



CASTOR CANADENSIS

Newsletter of the Jedediah Smith Society • University of the Pacific, Stockton, California

SPRING 2025

Red Bluff, CA Rendezvous, April 27 – 28, 2025: Jedediah Smith 1828, Buenaventura to the Pacific

As mentioned in the Fall 2024 *Castor Canadensis*, the Jedediah Smith Society (JSS) is excited to announce details regarding the April 2025 Red Bluff, CA Rendezvous. The Rendezvous is scheduled for the weekend of April 26th and the 27th. The host hotel is the Holiday Inn Express in Red Bluff, hotel details included below. JSS member Jim



From left: Joe Molter, Jim O'Callaghan and Jim Crumpler on a November 2024 scouting trip to Jed's Overlook.

O'Callaghan is leading the Rendezvous event with assistance from Richard Cimino and Joe Molter. The field trip locations include Ide Adobe California State Park, Jed's Overlook, and Jed's route from the Sacramento River to the Trinity River.

The Rendezvous commences with Saturday's field trip departing from the host hotel parking

Historical Panel Installed at Jed's Overlook

By Joe Molter



Looking SW from panel towards Turnabout Flat

Visiting the Bureau of Land Management's Redding Field Office on January 15th of this year, I was pleasantly surprised to hear that the long anticipated historic panel, commemorating Jedediah Smith's passage through these Northern California lands, had finally been installed at Jed's Overlook the previous month! Excited to see it, I went the following day and had a pleasant hike to the overlook where I took these pictures, enjoyed the beautiful view and contemplated Jed's travels through this area so many years ago. Thanks to the Bureau of Land Management, this well done panel will help educate and remind us of the significant contributions this worthy man made towards western exploration. This historic panel can be accessed via an easy 1½ mile trail from the Iron Canyon trailhead and parking lot off of California State Highway 36, which is located 7.5 miles northeast of Red Bluff, CA. For further information, contact the BLM's Redding Field Office by phone at 530 224-2100 or connect to their computer web site at www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/redding.

Footnotes: 1. See articles written by the author dealing with "Jed's Overlook" in past issues of the *Castor Canadensis*, as follows: *Jed's overlook and Turnabout Flat*, Fall, 2006 and *Jedediah Smith's Buenaventura Farewell*, Summer, 2012.



lot at 1pm. Next, the group proceeds to a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) trailhead about five miles east of Red Bluff. The trail leads to BLM kiosk "Jed's Overlook" highlighting Smith's departure from the Buenaventura/Sacramento River. The trail is approximately 3.0 miles round trip, rated as moderate with little elevation gain. However, the trail is rough and rocky in certain areas requiring hiking boots and hiking poles if desired. A leisurely hike with ample time at the kiosk will take about 3 hours. BLM maps and guides will be available for attendees. While at the kiosk, Joe Molter will provide an overview of the site. Participants are encouraged to ask questions and/or have a brief discussion.

For those who decide not to take the hike to the monument,

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Rich will lead an alternative hike, an easy walk on a level surface, to nearby Ide Adobe Park. The park memorializes California pioneer William Ide, captain of the Bear Flag Revolt and the only president of the California Republic, June to July 1846. After returning to Red Bluff between 4 and 5pm and with a bit of down time, JSS invites all Rendezvous attendees to an early (exact time TBA) Saturday evening “social” at the host hotel or a local restaurant. Location of the social will be determined by the final attendee count. If held at the host hotel, JSS will provide light snack food and non-alcoholic beverages. The hotel does allow attendees to “BYOB” i.e., bring your own libation should you desire.

Sunday’s field trip will be a vehicular tour of Jed Smith’s route from Red Bluff to the south fork of the Trinity River at Hyampom, California. The roadway generally follows Smith’s west/northwest route to the Trinity River. The road trip will include a few stops at notable locations to point out specific route details. After visiting the Trinity River location, upon return the group can stop in Hayfork for lunch. (Various lunch options included below.)

The Rendezvous will conclude upon return to the host hotel with any closing comments/discussion.

Hotel:

Holiday Inn Express

Reservations: 888 HOLIDAY (888) 465-4329

Front desk: (530) 528-1600

2810 Main Street Red Bluff, California 96080 United States

Check-in: 3:00 PM

Check-out: 11:00 AM

Hayfork Lunch/Dining Options:

Casa De Castellanos

7130 CA-3, Hayfork, CA 96041

Hours: 11:00 AM – 7:00 PM

Phone: (530) 628-5309

Hayfork Hotel

7230 CA-3, Hayfork, CA 96041

Hours: 10:00 AM – 11:45 PM

Phone: (530) 628-5337

Cali Jay’s BBQ

91 Trinity St., Hayfork CA 96041

Hours: 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Phone: (530) 628-4448

From the Archives: Jed’s Overlook and “Turn Around Flat” by Joe Moeller

FALL 2006—This picture was presented to me April 28, 2006, at the Redding BLM Field Office retirement party as a going away gift for my 29 years of service. Nicely framed, the gold plate is inscribed “BLM Redding Field Office — Jed’s Overlook — 1828”. The photo is taken north of Red Bluff from a high point on the east side of the Sacramento River. The view is looking northwest and “in the direction of a Gap in the Mountains” in which Jedediah Smith “intended to pass” and is so described in his journal on 13th of April, 1828. Jed continued by saying, “I went on in advance of the party and ascending a high point took a view of the country”. It is my belief that this “high point” that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is calling “Jed’s Overlook”, to be the probable spot where



Jed determined that “the mountains beyond appeared too high to cross at that season of the year or perhaps at any other” and made the monumental decision to abandon the Buenaventura route and head west through the “Gap in the Mountains” to the coast. And towards the unforeseen difficulties he would later encounter on the Umpqua River in Oregon.

Just down river from this location (off the picture to the left) is a flat near the river that I believe is the only place along the Sacramento River (or Buenaventura) matching Jed’s journal entry of 10th of April, 1828, when he

said, “I moved on with the intention of traveling up the Buenaventura but soon found the rocky hills coming in so close to the river to make it impossible to travel.”

This flat I'm calling "turn-around flat" because after Jed made his decision to head toward the coast, he was forced to turn-round and move his men and horses back down the river to a suitable crossing site and proceeded westward. I've been on this flat and its size is more than adequate to accommodate the 300 head of horses that Jed was pushing. I have been up and down river from this flat and the route below is open and capable of running horses to this point but the route north is "impossible to travel," as Jed had said!

Currently the BLM is constructing a parking lot and a loop trail to this overlook which will be called the Iron Canyon Trail and can be accessed by driving east of Red Bluff on Highway 36 for approximately 2 miles. When BLM acquired this parcel and others in the area through land exchanges over ten years ago, they really didn't know the historical significance of the acquisition. Other early trails are also present which were used by the Hudson's Bay Company and other early explorers and travelers and native American sites which document 6,000+ years of occupancy.

This area is part of the Sacramento River Bend Outstanding Natural Area which contains over 17 thousand acres of

wild lands that not only contain natural ecosystems and species important to protect, but also provides recreational opportunities for the public, livestock grazing, and protection of significant cultural resources.

When Jed left his men on "Turn-Around Flat" in 1828 to seek a high point to assess the lay of the land, I can imagine one of his men may have scratched his name and date into the soft cliffs that surround the flat while waiting for Jed to return! Wishful thinking possibly, but I'm hoping to revisit this site again and take another look. Wouldn't it be neat to find such an inscription!

Message from the Treasurer

Plans are now being finalized for our April Rendezvous and we encourage you to take part in this weekend adventure. I want to send a gentle reminder for those of you who have not yet sent in your 2025 dues, these funds are central to our efforts of organization. We thank all those who have sent in dues, especially those of you who have donated at higher levels. Remember you are all central

to our success, consider telling your friends about our organization and encourage them to become members! Happy Trails!

Receive this Pathfinder magnet after sending your membership dues.



On the Website

Did you know that you can read back issues of *Castor Canadensis* going back to 2009 on the Jedediah Smith Society website? Have you read Jed's famous 1830 letter lately? You can also find and order the wall map of Jed's travels, learn about upcoming events, order Castors and other publications. The website has much to offer. Stop on by!

Donations

Your generous donations will fund our education and outreach efforts regarding Jed's work and life, and will make membership events and Rendezvous possible. Mail contributions to Arthur Hurley, 1230 Olive Hill Lane, Napa, CA 94558 or online at jedediahsmithsociety.org/donations

We are a 501c3 nonprofit; all gifts are fully tax deductible.

Castor Canadensis Newsletter Guidelines

The *Castor* is your publication and your contributions are welcome. Please write to president@jedediahsmithsociety.org with your proposed ideas and to learn about specific guidelines for articles.

- Submit articles in Microsoft Word, photos welcome.
- After receipt, the article will be reviewed by a technical editor. Once this is completed the author will be notified.
- Please note the *Castor Canadensis* is not responsible for either the research or the opinions of the writer.

The President's Stump



This issue of the Castor celebrates the renewed vigor of our Society, a volunteer organization dedicated to a noble mission.

Discussions within the Society during the June 2024 board of directors meeting revealed that we had gently pivoted to a membership research focus, adding more rendezvous and in-the-field activities for you to participate in. You can recommend a rendezvous in an area where you would like to share your knowledge with other members of the Society. Please get in touch with me with your ideas.

The upcoming Jed's Overlook Rendezvous, a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) site located a few miles east of Red Bluff, California, on April 26 and 27, is a member-driven event. JSS board member Jim O'Callaghan and emeritus board member Joe Molter have been involved in the planning and will lead the rendezvous. This promises to be an exciting and engaging event—see the rendezvous itinerary on pages 1 – 2 for details.

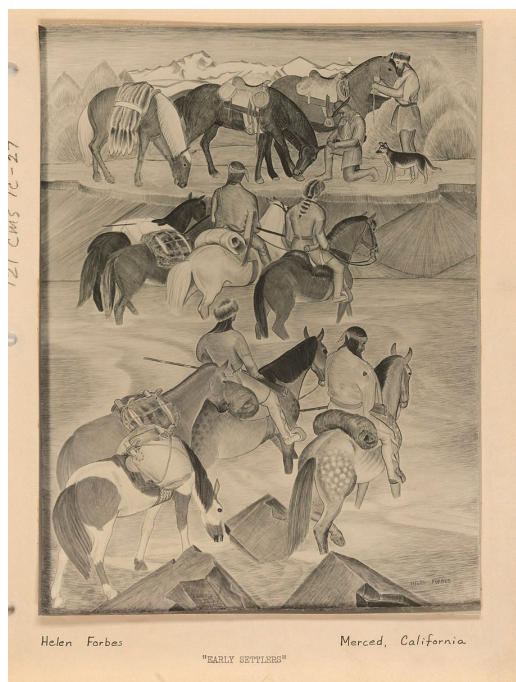
You may have missed our January Zoom presentation on the restoration of beaver in the western states. The link to the presentation is at jedediahsmith.org/beaver.

With members like you, we remain active. Your unique background and expertise are invaluable to the Jedediah Smith Society. Together, we share our knowledge. The coming year will be a time of adaptation for more digital educational activities and society updates, and rest assured, the Castor in hard copy form mailed to your home, will remain.

This is a gentle reminder that we are a membership Society. Your membership dues are important to keep you current on activities and publications and to support the organization of events like the upcoming Jed's Overlook, located east of Red Bluff, CA. Your membership also gives you the opportunity to propose and lead a rendezvous and to contribute to the growth and direction of the Society.

With Appreciation,

Rich Cimino
President of the Jedediah Smith Society



Jedediah Smith Crossing the Merced River, 1937, by Helen Forbes. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.



Jedediah Smith Society
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