

HISTORIC PHOTO RESEARCH ADVENTURE on the Stagecoach Trail



1890 Stage Wagon on Stagecoach Trail

Last March, Jerry England posted a photo on Facebook identifying a wagon on the Stagecoach Trail. He recalls seeing it on a Simi Valley Facebook page last year. In the book *Santa Susana* by Bill Appleton, the driver is identified as Joe Horner, who ran the Simi Stage from the Simi Hotel to San Fernando in 1890. To our knowledge, it is the only historic photo of the Stagecoach Trail in use.

The rocks sure looked familiar, so we challenged our local Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park (SSPSHP) volunteers to hike the trail and find the exact location of this photo based on the background features.



April 19, 2015 hikers on Stagecoach Trail

Teena Takata was planning a SSPSHP Stagecoach Trail Hike on April 19th, and scouted the location before the hike. On April 19th she posted the picture to the left on the Friends of Santa Susana Mountains Facebook page.

Teena said “We had a request to add hikers to substitute for the horse and buggy shown in an old photo. What amazes me the most is the maintained roadway (on the original photo) compared to the sandstone boulders we travel through today. Thanks hikers!”

If you are interested in taking the same picture, the site is 98 yards as the hawk flies (think one football field) below the 1939 Stagecoach Trail Marker.

Note: There have been three Santa Susana Pass Roads over the years. The first road, the “Santa Susana Pass Wagon Road”, was in use from 1859-1895. It became known as the Stagecoach Trail, and was also called “Devil’s Slide”.

The second road was built north of the first road, “The New Santa Susana Pass Road through William’s Cañon”. It was a graded dirt road and in use from 1895 to 1917. It was commonly called the Chatsworth Grade Road, and is called El Camino Nuevo on the Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park maps.

The third road was built just north of the second road in 1917, was paved with asphalt, and is known today as the Santa Susana Pass Road.