



The ***Las Vegas Tourist Guides Guild***

Early Nevada, Spanish Trail, and Mormon History Interpretation and Notes from Art Chesmore

First created from the Utah Territory in 1861, the Nevada Territory boundary was extended east in 1862. Following Statehood in 1864 the boundary was again extended east in 1866. In 1867, land annexed from Arizona Territory added what is now Clark County and Las Vegas.

The Old Spanish Trail Association organized in 1994, to protect, interpret, and promote the 1829-1848 trading route between New Mexico and California. Chapters are chartered in New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Arizona, Nevada and California. The 20th Anniversary Conference was held in Las Vegas in October 2014. See <http://www.oldspanishtrail.org/>

The Old Spanish Trail was designated a National Historic Trail by Congress in December 2002.

Old Spanish Trail Park, with historical signage, is located at 8150 Tara Ave, south of W. Sahara Ave and east of S. Durango Dr. The Red Rock overlook also has signage with information about the OST.

Major settlements along the Mormon Corridor were spaced approximately 45 miles apart; because that was the maximum distance a telegraph message could be transmitted without installing a repeater station.

The Mormon settlement of St. Thomas (1865-1938) was the only community displaced by the filling of Lake Mead.

The Old Las Vegas Mormon Fort State Historic Park, established in 1991, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and is marked Nevada Historic Marker #35.

AC – Art Chesmore



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**Early Nevada, Spanish Trail, and Mormon History
Interpretation Comparisons**

Relate to historical and well known events, and to natural resources familiar to clients and guests:

Ancient civilizations (Native Americans) were "Snowbird" pioneers, traveling between summer encampments in the tall pines, and winter in the desert.

Francisco Garcés, and The Dominguez-Escalante expedition, passed through Southwest North America in 1776, the same year the United States signed the Declaration of Independence.

Interstate Highway 15 parallels earlier transportation corridors, including the Old Spanish Trail, the Mormon Corridor, the San Pedro, Los Angeles and Salt Lake Railroad, the Arrowhead Trail, and Highway 91.

Gold was discovered in California in 1848, the same year that Southwest lands were ceded from Mexico.

Compare 1850s transportation along the Mormon Corridor to 21st C travel along Interstate 15. Pioneers traveled 10-12 miles per day over desert rutted pavement, aboard buckboards and in covered wagons, carrying food and water for families and livestock. Today, we travel a mile per minute on smooth asphalt, carrying bottled water in enclosed vehicles equipped with suspension systems and air conditioning.

In 1931, US Congress appropriate funds for construction of the Boulder Dam Project; Nevada Legislature repealed the prohibition of gaming; and Nevada Legislature liberalized marriage and divorce laws. All three pieces of legislation contribute to the current tourism industry in Southern Nevada.

In 1935, Boulder Dam was completed; the Lost City Museum of Archaeology was opened; and Valley of Fire State Park was established.

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