

The Nuclear West

Trip 1*, the Intermountain West

A Coach Tour by Buffalo Tours
Begins and ends in Los Alamos, New Mexico

August 22-30, 2010

\$ 1,645/person double
(\$2,324/person single lodging)

Heritage Partners and Life Members of the Los Alamos Historical Society will receive a \$100 discount on The Nuclear West Tour. To become a Heritage Partner, please contact the Los Alamos Historical Society e-mail: historicalsociety@losalamoshistory.org, Phone: 505-662-6272, or visit The Los Alamos Historical Museum at 1050 Bathtub Row, Los Alamos, NM 87544.

Price includes: chartered restroom-equipped coach, lodging, entrance fees at planned museums and attractions, and tour management. Most meals are NOT included, but regular stops are planned with availability of food in mind. Participants are encouraged to bring personal water bottles. Luggage handling is usually not available in remote places, and due to the vast distances to be traveled, we will be in a different town each night. Among the advantages of bus travel is that you can bring two (or more) small, easily handled pieces. Please tag all of your bags!

Welcome! For reservations, please contact Georgia at (505) 662-3965

P.O. Box 726 Los Alamos, NM 87544

Or e-mail: buffalotours@att.net

Web site: <http://home.covad.net/buffalotours>, then click on "Special Tour Events"

Tour Highlights:

Visions of the vast and seemingly empty landscape of the Intermountain West conjure up dinosaurs, canyon lands, historic journeys across uninhabited reaches, rafting down unknown desert rivers...and key activities of the **Manhattan Project** and the ensuing **Cold War** era.

- **Historic Wendover Airfield, UT:** WW II B-29 crews worked on top secret aerodynamic shapes and fusing systems, and then trained for delivery of the huge first atomic bombs.
- **Idaho National Engineering Laboratory (INEL):** seminal nuclear reactor research.
- **Project Plowshare sites:** peacetime use of nuclear devices detonated underground at the Rio Blanco, Rulison, and Gasbuggy events.
- **Prospecting, Mining and Milling :** select sites of the Uranium Boom.

Itinerary:

Sunday, August 22 --Mid-morning Los Alamos departure, traveling through Shiprock (site of a mitigated uranium mill) to overnight stop in Blanding, UT (home of a current uranium mill).

Monday--The Dinosaur Museum at Blanding specializes in feathered dinosaurs, and is opening early for our group so we can be on our way. Stopping at Green River, UT, there's the John Wesley Powell River History Museum, a converted uranium mill, and part of White Sands Missile Range. Then traversing the uranium-rich San Rafael Swell and entering the Valley of the Great Salt Lake we'll overnight at Tooele, UT, near Dugway Proving Ground.

Tuesday--After crossing the Bonneville Salt Flats, today's focus is Historic **Wendover** Airfield. This is the most original and largest WW II Army Air Forces base in the country with A LOT of original buildings. Our hosts will provide our lunch (included) in an historic building as we're briefed on the history of the base and its role during the Manhattan Project. There will be a special opportunity of seeing the B-29 "Enola Gay" hangar, South Base Tech Area and the loading bays for the simulated atomic bombs. The Flight Operations Building (OPS) is now a museum and part of the Tooele County Airport. The Nugget Hotel & Casino was the famous Stateline Hotel during the Manhattan Project, so of course we'll be staying there adjacent to the old base. Participants will have as much time as needed to explore the base on foot after the bus portion of the tour, or may opt to relax in the Nugget Hotel Casino complex.

Wednesday--Traveling north into Idaho and entering the Snake River Plain, the Oregon Trail is our route as we skirt the volcanic fields of Craters of the Moon National Monument. Arriving at the western edge of the vast Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEL) nuclear reactor research becomes the focus with an overnight stay in Arco, ID, the First Nuclear Powered Town.

Thursday--**INEL** day includes a tour of the historic Experimental Breeder Reactor-1 (**EBR-1**) and escorted tours of current reactor research facilities. Arriving in Idaho Falls in the afternoon, our accommodations along the falls of Snake River will allow time for discretionary exploration of this very pleasant city.

Friday--Leaving Idaho and tracking south and east along the Oregon Trail, the tour route passes through a corner of Wyoming before hitting the Outlaw Trail through the spectacular Flaming Gorge recreation area, and back into uranium-rich Utah with an overnight stop in Vernal. The Utah Field House is another must-see dinosaur museum opportunity.

Saturday--Into Colorado, the tour route focuses on **Project Plowshare** underground nuclear test sites of **Rio Blanco** (a Livermore shot) and **Rulison** (a Los Alamos shot). Some local folks who worked on Rulison will meet us. Overnight in Grand Junction, the former Manhattan Engineer District & Atomic Energy Commission headquarters for regional uranium mining and milling.

Sunday--A leisurely drive along the scenic Dolores River Canyon takes us deep into the heart of Colorado's Uranium Boom. A surprising new resort at remote Gateway with an optional collector car museum provides a wayside stop before continuing to **Uravan, Naturita, and Slick Rock**--places unknown to the world until uranium and vanadium. Even our final night in bustling Durango bears witness to western Colorado's importance to the 20th century atomic age with a mitigated Uranium mill site across the river from downtown.

Monday August 30 --Returning to New Mexico via Gobernador Canyon, one more **Plowshare** shot site, **Gasbuggy**, is passed near Dulce before arriving back in The Atomic City.



* See you on Nuclear West Trip 2 to Nevada Test Site, and Trip 3 to Hanford, WA, dates TBD