

All about a line: The Sidney-Black Hills Trail's impact on the cultural landscape of western Nebraska and South Dakota.

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All about a line: The Sidney-Black Hills Trail's impact on the cultural landscape of western Nebraska and South Dakota

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Abstract

When driving through western Nebraska and South Dakota, one can identify artifacts and signs of an earlier highway. In some places the wagon ruts and foundations of



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previous foundations are still visible; in other places the highway is represented through markers and signs erected by historically minded organizations. The presence of these signs, markers, and wagon ruts mark representations of the Sidney-Black Hills Trail on the landscape. The presence of the wagon ruts and settlement foundations mark a representation of the trail as it was and gives one a view of the real American West; a West that chronicles the Black Hills gold rush in 1874-1880. The presence of the historical markers and signs, both private and governmental, may represent the Trail as it was, and is, in the Mythic West. This theory of the American West and the Mythic West is what I am exploring in my study of the cultural landscape of the Sidney-Black Hills Trail. By comparing information from the National Register of Historic Places, the Nebraska and South Dakota Historic Markers programs, signs, and local resources to historic documents I find that the "West" and the "Mythic West" have merged, giving the impression that the present-day interpretations of the Trail are the historic interpretations of the Trail.

Comments

A Thesis Presented to the Department of Geography and Geology and the Faculty of the Graduate College In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Arts University of Nebraska at Omaha. Copyright 2005, Abbey R. McNair

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