Donner Summit Historical Society

20 mile museum
Signage Plan

"...inexpressibly comprehensive, grand, and picturesque. After congratulating ourselves upon the safe achievement of our morning feat, and breathing our mules a few minutes, we proceeded on our journey. A mile brought us to a small dimple on top of the mountain, in the centre of which is a miniature lake, surrounded by green grass."

What I saw in California Edwin Bryant 1849 upon reaching Donner Summit

Donner Summit *is* grand and unique and the Donner Summit Historical Society has embarked on a project to highlight the history and beauty of the Summit.

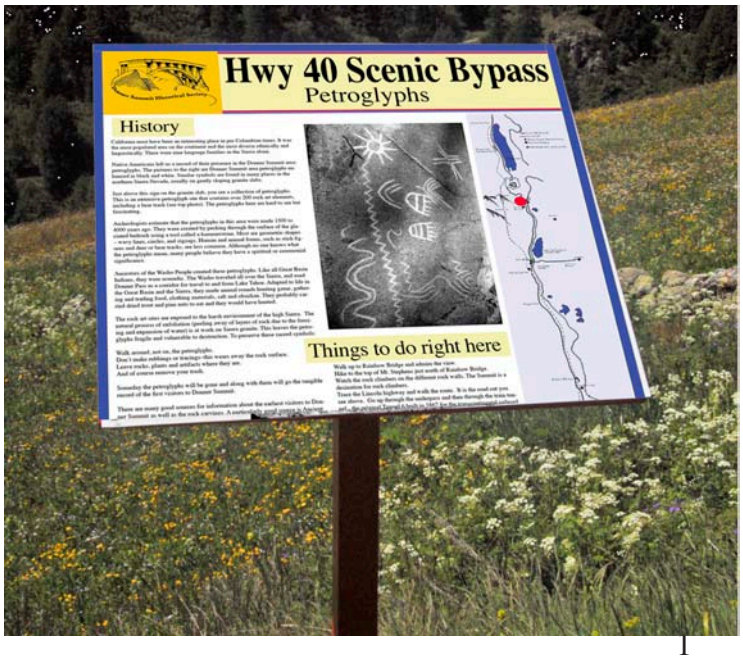
The 20 mile museum will consist of interpretive signs placed on private commercial property and along Old Highway 40. Each sign will highlight the history of the location, display historical photographs and quotes, tell a good story, and list activities for that location.

The purpose of the project is to

Share and explain Donner Summit history
Share the beauty and activities of Donner Summit
Encourage visitation
Revitalize the Summit economy which has been on a down hill slide for decades.

Initially the project will consist of 26 interpretive signs as delineated in the chart below. Most will be placed on private commercial property but some will need to be placed on County owned property along Old Highway 40 where there are turnouts or where there is currently parking.

The project will also include a booklet listing all of

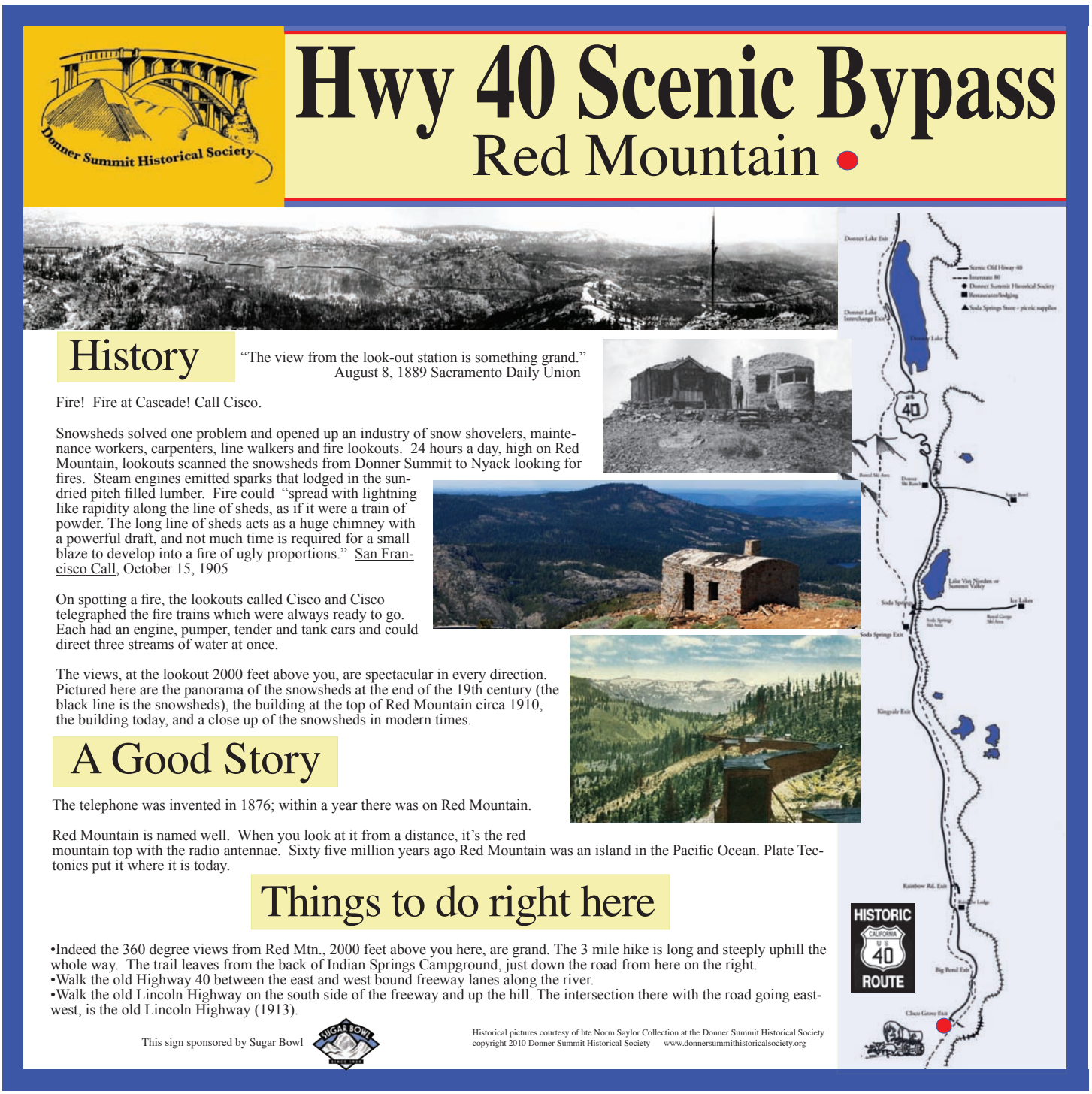


Example of interpretive sign, this one explaining the Donner Summit Native American petroglyphs.

the signs along with additional locations and information. Eventually, over subsequent years, the project will grow to include a dozen or more additional signs.

The project has met with overwhelming community approval and support as can be seen on the next page. Each sign, for example, is sponsored by local businesses and individuals who are paying for the construction and placement of the signs.

Solid steel sign frames stand three feet off the ground and the stands slide into aluminum receptacles placed in cement. This enables the signs to be easily removed late each Fall so that there will be no interference with snow removal in places where that would be an issue. Each sign will be two feet square and all the designs are consistent in general design.



Hwy 40 Scenic Bypass

Sugar Bowl

Donner Summit Historical Society

History

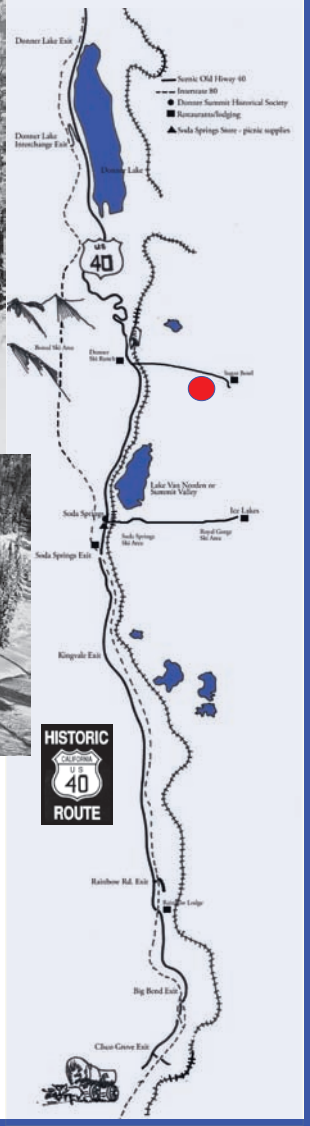
When Bill Klein, who would transform skiing himself, invited Hannes Schroll to Donner Summit from Yosemite in 1937, the ski industry was about to change. Hannes was a daredevil champion skier whose yodels as he tore down mountains could be heard for long distances. He was enthusiastic when he saw the Sugar Bowl. "We have to develop this," he said. The "Sugar Bowl" is perfect for skiing.

His family money disappeared just as he was talking to his mother about sending it from Austria so he could buy the land. It was the Anschluss and Hitler had taken charge of Austria and Hannes' money. Hannes turned to his Yosemite friends and they in turn turned to their friends and Sugar Bowl, the first California ski area built as a destination resort, was built. It included the first chairlift in the state and the second in the nation. The single seater (as opposed to the quads of today) ran to the top of Mt. Disney (3200 feet) in 6 minutes (today's quad takes 3 minutes). There was a lodge designed by a famous architect, rope tows, a skating rink, and ski jouring. Skiers arrived by train and were transported to the Bowl first by horse drawn and then by tractor drawn sleighs.

A Good Story

Hannes Schroll was larger than life. At the 1936 Mt. Rainier Olympic Trials, "I heard a yell high above me...like an eagle swooping down on a rabbit [it was] Hannes Schroll... yodeling at the top of his lungs! He jumped the first terrace like a deer going over a rail fence. Then he jumped another- and landed on one ski. His body was leaning over like an open jack-knife, and he was swinging his ski poles to keep from somersaulting. He must have skidded a quarter mile on that one ski, whooping and yelling all the time. As he passed me, his hat sailed trough the air, and he whooped even louder he was that glad to get both is skis back on the snow. Before he stopped, he'[d] passed No. 41, who had taken off ten minutes before." Rotarian 2/1936

Walt Disney was an initial investor in Sugar Bowl. One day his daughter wanted to ski. Hannes took her up Mt. Disney, put her on his shoulders, and skied all the way down.



Things to do right here

Take the road into the Sugar Bowl where the sign says Judah Lodge. Come in for refreshment at the bar or have a meal in the historic Lodge at Sugar Bowl (built in 1939). The food is great and the historical pictures are interesting. Find out about the lodge, William Wilson Wurster the architect, and how the wagon trains climbed over Donner Summit on Roller Pass.

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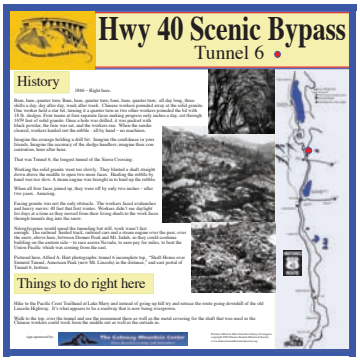
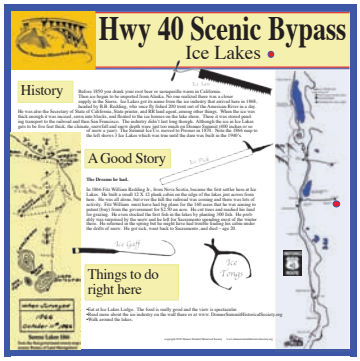
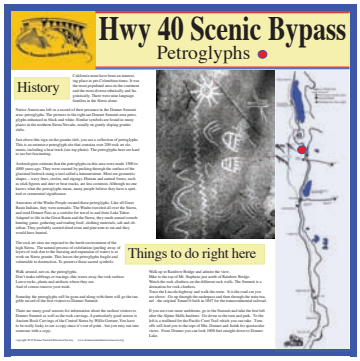
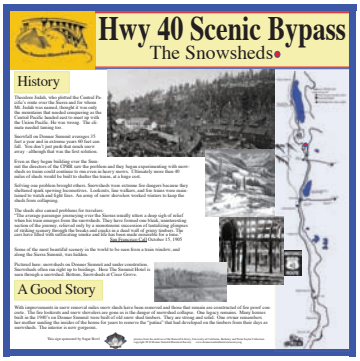
This sign sponsored by Sugar Bowl

Above, the Sugar Bowl Sign. Below, left to right: Tunnel 6, Ice Lakes, Petroglyphs, Snowsheds









On page one you see a typical sign in its metal stand. Left, typical side view of a steel stand. Right, typical rear view of a steel stand. Each sign is two feet square and the center of each sign sits 32" off the ground. Each sign slides into an aluminum sleeve set flush with the ground surface and in cement for easy removal. On page two and page three are two of the 26 initial signs, Sugar Bowl and Red Mountain. At the bottom of page three are smaller versions of four more.

Interpretive Signs, 2010

		County right of way	Private property	Other	Location
Red Mountain	NV	39º 19.471/120º 33.779			Eagle Lakes exit no. side at the curve uphill
Meadow Lake turn off	NV	39º 19.472/120º 33.781			Eagle Lakes exit no. side at the curve uphill
Lincoln Highway view from 40	PC	39º 18.255/120º 31.490			just east of the overpass on Old 40
Big Bend	PC		39º 18.397/120º 31.061	USFS	Ranger Station
Rainbow Lodge/Tavern	PC		39º 18.603/120º 30.564		Rainbow Lodge
Donner Summit Lodge	NV		39º 19.513/120º 23.363		Donner Summit Lodge
Pahatsi Rd wagon train route	PC	39º 18.776/120º 22.869			Soda Springs Rd. @ Cascade Rd. near the current Trails West marker
Ice Lakes	PC		39º 17.697/120º 22.959		Ice Lakes Lodge
Original Soda Springs Store	NV		39º 19.457/120 23.017		Soda Springs Store
Soda Springs Hotel Hotel	NV		39º 19.408/120º 22.768		Soda Springs (Donner Summit Hist. Society)
Soda Springs Ski Area	NV		39º 19.276/120º 22.758		Soda Springs Ski Area
Summit Valley overlook	NV		39º 18.997/120º 21.022		across hiway from CTL
Clair Tappaan & Cal/Heidelman (2)	NV		39º 19.012/120º 21.006		top of new loading area to the left back from cars
Hutchinson Lodge	NV		39º 19.056/120º 212.159		path start at right
Sugar Bowl	PC		39º 18.794/120º 20.381	prking structure	Sugar Bowl
Roller Pass	PC				USFS at PCT trailhead
Norden Station	NV		39º 19.032/120º 21.327		across from old Norden store
Charlie Chaplin's "Gold Rush" Mt. Lincoln	PC		yes		Sugar Bowl

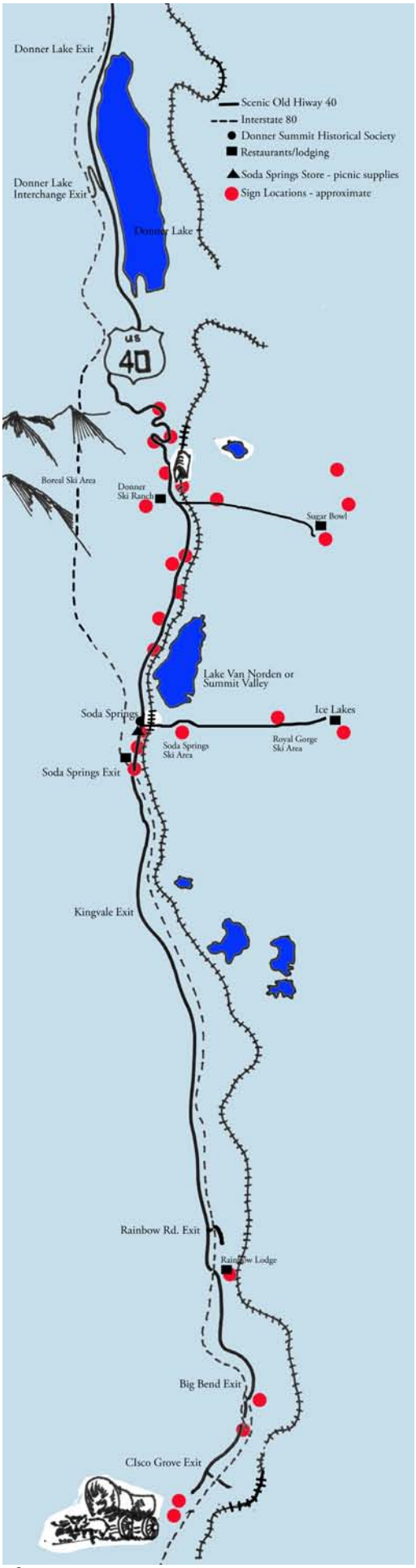
		County right of way	Private property	Other	Location
Magic Carpet	PC		39º 18.793/120º 20.345	prkgn structure	Sugar Bowl
Lodge at Sugar Bowl	PC		yes		Lodge at Sugar Bowl
Donner Ski Ranch	NV	39º 19.082/120º 19.808			across from Donner Ski Ranch
Sugar Bowl Academy building	NV		39º 18.997/120º 19.543		Sugar Bowl Academy
Tunnel 6 – first transc. RR tunnel	NV		old railroad bed in front of tunnel??		
		or 39º 19.019/120º 19.794		(turn out prior to tunnel on road to Sugar Bowl)	
Donner Lake overlook	NV	39º 19.156/120º 19.118		Rainbow Bridge parking north end affixed to railing at lookout on bridge	
Rainbow Bridge	NV	39º 19.134/120º 19.150		across 40 from Rainbow Bridge parking	
Transcontinental Railroad	NV	39º 19.119/120º 19.113		Rainbow Bridge Parking so. end	
		or down by the snowshed sign (below)?			
China Wall	NV	39º 19.052/120º 19.226		turnout prior to climbing parking area	
Central Pacific Snowsheds	NV	39º 19.123/120º 18.968			turnout below Rainbow Bridge

Miscellaneous:

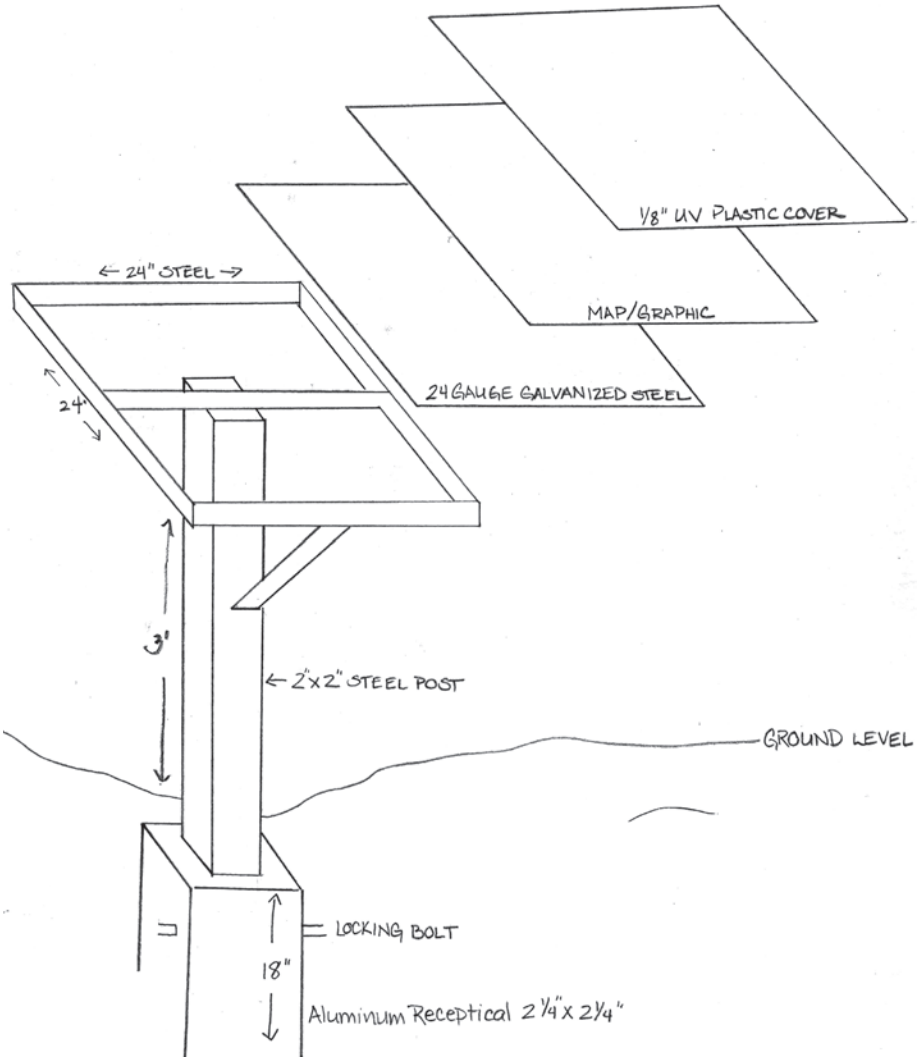
	39º 19.045/120º 19.463 turnout below Sugar Bowl Academy
curve below Rainbow Bridge	39º 19.056/120º 19.230 (petroglyph site - China Wall sign?)
turnout below the climbing wall - small	39º 19.127/120º 18.971 (good snowshed view)
souvenir stand at Cisco	39º 18.666/120º 32.471 (possible Forest Gift Shop sign)
Sugar Bowl prkg structure west end	39º 18.796/120º 20.413

Contact: info@donnersummithistoricalsociety.org, Bill Oudegeest 209-606-6859

20 Mile Museum Supporting organizations/businesses



Sign Stand Design



The above diagram shows the design of the stands.

Each stand is made out of hard steel with the center of sign 36” off the ground. The signs are at 45 degree angles to the ground. A 24 gauge galvanized steel sheet sits on the frame, made of 1” square steel 1/8” wall tubing, with the sign and UV plastic cover sitting on top. The post is 2” X 2” 1/4” wall square steel tubing.

The aluminum receptacle sits below ground level so the sign can be removed in winter and so it does not affect snow removal machines. A locking bolt will secure the sign. Receptacles will be plugged when the signs are removed.