Trails West, Inc. is an organization of emigrant trail enthusiasts who research, identify, mark and aid in the preservation of the trails used to reach California and southern Oregon in the mid-19th century. As an organization it marks the trails in Nevada, Oregon and California with T-shaped railroad rail. Each marker bears a plate inscribed with the location, trail name and a descriptive quote from an emigrant diary of the 1840’s to 1860’s. In 1984, Tails West began publishing guides with “Emigrant Trails West: A Guide to Trails Markers Placed by Trails West, Inc. along the California, Applegate, Lassen and Nobles’ Tails in Idaho, Nevada, and California.” Members participate on both work trips (installing markers) and fun trips (learning about the trail).

Trails West was organized on July 17, 1970, at Crowder Flat, Modoc National Forest, California. Attending were about 40 people traveling the Applegate pioneer trail on a tour arranged by the North Cal-Neva Recreation RC&D (Resource, Conservation and Development) Recreation - Tourist -Beautification Committee. It was first proposed in January at a meeting of North Cal-Neva trail buffs in Reno. It would raise money through dues, donations, etc. to promote awareness and protection of historical resources. It was agreed the name Trails West was appropriate, and on August 17, 1970, it was incorporated as Trails West, Inc.

Trails West, Inc. had been preceded by the Nevada Emigrant Trail Marking Committee (NETMC). It was established in 1967 to preserve and mark the trail across the 40 Mile Desert in western Nevada. In 1974, NETMC disbanded and offered maps, supplies and markers to Trails West, Inc. In 2000, a dispute arose between previous members and members of Tails West over placement and ownership of markers and they sued Trails West, Inc. The suit was settled in 2001, with Trails West, Inc. agreeing to reattach plates and returning those markers not fitting into Trails West’s trail alignment to the original members of NETMC.

Trail’s West, Inc.’s website, [www.emigranttrailswest.org](http://www.emigranttrailswest.org) describes its mission and lists the trails guides (with updates) available for purchase, and a schedule of activities. The Members Only section has current news, Board Minutes (2009 to present), its newsletter The Marker (September 1999 to present), current membership roster, Bylaws, and other information, including photographs.

The records in this collection, 1968-2017, include minutes of the Board of Directors, agendas, committee reports, correspondence, attachments, and information on markers, NETMC suit, financial information, publications, plaques, albums and scrapbooks.
Box 1
Minutes

Received in 2 binders titled Minutes (with agendas, correspondence, reports, etc).
Transferred to 10 folders

1. Organizational meeting, July 17, 1970
2. Meeting agenda, Aug. 6, 1971
3. Aug. 4, 1972-Nov. 12, 1977

Received in 1 binder titled Minutes, transferred to 3 folders

11. April 2011-April 14, 2012

Received in 1 binder, no title, transferred to 4 folders.

15. Minutes, April 2, 2011-March 29, 2003 (descending order as received)
16. Minutes, December 8, 2002-April 4, 1992 (descending order as received)
17. Treasurer’s report, Jan. 1, 2010-Aug. 31, 1984 (descending order as received)

Received in 1 binder titled TW File (Minutes, forms, The Marker, correspondence, marker inspections, NETMC). Transferred to 3 folders

18. 2008-2005 (descending order as received)
19. 2004-2001 (descending order as received)
20. 2000
Box 2

Documents – Correspondence, Newsletters, Fieldtrip Notes, Litigation, Guidelines

23. “Early Trails West Marker Info.” Ca. 1994-1977 (descending order as received)
24. TW Constitution and Bylaws [1974-2013]
27. “Plaques sold to members” and “Donations for Manuscripts” [1981-2012]
28. Miscellaneous correspondence - mail and email – [1984-2012]
29. “Marker History per Field Trips” [1985-1995]
30. “Marker History per Field Trips” [1997-2005]
31. Membership Rosters [2010-1988] (descending order as received)
33. “Red River Cart” by Bert Ashton, ca. 1989
34. TW/NETMC litigation. Emails June 6, 2000-Dec. 28, 2000
36. TW/NETMC litigation. General information.
37. TW/NETMC litigation. Legal Fund and Insurance. 1999-2001
38. TW/NETMC litigation. Newspaper clippings. 2000
39. Secretary of State Filing of Officers [2002-2011]
40. Insurance [2003-2014]
41. Miscellaneous Guidelines, policies, order forms, ballot [2004-2012]
42. 40 Anniversary, 2010
43. Donation to California Trail Interpretive Center, Elko, NV 2013
44. Stationary, Envelope, Membership Card, Brochure, Inventory, Bylaws 2017.
45. Trails Commentaries (Published on website)
47. The Marker, Winter 2008-Winter 2015
Box 3

**Trails Marker Placement Permits**, ca. 1971-2015, in order as received with folder title, 19 folders

49. Emigrant Trail Marker Permits. Lists, 2004; 2009
50. Applegate Trail Marker Permits, [ca. 1971-1986]
51. Beckwourth Trail Marker Permission, 1992; 2012
52. Burnett Cut-off, 2013
53. California Trail Marker Permissions, 1974-1979
54. California Trail Marker Permissions, 1984-2015
55. California Overland Trail Marker Permission, 2014
56. Carson Trail Marker Permission, 2001-2002
57. Central Overland Trail Marker Permission, 2014
58. Hastings Cut-off Marker Permission, 1997
59. Henness Pass Marker Permissions, 2015
60. Johnson’s Cut-off, 2011
61. Lassen Trail [1974-2007]
63. Sonora Emigrant Route, 2015
64. Truckee Trail [1989-2015]
65. Yreka Trail, 2008
68. Nevada Emigrant Trail Marker Placement Release (NETMC), 1968-1971
69. Oregon-Applegate Markers, 1992
70. Miscellaneous correspondence re: Permits, Road Closures, Leases [1997,2007-2008]
71. **Photocopied photo album.** Burt Ashton’s photos of wagon parts found on 40 Mile desert and general photos of Trail West members, ca. 1985 [Original in possession of Ralph and Sandy Theiss to go with wagon, cart and carved oxen]
72. **Album.** Contents removed from one binder. Photos of Bert Ashton, 1990; Bruff Camp, 2012; Publicity; member obituaries, 2014
Box 4

Financial

75. Financial. Audit Reports, 2005-2010
79. Canceled Bank Books (2) 1984-1987
80. Financial. 40th Anniversary, 2010

Box 5

Publications


A Guide to the Applegate Trail from Lassen Meadows to Goose Lake. Richard K. Brock, Editor; Donald E. Buck, Historian; Alison Portello, Photo Editor; Herman Zittel, Cartographer. An Emigrant Trails West Series Guidebook by Trails West, Inc. 3rd edition, 2010.


Plaques:


Box 6
Scrapbook

#2 Scrapbook, 1977-1991. Newspaper clippings, printed materials, photographs with identification. Cover is wood with covered wagon and the letters *Trails West* carved on cover with leather ties to close album.

Box 7
Scrapbooks and Photo Albums

#5 Binder. Photographs by Betsy Washburn, 1985-1991. First section, June 1985, photographs not identified; other sections are arranged by location (route, trail) and identified. At back of binder is Annual Banquet program, 2007; correspondence re: Milt Otto and 1979-1982.


Box 8
Scrapbooks and Photo Albums


#7 Photo album, 2003-2006. Photographs identified.

General Scrapbooks, Binders, Individual Photos and Photo Albums List

1. See Folders 71, 72, 73 and 74