

Initial Point of the Uintah Special Meridian recovered ...



On August 30th, 1875, Deputy Surveyor, Charles L. DuBois, stood on an open plateau rising above the Uintah River Valley. His instructions were to “select the most available point within the reserve for an initial point” from which the survey of the Uintah Valley Reservation would commence. Friday, September 4th, 2009, a group of surveyors representing the Bureau of Land Management, Uintah County, Duchesne County and the Utah Council of Land Surveyors joined forces at the intersection of Highway 121 and 3500 East Street, approximately five miles east of Enola, Utah to recover the position of the Initial Point. The group excavated to a depth of three feet below the highway surface, recovering the last known relic

witnessing the official position of the Initial Point, a four inch diameter brass cap set by Cadastral Surveyor, Andrew Nelson, in June, 1953. The 1953 survey was undertaken as an administrative policy of the Bureau of Land Management to restore all Initial Points of the Public Land Surveys because of their great historical value. The Initial Point of the Uintah Special Meridian is one of 38 Initial Points established throughout the United States and is one of only six specially designated for the surveys of Reservation Lands in the 1870’s. A new brass cap positioned directly above the 1953 monument will be installed under a specially constructed cover marked “Initial Point” making the point more accessible for future land boundary surveys.

The **Utah Council of Land Surveyors**, in a continuation of supportive effort of the BLM policy, has garnered special cooperation of the Ute Indian Tribe, the Uintah County Commission, the Duchesne County Commission, the Bureau of Land Management, the Certified Federal Surveyor program, and the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping, to construct a historical marker commemorating the Initial Point’s importance as the point of reference for nearly every parcel of land within the boundaries of the 2 million-acre Uintah Valley Reservation spanning much of Uintah and Duchesne Counties. The marker will replicate the 1875 six-foot diameter mound of stones topped by a 10 inch by 12 inch by 20 inch stone marked “I.P. 1875 U.S.M.” Three historical plaques will depict the events of the 1860’s leading up to the creation of the Uintah Valley Reservation,



the surveys of the 1870's which established the boundaries of the land still relied upon today, and the 1900's allotment and homestead eras which resulted in the checker-board pattern of land ownership across the reservation.



The public is invited to witness the unveiling of the Initial Point Historical Marker and the setting of the Initial Point Capstone Monument, at **10:00 am on Friday, September 18th, 2009**. The ceremony will be followed by adjournment to the Lapoint Pavilion for presentations by the Tribal Council, the Bureau of Land Management, and local surveyors. A bar-b-que lunch will be hosted by the Ute Tribe.