jury on 23 felony charges related to a scheme.

But even if he were to sell his 400 acres in the area and bow out of the local development picture, there is likely to pressure to develop the private land around the Old Spanish Trail.

I have more than a passing interest in the Old Spanish Trail, particularly the Northern Branch that ran through the C

First, the late Jim Robb introduced me to a book about the trail's history. And he was instrumental, along with area and Katherine Nelson, in making sure the Northern Branch was included when the Old Spanish Trail was designat historic trail.

I was among the several hundred people who attended the dedication ceremony at Eagle Rim Park on Orchard Me Northern Branch of the trail was formally dedicated a national historic trail.

Furthermore, I've repeatedly encountered the Old Spanish Trail in other circumstances. Just last fall near Durango watched as video cameras recorded several elders of the Southern Ute Tribe riding horseback on a portion of the of the Old Spanish Trail. That portion of the trail is to be inundated by the Animas-la Plata Water Project, and histo visual record of where the trail once ran.

Not all of the stories regarding the Old Spanish Trail are especially savory ones. In addition to being a path for lega between Santa Fe and the Spanish communities of Southern California, the trail was used for illegal commerce. St mules were pushed over it. So were Native American slaves — mostly Paiutes from what is now southwestern Uta Nevada — who were sold to wealthy families at both ends of the trail.

But the trail is a part of this region's heritage — good and bad — and that deserves preservation.

To that end, the 1886 easement for a wagon road that the OMNIA group and other researchers have dug out of co may help. It applies to several miles of road or trail between what is now Orchard Mesa and the community of Whit

Combined with more recent easements for parts of the trail, this document should give county officials authority to whatever development may ultimately be approved on that part of Orchard Mesa, good public access to the Old Sp remain.

[Fed Cuts Interest Rates Again](#)

Mortgage Rates Hit 26 Month Lows. Calculate Your New Mortgage Payment.

www.LowerMyBills.com

[Online College Programs - US Residents](#)

Get matched with up to 5 colleges with 1 form. Serious inquiries only.

www.NexTag.com/online-degrees

[New Car Weekend Sales](#)

Find out Today's Advertised New Car MSRP & Instant Invoice Price Info.

CarBargainsWeekly.com

Ads by Yahoo!

[Return to Top](#)

[Grand Junction News](#) | [Grand Junction Weather](#) | [Sports](#) | [Business News](#) | [Opinions](#) | [Classified](#)
[Grand Junction Cars](#) | [Grand Junction Real Estate](#) | [Grand Junction Jobs](#)

Copyright 2008 Grand Junction Newspapers, Inc. All rights reserved. - [The Daily Sentinel](#) -

By using this service, you accept the terms of our [visitor agreement](#) and [privacy policy](#).
To report content corrections, email corrections@gjds.com or to report
classified advertising corrections, email classified@gjds.com
Registered site users, you may [edit your profile](#).
Having trouble? Visit our [help & FAQ](#)

