

Mullan Road Segment
St. Regis vicinity
Mineral County
Montana

HAER No. MT-45

HAER
MONT,
31 - SAIREG.V,
1 -

PHOTOGRAPH

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service
Rocky Mountain Regional Office
Department of the Interior
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

HAER
MONT,
31-SAIREG.V,
1-

Mullan Road Segment

HAER No. MT-45

Location: Secs. 5 and 8, T18N, R28W; Secs. 31 and 32, T19N, R28W; and Secs. 34, 35, and 36, T19N, R29W
St. Regis vicinity, Mineral County, Montana

UTM: 11.637450.5244400
11.631375.5247575

Quad: St. Regis

Date of Construction: 1860

Present Owner: Lolo National Forest
U. S. Forest Service
State of Montana (private)

Original Use: Military road

Present Use: Secondary road (portions)

Significance: Although the military road never functioned as such, it did become a popular thoroughfare for emigrants and fortune seekers during gold rushes in the 1860s and for a few years thereafter. Predating the arrival of railroads in the region, the Mullan Road is primarily significant for being the first constructed road to link the northern Plains with the Columbia Plateau.

Researcher s: Craig Holstine and Glen Lindeman, AHS, Eastern Washington University, 1982

Transmitted by: Jean P. Yearby, HAER, 1985

Along its approximately 5-mile length, the Mullan Road Segment varies from an overgrown widened path through the forest at its western, to a two-track dirt jeep trail, to a one-lane dirt and gravel road on its eastern junction with the modern paved State Highway 10. At one point on the road, there are the decayed remains of a collapsed bridge in a small gulley. Constructed between 1859 and 1862, the Mullan Road connected Fort Benton at the head of navigation on the Missouri River with Fort Walla Walla in what is now southeastern Washington. U. S. Army Lieutenant (later Captain) John Mullan commanded the project, which was intended to facilitate the movement of troops between the Great Plains and the Columbia Plateau during times of Indian hostilities.

References: John Mullan, Sketch of the Preferred Location of the Military Road from Cantonment Jordan to the Bitter Root River, January 9, 1860. Map W76-23, Record Group 77, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

John Mullan, Report on the Construction of a Military Road from Fort Walla Walla to Fort Benton, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1863, p. 18.