

Westward Movement - Trail Decision #2

Fates:

TD #1 (No Movement) You fill your water barrels and water your livestock first thing in the morning and head out at day break. You plan to travel in the early morning and early evening, in hopes of resting your livestock during the heat of the day and conserving water. Two days into the trip your animals are requiring far too much water and are becoming sluggish and dehydrated. You realize that you have miscalculated your water rations and that to water your livestock for five more days would put the rest of wagon train at risk of illness or even death. Your wagon train reluctantly decides to turn around and return to South Pass. However, the two day trip back proves to be greater than your water supply can handle. You must stop watering all livestock that are not pulling a wagon which results in the loss of 13 animals. After a day of rest at South Fork, you continue your journey south to Fort Bridger.

TD #2 (Move ahead) You fill your water barrels and water your livestock first thing in the morning and head out at day break. You reach Fort Bridger only to discover that the costs of goods are outrageous and that the ramshackle fort is quite disappointing. However, your supplies are decent and you are able to trade for the few necessities that you need with Native American's outside the fort. You spend one night, fill your water barrels and successfully continue on well supplied the next morning.

TD #3 (Move Back) You fill your water barrels and water your livestock first thing in the morning and head out at day break. Those of you who traveled south begin to second guess your decision a few days into the trip. A young mother on your wagon train begins experiencing troubles with her unborn baby. You decided to send a scout back to South Pass and along the Sublette Cutoff to inform the other wagon train that the doctor's services are required. The scout finds the wagon train stopped and tending to their pulling oxen that are worn out, dehydrated, and requiring a veterinarian. Unfortunately, the only vet is back with the others on the main trail to Fort Bridger. After another long ride back to inform them of the mishaps, both wagon trains decide to turn around, return to South Pass, and rejoin their forces and skills. This results in a week long delay. However, this also strengthened their community and desire to work together as a team who later chose to successfully make the journey together along the Sublette Cutoff.

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Last night you arrived at South Pass located on the Continental Divide. This important landmark is the halfway point on the Oregon Trail. You celebrate with the others in your wagon train for a brief moment, only to remember that you still have approximately 1,000 mile of trail ahead. Your supplies are holding up, but water has become a concern due the hot, dry July days and the difficult decision that you now face.

A meeting was called around the campfire last night and one representative of each wagon was asked to attend. Recently a new shortcut called the Sublette Cutoff was forged cutting off approximately 85 miles and 7 days of trail just outside of South Pass. However, 45 of those miles are waterless and the decision to travel this route is not an easy one to make. The alternative is to remain on the main trail to Fort Bridger where your livestock should have plenty of opportunities to drink from natural water sources and where your supplies can be replenished at Fort Bridger.

Trail Decision	Possible Actions	Analysis
1	Time is of the essences. You love adventure and are always willing to take a risk. It has been a long journey so far and the thought of cutting 85 long, hard miles off of your journey is just too much to pass up. You choose to fill your water barrels, water your livestock, and head out on the Sublette Cutoff at day break. This decision could save you as much as seven days on the trail. However, you are giving up an opportunity to restock your supplies at Fort Bridge and are putting your livestock at risk of dehydration and possibly dying.	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">Pros</div> <div style="padding: 5px;">Cons:</div>
2	You are traveling with livestock and are concerned about the health of your older companions as well as a mother whose baby is due any day now. Even though time is important, your wagon train decides that the Sublette Cutoff is just too big a risk to take. You will continue traveling south to Fort Bridger where you've been told that the water is plentiful and the supplies are overflowing. However, in the back of your mind you can't stop thinking about the seven extra days on the trail and how that might affect your wagon train in making it to the Willamette Valley before the first snowfall.	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">Pros:</div> <div style="padding: 5px;">Cons:</div>
3	Your wagon train takes a vote and is deadlocked. Your community discussion continues into the night. Both sides are stubborn and the wagon train decides to split in two. Families with livestock and health concerns will continue traveling south to Fort Bridger. Those who are strong and are willing to risk it, will travel west on the Sublette Cutoff. Both sides are unhappy with the decision, but are unwilling to compromise. Tired and sad, you say your goodbyes and head off to bed.	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">Pros:</div> <div style="padding: 5px;">Cons:</div>
Action Chosen # _____		