



Our website is www.zebulonpike.org

Our Purpose: To Establish federal designation of the Pike National Historic Trail

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Pike National Historic Trail Association

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Pike experiencing Christmas in the upper Arkansas River Valley 1806

Having descending through Brown's Canyon on the Arkansas, Pike and his men were on the prairie above Salida with Shavano Peak to their west. They had seen the snow covered peaks of the 14,000 foot (+) Harvard, Yale and Princeton mountains. On December 24th, 1806, they were cold and hungry. In the afternoon of Wednesday the 24th, the party was once again together and Pike received the report that Dr. Robinson and interpreter Baroney had killed 4 buffalo.

"Sent out horses for the meat, shortly after Sparks arrived and informed us that he had killed four cows. We now again found ourselves all assembled together on Christmas Eve, and appeared generally to be content, although all the refreshment we had to celebrate that day with, was buffalo meat, without salt, or any other thing whatever. ..."

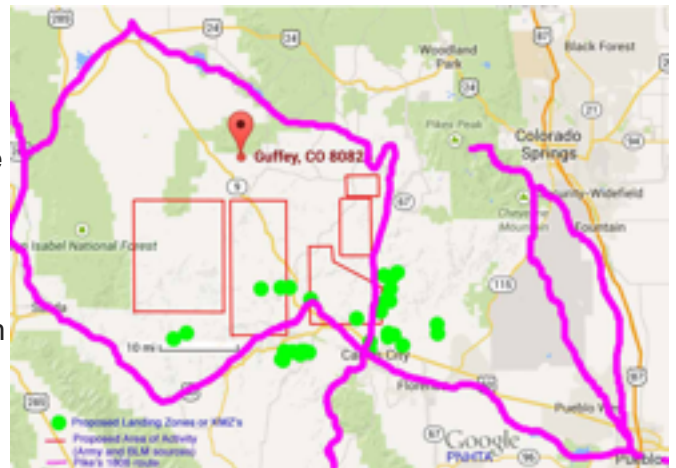
25th December, Thursday.— **"It being stormy weather and having meat to dry; I concluded to lie by this day. Here I must take the liberty of observing that in this situation, the hardships and privations we underwent, were on this day brought more fully to our mind. Having been accustomed to some degree of relaxation, and extra enjoyments; but here 800 miles from the frontiers of our country, in the most inclement season of the year; not one person clothed for the winter, many without blankets, (having been obliged to cut them up for socks, &c.) and now laying down at night on the snow or wet ground; one side burning whilst the other was pierced with the cold wind; this was in part the situation of the party whilst some were endeavoring to make a miserable substitute of raw buffalo hide for shoes &c."**

We today should count our blessings.

Ft. Carson's request- HAMET (High Altitude Mountain Training) right-of-way with the BLM

We wanted to give you heads up about a high-altitude mountain training proposal by the Army and let you know a little bit about it.

The Army has proposed to the BLM the use or partial use of BLM land for a high altitude mountain training in the area north from Cañon City, just south of US 24, East of US 285 and North of US 50 in the Guffey, Colorado area, i.e. the usage of BLM administered lands in Teller, Fremont, and Park counties. (See the accompanying map.)



The apparent objective is to fly helicopters in and out for training purposes for establishing initial footholds for military operations in mountainous areas around the world.

Reportedly- This would be a 10-year right-of-way, with up to 8 landings per day/landing zone, day and night. There may be 46 proposed landing zones, four of them located in BLM lands adjacent to the Guffey, CO area. The military helicopters would be low-flying between the landing zones. The use would not only be for Ft. Carson personal but would also be available to other Army posts.

We have responded to BLM's request for public comment, talked with BLM and parties living in the area. More information is being gathered.

Links: http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/co/field_offices/royal_gorge_field/planning0/hamet.Par.9307.File.dat/BLM%20PPT.pdf
<http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/fo/rgfo/planning/hamet.html>

Norm Meyer, a former Pike National Historic Trail Association Board member, dies at 97.



Norman Franklin Meyer died on November 21st in Louisville, CO. He was 97. He was on the founding Board of the Pike NHT Association. He is survived by 2 daughters and 2 sons, 4 grandchildren and 4 great-grand children.

He grew up as a cowboy in Gardner, CO, in the Wet Mountain Valley almost due east of Medano Pass in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Most historians believe that Pike crossed Medano to get to the Great Sand Dunes and the San Luis Valley on January 27, 1807.

Norm flew jumbo jets for Continental Airlines for 35 years and flew for 70 years, and is one of only 500 members of the United Flying Octogenarians. His love of flying was matched with a long-standing interest for historic preservation. His well-kept, distinctively yellow, 1889 Victorian home in Conifer CO is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Following Pike's Footsteps approaching Cañon City- D. Nelson Walker Part 5 'Dec. 5-7' - West of Florence
Leg #2

Camp 28, Dec. 5-7, 1806; located on the north side of the Arkansas within the City of Canon City and about 1100 feet southeast of True Value Hardware in a residential neighborhood between Cameron Avenue and Willmoor Court. The geographic coordinates are N 38-36-41.09; W 105-13-13.73. The legal description is NE1/4 NE1/4 Sec. 33, T18S, R70W, 6th PM, Fremont County.

For some reason Scott began to assign camp numbers on his map to designate Pike's campsites, beginning with #28. He probably found it necessary to do this because his Routes of Early Travelers map included the crisscrossing paths left by numerous explorers. Fremont, Farnham, Pattie, and Long, all passed through the Canon City area, and Pike visited it twice. Scott must have added the camp numbers to help readers identify Pike's path from the others, and to distinguish the two different camps that Pike occupied while he was here.

All of lands on the north side of the river between the Dec. 4 campsite and Camp 28 are either privately owned or owned by the Colorado State Department of Corrections, which are not accessible to the public. However, this leg of the route does cross two public highways that offer opportunities for car-bike-hike signage; State Highway 67 and Mackenzie Avenue.

On this leg, Pike's path also passes near Pathfinder Regional Park (located about a mile west of the City of Florence) and the Arkansas Riverwalk. Both of these parks are operated by the Canon City Area Recreation and Park District. The Recreation and Park District also has plans to connect the Riverwalk trail to Pathfinder Park. Although the parks and trails are located on the south side of the river and not directly along Pike's footsteps, the opportunities here for car-bike-hike trail designation and interpretive signage are great.

Finally, I think it is unlikely that Pike would have actually established Camp 28 at the place indicated on Scott's map. The Arkansas River is located about 0.3 miles south of here, and it is more likely that he camped closer to the river. Regardless of where it was located, all of land on the north side of the river here is privately owned and not available for public access. *(D. Nelson Walker Part 6 - next issue)* © 2014- N.D.Walker- Pike NHTA

Pike crossing the Rio Grande River in Colorado - Part 2

Immediately to the west of Zapata Falls in the San Luis Valley, CO, south of the Great Sand Dunes, they approached the Rio Grande.

January 29th. ***"Finding the distance too great to attempt crossing immediately yo the river, in a direct line, we marched obliquely to a corpse of woods, which made down a considerable distance from the mountains. Saw sign of horses. Distance 17 miles"***

January 30th. ***"We marched hard, and arrived in the evening on the banks of the Rio del Norte, then supposed to be Red river. Distance 24 miles"***



The Rio Grande near the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge Visitor's Center

Rio grande crossing- continues January 31st “As there was no timber here we determined on descending until we found timber, in order to make transports to descend the river with, where we might establish a position that four or five might defend against the insolence, cupidity, and barbarity of the savages, while the others returned to assist the poor fellows who had been left behind at different points. We descended 18 miles, when we met a large branch [Rio Conejos], emptying into the main stream, about five miles up which branch we took our station. Killed one deer. Distance 18 miles”



Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge
Visitor's Center

We have had several contributions to our investigation regarding where Pike may have across the Rio Grande. There is ample evidence which indicates that he may have crossed on January 30 or 31st, 1807 somewhere between the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge Visitor's Center and the confluence between the Conejos and Rio Grande. Some have suggested that they have never seen the Rio Grande unfrozen in January. Others say they have. What is suggested is that the party may have crossed on the ice or made a short bridge across the unfrozen section.

One person told us that many in the San Luis Valley feel that the crossing was further down the Rio about a mile above the confluence. The investigation continues.

The same person referred to the believed misplacement of the Pike Stockade and that it was perhaps a mile or so up the Conejos.

She also mentioned that the crossing in 1807 of the Conejos River at the town of Conejos near Antonito when the Spanish were moving south with Pike on what may have been the west and perhaps main branch of the Old Spanish Trail. We hope to learn more as we talk with more people in the Valley.

Possible Pike site and Washington Spring Stagecoach Stop

An interesting observation has been made that between the Zapata Falls area and the Refuge Visitor's Center there is a natural spring almost halfway between and almost on a straight line with the Refuge Visitor's Center. It is be possible for Pike to have gotten water here as later on in history a stage coach line reportedly passed through the spring area. It was called the Washington Spring Stagecoach Stop. Our San Louis Valley coordinator is looking further into the stage coach stop and possible links with Pike. Today it looks the spring looks as if it is filled with polluted, non-potable water.

Merry Christmas and may you enjoy a wonderful New Year.