The Granada-Fort Union Military Route left the main trail at Old Granada and traversed southwest through today’s Prowers, Baca and Las Animas counties to New Mexico.

Stagecoach Routes on the Santa Fe Trail

The early stagecoach routes followed the Santa Fe Trail and in 1860 the Denver and Santa Fe Line used the earlier abandoned Bent’s Old Fort for a stage stop. Other stations were located at Iron Spring, Hole-in-the-Rock, and Hole-in-the-Prairie. In 1867, Barlow and Sanderson took over the route and began to establish new stations in the Purgatoire River Valley. These include the Vogel Canyon, Bent Canyon, Lockwood Canyon, and the Hogback stations. The route had stations at Las Animas City, Boggsville, Vogel Canyon and el Moro in Southern Colorado.

See stagecoach ruts and experience more of southern Colorado’s rugged beauty at Vogel, Purgatoire and Carrizo Canyons along Colorado 109 from La Junta or Highway 287 from Springfield.

Driving the Mountain Route

The mountain route of the Santa Fe Trail through Colorado closely parallels U.S. 50, Colorado 350 and 1-25. Communities along the route include Lamar which has the Madonna of the Trail monument and Big Timbers Museum. Fort Lyon is home to the historic Kit Carson Chapel. In Las Animas visit the restored 1889 Bent County Courthouse, Boggsville, and the original grave site of William Bent at the Las Animas Cemetery. In La Junta visit the Otero Museum and the Koshare Kiva Museum. The Comanche National Grasslands has limestone markers on segments of the Santa Fe Trail. Trinidad has the 1870s Hough-Baca and Bloom Mansion operated by the Colorado Historical Society.

Become a Bent’s Fort Chapter Member

Below are two membership forms. One is for the Bent’s Fort Chapter and the other is for the Santa Fe Trail Association.

Bent’s Fort Chapter Membership Year ________________
Name _________________________________________
Address _______________________________________
City ___________________________ State _________
Zip ________ Phone ____________________________
Email _________________________________________
Membership dues & categories (check one)
____ Individual & Family - $15.00
____ Organization - $20.00 ____ Lifetime - $500.00
Local Chapter Membership: ____New _____Renewal
Make checks payable to Bent’s Fort Chapter and mail to:
Emery Murray, Treasurer, 231 Vigil Avenue, Las Animas, Colorado 81054
The benefits include: 1) Quarterly newsletter, 2) Tours of SFT sites on private property with knowledgeable guides, 3) Comradery with like-minded people who enjoy history, 4) 10% discount for purchases at Boggsville “Trade Room”

Santa Fe Trail Association Membership Year ____________
Name _________________________________________
Address _______________________________________
City ___________________________ State _________
Zip ________ Phone ____________________________
Email _________________________________________
Membership dues & categories (check one)
____ Youth (18 & under)-$15.00 ____ Individual - $25.00
____ Family - $30.00 ____ Non-profits - $40.00
____ Business/Institution-$50.00 ____ Patron - $100.00
____ Benefactor - $1,000.00
Membership: ____New _____Renewal
Make checks payable to Santa Fe Trail Association and mail to: Ruth Olsen-Peters, Santa Fe Trail Center, 1349 K-156 Hwy, Lamed, KS 67550.

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The Santa Fe Trail in Southeastern Colorado

The Santa Fe Trail

After Mexican Independence in 1821, American and Mexican traders developed the Santa Fe Trail. It quickly became a commercial and cultural link between the United States and Mexico. It also served as a road of conquest during the Mexican War and later the Civil War. After the completion of the Santa Fe Railroad to Santa Fe in 1880, the trail was abandoned as a national route.

Bent's Old Fort

In 1833 William and Charles Bent and Ceran St. Vrain, operating as Bent, St. Vrain and Company, built Bent's Fort on the north bank of the Arkansas River. Business consisted of trading buffalo robes, furs and horses with the Native Americans and importing Euroamerican trade goods to New Mexico. The fort was an important outpost of American commerce along the Mountain Route of the Santa Fe Trail. The fort was reconstructed in the 1970s and is operated as Bent’s Old Fort National Historic Site by the National Park Service.

Bent's New Fort

Fort Wise (Old Fort Lyon)

William Bent established his new fort at Big Timbers on a bluff overlooking the Arkansas River in the early 1850s. Bent leased the fort to the U.S. military in 1860. Bent’s New Fort was used as the Upper Arkansas Indian Agency and Commissary for Fort Wise. The site is privately owned and permission is required prior to visiting.

Fort Wise was built in 1860 west of Bent’s New Fort. It was named for Henry Wise, governor of Virginia. In 1861, the name was changed to Fort Lyon in honor of Nathaniel Lyon, killed at the Battle of Wilson’s Creek in Missouri on August 10, 1861. Fort Wise/Lyon served as an important military link on the Santa Fe Trail between Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and Fort Union in New Mexico. Due to its location in the Arkansas River flood plain and flooding, the fort was moved to its present location east of Las Animas in 1867. The property is privately owned and permission is required prior to visiting.

Las Animas City

Las Animas City was the first town in southeast Colorado and was located on the Arkansas River across from Fort Lyon. It served as the home station for the Barlow and Sanderson Stage Company and later become the county seat for Bent County. It was abandoned after 1873 when the Kansas Pacific Railroad built present-day Las Animas.

This site is under the administration of the Corps of Engineers, John Martin Reservoir. Permission is necessary from COE to access the site. For information contact:

John Martin Reservoir
Corps of Engineers
Hasty, Colorado 81044
(719) 335-3476

Boggsville Historic Site

Boggsville was founded in 1862 on the west bank of the Purgatoire River. It was located 3 miles from new Fort Lyon. It was built on 2,040 acres originally a part of the 4 million acre 1843 Vigil-St. Vrain, or Las Animas, Mexican land grant, comprising most of southeastern Colorado. It served as a center of commerce and agriculture between 1867 and 1873, and was the first county seat of Bent County. It was the home of Thomas and Rumalda (Luna) Boggs, John W. and Amache (Ochincie) Prowers, and Kit and Josefa (Jaramillo) Carson.

Boggsville Historic Site is a property of the Pioneer Historical Society of Bent County, a non-profit corporation. The site is open the last weekend in April for Santa Fe Trail Day through Memorial Day, Wednesday - Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Memorial Day to Labor Day, daily, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; September through the end of October, Wednesday - Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For information contact:

Boggsville Historic Site
P.O. Box 68
Las Animas, Colorado 81054
(719) 456-1358
boggsville67@yahoo.com

The Santa Fe Trail Association

A nonprofit organization that promotes public awareness and appreciation for the Santa Fe Trail. For more information contact:

Santa Fe Trail Association
Santa Fe Trail Center
1349 K-156 Hwy.
Larned, Kansas 67550
(620) 285-2054
info@santafetrail.org
www.santafetrail.org

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