

# Railroads, Ranches & Ghost Towns

## Golden Spike to City of Rocks

### BEAR RIVER HERITAGE AREA

*Blessed by Water, Worked by Hand*

Before the advent of white settlers, Box Elder was home to Northwestern Shoshone Indians whose families followed seasonal systems of subsistence along the eastern and northern shores of the Great Salt Lake. In the 19th Century, Mormons and other immigrants established routes and settlements, and with the advent of the railroad, small towns cropped up. This self-guided tour directs you to historical sites and attractions of Box Elder County, Utah and parts of neighboring Cassia County, Idaho. Allow three days for the tour, and plan ahead for safety in travel on back roads in the Great Basin desert terrain.



Brigham City Main Street – Brigham City, UT



Historic Fruitway – Willard/Perry, UT



Golden Spike National Historic Site



The Spiral Jetty

### EASTERN BOX ELDER COUNTY

#### PART ONE: EXPERIENCE & LEARN

*Distance and Time: ~160 miles, one day*

**Communities:** Brigham City, Willard/Perry, small towns along UT Hwy 38, Tremonton, Bothwell, Corinne, and Promontory. Beginning in the town of Brigham City, the tour includes educational and historical sites that will prepare you to understand the history and natural resources of the region.  
**Information:** [boxeldercounty.org](http://boxeldercounty.org); [nwbsoshone.com](http://nwbsoshone.com); [visitbrighamcity.com](http://visitbrighamcity.com)

#### **Museums and Historic Sites**

Visit Box Elder County museums to learn more about the history and geography of the region.  
**Information:** Self-guided walking tour, [brighamcity.utah.gov](http://brighamcity.utah.gov); BRHA Small Museums Tour, [bearriverheritage.com](http://bearriverheritage.com); Shoshone Indian history, [nwbsoshone.com/culture.php](http://nwbsoshone.com/culture.php).

#### **Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge**

A wetland created by the flow of the Bear River into the northeast arm of the Great Salt Lake. The marshes are the largest freshwater component of the Great Salt Lake ecosystem. Educational exhibits and programing, auto tour, bird watching, and photography.

**Location:** 2155 West Forest Street, Brigham City  
**Information:** 435.723.5887; [fws.gov/refuge](http://fws.gov/refuge)

#### **Historic Fruitway**

South of Brigham City, two miles along historic Hwy 89 offers shopping at family-owned roadside stands for fruits, vegetables, flowers and plants.

**Information:** [visitbrighamcity.com/fruit-way](http://visitbrighamcity.com/fruit-way); [facebook.com/UtahsFamousFruitWay](https://www.facebook.com/UtahsFamousFruitWay)

#### **Willard Bay State Park**

A huge freshwater reservoir that offers camping, fishing, boating, and bird watching.

**Location:** 900 W. 650 N. Willard  
**Information:** 435.734.9494 or 801.782.2321; [stateparks.utah.gov/parks/willard-bay](http://stateparks.utah.gov/parks/willard-bay)

#### **Holmgren Historical Farm**

Working farm listed on the National Register of Historic Places, open for visitors March-October. Special events by appointment.

**Location:** 460 N. 3rd E. Tremonton  
**Information:** 435.279.0072

#### **Wagonland Adventure**

Authentic and educational experience of the pioneer horse-drawn era. Over 300 restored horse-drawn wagons, carriages, and stagecoaches. Tours by appointment.

**Location:** 8790 West Hwy 102, Tremonton  
**Information:** Eli Anderson; 435.279.6422; [wagonlandadventure.com](http://wagonlandadventure.com)

#### **Marble Park**

A skyline etched with iron sculptures of prancing horses, wagons, and wheels, created by the late Boyd Marble for the enjoyment and education of others.

**Location:** 11598 W. 11200 N. Tremonton  
**Information:** Greg and Betty Marble; 435.279.0764 or 435.279.6063

#### **ATK Launch Systems Rocket Display**

The world's largest producer of high-technology solid rocket motors for space, defense, and commercial use. Outdoor display of solid rocket motors.

**Location:** 9160 UT Hwy 83, Corinne  
**Information:** Free admission, open year-round

#### **Golden Spike National Historic Site**

The transcontinental railroad was completed at this site on May 10, 1869. Locomotive demonstrations, museum, ranger programs, and auto tour.

**Location:** 22000 West Rd, Corinne  
**Information:** 435-471-2209; [nps.gov/gosp](http://nps.gov/gosp); Visitors center open year-round 9a.m. - 5p.m., closed holidays

#### **Spiral Jetty**

Earth work created in 1970 by Robert Smithson, located at Rozel Point peninsula on the northeastern shore of Great Salt Lake.

**Location:** 41.4377° N, -112.6689° W; Follow the signs from Golden Spike NHS.  
**Information:** [diaart.org](http://diaart.org); directions at [utah.com/great-salt-lake-state-park/spiral-jetty](http://utah.com/great-salt-lake-state-park/spiral-jetty); printable guide at [umfa.utah.edu/spiral-jetty](http://umfa.utah.edu/spiral-jetty).

**NOTE:** There are no restrooms or cell service beyond Golden Spike NHS.

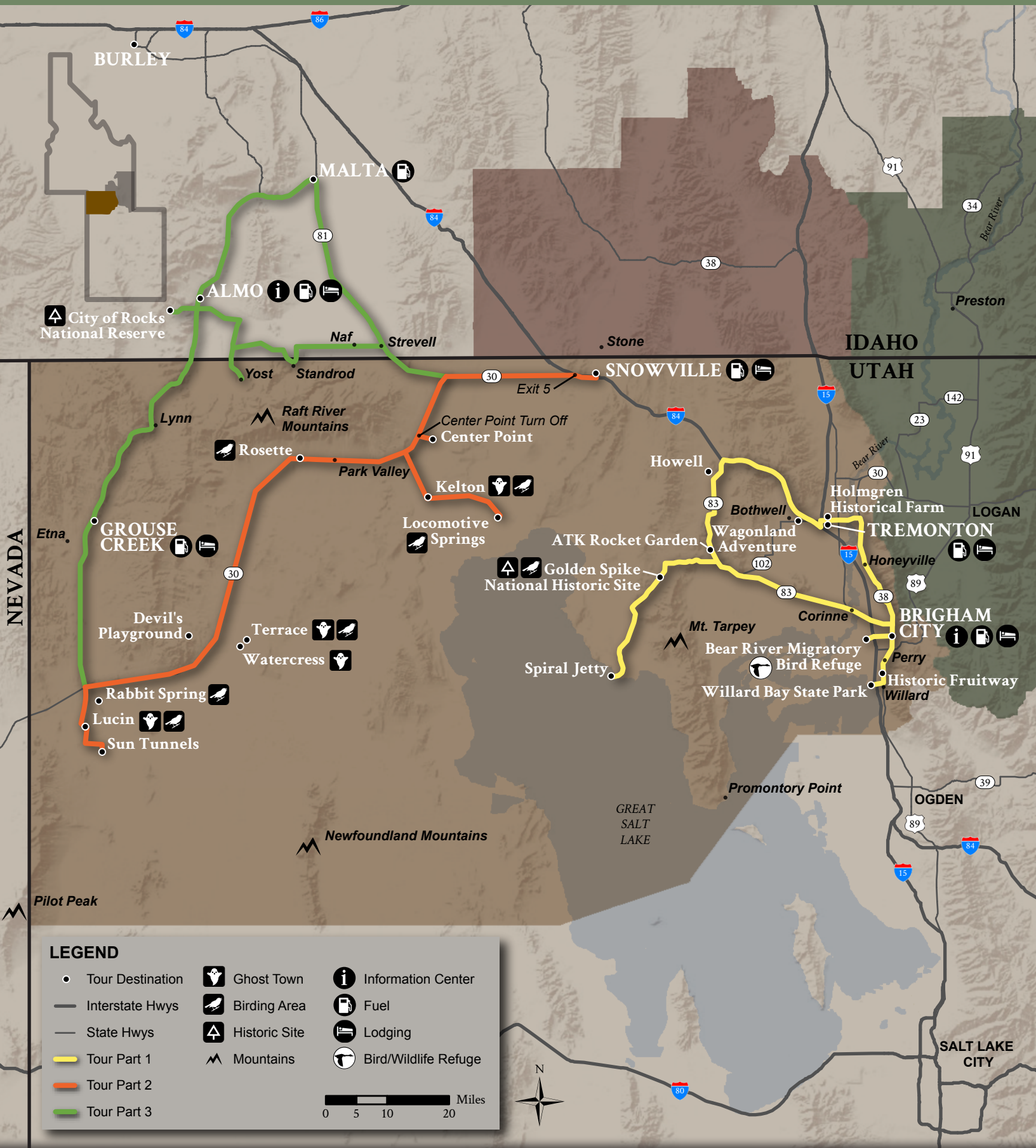


# BEAR RIVER HERITAGE AREA

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GOLDEN SPIKE TO CITY OF ROCKS

[www.bearriverheritage.com](http://www.bearriverheritage.com)



GOLDEN  
SPIKE

CACHE  
VALLEY

BEAR LAKE  
COUNTRY

PIONEER  
TRAILS



Railroad Trestle - Lucin



Terrace Cemetery



Lazuli Bunting - Lucin Area



Center Point - Kelton



Sun Tunnels

### QUICK FACTS

**Food, Gas, Lodging:** Snowville, Grouse Creek, Almo; dispersed camping on BLM ground.  
**Time to Visit:** May to October  
**Safety:** Bring water and food as amenities are sparse; fill up gas tank at Snowville. Go with good tires and carry a spare.

### Emergency 911

Box Elder County Sheriff (Utah) – 435.734.3800  
 Cassia County Sheriff (Idaho) – 208.878.2251  
 City of Rocks Park Superintendent – 208.312.2796 or 208.824.5901  
 Cassia Regional Hospital, Burley, ID – 208.678.4444

## PART TWO: RAILS, TRAILS & GHOST TOWNS

*Distance and Time: ~125 miles, one day*

**Communities:** Snowville, Park Valley, Rosette  
 For travelers looking for an adventurous back-roads route, State Hwy 30 through the Great Basin desert back-roads provides plenty of intrigue. Skirting the north shore of the Great Salt Lake, these roads will take you past remote ranches, ghost towns and cemeteries, railroad beds, and wide open vistas over desert terrain.

**Directions:** From I-84, take Snowville Exit 5. Head West on State Hwy 30 for ~15.5 miles. Turn south at the State Hwy 42/30 Junction to continue on State Hwy 30. The tour begins here.

### Town of Snowville, founded 1871

Located about three miles south of the Idaho border, Snowville is the center of farming and dairying activities in the Curlew Valley. Travelers can dine at Mollie's Café or the Ranch House diner.

**Location:** Snowville Exit 7 from US I-84

**Information:** [boxeldercounty.org](http://boxeldercounty.org)

### Ranch Sites

Western Box Elder County is most suited for ranching, as is evident by the many uniquely named ranch sites.

**Information:** USU Ranch Family Documentation Project, [digital.lib.usu.edu](http://digital.lib.usu.edu); 435.797.8248

### Ghost Towns and Cemeteries

Several towns sprang up along the lines of the Transcontinental Railroad, but were abandoned when the Lucin cut-off bypassed the old route in 1904.

**Lat/Long:**

**Kelton:** 41.7460, -113.1064; **Terrace:** 41.1727, -111.9766; **Lucin:** 41.3483, -113.9042

In the words of author Stephen Carr, "Take nothing but photographs, leave nothing but footprints."

**Information:** *The Historical Guide to Utah Ghost Towns*, by Stephen Carr; [heritage.utah.gov/history/cemeteries](http://heritage.utah.gov/history/cemeteries); and [bearriverheritage.com](http://bearriverheritage.com) for the BRHA cemetery brochure.

### Flora and Fauna (to be completed later)

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### Birding

Birding opportunities are all along the tour with prime areas at Kelton, Locomotive Springs, Terrace, Lucin (specifically at the pond), and Rabbit Spring (a small reservoir). Look for common and spring migrant songbirds, Northern saw-whet owls, and a variety of raptors along power lines.

**Information:** [utahbirds.org](http://utahbirds.org); [audubon.org](http://audubon.org)

### Hunting and Fishing

Small and big game, upland game, waterfowl, and a variety of fish are each found within the region, with hunting allowed in certain areas. Licenses are required for both hunting and fishing.

**Information:** [wildlife.utah.gov](http://wildlife.utah.gov); [blm.gov](http://blm.gov); [nps.gov](http://nps.gov); and [idfg.idaho.gov](http://idfg.idaho.gov)

### Overland Routes

Many routes and trails passed through this region, including the Transcontinental railroad, immigrant trails, and stock trails. Original railroad rails were removed during WWII, but some trestles and almost 90 miles of historic grade still exist. The Oregon California Trail brought over 500,000 pioneers travelling through this region on their way to points west.

**Information:** Search the National Register for the Central Pacific Railroad Grade Historic District at [npsgallery.nps.gov](http://npsgallery.nps.gov); or the Oregon California Trails Association at [octa-trails.org](http://octa-trails.org).

### Center Point

Center Point is the name given to one of the most visible wagon freight routes delivering goods from Kelton to points west in the late 1800s to early 1900s.

**Location:** Freight wagon roads running out from Kelton can be viewed by looking south from the point given below.

**Lat/Long:** Turn east on W. Wildcat Road from US Hwy 30 at 41.86220, -113.12780; Drive about 1.5 miles to the viewing point at 41.85600, -113.09605

### Devil's Playground

Comprised of BLM and state land, this location is full of interesting rock formations and is a good site for OHV riding and camping. BLM lands are public but expect to see "No Trespassing" signs as government and private lands often intersect.

**Location:** Found off of Highway 30 at the south end of the Grouse Creek Mountains

**Lat/Long:** 41.53252778, -113.6884722

**Information:** [geology.utah.gov](http://geology.utah.gov); [360cities.net](http://360cities.net); [boxeldercounty.org](http://boxeldercounty.org); [stateparks.utah.gov](http://stateparks.utah.gov); [blm.gov](http://blm.gov)

### Sun Tunnels

Created by artist Nancy Holt in 1976, this radical creation, along with the Spiral Jetty, is part of the land art collection of the Dia Art Foundation. Located in an unlikely and remote location, one experiences only by visiting why this is the perfect location.

**Lat/Long:** 41.30351, -113.86380

**Information:** The DIA Art Foundation, [diaart.org](http://diaart.org); for travel directions, [utah.com/wendover/sun-tunnels](http://utah.com/wendover/sun-tunnels); and a printable guide at [umfa.utah.edu/land-art/sun-tunnels](http://umfa.utah.edu/land-art/sun-tunnels).





Historic Tanner House - Grouse Creek



Cattle Drive - Grouse Creek



City of Rocks



Swainson's Hawk - City of Rocks

### **PART THREE: GROUSE CREEK TO CITY OF ROCKS NATIONAL RESERVE**

*Distance and Time: ~150 miles, one day*

**Communities:** Grouse Creek, Yost, Lynn, Almo, Standrod, Naf, Strevell

Continuing north from Lucin, visitors will travel a loop through remote ranching communities to City of Rocks National Reserve and City of Rocks Scenic Byway. Local attractions include hiking, birding, horseback riding, hunting and fishing; historic architecture, and cultural celebrations such as rodeos and 4th of July celebrations.

**Information:** [nps.gov/ciro/planyourvisit/hours.htm](https://nps.gov/ciro/planyourvisit/hours.htm); [grousecreek.com](https://grousecreek.com); [visitidaho.org](https://visitidaho.org)

#### **Historic Architecture**

In Grouse Creek and the surrounding communities, look for early log structures, and small barns, which were used to protect stock animals in ranching communities. For an interesting hike, you can find the sandstone quarry at the center of Grouse Creek and see the natural materials used for buildings such as the Grouse Creek School, the Mormon tithing house near the red brick Tanner house, and the Etna schoolhouse found on the Etna Road loop, and others. **Information:** For further learning see The Grouse Creek Cultural Survey by Thomas Carter and Carl Fleischhauer, 1988, [digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/Grouse](https://digital.lib.usu.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/Grouse)

#### **Gone Country**

Originally established as a co-op for the residents of this remote ranching community, the Grouse Creek Country Store carries basic supplies, snacks, 24-hour gas pumps. Internet available in front of store. **Location:** 8844 Grouse Creek Rd, Grouse Creek, UT **Information:** JoAnn Kimber, 435.747.7341 **Lodging:** The Loaf Inn cabin sleeps six, and there are 4 RV hookups.

#### **Buck's Naf Mercantile**

Early 1900s mercantile restored by a local family. Burgers, beer and collectibles. **Location:** 2595 East Strevell Rd, Naf, ID **Information:** 208.308.6072; Open Mother's Day to October, Sat-Sun, or by appointment.

#### **Almo Outpost Inn and Steakhouse**

**Location:** 3020 Elba Almo Road, Almo **Information:** 208.824.5577; [almoinn.com](https://almoinn.com) **Note:** Steakhouse closed Mondays

#### **Tracy General Store**

Built in 1894, the oldest operating general store in Idaho. Deli lunches and lunch specials, homemade cookies, souvenirs, maps, and more. Showers and 24-hour gas pumps.

**Location:** 3001 Elba-Almo Hwy, Almo, ID

**Information:** 208.824.5570;

**Hrs:** 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

#### **Old Homestead**

Rent by the day or week.

**Location:** 809 E. 2975 S., Almo

**Information:** 208.824.5521

#### **Rock City Mercantile & Auto Repair**

**Location:** 839 East Elba-Almo Road, Almo

**Information:** 208.824.5510; Rocky City Mercantile on Facebook

#### **Durfee Hot Springs**

**Location:** 2798 Elba-Almo Road, Almo

**Information:** 208.824.5701 or 208.824.5543; [durfeehotsprings.com](https://durfeehotsprings.com)

#### **City of Rocks National Reserve**

Hiking, camping, birding, horseback riding, photography, and auto touring.

**Location:** 3035 Elba-Almo Road, Almo, ID

**Information:** 208.824.5901, City of Rocks Visitors Center, 3035 S. Hwy 77 Spur; [nps.gov/ciro](https://nps.gov/ciro)

#### **City of Rocks Back Country Byway**

The auto tour begins at the City of Rock Visitors Center.

**Distance and time:** ~24 miles, 1.5 to 2.5 hours

**Information:** [visitidaho.org](https://visitidaho.org); [visitsouthidaho.com](https://visitsouthidaho.com)

#### **Castle Rocks State Park**

**Location:** 748 East 2800 South, Almo, ID; One mile northeast of the City of Rocks Reserve. Lodging includes a yurt, bunkhouse, lodge and glamping.

**Information:** [parksandrecreation.idaho.gov](https://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov); 208.824.5901



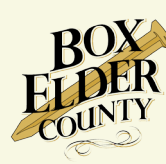
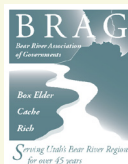
\* All photos by Heritage Area staff except for the following: Brigham City Main Street - Paul Larsen; Golden Spike and Spiral Jetty - Courtney Cochley; Grouse Creek Cattle Drive - Ron Goede; Sun Tunnels - Aimee Smith; Lazuli Bunting, City of Rocks, and Swainson's Hawk - Wallace Keck;

SUPPORT PROVIDED BY:



**Bear River Association of Governments**  
Logan, Utah 435.752.7242  
[www.brag.utah.gov](https://www.brag.utah.gov)

**Box Elder County Tourism**  
Brigham City, Utah 435.734.3315  
[www.boxeldercounty.org/visiting.htm](https://www.boxeldercounty.org/visiting.htm)



For more information or to comment on this tour, contact Lisa at 435.713.1426 or [lisad@brag.utah.gov](mailto:lisad@brag.utah.gov)

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