

NEWS RELEASE

**USDA Forest Service
Ashley National Forest
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Subject: Carter Road Passport in Time Project

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VOLUNTEERS PARTICIPATE IN FOREST SERVICE PASSPORT IN TIME PROJECT

The week of July 12th through the 16th, armed with metal detectors and their trusty trowels, Forest Service archaeologists and volunteers will survey, excavated, and record historic sites along the once famous Carter Road.

The Carter Road was opened in 1881 to transport supplies to troops stationed at Fort Thornburgh in Maeser. The military deployed troops into the Uintah Basin to alleviate the local resident's fears that resulted from both the Little Bighorn battle and the 1879 attack on government employees at the White River Indian Agency near Meeker, Colorado. The "hostile" Ute Uncompahgre and White River bands were moved to a reservation in the Uintah Basin, and the recently arrived Indians were perceived as a threat to the Anglo settlers in the region.

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“The Bench,” where Vernal is now located was considered a better location for defense because it allowed unobstructed 360 degree views of the surrounding territory. The existing settlement in Ashley was considered vulnerable to attack because of the dense trees and vegetation along the stream courses.

The Carter Road was the first road to cut across the Uinta Mountains, but it could only be used a few months each year. The government had difficulty securing title to the land at Fort Thornburgh, and army generals in Omaha questioned the location of a fort so far from the Utes the military was supposed to be watching. The fort only existed for about 18 months and was eventually moved to become Fort Duchesne.

This Passport in Time (PIT) project, led by the US Forest Service will uncover a part of the Basin’s history. To experience a part of this exciting project come visit the project in Government Park; From Vernal take 2500 West to the Forest boundary. Once on Forest land drive for 12.7 miles until you reach Government Park. Then see the informational booth attendant on how you can learn more about the Carter Road and/or volunteering for the US Forest Service or contact Byron Loosle, Archaeologist at the Ashley National Forest Supervisor’s Office at (435) 789-1181.

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