



DATE 10/19/2006 7:15 AMFOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

This is part of an occasional series by the Sanpete Country Travel and Utah Heritage Highway 89 Alliance on the people and places along U.S. Highway 89.

President Signs Mormon Pioneer Heritage Area Bill

A bill establishing the National Mormon Pioneer Heritage Area has been signed into law by President George W. Bush.

"I'm extremely pleased that after years of moving this bill through the legislative process President Bush has signed the National Mormon Pioneer Heritage Area into law," said Sen. Bob Bennett, R-Utah, who sponsored legislation to create the heritage area. "This is a fitting tribute to Utah's pioneers and one that will help promote economic development and preserve our unique heritage for future generations."

The national designation recognizes the history, architecture and culture along "the heritage highway," and includes U.S. Highway 89 from Fairview to Kanab, the Boulder Loop (state highways 12 and 24), the All-American Road (highway 12) and the six counties through which the route passes: Sanpete, Sevier, Piute, Wayne, Garfield and Kane.

Many local residents, including Monte Bona, executive director of the Utah Heritage Highway 89 Alliance, and Gary Anderson of Utah State University's Extension, spent years working on the measure and Bona even helped draft the original bill. Bona called Bush's signing "An important and historic event. It's very rewarding to see the Mormon Pioneer Heritage Area officially established." The initiative underwent several renditions in the past six years and survived three sessions of Congress.

Bona says that the cities and towns in the six-county area are the best remaining example of how Mormon pioneers colonized the west. "The heritage area includes countless examples of rich cultural and architectural history shaped by the early settlers," he says.

The bill specified that up to \$10 million may be spent on development of the heritage area, including activities such as historic preservation of buildings and signage, but no more than \$1 million per year. Funds are matched on a 50 per cent basis.

For more information Contact:

Monte Bona
Sanpete County Travel and Heritage Council
(435) 462-2502