



EXHIBIT: End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center

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REGON TRAIL
INTERPRETIVE CENTER
OREGON CITY, OREGON

The Willamette River waterfalls have been the center of human activity for over 3,000 years. Archeologists have uncovered evidence of Native American culture predating 1,000 years, B.C., which evolved without interference until white immigration forever altered its course.

In 1818, the United States and Great Britain agreed to a ten-year joint occupancy of the Oregon Country — now the states of Oregon, Idaho, Washington and parts of Montana, Wyoming and British Columbia. Ten years later, because of the pending boundary settlement, the powerful British Hudson's Bay Company wished to secure a strong bargaining position. To this end, Canadian-born Dr. John McLoughlin, who managed company operations from Fort Vancouver, ordered the construction of three log houses next to the Willamette River waterfalls in the winter of 1829-30. In 1832, he ordered a sawmill and a flour mill built at the waterfalls thereby making first use of water power in Oregon City.

In the ensuing decade, small groups of hardy Americans started to arrive in the Willamette Valley. In 1841, Methodists established a milling company occupying

an island below the waterfalls, opposite the property claimed by Dr. McLoughlin. Their letters to friends in the East, adding to publicity given to the territory by a Boston schoolmaster, started the first trickle of settlers who made their way to the Willamette Valley via the "Oregon Trail".

After nearly 2,000 miles on the "trail" from Independence, Missouri, an exhaustive journey which lasted five months, the emigrants finally came to the "End of the Oregon Trail" in Oregon City, Oregon. The Willamette River waterfalls also mark the end of the river route of the "Oregon Trail" for those emigrants who boated down the Columbia River from The Dalles to Fort Vancouver and then up the Willamette River. From there, the emigrants, whether arriving by land or water, fanned out across the fertile Willamette Valley to the South in search of the new homes which they had come so far, and sacrificed so much, to find.

September 20, 1852, Esther Hanna wrote, "*Here we are at last in Oregon City, that long looked-for place! . . . But we are alive, and although depleted in strength from scarcity of food and exhaustive travel, we offer prayers to the good Lord who has watched over us.*"

The "End of the Oregon Trail" Interpretive Center serves as a visitors center to better explain the arduous trail journey and the welcome site of Oregon City — THE JOURNEY'S END!

LOCATION: Fifth and Washington Streets

HOURS: Wednesday - Saturday 10:00 am-4:00 pm
Sunday 12 Noon-4:00 pm

ADMISSION: Adults \$1.00
Children under 12 years .50

DIRECTIONS: Take I-5 to the I-205 Oregon City-West Linn Exit; enter Oregon City from the Park Place Exit off I-205; stay to the right, becomes Washington Street; continue up hill - the Interpretive Center is at the corner of 5th and Washington Streets.

**END OF THE OREGON TRAIL —
BEGINNING OF OREGON HISTORY**
