

The Lewis & Clark Legacy

The Lewis & Clark Expedition Bicentennial is many things to many people. It is history, science, culture, education, commerce, Montana heritage, festivities and tourism. In a way, the Expedition was Montana's first group adventure tour. They hiked, fished, camped, boated, hunted, rode horses and even tried some winter sports in the Bitterroots. Like many of their successors two hundred years later, they saw abundant wildlife, they learned much about the area's culture, and they sought potential locations for future business development.

Much has changed in two hundred years. Yet modern explorers can experience Montana's rich natural beauty, outdoor recreation and culture as Lewis & Clark did – with a few more conveniences. Business opportunities abound. And visitors are welcomed with warm hospitality.

Could Lewis & Clark have envisioned that, two hundred years later, millions of people would commemorate the bicentennial of their expedition? What would they think of the changes in Montana since 1805-06? Could they have predicted the impact of their journey on native cultures? Would they be pleased with their legacy?

Perspectives about the Bicentennial Vary

National enthusiasm for Lewis & Clark, fueled by best-selling novels and television documentaries, has been described as a "phenomenon" – some say that it fills a need for heroes in an American culture currently lacking real heroes. But there are varying perspectives on the legacy of Lewis & Clark, and on the Bicentennial:

- υ To historians: “*the Event of the century*”
- υ To tourism businesses: “*the Opportunity of the century*”
- υ To conservationists: “*the (potential) Trampling of the century*”
- υ To residents: “*the (potential) Headache of the century*”
- υ To American Indians: “*the beginning of Change*”

The Bicentennial Commemoration of the Expedition in Montana must address all of these perspectives, and it must do so in a way that creates positive legacies for the next 200 years.

CHAPTER I: Background and Context

- ❖ Introduction
- ❖ Stakeholders
- ❖ Planning Process
- ❖ Key Players
- ❖ American Indian Perspective
- ❖ National Partners

Lewis & Clark
Memorial, Fort Benton



Planning for the Bicentennial is Crucial

Predictions vary about the number of people – both resident and nonresident visitors – who are expected to travel in Montana during the Bicentennial years (2003-2006). The Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) at the University of Montana conducted a national telephone survey in early 2000, and estimated that as many as 4-8 million *additional* nonresident tourists could visit Montana during the four year period. That number of additional visitors could strain community infrastructure and amenities, particularly in rural areas.

The Bicentennial in Montana also must be planned within the context of the National Commemoration. Although the official "Bicentennial years" in Montana are 2005 and 2006, the national event kicks off in January of 2003. There are eleven Trail states from Missouri to Oregon, and many other states from coast to coast planning events and activities for the Commemoration.

In Montana, Who Are We Serving?

There are Many Stakeholders in the Bicentennial's Success

The Bicentennial offers potential benefits to many stakeholders, including Montana's citizens, businesses, agencies and visitors. The extent to which these stakeholders are involved in the planning and implementation of the Commemoration will determine its success. Some key stakeholders are:

- υ Montana citizens and communities
- υ Montana businesses
- υ Nonresident visitors
- υ Historians/preservationists
- υ Elected officials
- υ Public agencies
- υ Educators and students
- υ Montana tribes

Key issues are historical accuracy, cultural sensitivity, natural resource protection, community development, impact management, business development, historic preservation, collaboration and effective communication. Strategic planning is needed to address these issues in the context of Montana's values and priorities.

The Montana Master Plan is a "Big Picture" Strategy

The purpose of this Bicentennial Master Plan is to outline a strategy that addresses the key issues listed in the previous section. It is intended to be a "big picture" document – one that provides a strategic framework – and as such, it does not address details of every proposed project statewide. Instead, it provides a strategic *system* within which Bicentennial programs, projects and events can be supported. Its goal is to create a "seamless system" for Bicentennial programming.

The scope of the Master Plan includes the following:

- ◆ Assessment:
 - Key sites, supporting amenities, strategic markets
 - Strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats related to the Bicentennial
 - Gaps and overlaps in Bicentennial programming
- ◆ Strategy:
 - Bicentennial Strategic Framework
 - Top priority projects, programs and events
 - Travel corridors
 - General marketing strategy
- ◆ Implementation:
 - Timeline and estimated budget
 - Key partners, their roles and responsibilities
 - Implementation resources (funding, technical assistance)
 - Fundraising strategy

Development of this Master Plan began in March and was completed in September, 2000. The planning team followed a nine-step process (see Figure 1.1 at right), as contracted by the Montana Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission.

Figure 1.1. Planning Process

1. Orientation, information-gathering (March-May 2000)
 - Meet with Commission, key partners
 - Review results of previous focus sessions, workshops and meetings
 - Establish evaluation criteria for programs and projects
2. Evaluate current conditions (April-July)
 - Compile/review data, proposed projects, priorities, industry input
 - Evaluate context of national, other states' plans
 - Integrate all information, identify gaps and overlaps (May-July)
3. Present draft Strategy to Commission for approval (July)
4. Create and distribute Master Plan outline for public comment (August)
5. Obtain public input and endorsement (August-September)
6. Create Master Plan document (August-September)
 - Background, Context, Current Conditions
 - Strategies & action steps
 - Marketing strategy (especially targeting Montanans)
 - Fundraising, sponsorship & endorsement programs
7. Refine per public input; submit final Plan (September)
8. Commission adoption of Master Plan (October)
9. Begin Plan implementation (October/November)



Montana Bicentennial Commission Focuses on Coordination

Montana's Bicentennial commemoration effort is led by the Montana Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission, which was created by the 1997 legislature. The twelve Commissioners are appointed by the Governor to three-year terms, representing the private/non-profit sector, three state agencies (Montana Historical Society, Travel Montana, State Parks), and three American Indian tribes. The Commission's mission is to oversee the planning and implementation effort, by initiating statewide programs and supporting local/regional projects and events.

Key Players will Collaborate to Make the Bicentennial Happen

Planning and implementation of Bicentennial programs cannot happen successfully without the collaborative involvement of many partners. Along with the Commission, the key players are the following:

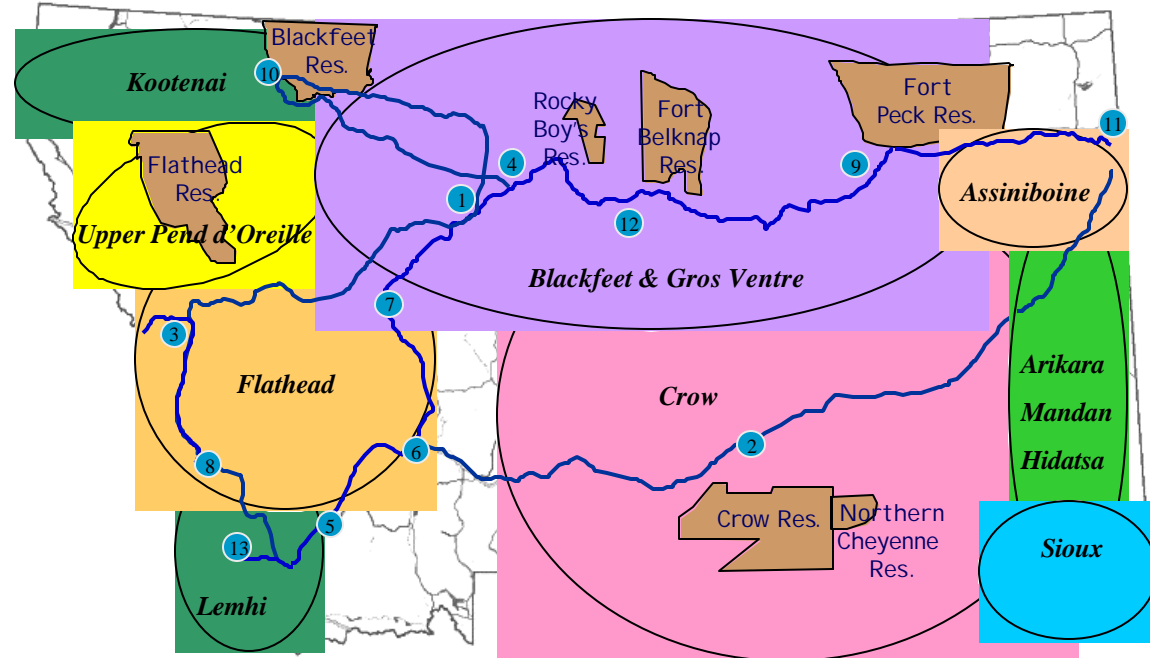
- ∪ Montana Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission (sponsor of the Master Plan)
- ∪ Travel Montana (Montana Department of Commerce)
- ∪ 15 local (county/regional) Bicentennial planning commissions
- ∪ 11 Tribes: Assiniboine, Blackfeet, Chippewa-Cree, Crow, Gros Ventre, Kootenai, Northern Cheyenne, Pend d'Oreille, Salish, Sioux and Little Shell Chippewa
- ∪ 9 chapters of the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation
- ∪ Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center, Great Falls
- ∪ Montana Tourism & Recreation Initiative (MTRI) interagency planning team:
 - State Agencies: State Historical Society; Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks; Department of Transportation; Department of Commerce; UM Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research, State Coordinator of Indian Affairs
 - Federal Agencies: USDA Forest Service; Bureau of Land Management; Bureau of Reclamation; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; National Park Service; Bureau of Indian Affairs; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
 - Tribal Colleges: Blackfeet Community College, Little Big Horn College, Salish-Kootenai Community College, Fort Belknap Community College, Fort Peck Community College, Dull Knife Memorial College, Stone Child College
- ◆ Montana State Legislature and Governor's Office
- ◆ National Council of the L&C Bicentennial, Trail Heritage Foundation, Congress

American Indian Perspective

Of all the key players, the American Indians have a unique perspective about the Expedition and the Bicentennial. To the indigenous tribes, Lewis & Clark were not "discoverers," they were "invaders." Tribal lifestyles changed dramatically as a result of the Expedition's success. Two hundred years later, many tribes still struggle to adapt to those changes, while retaining their traditional heritage and culture. To them, the Bicentennial is not a "celebration," but it is a commemoration. It is a part of their history, too, and they welcome the opportunity to tell "the rest of the story:" the encounters between the Corps and native tribes, as told through tribal oral histories from the early 19th century to the present.

Map 1.1 depicts the approximate locations of original tribal occupancy areas judicially established in 1978 (as published by the U.S. Geological Survey), compared to the reservations of today. It also shows the route of the Corps of Discovery as they traveled through the homelands of various tribes. Note that today, only two reservations are located directly on or adjacent to the Lewis & Clark Trail, although the other five reservations are near it.

Montana's tribes seek to preserve their oral histories, including narratives that relate to the Lewis & Clark Expedition. They also want to ensure that tribal history and culture are interpreted accurately and appropriately. Many wish to participate as partners in planning the Bicentennial, and in implementation of programming such as reenactments, educational exhibits and displays, American Indian traditional games, conferences and tours.



Map 1.1. Original Tribal Occupancy Areas vs. Current Reservations

The Bicentennial Commemoration Involves Major National Partners

In addition to state planning efforts for the Bicentennial, a national planning effort is ongoing. The national commemoration effort is led by two sister organizations: the Lewis & Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and the National Council of the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial.

The Foundation was formed when the Lewis & Clark Trail was designated as a National Historic Trail in 1978. Its mission focuses on Trail preservation and stewardship, scholarly Lewis & Clark research, and public education about the Expedition and its significance in American history. Its national headquarters is located in Great Falls, Montana.

The National Council began as a committee of the Foundation, established to begin planning a national commemoration of the Expedition's Bicentennial. As the Bicentennial drew closer and the workload increased, the Bicentennial committee became a separate organization with its own staff. The Council's headquarters is located at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon.



The National Council has many partners. It works closely with federal agencies that manage segments of the Trail and are planning for the Bicentennial. It seeks advice from a Circle of Tribal Advisors, representing tribes that Lewis & Clark encountered along the Trail, in order to emphasize the American Indian perspective about the Expedition. The Council also works with the Circle of Trail State Coordinators so that communication flows between the states and the Council.

The Council is endorsing a number of "Signature Events" along the Trail during the Bicentennial, including reenactments, festivals, dedications, etc. Additionally, the National Park Service (which has overall management responsibility for the Trail) and the National Park Foundation are coordinating a national "Corps II" traveling park, or educational exhibit, which will follow the Trail route on the Bicentennial dates of the Expedition. The Council is negotiating to hire an international marketing firm to coordinate marketing, corporate fundraising and product licensing for the Bicentennial. A Bicentennial "Circle of Friends," chaired by Dr. Stephen Ambrose, has been established to raise \$10+ million for the event.

Congress has formed Bicentennial caucuses in both the House and the Senate, with representatives and senators from all of the Trail states (and others) participating, including the entire Montana delegation (Senator Burns, Senator Baucus, and Representative Hill, who was a co-founder of the House caucus). In late 1999, the caucuses asked the National Council and Trail State Commissions to submit lists of projects to them for potential appropriations funding. There were 315 project proposals submitted, totaling more than \$325 million dollars (91 of them were from Montana, totaling nearly \$56 million). Some projects were funded in the Congressional FY2000 budget process, and additional appropriations are anticipated in the FY2001 and FY2002 budgets. The National Council and Commissions in each Trail state continue to work closely with Congressional representatives.



Lewis & Clark
Meeting Indians
at Ross' Hole –
C.M. Russell

Courtesy of the Montana
Historical Society

Notes: