

Why I Am Me: NEPA/MET Gene?

Mike Walker, Storyteller & Documentation Nut

Hugo Storytelling Program

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

Web Page: <http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/storytel.htm>

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Who is the Volunteer Mike Walker, Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (*Hugo Neighborhood* or HNAHS)? What characteristics and personal values does he practice as a volunteer?

Seventy-year old Michael “Mike” Larry Walker was born a Navy brat August 28, 1944 in Santa Rosa, California. He spent two weeks in that town before his dad was transferred to a new duty station. He is a proud 1958 Hugo Elementary School “Falcon” 8th grade graduate. Since then he had seen his share of life in his travels from Oregon for almost 20 years, and back to Oregon since 1980. He had always come back to his Hugo family and rafting the Rogue River as a way to make life right. In 1998 he retired, and became his wife’s, Cindy’s, housekeeper and landscaper when he was not rafting or camping, researching local history, conducting genealogical research, consulting part-time, and being a land use activist.

Growing Up. He had grown up on a small family dirt farm in Hugo starting in 1947 with his family visiting his grandfolks, Anna and Rudolph Hlobil, in the Town of Three Pines, Oregon during Dad’s 30 days of annual Navy leave each year. In 1952 he was living in the old Three Pines Schoolhouse with his grandfolks, his Mom, Elsie Sylvia Hlobil Walker, and two siblings, Dale and Susan. This was during a time his Dad, Jessie Edie Walker, a Navy Chief Petty Officer Aviation Mechanic, was stationed alone away from family in Japan during the Korean War. His family’s Hugo farm since Dad retired from the Navy in 1955 was where he discovered he loved the earth and farming. Home had a few milking cows, steers for beef, a big family garden, chickens for eggs - for a couple of years the family had about 2,000 egg laying White Leghorns, some pigs, and, of course, dogs and cats. He always thought he would have been a farmer if he could have learned how to make a living. Later, the idealism and youth at university stuck, and it became important for him to understand, promote, and protect agriculture.

Volunteering. Being a volunteer is quite different than being employed by a boss or supervisor implementing their mission, or family responsibilities to blood relations such as a father, mother, siblings, or spouse. The volunteer can make the personal decision to follow directions and/or policy by finding a group which matches the volunteer’s values, or she can find a group that delegates the authority to implement the mission of the group. The *Hugo Neighborhood’s* committees and sub-committees have the second relationship with the Board. Except for a couple of situations having to deal with 1. financial support and/or liability, and 2. policy compliance issues, the *Hugo Neighborhood* does not try to micro-manage the activities of its committees and sub-committees. In most cases, the Board does not know on-going details, and significant trust is given to volunteers.

Within the framework of the *Hugo Neighborhood's* mission of land use and history, Mike is interested in helping neighbors become part of their communities by being involved in their community's resources, including human and cultural resources. He believes neighbor's involvement, understanding, and ownership in these resources will contribute to improve the overall quality of their lives in their communities. His professional strengths are bureaucratic planning skills gained from 30-years of Federal service flying airplanes, and in coordinating input and ideas from the public, local governments, and agencies in land use planning and environmental analysis projects and plans.

Career. As a snapshot background, Mike's career with the Feds started in the humidity of Florida and Texas to the South China Sea of southeast Asia via the San Francisco Bay area of California. Then on to the rural solitude of Alaska and Nevada, and back again to the green trees and mountains of Western Oregon where in 1998 he retired to the comfortable solitude and friendly neighbors of Hugo. It is here his wife, Cindy, and he built a new home together. Scenic Mt. Sexton is in the frame of their kitchen window every day . . . after he gets up to make several cups of coffee — aroma roasted, mountain grown they say. Early each morning their just three-year old dogies, Deeno and Pebbles, obnoxiously say hi with their grinning teeth, wet noses, and tails a going while asking, "Where's breakfast?"

Today Mike is mostly a volunteer planner for the *Hugo Neighborhood* with an interest in local history and land use. His planning back-ground started as a local county planner working for Josephine County, Oregon, and summer employments while in graduate school.

- 1966 - 1967. Assistant County Planner, Josephine County, Oregon. Materially assisted in the development of *A General Plan For The Josephine County Urbanizing Area And The City Of Grants Pass*, 1969.
- 1972 - 1974. Graduate School at OSU & UO. Graduate Research Assistant with Extension Service, Clatsop County, Oregon; Research Assistant with Northam & Associates; and County Planning Assistant, Yamhill County, Oregon.

Employment Experiences. Walker's most significant employment experiences were as a Federal planner and environmental coordinator with the BLM in Alaska, Nevada, and Oregon where he worked on land use plans and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analyses documents (i.e., EISs, EAs, and FONSI). The analysis occurred within the framework of NEPA compliance standards through group think and consensus identified as the interdisciplinary (ID) team process. His analytical skills would prove helpful to his service for the National Federation of Federal Employees in Medford, Oregon, for which he served a couple of years as Chief Steward.

- 1975 - 1979. Community Planner/Interdisciplinary EIS Team Member, Alaska Outer Continental Shelf Office, Anchorage, Alaska; grant writer and project inspector for multi-million dollar socio-economic studies program.
- 1979 - 1980. Environmental Protection Specialist/EIS Team Leader, BLM Nevada State Office, Reno.
- 1981 - 1982. Planning Coordinator, BLM Medford District Office (MDO), Oregon.
- 1981 - 1984. Technical Publications Writer/Team Member, MDO.
- 1985 - 1986. Environmental Specialist/Interdisciplinary Team Leader, MDO.
- 1986 - 1990. Environmental Specialist/Technical Coordinator/Interdisciplinary Team Member, MDO. Program lead for developing BLM's western Oregon rural interface area issue (citizens living in the woods) during its resource management planning effort.

- 1991 - 1998. Outdoor Recreation Planner, MDO. Team Leader of a controversial complex river planning process to revise the Rogue River's Hellgate Recreation Area Management Plan through an environmental impact statement process. Grant writer and project inspector for grants involving economics, erosion, safety, and public attitudes, and background studies involving fisheries, wildfire, flood plains, riparian areas, soils, water resources, wildlife and wildlife habitat, and timber management.
- 1997 - 1998. Chief Steward, National Federation of Federal Employees, MDO.

He experienced some minor conflicts with the management team of the BLM Medford District Office (MDO), but mostly it was a wonderful career with knowledgeable and friendly co-workers. On a few occasions, his advocacy for more transparency and public involvement opportunities pushed the limits of the management team. Most important to Mike was that he never had a predetermined analysis process and/or impact projection given to him as the Team Leader of numerous EA and EIS ID teams. Management was legally required to respect the independence of the NEPA analysis process, and honestly focused on making the decisions.

What the heck is NEPA and its products called an EIS, EA, and FONSI? The NEPA is a U.S. law that established a national policy promoting the enhancement of the environment. It was enacted on January 1, 1970 with the short title "National Environmental Policy Act of 1969." Some feel NEPA is one of the most emulated statutes in the world, and is often referred to as the modern-day "environmental Magna Carta."

Mike believes that NEPA's most significant accomplishment was establishing procedural requirements for all federal government agencies to prepare environmental assessments (EAs) and environmental impact statements (EISs) for their proposed actions. EAs and EISs contain human environmental consequence statements about the projected environmental effects of proposed federal agency actions. The human environment was defined to include the natural, physical, economic, and social environments.

NEPA analysis is the formal process used to predict the environmental consequences (positive or negative) of a plan, policy, program, or project prior to the decision to move forward implementing the proposed action. EAs and EISs are governed by rules of administrative procedure regarding public participation and documentation of decision-making, and are subject to judicial review. An impact assessment may propose measures to adjust impacts to acceptable levels or to investigate new technological solutions.

The purpose of the NEPA analysis is to ensure that decision makers consider the environmental impacts when deciding whether or not to proceed with a project. The International Association for Impact Assessment defines an environmental impact assessment as "the process of identifying, predicting, evaluating and mitigating the biophysical, social, and other relevant effects of development proposals prior to major decisions being taken and commitments made." *EIAs are unique in that they do not require adherence to a predetermined environmental outcome, but rather they require decision makers to account for environmental values in their decisions and to justify those decisions in light of detailed environmental studies and public comments on the potential environmental impacts.*

NEPA analysis involve a technical evaluation intended to contribute to more objective decision making. They have been used increasingly around the world. The number of EAs filed every year has vastly overtaken the number of the more rigorous EIS. An EA is a "mini-EIS designed to provide sufficient information to allow the agency to decide whether the preparation of a full-blown EIS is necessary."

FONSIs are Findings of No Significant Impact. They are public documents issued by a Federal agency briefly presenting the reasons why an action for which the agency has prepared an EA will not have a significant effect on the human environment and, therefore, will not require preparation of an EIS.

NEPA is to be integrated with other planning "at the earliest possible time to insure planning and decisions reflect environmental values" (40 CFR 1501.2). The NEPA process is always triggered at the "proposal" stage, or when an agency is considering a goal and is "actively pursuing different means of accomplishing that goal" (40 CFR 1508.23) if implementing the goal would have environmental impacts. The proposal stage is during or immediately following the feasibility stage (40 CFR 1502.5(a)). However, environmental planning is also useful in defining goals, particularly in broader planning, such as the 1995 *BLM MDO Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan*.

Analyses must Be Systematic. According to NEPA, Section 102(A), analyses must be systematic. The selection of appropriate issues, impact topics, mitigation strategies, analysis boundaries, and alternatives; the involvement of the interested and affected public; and other aspects of the NEPA process based on scientific evidence and on sound, repeatable thought processes.

Section 102(A) utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach which will insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts in planning and in decisionmaking which may have an impact on man's environment;

Most Important is the ID Team. Because NEPA analyses are scientific, objective, and high quality, they must be performed by individuals with credentials appropriate to the issues (40 CFR 1502.6). These individuals *must use the interdisciplinary or interactive team approach in defining all important features of the analysis (e.g., issues, data-gathering needs, alternatives, etc.)* throughout the NEPA process. This approach includes discussions with "cross-functional" disciplines; specialists from the Federal agency and others; and decision-makers, as appropriate (NEPA Section 102(A); 40 CFR 1502.6).

Comprehensive Documented Analyses. In hindsight, it is more obvious to Mike, *why he has an overwhelming interest in the open, public, cumbersome, time consuming, group think planning process of comprehensive objective analysis, equal to, or greater, than the decision-makers' final decision.* He believes you arrive at better publically transparent decisions based on a team's documented baseline and comprehensive objective analyses; this type of documentation is accessible and can be reviewed and corrected as needed. However, he really does not know why his early interests leaned toward the earth and planning - luck of the draw, . . . bad genes (the NEPA/MET Gene? He concludes that, in part, it must be related to growing up on a dirt farm in Hugo, Oregon, part of Josephine County which has a dearth of first class soils.

Regardless, once he experienced an introduction to county, and Federal land use planning, his course was set. He does remember that his experiences with planning in three county governments were, he is embarrassed to admit, more partisan and value laden than working for the Federal government which Mike believes was much more objective and transparent with NEPA requirements as the authority for meaningful public participation.

High School. Mike was a B student in Grants Pass High School without any particular career direction or encouragement from family or friends, except for his Dad's, Jessie Walker's, persistent declarations that he should work hard for good grades. Dad was a 20-year retired Navy man and Mike had planned on checking out the black shoe Navy (i.e., surface Navy versus aviation) after highschool. He remembers his senior year at Grants Pass High when he met his counselor to discuss his future. No, he had no intention in going to college; he would join the Navy, and that was that. Except, soon after Dad came to Mike and told him, "I want you to get a grant and go to college." Mike told his Dad, sure, but basically he shined him until his Dad asked him a couple more times whether he had seen a counselor about a scholarship.

Upon meeting his counselor again, he asked Mike "*What kind of a scholarship are you interested in?*" Mike had no idea, so he said with a mischievous smile, "*What kind do you have?*" The bottom line was that Mike was awarded a small four-year scholarship to Oregon State University (OSU) by a local Grants Pass Episcopalian Church. At the time he didn't really understand discrimination being prevalent in all aspects of life, and did not think much of it. However, today he marvels at the decision that let a practicing Catholic attend college funded by Episcopalian Church grants for four years, where he discovered a wide world beyond Hugo. Later Mike learned that peer pressure on his Dad from two neighbors, Mrs. Dickerson and Mrs. Halstead, whose two boys were Mike's friends and were going to college, were the reason for his forceful push for Mike to try and get a scholarship.

Higher Education. His education beyond highschool focused on planning and the earth sciences, even though he did not know it while he was seeking a B.S. degree until 1966, his Senior year at OSU. That was the year he actually decided on a major, which turned out to be a B.S. in Natural Resources (NR). The NR route represented physical geography with a practical land use planning focus from a "disguised" Geography Department. He remembers showing up at OSU in Corvallis, Oregon as a freshman. All the new arriving freshmen had their first meeting with the university administrators in the huge OSU Gill Coliseum, a multi-purpose arena home to the Oregon State Beavers' basketball, wrestling, volleyball, and gymnastics teams. The purpose was to sort the students into their academic career patterns. It was happenstance that he had sat next to another freshman who planned on being a landscape architect. That sounded good to Mike and he majored in landscape architecture for a term, but left because he found the work too mechanical, with strict standards of design that could not be questioned.

1966 West Coast Wrestling Champ. This part of Mike's life was being a confident *independent* athlete. He had wrestled for three years in high school and had been part of the Grants Pass High School Varsity Wrestling Team when it took the A-1 State Wrestling Championship in 1962. "Independence" is the wrestling tie with the NEPA mandate of objective systematic planning analyses. Both activities allowed him to independently assess the situation and make his own

decisions. Mike would wrestle for four years at OSU, three of them on the varsity team, and in 1966 he became the top dog at his 177 pound weight class in the West Coast AAWU. The Athletic Association of Western Universities (AAWU) was formed in 1959 and became the Pacific-8 Conference in 1964. Over the years it went by the names Big Five, Big Six, Pacific-8, Pacific-10, and became the Pacific-12 in 2011. Mike had felt the exhilaration of accomplishment as a confident independent member of a team effort. At GP High it also taught him discipline and leadership from Head Wrestling Coach Bill Ryder, who coached wrestling teams that won three straight titles from 1962 to '64. Between 1962 and 1975, Ryder's teams won 12 district titles and were runners-up at state in 1965 and '66.

With his B.S. in hand he headed home to Hugo, and was hired as Assistant County Planner for Josephine County, Oregon. His job with the county was to assist the Planning Director in developing its first comprehensive plan. This year of employment occurred just before five years in the U.S. Navy as an aviator during the Vietnam War. Being an aviator required extensive and intensive planning on flight logistics, team work, and, especially safety.

- 1967 - 1972. Officer in the United States Navy. Aviator, Vietnam Conflict.

Graduate School. Out of the Navy in 1972 and back to OSU and graduate school where he finally discovered he was a land use planner at heart with a land use focus. OSU has an interesting history starting out in 1856 as a private academy until 1858 when the Freemasons played an important role in the change to Corvallis College. In 1865, the school began offering a bachelor's degree, and a few years later in 1868, the Oregon Legislative Assembly designated Corvallis College as the "*Agricultural College of the State of Oregon.*" Another name change to Corvallis State Agricultural College saw its first B.A. graduating class in 1870. In 1911, the Extension Service was established at the college. Much, much later in 1961 the college would become OSU, a year before Mike was a freshman.

DNR Evolves Into Geography Dept. In 1952, the State authorized the geography program's focus on applied physical and technical geography as the *Department of Natural Resources* (DNR) with bachelor's and master's degree authority. In 1966 Mike graduated with a B.S. degree in Natural Resources, the same year the DNR became the *Department of Geography* in the School of Science. By 1967, when he was in Navy flight school in Florida, the *Geography Dept.* offered bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs in physical, resource, and technical geography. Another big change occurred in 1972 just before he started his M.S. degree in Resource Geography. This new dimension to the *Geography Dept.* had occurred with development of the Extension Land Resource Management Program in cooperation with the University Extension Service. The program had four main objectives: 1. develop land use and resources planning, 2. develop research and demonstration projects concerning land use and planning issues, 3. provide liaison between educational institutions and planning agencies, and 4. provide instruction and direction of graduate students in land use and rural planning. In 1987 the OSU graduate program in geography underwent a review by a blue ribbon committee composed of campus scholars and external reviewers. Significantly, the external reviewers' report judged the OSU program to be the best applied geography program in the nation (Association of Pacific Coast Geographers Yearbook. Jensen, Granville J. 1990. *Geography at Oregon State University.* APCG Yearbook).

Higher Ed. His higher education would eventually include an undergraduate degree and a graduate degree from OSU, and a Ph.D. . . . almost. Smile. As a single man he had not excelled as an undergraduate pursuing his B.S. (i.e., “C” average). After marrying and his Navy aviator days, he had more discipline, and as a graduate student he maintained an “A” average. He liked university - too bad his funding expired.

- B.S. — Natural Resources, Oregon State University (OSU), 1966.
- M.S. — Resource Geography, OSU, 1974, dissertation *The Relationship Of Land Use And Size Of Land Parcel To Water Services Needed In The Merlin Irrigation District: 1973*, program emphasis in water resources and land use techniques.
- Ph.D. — All but dissertation (ABD) in Urban Planning/Resource Geography from University of Oregon and OSU, 1975.

ABD is a mostly unofficial term identifying a stage in the process of obtaining a research doctorate in the U.S. Mike had completed the preparatory course work and qualifying examinations for his joint UO/OSU Ph.D in urban planning/resource geography, but he had not completed his comprehensive examinations, nor defended a dissertation proposal. The G.I. Bill’s cash payments for tuition and living expenses to attend university expired during the middle of his doctorate program. He would never complete the degree. However, his first real NEPA job was ahead of him in Alaska from 1975 - 1979 as a Community Planner and EIS ID Team Member for the Alaska Outer Continental Shelf Office.

In summary, he was taught applied resource geography as the core theme of his higher education degrees. Geography is the study of human use and interaction with the earth and the identification of spatial and temporal variation in natural and human processes. Applied resource geography was devoted to research which utilized geographic approaches (i.e., human, physical, and nature-society) to resolve human problems that have a spatial dimension (e.g., land use and planning issues, land use and rural planning, etc.). For Mike, these approaches were related to natural resources and planning because they linked physical processes with factors such as social vulnerability, planning, and resource management. Many aspects of these issues had a strong regional focus (e.g., geography of resources, land use, rural and regional resource evaluation, etc.).

Retired. Much later, in 1998, Mike retired from Federal service and soon arrived back in Hugo where he had started. In 1999 Wayne McKy, President of the Hugo Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), asked Mike if he might be interested in becoming involved with the Hugo CAC? This was land use planning as implemented by Oregon’s famous or infamous Senate Bill 100.

As Oregon grew in the 1960s, Willamette Valley residents began to view development as an environmental disaster that wasted irreplaceable scenery, farmland, timber, and energy. Metropolitan growth was explicitly associated with the painful example of Southern California. Republican Governor Tom McCall summarized the fears of many of his constituents in January 1973, when he spoke to the Oregon legislature about the "*shameless threat to our environment and to the whole quality of life—unfettered despoiling of the land*" and pointed his finger at suburbanization and second-home development. The Oregon Land Conservation and Development Act of 1973, formally Oregon Senate Bills 100 and 101 of 1973, were pieces of landmark legislation passed by the Oregon State Senate in 1973 and later signed into law by McCall. It

created a framework for land use planning across the state, requiring every city and county to develop a comprehensive plan for land use with a focus on protecting farm and forest lands. Mike had been introduced to the land use program at OSU in graduate school. Oregon presently has 19 statewide planning goals of which the first four are about public involvement, land use planning, and protecting farm and forest lands. The order of the goals was significant to Mike, especially Oregon's Statewide Goal 1: Citizen Involvement - To develop a citizen involvement program that insures the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process.

Oregon's 19 Statewide Planning Goals

http://www.oregon.gov/lcd/pages/goals.aspx#Statewide_Planning_Goals

1. Citizen Involvement
2. Land Use Planning
3. Agricultural Land
4. Forest Lands

It did not take long for Mike to say yes to Wayne. For the last 15 years he had served as either the Secretary or the Education Chair. The 1993 Hugo CAC had its roots in the 1973 Senate Bill 100. In 1999 it became the Hugo Neighborhood Association, and in 2000, it reorganized into the *Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society*. Today the *Hugo Neighborhood* is an informal nonprofit charitable and educational organization composed of a voluntary group of citizens with a history and land use mission promoting the social welfare of its neighbors.

- 1999 - 2004. Secretary, Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society (HNAHS). Advocate for Oregon Statewide Goal 1 - Citizen Involvement in Josephine County and land use advocate in county land use applications and procedures.
- 2004 - 2015. Education Chair, HNAHS (History & Land Use) - <http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/>.
- 2015. Interim Membership Chair, HNAHS.
- 2015. Interim Outreach Chair, HNAHS
- 2015. Interim Web Master, HNAHS.

The *Hugo Neighborhood's 2005 Mapping Action Plan For Applegate Trail Program* was its first major policy for its history program. The *Mapping Action Plan* was authorized by all six HNAHS Board members. Mike was one of those Board members and the lead architect of the policy that emigrant trail inventories be supported by documented analyses which was systematic. His bias toward the utility of the NEPA analysis and documentation method was a given, with some examples of a systematic review following

- A systematic review aims to provide an exhaustive summary of current literature relevant to a research question.
- The methodology section of the review will list the databases and citation indexes searched; identified articles are checked against pre-determined criteria for eligibility and relevance.
- A systematic review, both qualitative and quantitative, uses an objective and transparent approach for research synthesis, with the aim of minimizing bias.

The Hugo Emigrant Trails Committee (HETC) was formally organized by the Board in 2005 through the authority of the *Mapping Action Plan*. Per the 2005 policy, all emigrant trail inventories and decisions would be documented using the standards of the Oregon-California

Trails Association's (OCTA's) *Mapping Emigrant Trails* (MET) Manual. This policy was formally corroborated and continued by the *Hugo Neighborhood* Board in 2012 when the *Hugo Applegate Trail Marking & Mapping Project Agreement* was finalized and signed by its partners.

- Trail Mapping Committee, Office of National Trails Preservation & Oregon-California Trails Association. July 2002, 4th edition. *Mapping Emigrant Trails MET Manual*. Independence, MO.
- *Hugo Neighborhood*. May 14, 2005. *Mapping Action Plan For Applegate Trail Program*. Hugo, OR.
- Northwest Chapter, Oregon-California Trails Association (NWOCTA); *Hugo Neighborhood*; and the Josephine County Historical Society (JCHS). March 2012. *Hugo Applegate Trail Marking & Mapping Project Agreement*. Hugo, OR.

Over the years, the work of the HETC's two sub-committees has been outstanding researching and installing wooden *Trail* survey markers, and later OCTA carsonite markers.

Diaries, Journals & Reminiscences Sub-Committee & GLO Field Review SubCommittee
Hugo Emigrants Trails Committee (HETC)
Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society
Web Page: <http://www.hugoneighborhood.org/applegat.htm>

A foundation principal of the HETC, *Hugo Neighborhood*, carrying out its mission in the winter-wet, mountainous terrain of Southwestern Oregon is to research, map, and document emigrant trails through the use of the methods, procedures, and documentation identified in the OCTA MET Manual as supplemented. The Hugo Native American Team, a Committee of the HNAHS, had also adopted a similar systematic analysis approach.

- Rose, Karen and Walker, Mike, Co-Project Leaders, HETC. December 8, 2013. *Standards: Emigrant Trail Inventories and Decisions*. Hugo, OR.
- Walker, Mike, Education Chair, HNAHS. Draft July 4, 2012. *The Standard For Historical Trail Inventories: Verification And Reliability of Evidence*. Hugo, OR.
- Hugo Native American Team, Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society. August 12, 2012, Updated April 12, 2014. *Appendix F. Maps For Use In Identifying & Mapping Indian Trails, Indian Trail Over Grave Creek Hills: 1855*. Hugo, OR.

In 2015 the *Hugo Neighborhood* had been working on researching, mapping, and documenting the 1846 - 1883 *Trail* in northern Josephine County, Oregon for one and one-half decades.

OCTA MET Manual. The MET Manual was not quite science, but Mike thought it was a thoughtful mature analysis process to research, locate, map, and document emigrant trails. Like a NEPA analysis, a MET Manual analysis was a *systematic process based on evidence, and on sound, repeatable thought processes*. In sum, both the MET and NEPA analyses methods involved a technical evaluation intended to contribute to more objective decision making. Part of the MET's compliance standards was to examine and document all the relevant written, cartographic, physical, and artifact evidence with an open mind. Preconceptions that lead to "make things fit" must be avoided.

In the best of all situations, the trail researcher **examines all the relevant written, cartographic, physical, and artifact evidence**, and finds them mutually supporting. What does the researcher do when different kinds of evidence conflict? How does one determine the relative reliability of different types of evidence (*OCTA MET Manual*, Ranking the Reliability of Evidence Used to Verify Trail Location (pages 5 - 8).

Most importantly, the **mapper should conduct field investigation and authentication with an open mind**. The easy things are readily resolved; the difficult problems may require additional research and field work. **The mapper should avoid going into the field with preconceptions that lead to “make things fit” especially when they don’t seem to square with the evidence**. The MET program is open-ended. It is designed to allow for doubts and to provide for corrections and additions as new materials and evidence come to light. History is a matter of building upon what has gone before. **It isn’t a matter of being “right.” It is more a matter of putting forth what research has indicated has the highest degree of probability**. All mapping endeavors should be considered as the opening of an on-going dialogue. That’s the historical process at work (*OCTA MET Manual Conclusion*, page 12).

MET Manual Compliance Standards. The MET Manual’s philosophy and Mike’s character fit near perfectly per his interest in a credible documented planning process leading, in this case to an emigrant trail inventory decision. Planning, including the MET analysis process, for the *Trail* work in Hugo is not a democratic process where the majority rules. It is a compliance analysis process more like NEPA, or the old objective journalism where a through research and documentation of all the facts ruled the outcome (i.e., there are analytical standards and criteria). The following are the MET Compliance Standards (CS) Mike advocates. He recently used them to document a MET analysis for the *Non-Surveyed Applegate Trail Site: East I-5 Manzanita Rest Area*.

- MET CS 1. Examine and Document All the Relevant Written, Cartographic, Physical, and Artifact Evidence
- MET CS 2. Evaluate General Principles of Trail Location & Verification
- MET CS 3. Apply Cardinal Rules of Trail Verification for Conformance
- MET CS 3. Rank Reliability of Different Types of Evidence Used to Verify Trail Location
- MET CS 4. Evaluate Applicability of Guidelines for Locating Wagon Trails
- MET CS 5. Classify Trail Location with the Classification Categories

- Walker, Mike, Member HETC, *Hugo Neighborhood*. Draft April 7, 2015. *Non-Surveyed Applegate Trail Site: East I-5 Manzanita Rest Area*. Hugo, OR.

Other volunteer hats Mike has worn, or wears, since he retired from Federal service also involve organization and analytical skills, only one of which is for pay - President of NEPA Design Group.

- 1998 - 2015. President of NEPA Design Group. This group provides customized National Environmental Policy Act consulting services designed to address resource issues through the interdisciplinary team process of addressing problems, affected environment, alternative opportunities, and the impacts (direct, indirect, and cumulative) of those opportunities.
- 2003 - 2015. Director, Goal One Coalition - <http://www.goall.org/>
- 2004 - 2006. Associate Director, Josephine Soil & Water Conservation District.
- 2006 - 2015. Director, Rogue Advocates - <http://www.rogueadvocates.org/>

Besides his public service as a paid and volunteer planner, he is frequently kidded by family members, especially his wife, for documenting numerous family events. Mike is tinkering with the idea that through some combination of culture and biology (i.e., NEPA/MET Gene), his mind was more receptive to analytical thinking over the intuitive. This is not to suggest that he does not spontaneously response to questions with his opinions. However, he usually ends up in thinking its his bad genes. Smile.

In summary, Mike has a passion for the scientific method and strives to comprehensively document his voluntary work for the *Hugo Neighborhood*, regardless of the topic. He believes the roots of his voluntarism characteristics are part of the following collective, overlapping, elements resulting in a cumulative propensity toward the scientific method and documentation.

- Mike experienced growing-up on a Hugo dirt farm with a dearth of 1st class soils; he always thought he would have been a farmer if he could have learned how to make a living. Later it became important for him to understand and protect agriculture.
- In 1966 Mike graduated with a B.S. degree in Natural Resources (i.e., applied resource geography).
- With his B.S. in hand he headed home to Hugo, and was hired as Assistant County Planner for Josephine County, Oregon. His job was to assist the Planning Director in developing its first comprehensive plan.
- In 1972 a new program in the OSU *Geography Dept.* had occurred with four main objectives: 1. develop land use and resources planning, 2. develop research and demonstration projects concerning land use and planning issues, 3. provide liaison between educational institutions and planning agencies, and 4. provide instruction and direction of graduate students in land use and rural planning.
- He received his M.S. in Resource Geography in 1974; his dissertation was *The Relationship Of Land Use And Size Of Land Parcel To Water Services Needed In The Merlin Irrigation District: 1973*, program emphasis in water resources and land use techniques.
- His Ph.D., ABD was in Urban Planning/Resource Geography.
- Significant employment experiences were as a Federal planner and environmental coordinator with the BLM in Alaska, Nevada, and Oregon where he worked on land use plans and NEPA analyses documents. The analysis occurred within the framework of NEPA compliance standards through group think and consensus identified as the ID team process.
- NEPA analyses must be systematic: The selection of appropriate issues, impact topics, mitigation strategies, analysis boundaries, and alternatives; the involvement of the interested and affected public; and other aspects of the NEPA process based on scientific evidence and on sound, repeatable thought processes.
- NEPA analyses are scientific, objective, and high quality, they must be performed by individuals with credentials appropriate to the issues.
- In 1999 he became a member of the Hugo Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) because this was land use planning as implemented by Oregon's famous Senate Bill 100. The Oregon law created a framework for land use planning across the state by requiring local governments to develop a comprehensive plan with a focus on protecting farm and forest lands.
- Planning, including the MET Manual analysis process for the Applegate Trail is not a democratic process where the majority rules. It is a compliance analysis process more like NEPA, or the old objective journalism where a thorough research and documentation of all the facts ruled the outcome (i.e., there are analytical standards and criteria).

- His professional bureaucratic volunteer planning skills were gained from a lifetime of Federal service developing land use planning and environmental analysis projects and plans.

In hindsight it is more obvious, to Mike, why he has an overwhelming interest in the open, public, cumbersome, time consuming, group think planning process of comprehensive objective analysis, equal to, or greater, than the decision-makers' final decision. He believes you arrive at better publically transparent decisions based on a team's documented baseline and comprehensive objective analyses. This type of documentation also represents a formal, thoughtful analysis with explicit ownership by the author(s), and of sorts, accountability, that is accessible and can be reviewed and corrected as needed. However, he really does not know why his early interests leaned toward the earth and planning. He tentatively concludes that it was related in some way to growing up on a dirt farm in Hugo, Oregon, which has a dearth of first class soils needing protection, and his NEPA/MET Gene.

And, that's part of *Why I Am Me*. Mike, A *Hugo Neighborhood* Volunteer :)

Mike, Mikie, Michael, Hey You, BH, . . . one or all of us is a friendly hugable Hugoite. Remind me.

p.s. Before Mike arrived at "old," he used to really enjoy outdoor family activities (e.g., camping, hiking, hunting, especially rafting, etc.). Now he enjoys volunteer community projects: local Hugo history (e.g., Applegate Trail, auto courts, orchards, Native Americans, etc.), conducting oral histories for old timers, working in the garden, and having fun in family activities with his wife Cindy, and their doggers, Deeno and Pebbles.