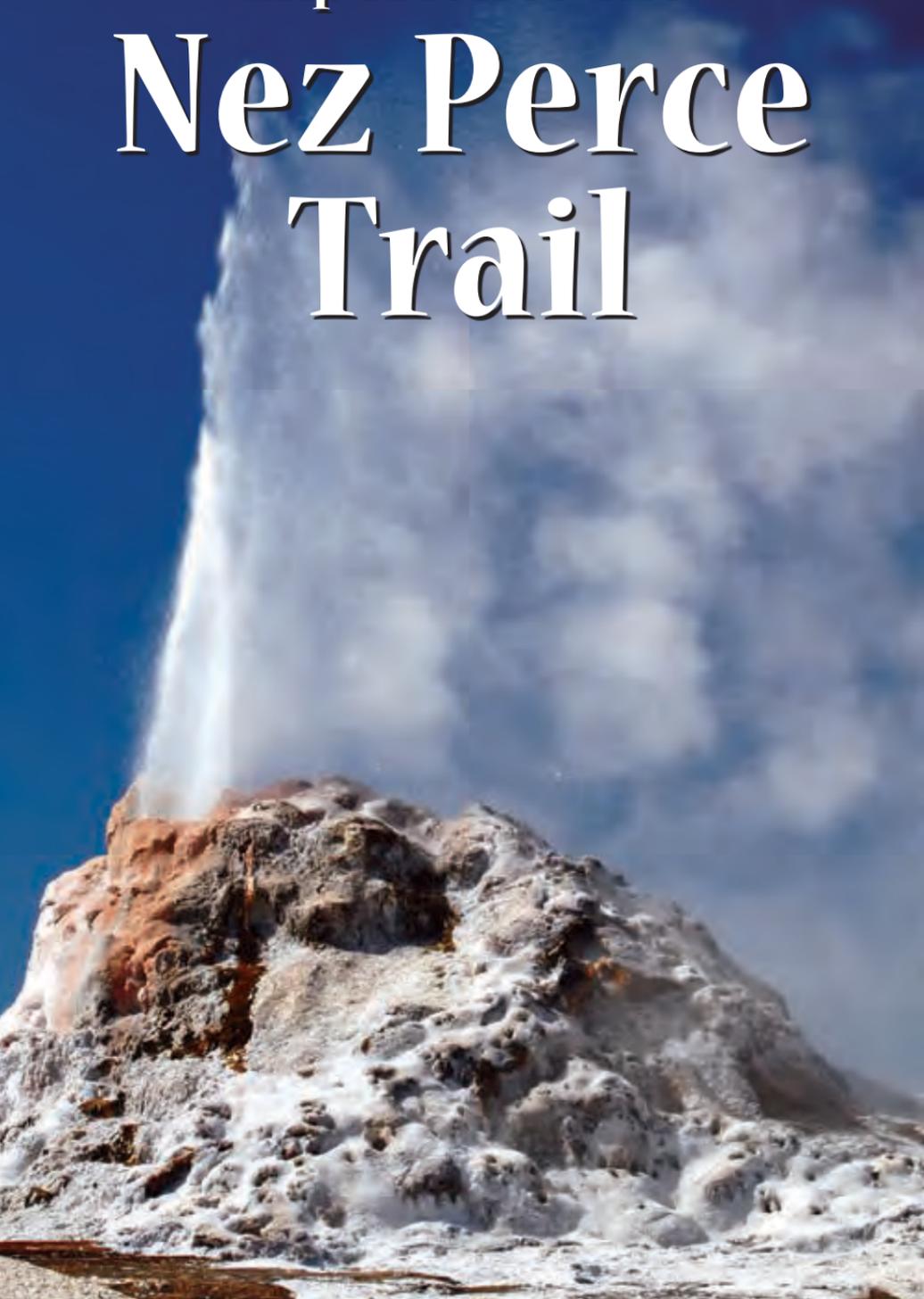


Through Yellowstone National Park

6

# Experience the Nez Perce Trail



White Dome Geyser, Yellowstone National Park  
Roger Peterson - USDA / Forest Service



# AUTO TOUR

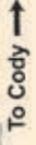
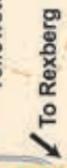
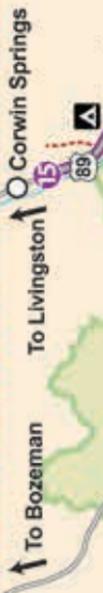
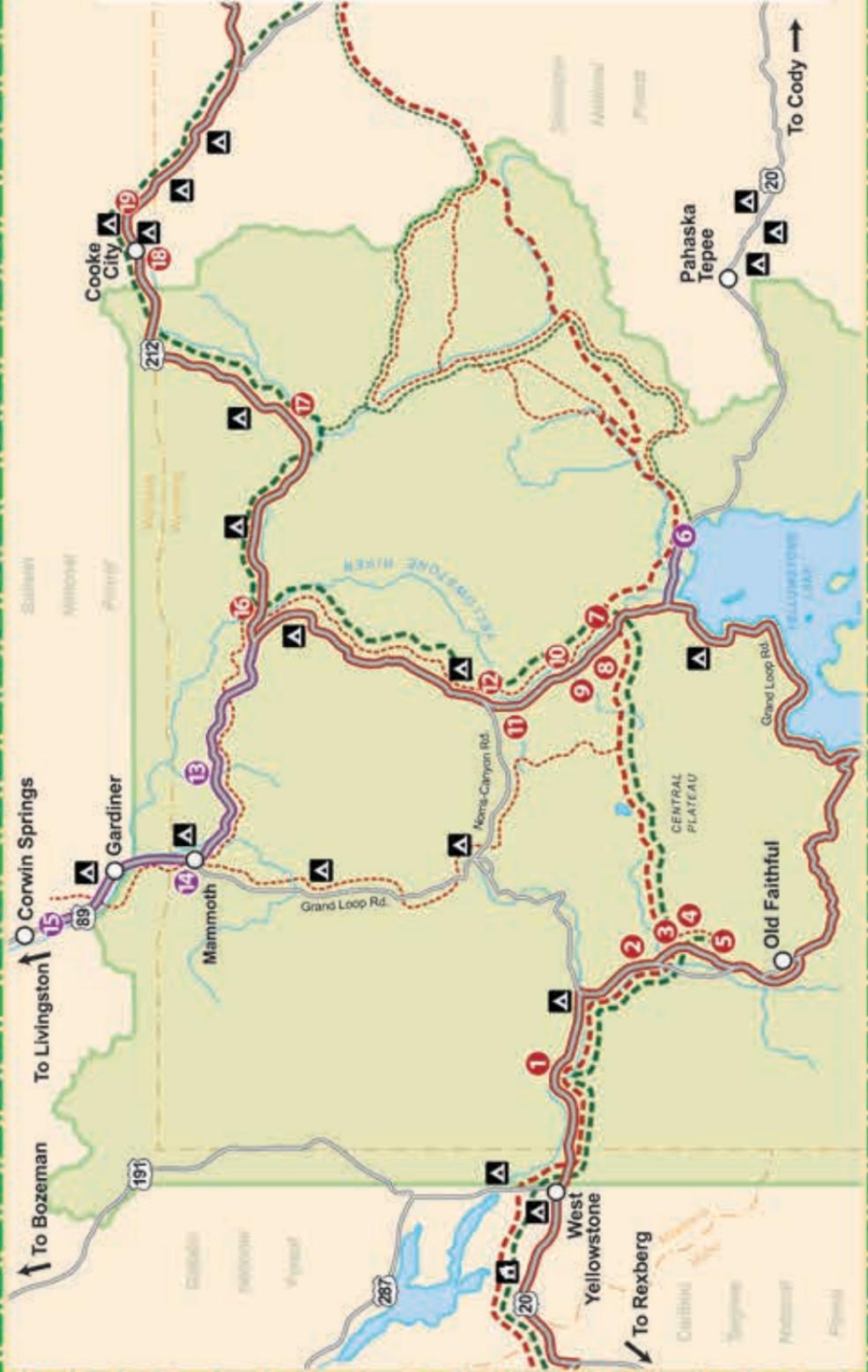


# Nez Perce Through Yellowstone

- Nez Perce Main Group Route
  - US Army Main Command Route
  - Nez Perce Scouting Parties
  - US Army Scouting Parties
  - Highway
  - Mainstream Traveller Route
  - Side Trip Route
  - Auto Tour Stop
  - Yellowstone National Park
  - Town
  - Rental Cabin
  - Campground
- For further information on federal recreation facilities visit [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) or call toll free 1-877-444-6777.



Maps in this brochure are for general orientation only and are not to scale. Please use a US Forest Service, National Park Service or other detailed topographic map for accurate and specific information.





# The Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail

Designated by Congress in 1986, the entire Nez Perce National Historic Trail (NPNHT) stretches 1,170 miles from the Wallowa Valley of eastern Oregon to the plains of north-central Montana. The NPNHT includes a designated corridor encompassing 4,161 miles of roads, trails and routes.

This segment of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail, **Through Yellowstone National Park** and the immediately adjacent Custer Gallatin National Forest, is one of eight available tours. These are available at Forest Service offices and visitor centers along the route (complete list on page 43).

Each designated Auto Tour route stays on all-weather roads passable by all types of vehicles. If you are driving an RV or towing a trailer some side trips may not be appropriate. These will be noted in the driving directions.

Many locations along all Auto Tour routes may not have cell phone coverage. Designate a contact person at home to communicate through.

**Check weather and road conditions before embarking on your journey. Call 511 for road condition reports on major routes. For current road conditions information inquire locally.**



# The Flight of the Nez Perce

The Summer of 1877 brought tragedy to the Nez Perce (or, in their language, Niimípuu, meaning “the people”). Many of their tribe had been removed from homelands to a reservation. Now the U.S. Army was ordered to put the remaining Nez Perce there. These bands objected because they had not sold their land to the U.S. government nor signed a treaty. Incited by the death of several Idaho settlers killed by young warriors as revenge for earlier murders, the army sought to force the Nez Perce onto the reservation. The eruption of violence and pressure caused those Nez Perce leaders to lead their people away from the conflict and in search of a new home. The trek of more than 800 people and 2,000 horses was to be peaceful.

Fearing that the mobilized Nez Perce would inflame other tribes to leave their reservations, the U.S. Army began to pursue the Nez Perce to force them back upon the reservation in Idaho. The trek became a flight marked by skirmishes and battles, the last of which occurred more than 1,100 miles away from their homeland and less than 40 miles from safety in Canada.

The Nez Perce journey took them northeast from the Wallowa mountains of Oregon, across a raging Snake River, and then into north-central Idaho.

After battles at White Bird and Clearwater, Idaho, they followed well-worn trails across the rugged Bitterroot mountains, entering Montana near Lolo Pass.

They moved south to the Big Hole Valley, where the army caught them by surprise and killed Nez Perce of all ages.

After that, the Nez Perce moved as quickly as they could through more mountains, across the Yellowstone Plateau, and then north toward Canada.



Allalimya Takanin - (Chief Looking Glass)  
by Roger Cooke



## The Yellowstone Plateau

The Nez Perce entered the recently designated Yellowstone National Park on August 23, 1877. They knew the Park well, as tribal members traditionally visited the area often to hunt and gather food or while traveling east to the buffalo hunting grounds of the Great Plains.



Trout Creek - Hayden Valley, Wyoming  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

During the next two weeks, the Nez Perce encountered all 25 people known to be visiting the Park at the time. To obtain supplies and fresh horses, they attacked or took hostage several tourists. Although they initially had no intention of harming the visitors, as events unfolded, the situation became dire. Ultimately, as revenge for the deaths at Big Hole two weeks earlier, warriors killed two visitors, and left a third for dead.

In addition to General Oliver Otis Howard, who had been pursuing the Nez Perce since they left Oregon, General William Tecumseh Sherman called in additional troops which closed in from the east. Against all odds the Nez Perce were able to evade all efforts to stop them and escaped the Park without incident.



General Oliver O. Howard  
by Matthew Brady, Courtesy Library of Congress

The events of the summer of 1877 in Yellowstone Park were complex. Unlike other segments of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail Auto Tour, this part of the story unfolds on several fronts simultaneously making it difficult to identify a single route that follows a cohesive story line. The recommended route follows the most reasonable way to drive through the Park. The following synopsis of several of the individual storylines may help explain how events unfolded.

## Tourists and others in Yellowstone Park:

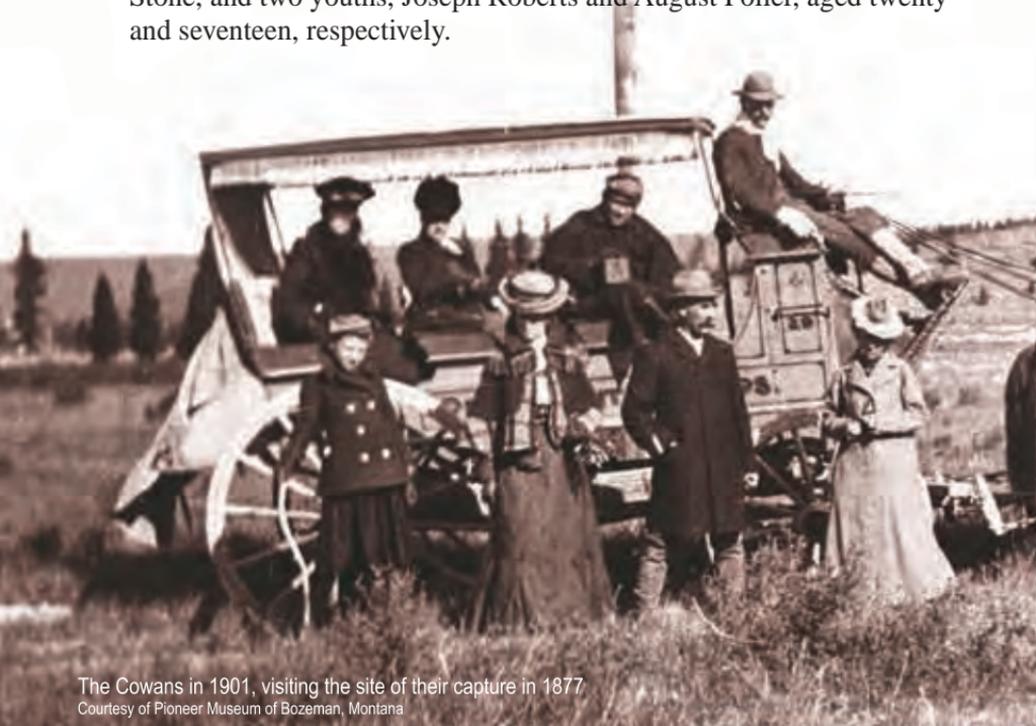
### Radersberg Party

George F. Cowan, his wife Emma, her brother Frank D. Carpenter, and sister Ida Carpenter, Charles Mann and a young teamster and cook, Henry (“Harry”) Meyers – all from Radersburg, Montana - plus three friends of Frank Carpenter’s from Helena, Andrew J. Arnold, William Dingee, and Albert Oldham were visiting the Park to celebrate George and Emma’s 2<sup>nd</sup> wedding anniversary.

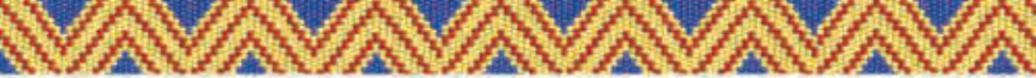
On the morning of August 24, Nez Perce entered their camp **4** and took the party hostage. Later that day the encounter turned violent. As a result George Cowan was seriously wounded and left for dead, the others escaped except for Emma, Ida and Frank who were taken by the Nez Perce but were released the next day. George was picked up by General Howard on August 30, **4** Emma, Ida and Frank encountered Lieutenant Charles Brewster Schofield, **13** Henry Meyers, Charles Mann and Albert Oldham were picked up by General Howard’s command on August 28, **1** Arnold and Dingee also eventually reached safety.

### Helena Party

Andrew Weikert, Richard Dietrich, Frederic J. Pfister, Charles Kenck, John (Jack) Stewart, Leander Duncan, Leslie N. Wilkie, Benjamin Stone, and two youths, Joseph Roberts and August Foller, aged twenty and seventeen, respectively.



The Cowans in 1901, visiting the site of their capture in 1877  
Courtesy of Pioneer Museum of Bozeman, Montana



On the morning of August 25, they observed the Nez Perce passing several miles to the south <sup>11</sup>. The next morning a group of warriors dashed into their camp firing their weapons. The tourists scattered and all escaped except Charles Kenck who was killed. Weikert, Wilkie, Steward and Stone found each other and made their way back to Mammoth Hot Springs <sup>14</sup> finding Pfister along the way with Lieutenant Schofield's command near Tower Junction. On August 27 Duncan and Dietrich arrived at Mammoth Hot Springs just as the rest of the party plus Emma Cowan and Frank and Ida Carpenter were about to leave for Fort Ellis. While Weikert and hotel proprietor James McCartney went to look for the lost men Dietrich stayed behind. Several isolated skirmishes occurred over the next couple of days in the vicinity of Mammoth Hot Springs and the Henderson Ranch to the north. <sup>15</sup> Dietrich was killed but the rest of the party made it out of the Park.

### **William H. Harmon**

On August 23, William Harmon, a prospector from Colorado, was camped not far from the Radersberg party of tourists and left with them the next morning after they had an initial encounter with three Nez Perce from Looking Glass's Band. When the next encounter escalated to violence, <sup>4</sup> Harmon and Henry Meyers escaped into a marsh. Harmon was picked up the next day by Stanton Gilbert Fisher, a civilian scout, and his company of Bannock scouts on the Madison River.

### **John Shively**

A prospector and ex-soldier, crossing the park from the Black Hills gold country in Dakota Territory, captured by Nez Perce on August 23 <sup>3</sup> and forced to travel through the park with them until he escaped on September 2 east of Yellowstone Lake.

### **James C. Irwin**

A recently discharged soldier, captured by Nez Perce on August 25 <sup>7</sup> and held until he escaped September 1. He encountered Howard's scout Fisher near Pelican Creek on September 2, and later Howard at his camp six miles north of Yellowstone Lake near Mud Volcano. He shared valuable observations from his time with the Nez Perce.



The Flight of the Nez Perce of 1877 symbolizes the dramatic collision of cultures which continues to shape the West and its people. A native people were forced to flee their homelands in a futile attempt to avoid war and save their traditional ways. Immigrated European people found themselves fighting neighbors who had been their friends for many years. Traditional trails, which had long been a source of joy and sustenance, became a trail of flight and conflict, a trail of sorrow.

## Chronology of Events

*The events in this timeline coincide with the sites seen on this auto tour:*

### August – September, 1877

As the Nez Perce entered the Park from the west and General Howard's forces approached from the north, a group of nine tourists from Radersburg, Montana were camped in the Lower Geyser Basin. Another group of ten men from Helena camped near the Yellowstone Falls. Prospector John Shively was looking in the Park for lost horses. Also in the park was James Irwin, recently discharged from the army in Bozeman. Soon their lives would all be woven into the same story.

**August 14** – A party of tourists from Radersburg Montana enters the Park ①.

**August 23** – Nez Perce enter the Yellowstone National Park; Nez Perce scouts capture prospector John Shively and camp near the tourists from Radersburg ② ③.

**August 24** – Nez Perce scouts capture the Radersburg tourists ④. By the end of the day, seven had escaped or been shot.

**August 25** – The Nez Perce release Radersburg tourists Emma Cowan, Ida Carpenter, and Frank Carpenter ⑦. J.C. Irwin, a recently discharged soldier, is captured by the Nez Perce ⑦. The Nez Perce camp at Mud Volcano ⑧.

**August 26** – Nez Perce scouts raid the camp of the ten Helena tourists killing Charles Kenck and wounding Jack Stewart ⑪. Emma Cowan, Ida and Frank Carpenter find Lieutenant Schofield and are escorted out of the Park, along with Frederic Pfister of the Helena party ⑬. Nez Perce Camp at Indian Pond ⑥.

**August 28** – General Howard's command picks up tourists Henry Meyers and Albert Oldham, of the Radersburg party, along the Madison River ①.

**August 30** – George Cowan is picked up by General Howard's entourage ④.

**August 31** – General Howard goes over Mary Mountain Trail and camps near Mary Lake ⑤. A Nez Perce reconnaissance party encounters Lieutenant Gustavus C. Doane's detachment at Henderson's ranch north of Mammoth Hot Springs ⑮. While retreating to the main Nez Perce camp, the scouts kill Helena tourist Richard Dietrich at Mammoth Hot Springs ⑭.

**September 1** – General Howard camps on the Yellowstone River ⑧. Scout S.G. Fisher meets James C. Irwin, who has escaped from the Nez Perce camp.

**September 3** – General Howard camps near Yellowstone Falls. Captain William F. Spurgin gets wagons through the Beaver Slide ⑩.

**September 4** – General Howard travels over Mount Washburn.

**September 5** – General Howard crosses Baronett's Bridge ⑯.

**September 6** – Soldiers begin moving up Soda Butte Canyon ⑰.

**September 7** – General Howard passes Cooke City ⑱.

— AS YOU TRAVEL THE TRAIL —

**The trail memorializes not only  
those who died during the flight,  
but those who survived.**

**Their tragic journey marked the end  
of freedom for the Nez Perce  
and opened their lands to settlement.**

**As you travel this historic trail  
through Yellowstone National Park,  
whether you drive, ride or walk,  
you will gain an  
understanding and appreciation  
for the difficulty of their journey  
and the tremendous odds  
the Nez Perce had to face and overcome.**

Nez Perce Dreamers in Traditional Dress,  
courtesy of WSU L.V. McWhorter Collection



# Experience the Nez Perce Trail

## How do I get there?

Today visitors enter the Park from one of five gateways: through West Yellowstone on U.S. Highway 20; from the north through Gardiner on Montana State Highway 89; from the south through Grand Teton National Park on Wyoming State Highway 89; from the Northeast Entrance through Cooke City on Montana State Highway 212; and through the East Entrance near Pahaska Tepee on U.S Highway 20. The story of the flight of the Nez Perce through Yellowstone proceeds from west to east beginning at West Yellowstone and ending at Nez Perce

In 1877 there were no major roads leading through Yellowstone National Park, only a handful of wagon roads and an ancient Native American trail system. Wagons traveling up the Madison and Firehole Rivers could reach the area of the Lower Geyser Basin; those on horseback could follow trails and bridle paths to Mammoth Hot Springs, the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, and several other prominent tourist sites. "Yellowstone Jack" Baronett erected a wooden bridge across the Yellowstone River above its confluence with the East Fork of the Lamar River. The bridge enabled travel between Mammoth Hot Springs and the route east to the mining region around Cooke City, Montana.



## Stops along the Route

As you travel through the Park you will be following several stories that unfolded simultaneously crossing back and forth over each other. The main body of the Nez Perce was traveling east along a familiar route. Several smaller scouting groups moved independently of the large group. It was mainly the scouts who interacted with the tourists.

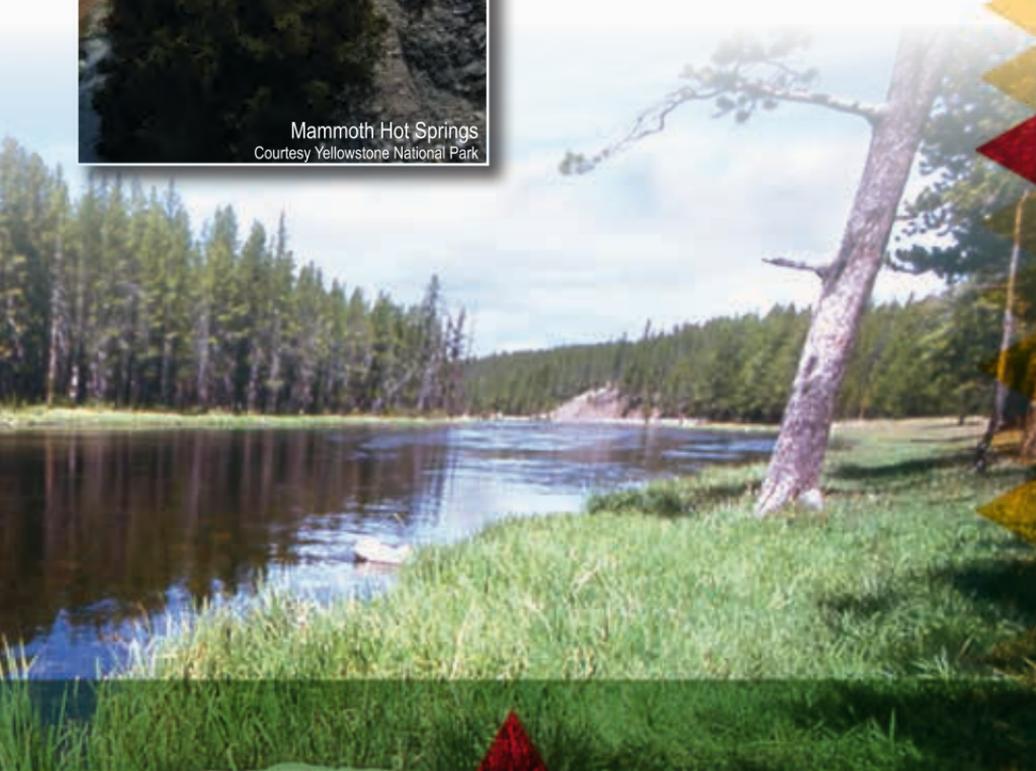
The U.S. Army, led by General Howard, pursued the Nez Perce. Additional troops were prepared to engage the Nez Perce from the north and east.



Mammoth Hot Springs  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

Driving directions will take you to the locations nearest the historic events in a way that minimizes back tracking but may not be exactly in the order the events occurred.

At several points you will be given options for side trips or hikes that will take you closer to the historic sites. Some of these side trips may not be suitable for larger vehicles.



## 1 Madison River, Wyoming

August 23 - Nez Perce enter Yellowstone

From West Yellowstone, follow US Highway 20, West Entrance Road, east for 8 miles. Immediately after crossing the Madison River, pull into the turnout on the south side of the road.

On August 14, nine days before the Nez Perce arrived, a party of tourists from Radersburg, Montana, passed here on their way to the Lower Geyser Basin where they set up their main camp while they explored the Park. The party consisted of George Cowan and his wife Emma, her brother Frank D. Carpenter, and her sister Ida Carpenter, as well as several other friends. Their experience of the Park was very different than it is today. Roads had not yet been developed through the new Park and travel was challenging.

*"We come to vast quantities of fallen timber and we find our progress impeded to such an extent that we are compelled to call our axes into requisition, and cut our way for more than a mile, when we again find open timber."*

*– Frank Carpenter (tourist, Radersburg party)*

When the Nez Perce entered the Park a full three days ahead of the U.S. Army, they were headed east along the Madison River in the direction of their potential ally, the Crow Tribe. *Hotóoto* (Lean Elk) and other men in the bands were familiar with the area and took leadership roles while in the Park. Oral histories reveal that once inside the Park, the Nez Perce began to feel the curative and healing powers from the landscape. They slowed their arduous pace to allow their people time to rest, to grieve for those lost, and to find the strength to continue.



## 2 Madison Junction, Wyoming

August 23 - Nez Perce camp near tourists

Continue driving east on U.S. Highway 20 for 6.0 miles to Madison Junction. At Madison Junction, turn south onto the Grand Loop Road for 5.9 miles to a turnout with an interpretive sign outlining the Nez Perce events in the Park.

On the night of August 23, a group of tourists camped in the Park became worried about the Nez Perce moving through the region. However, a scout assured the tourists that they would be safe in the Lower Geyser Basin as he wrongly believed the Nez Perce would never come into the Park on account of their fear of the geysers. Unaware of the close proximity of the Nez Perce that night, the tourist party hosted a large bonfire celebrating their last night in the Park.

Great Fountain Geyser  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park



The Nez Perce bands followed the Madison River east and camped the night of August 23 near the confluence of the Firehole and Gibbon Rivers. A scouting party led by *Hímiin Maqsmáqs* (Yellow Wolf) spotted a large camp fire and heard noises several miles to the south. They waited until the next morning to approach the camp of the tourist party.



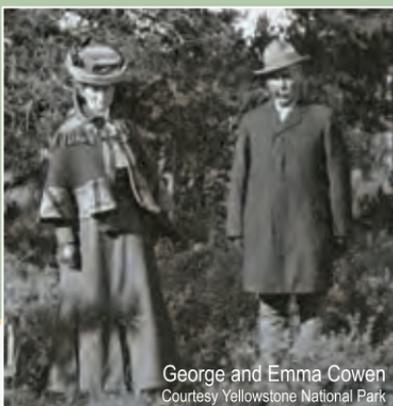
Several days later as General Howard's Bannock scouts traveled along the Madison River, they met up with two men who were fleeing their encounter with Nez Perce warriors. William H. Harmon, a Colorado prospector, and Charles Mann of the Radersburg party had escaped when their party was captured at Lower Geyser Basin. Two days later Henry H. Meyers and Albert Oldham of the same party met Howard's command as they followed the trail of the Nez Perce out of the Park.

*"We rode down about six miles when we overtook him. He proved to be an escape prisoner from the enemy. His name was Harrison [Harmon]. Took him back to camp... Just after getting back to camp Paguite and the desperado came in with another escape prisoner (Chas Mann) who they had found above the camp. Man had a ball hole through his hat."*

*– S.G. Fisher (civilian scout), August 25, 1877*

The Radersburg party – so-called because its members were from that community between Helena and Three Forks, Montana Territory – consisted of nine people: George F. Cowan, his wife Emma, her brother Frank D. Carpenter, and sister Ida Carpenter, besides Charles Mann and a young teamster, Henry ("Harry") Meyers – all from Radersburg- plus three friends of Frank Carpenter's from Helena, Andrew J. Arnold, William Dingee, and Albert Oldham.

Jerome A. Greene,  
*Nez Perce Summer, 1877*



George and Emma Cowen  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park



Nez Perce Historical Site  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

This historic sign has been removed from the site of this council and is now stored for preservation at the Yellowstone Heritage and Research Center in Gardner, MT.

### 3 Nez Perce Creek, Wyoming

*August 23, 1877 - The capture of John Shively*

Continue south for another 0.1 mile to the bridge over Nez Perce Creek. Another 0.2 mile south of Nez Perce Creek is the trailhead for the Nez Perce Trail, also known as the Mary Mountain Trail.

From their camp near present-day Madison Junction, the main band of Nez Perce moved south along the Firehole River and then continued east over the Central Plateau following Nez Perce Creek. The Nez Perce consisted of young men and women, babies and toddlers, elderly and sick. Stretched out across the landscape, they formed a column almost three miles in length.



Just half a mile from where the tourists were camped on August 23, prospector and ex-soldier John Shively set up his camp. That evening Nez Perce scouts entered his camp looking for supplies. From there they saw the lights of the Radersberg camp which they, as well as Shively, visited the next morning.



By Joe Guarisco

*"On the evening of the second day, after leaving the Radersburg party, I was camped on the Lower Geyser Basin. I was eating my supper, and, on hearing a slight noise, looked up, and, to my astonishment, four Indians, in war paint, were standing within ten feet of me, and twenty or thirty more had surrounded me not more than forty feet off. I sprang for my gun, but was rudely pushed back."  
- John Shively  
(prospector and ex-soldier)*

*"This white man [Shively] asked if he knew the way the head of Yellowstone Park, toward the Crow Indian lands....He said he did and would go with us. Said his horses were lost, and he was on hunt for them. The warrior told him he would give him a horse to ride, and that it would be a gift for him to return on."*

Himiin Maqsmáqs (Yellow Wolf)



Courtesy of L.V. McWhorter Collection  
Washington State University 85-4-70-502

Near here on the afternoon of August 30, General Howard's party encountered Al Oldham who had received a very painful wound during the encounter of the Radersburg party with the Nez Perce on August 24. Mr. Oldham managed to remain hidden after he was wounded and had been slowly making his way toward safety. Oldham managed to crawl down the creek and eventually was found.

## For Hikers:

### Nez Perce Trail / Mary Mountain Trail 21 miles one way

This is a moderately strenuous hike if you do it all in one day.

Mary Mountain has two trailheads. The Nez Perce trailhead is located 0.2 mile south of Nez Perce Creek. The Mary Mountain trailhead is located just north of the Alum Creek pullout and 4 miles south of Canyon Junction.

From the Nez Perce trailhead, hike east through open meadows dotted with grazing bison. Elk and bison can sometimes be seen in the distant meadows. The eastern trailhead is located just north of the Alum Creek pullout and 4 miles south of Canyon Junction.

Nez Perce / Mary Mountain makes for a long day hike, and you will need to have a vehicle awaiting you at the opposite trailhead. For shorter day hikes, the trail affords good opportunity to walk as far as you wish and then turn back.



*In recent years buffalo and grizzly bear activity has increased in the Park. If you are planning to hike in the Park, be sure to check with Park personnel before you go. Know how to be safe in bear country!*

#### **PERMIT:**

Overnight camping in Yellowstone National Park requires a backcountry permit. Check out the latest fees and more details at [nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/backcountryhiking.htm](https://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/backcountryhiking.htm).



Mary Mountain Trail  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

## 4 Nez Perce Trail / Mary Mountain Trail, Wyoming

August 25, 1877 - Violence erupts

The Nez Perce and General Howard's command travelled east over the Central Plateau. There are no roads through this area although there is a hiking trail, detailed on the previous page, that closely follows their route. The following events took place during their traverse across the plateau.

The relationship between the Nez Perce and the Radersburg tourists became increasingly contentious as some of the younger warriors, angered and grief-stricken by the unwarranted assaults on their people, sought revenge. Shots were fired and one man was left for dead. Five men escaped and the two women, along with Frank D. Carpenter, joined the prospector John Shively, as captives of the Nez Perce.

*"I was riding beside Albert Oldham a little ways behind George and Emma. The Indians were all around us. I saw two Indians on horses coming down in front of us at a full gallop. They stopped suddenly and fired, and George jumped or fell from his horse. At the same moment Albert Oldham dropped from his horse, being shot by an Indian a little ways above and behind us."*

*- Ida Carpenter; (thirteen years old, tourist, Radersburg party)*

*"Those nine prisoners the warriors bothered. The chiefs took the two women away from them. One was full grown, the other young and small. Both good looking. I saw everybody making to travel... then, soon, I heard some gun reports. It was the bad boys killing some of the white men."*

*- Hímiin Maqsmáqs (Yellow Wolf)*



Trout Creek, Hayden Valley  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

The main band made camp approximately 10 miles to the east, near Mary's Lake. The Cowans and Frank D. Carpenter were given food, water, blankets, and were kept within *Hinmahtooyahatkekht's* (Chief Joseph) camp to protect them from further assaults from angry warriors. Emma Cowan later related how the night air was filled with the mournful singing of many in the large surrounding camp. During the night as it started to rain, Nez Perce women covered the buffalo-hide blankets with canvas so as to protect those tourists from discomfort.

Two days later General Howard's scouts reached this point and two days after them, the infantry and cavalry. But before they could get the supply wagons through the Mary Mountain Trail, a road had to be built. While the infantry went on ahead, the teamsters stayed behind with the wagons.



Iwe'tonmy  
(Jeanette Reuben Wilson)  
Nez Perce women  
played an important role  
in the Flight of 1877  
Lee Moorehouse photo, taken July 4, 1906.  
Courtesy Nez Perce National Historical Park

View across Central Plateau,  
Yellowstone National Park  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park



*"Here...  
our wagon-road ended..."*

*From this point to the banks  
of the Yellowstone, and  
down that river we cut and  
constructed our own road,  
the work being done by civilian  
employees under charge of  
Capt. W.F. Spurgin, Twenty-  
first Infantry. It was a most  
tedious and laborious task,  
and may be appreciated in  
the fact that a wagon-road  
through that section has  
been always considered... an  
impossibility."*

*- General Oliver O. Howard*

## 5 Lower Geyser Basin, Wyoming

*August 24, 1877 - The capture of the Radersburg Tourist Party*

General Howard's command followed the Nez Perce across the Central Plateau to your east. There are no roads through this wild country so we will circle around the south side of the Plateau, and pick up the trail, just north of Yellowstone Lake. As you travel consider the hardships endured by both the Nez Perce and their pursuers as they struggled across this daunting landscape.

From the Nez Perce trailhead, proceed south on the Grand Loop Road for 0.8 mile to the Lower Geyser Basin. Continue south to the Middle and Upper Geyser Basins. It is 8.3 miles to the Old Faithful exit, another 17.6 miles to West Thumb Junction, and 19 more miles to Lake Village Junction. From Lake Village Junction, proceed north on Grand Loop Road for 1.6 miles to Fishing Bridge Junction.

### Sidetrip

To explore Indian Pond and Pelican Creek turn right at Fishing Bridge Junction, Highway 20, and continue east for approximately 3.5 miles to the small pull-outs along Indian Pond, located on your right.

To continue with the main tour, drive north on Grand Loop Road, away from Yellowstone Lake, for 4.9 miles to a sign for Nez Perce Ford picnic area.



Pink Cone Geyser  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

The morning after they captured John Shively, a Nez Perce scouting party paid an early morning call on the camp of the Radersburg tourist party. The main concern of the scouting party was to find supplies, food, and fresh horses that they desperately needed. When George Cowan reacted poorly to their helping themselves to these supplies, the encounter turned dangerous. The Nez Perce worried that the tourists would report the main band's whereabouts to the army. At first the tourists prepared to leave, but were soon compelled to travel along with them.

*"We could see about three miles of Indians, with one thousand or fifteen hundred ponies, and looking off to the left we could see more Indians looking at the geysers in Fire Hole Basin."*

*– Frank D. Carpenter (tourist, Radersburg party)*

*"Because I shook hands with him he put me in mind not to kill him. He looked at me and said, "I am going to ask you. Why you come here? I hear a little about you."*

*I answered by the interpreter "Yes, I am one of the warriors."*

*Then these white men got afraid. The leader asked, "Would you kill us?"*

*"They (the other warriors) are double-minded," I told him."*

*– Hímiin Maqsmáqs (Yellow Wolf)*

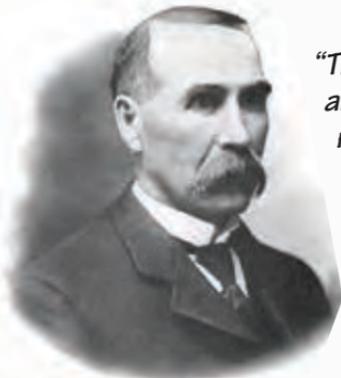


Photo courtesy of "Progressive men of the state of Montana"

*"The Indians came into camp in small parties all on foot and well armed until they probably numbered at least fifty. About this time I noticed that one of the party had opened the sugar and the flour that was in the baggage wagon and was preparing to issue it out to the redmen who in turn were holding their blankets preparatory to receiving their share."*

*– George Cowan (tourist, Radersburg party)*

## Side trip:

### *Indian Pond and Pelican Creek (and back)*

This 7 mile round-trip side trip will take you to the picturesque Indian Pond. There you can hike an easy 3 mile trail to the shore of Yellowstone Lake.

There is no RV turnaround at Indian Pond.

## 6 Indian Pond and Pelican Creek, Wyoming August 26 - Nez Perce camp at Indian Pond

From the Nez Perce trailhead, proceed south on the Grand Loop Road for 0.8 mile to the Lower Geyser Basin. Continue south to the Middle and Upper Geyser Basins. It is 8.3 miles to the Old Faithful exit, another 17.6 miles to West Thumb Junction, and 19 more miles to Lake Village Junction. From Lake Village Junction, proceed north for 1.6 miles to Fishing Bridge Junction. Turn right and cross over Fishing Bridge. Continue east for approximately 3.5 miles to the small pull-outs along Indian Pond, located on your right.

The main band of Nez Perce camped another night around Indian Pond, just north of Yellowstone Lake. Oral histories recount how there were so many traveling in this group that many were still arriving in camp as the first began to leave camp early the next morning. The Nez Perce continued north and northeast from Indian Pond, following the Pelican drainage to the heart of the Absaroka Mountain Range.



Only one day behind, S. G. Fisher and his scouting party of twenty or so Bannock Indians attempted to follow the Nez Perce upstream to Indian Pond and then into the Absaroka mountains. They were deterred by the rugged terrain and numerous downed trees.

On September 1, James. C. Irwin, who had spent a week as a captive of the Nez Perce, was discovered on Pelican Creek by Scout S. G. Fisher. He was able to tell General Howard that the Nez Perce were headed for Clarks Fork River over rough terrain.



Courtesy of Cyrus Brady, Northwestern Fights and Fighters

*"We have just met an escaped prisoner from Joseph's Band, his name is James C. Irwin, lately discharged from Co. G 2d Cavalry, Ft. Ellis [Bozeman]. He says he left the hostile camp about 8 o'clock this morning... This man Irwin will come to your camp and explain the situation. It will be very important to keep this man with you.*

*- S.G. Fisher (civilian scout), September 1, 1877*

Because of long-standing alliances with the Crow, it is thought that the non-treaty Nez Perce intended to find aid and safety with the Crow people after crossing into their territory east of the National Park. At a minimum, the non-treaty Nez Perce sought to pass peacefully through Crow territory to the buffalo hunting grounds on the Great Plains.

While in Yellowstone, Piyóop'yoo xayxáyx (Chief White Bird) sent four emissaries in an effort to enlist their aid. It is said that official aid was denied to the Nez Perce because some Crows feared retaliation by the U.S. Army. However, small groups of Crows unofficially aided the non-treaty Nez Perce. Oral history accounts reveal that Crows took several babies and young children from the Nez Perce for safe-keeping during the war. A few Crow warriors are also known to have joined the non-treaty Nez Perce while traveling through the eastern portion of the Park. Crow people also re-supplied the Nez Perce with some ammunition, fresh horses, and jerked buffalo meat while in that region.



Piyóop'yoo xayxáyx (Chief White Bird)  
by Joe Guarisco

## For Hikers:

### Storm Point Trail – 3 miles round trip

This easy 3 mile hike begins in the open meadows where the Nez Perce camped overlooking Indian Pond and Yellowstone Lake. The trail passes by the pond before turning right (west) into the forest. It continues through the trees and out to a vista of the lake at Storm Point. Following the shoreline to the west, the trail loops through the forest and returns to Indian Pond. This trail is often closed from late spring to early summer due to the bear activity. Inquire at the Visitor Center about trail closures before beginning this hike.



*In recent years buffalo and grizzly bear activity has increased in the Park. If you are planning to hike in the Park, be sure to check with Park personnel before you go. Know how to be safe in bear country!*

## 7 Nez Perce Ford, Wyoming

August 25 - James C. Irwin is captured

From the Nez Perce trailhead, proceed south on the Grand Loop Road for 0.8 mile to the Lower Geyser Basin. Continue south to the Middle and Upper Geyser Basins. It is 8.3 miles to the Old Faithful exit, another 17.6 miles to West Thumb Junction, and 18.8 more miles to the Lake area Junction. From Lake, proceed north for 1.6 miles to the Junction at Fishing Bridge.

This next 6-mile section of the road follows the Nez Perce Trail in the reverse order of the story. The Nez Perce came across the Central Plateau, emerged near Mud Volcano, forded the Yellowstone, and headed south toward Yellowstone Lake on the east side of the Yellowstone River.

Drive north on Grand Loop Road, away from Yellowstone Lake, for 4.9 miles to a sign for Nez Perce Ford picnic area. Turn east and drive for 0.3 mile down to the river to see Nez Perce Ford.

*“During the forenoon the Indians had captured a soldier... He told them of the Helena tourists camped near the Falls, the number of the men and horses.”*

*- Emma Cowan (tourist, Radersburg party)*

The soldier was James C. Irwin who had been discharged from Company G, 2nd Cavalry, Ft. Ellis (Bozeman). He escaped from the Nez Perce September 1, and was discovered on Pelican Creek by Scout S.G. Fisher.

*“The Indians plunged into the stream without paying much regard to the regular ford, and camped on the opposite shore.”*

*– Emma Cowan (tourist, Radersburg party)*

It was at this point that Emma Cowan, Ida Carpenter, and Frank D. Carpenter were given their freedom.

*“The women were given horses, the man was made to go afoot. They must not travel too fast. Food was given for their living while going to some town or wherever they lived.*

*We did not want to kill those women. Ten of our women had been killed at the Big Hole, and many others wounded. But the Indians did not think of that at all. We let them go without hurt to find their own people.”*

*– Hímiin Maqsmáqs (Yellow Wolf)*

While the main party of Nez Perce headed east from Yellowstone Lake along Pelican Creek and then over the Absaroka Mountains, General Howard went north to go out the Lamar River, up Soda Butte Creek to Cooke City, Montana, and then across a pass in the Absaroka Mountains to the headwaters of the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River.



## 8 Mud Volcano, Wyoming

August 25, 1877 - Nez Perce camp

Sept. 1, 1877 - General Howard camps on the Yellowstone River

Return to the Grand Loop Road. 0.8 miles north of the Nez Perce Ford is the entrance to the Mud Volcano area.

After fording the Yellowstone River, the main band of Nez Perce camped near the river. It is known through several oral histories and historical documentation that an elderly woman chose to stay behind here at Mud Volcano as the main band of Nez Perce continued to move eastward through the Park. The elderly woman was last seen by the Nez Perce near one of the geysers, sitting on a buffalo robe with water nearby, singing a song. Bannock scouts enlisted by the U.S. Army eventually came upon the woman, shot and scalped her. The elderly woman made a decision to stay behind so that she would not drain the resources or hinder the movement of the group. She did not want to burden anyone else. She sacrificed her life to ensure the survival of the others.

Although the Nez Perce camped here August 25, the cavalry and infantry did not arrive until September 1, 1877.

*“Right in the center of an Indian camp I rode up to a poor helpless old squaw. ....She laid on a few ragged robes, and suddenly closed her eyes as if expecting a bullet but not wanting to see it come. She seemed rather disappointed when instead of shooting her I refilled her water-bottle. She made signs that she had been forsaken by her people, and wanted to die, and from a couple of shots I heard ten minutes later as I followed the trail down the creek, one of our wild Bannack scouts acceded to her wishes and put her out of her misery.”*

– John W. Redington, (Retired U.S. Army - volunteer scout)



Crater Hills Mud Pool  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

## 9 Sulphur Mountain, Wyoming

*August 25, 1877 - Helena tourists camp near here  
Sept. 2, 1877 - General Howard abandons wagons*

Head North from Mud Volcano. Just after crossing Trout Creek, in 2.1 miles, Sulphur Mountain lies on the west side of the road. 3.2 miles north of Sulphur Mountain, notice the sign for the Mary Mountain Trail. From here, the Nez Perce went south, but General Howard went north.

Sulphur Mountain rises only 300 feet above the road but is still the highest point on this side of Hayden Valley. It made for a good lookout for a group of ten men from Helena who were touring the Park on August 25, 1877.

*"We were just on the point of leaving the [Sulphur] Springs, when Duncan came running down from the top of Sulphur Mountain, exclaiming, "There's a d--n big party of tourists, or else a big band of elk, ahead!" Wilkie said - "Yes, your elk will turn out to be trees, like all the rest of the game you see."*

*After traveling 3 or 4 miles the boys began to grow uneasy. We could see something alive coming, but did not know what it was...*

*We traveled on...and, on reaching the top of a small hill, saw a large camp across the Yellowstone. Duncan exclaimed: "Indians! Indians! My God, it's Indians!" He wanted us to backtrack...*

*We traveled back at a very lively rate for five or six miles to Sulphur Springs, where our scare seemed to subside a little... We then found a beautiful and safe camp."*

*- Ben Stone (tourist, Helena party)*

When General Howard reached this point on September 2, they decided to abandon the wagons and carry what supplies they could.

*"...though the trail did lead in the right direction, it took us over such fearful steeps, and across such deep and rough ravines, with precipitous banks, that it seemed utterly hopeless for our train of supplies ever to get through.*

*These difficulties being in view, the troops gave up the wagon-train and took what provision they could carry with the pack-train, and went on to cross the Yellowstone at Baronet's Bridge."*

*- General Oliver O. Howard*



## 10 Spurgin's Beaver Slide, Wyoming

September 3, 1877 - Captain Spurgin gets the wagons through

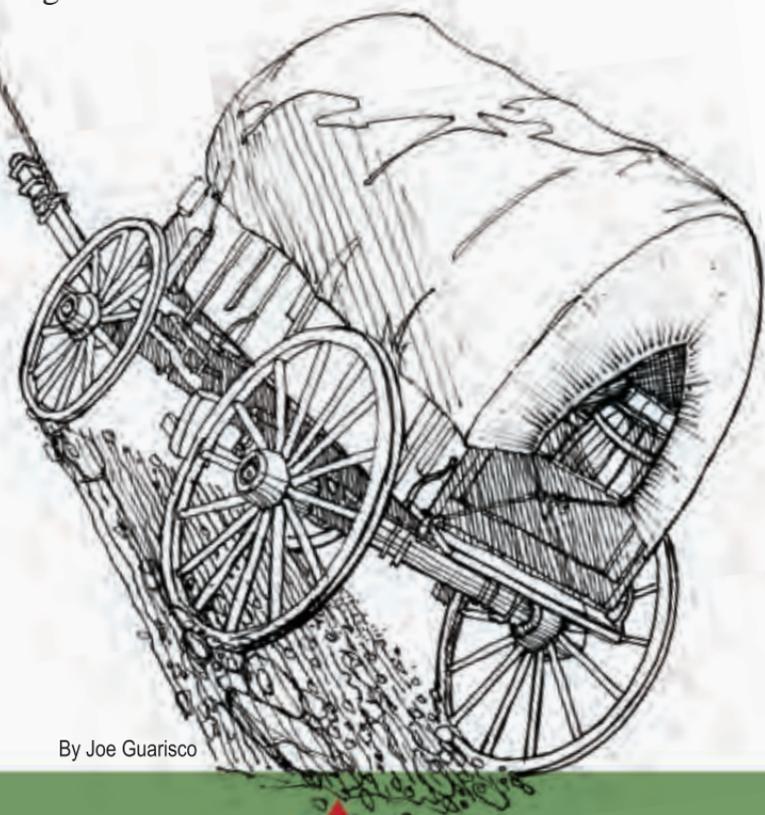
Continue north on the Grand Loop Road from the Mary Mountain Trailhead for 0.4 mile and pull into a tiny turnout on the bank of the Yellowstone River. On the hillside just above the turnout was the location of Spurgin's Beaver Slide.

Several of the army wagons had no choice but to descend one particularly steep bit of ground that became known as Spurgin's Beaver Slide after Captain William F. Spurgin who headed the effort. Fortunately they had a 100 foot rope in one of the wagons. They wound the rope around a tree at the top of the slope and tied the other end to a wagon. With several men holding the end of the rope, they carefully lowered the wagons one at a time. Once 100 feet were gained they secured the wagon to a tree with a shorter rope while they moved the longer rope down slope for the second 100 feet. In this manner, the army wagons "slid" down the steep slope. George Cowan, the injured Radersburg tourist, was in one of those wagons.

*"Cowan suffered intensely, but bore it all bravely. Part of the time he was standing on his head, and then again he would be on his feet. It was enough to make a well man sick."*

*- A.J. Arnold (tourist, Radersburg party)*

The rope burns created on the trees were visible for years. Several of these stumps are preserved in the Yellowstone Heritage and Research Center.



## 11 Otter Creek, Wyoming

*August 26, 1877 - Tourists from Helena camped near here*

Continue north on the Grand Loop Road for 1.0 mile to where the road crosses Otter Creek.

As the three released Radersburg tourists traveled by here on August 26, they were unaware of the ten men from Helena camped just a short distance away. The day before, these men had seen the Nez Perce from the top of Sulphur Mountain, and spent an uneasy night pondering the best course of action.

*"We camped for the night, but some of the boys wanted to go back home, but the majority was of the mind to go ahead to the geysers, as we had come thus far, and the journey was almost completed."*

*- Frederic Pfister (tourist, Helena party)*

*"Duncan, not feeling safe, took his blankets and made his bed half a mile from camp in the timber, all of us laughing at him."*

*- Ben Stone (tourist, Helena party), September 6, 1877*

*"I know one that did not close his eyes, and that was your humble servant. I felt as though someone ought to stay awake; if the truth was known, I felt pretty nervous."*

*- Andrew J. Weikart (tourist, Helena party)*

The so-called Helena party of ten men included Andrew Weikert, Richard Dietrich, Frederic J. Pfister, Charles Kenck, John (Jack) Stewart, Leander Duncan, Leslie N. Wilkie, Benjamin Stone, and two youths, Joseph Roberts and August Foller, aged twenty and seventeen, respectively. Several of the party under Weikert had left Helena on August 13, reaching Mammoth Hot Springs on the twentieth, where they met the other members.

Jerome A. Greene, Nez Perce Summer, 1877



Upper Falls, Yellowstone River  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

The next day their fears were realized.

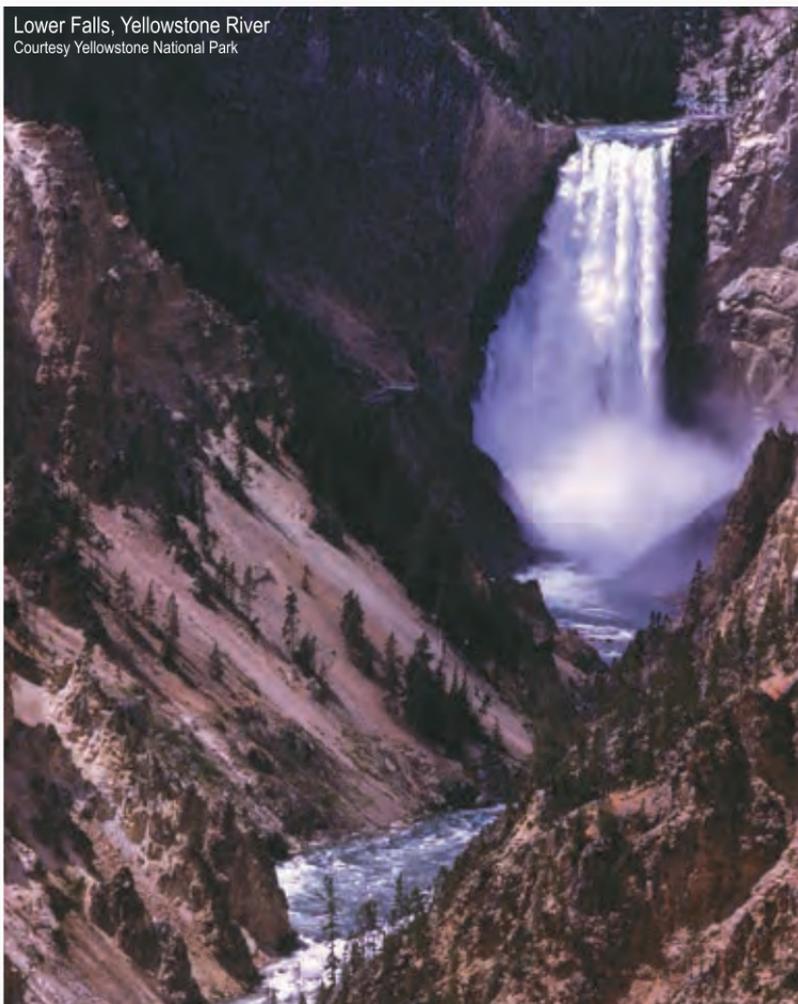
Fearing another surprise attack like the one at Big Hole, the Nez Perce sent out at least three different scouting parties in all directions of the Park. Scouting parties gathered information as to the U. S. Army's whereabouts, secured food, supplies, and fresh horses. One such scouting party entered the Helena tourist party camp taking what they could.

*"I looked around and saw the camp full of Indians with the boys jumping and going in every direction."*

*- Frederic Pfister (tourist, Helena party)*

John (Jack) Stewart was wounded, shot in the side and in the calf of the leg, and another, Charles Kenck, killed. The others all scattered and, including the wounded man, made it out of the Park safely. Five of them made their way to Mammoth Hot Springs where they once again encountered Nez Perce, this time by a small scouting party of young warriors.

Lower Falls, Yellowstone River  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park



## 12 Canyon Junction, Wyoming

*September 3, 1877 - The army was running low on supplies.*

From Otter Creek proceed 2.7 miles north on the Grand Loop Road to Canyon Junction.

*"On the Yellowstone the army ran out of tobacco and most everything else, and filled up on lake trout without salt. These fat fish were lazily lolling around in the river, and luckily it was no trick to catch them. Most of them were wormy, but in those hungry days everything went."*

*- John W. Redington (Retired U.S. Army - volunteer scout)*

Grand Canyon of Yellowstone  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park



### Side trip:

#### *Tower Junction to LaDuke Picnic Area (and back)*

18.2 miles north of Canyon Village Junction is Tower Junction. This road winds between Dunraven Peak and Mount Washburn.

To follow the side trip to Laduke Picnic Area turn east at Tower Junction following the Grand Loop Road towards Blacktail Deer Creek.

Alternatively, to skip the side trip turn east onto Highway 20 towards your next stop at Baronett's Bridge, page 36.

The next three stops, from Tower Junction north to LaDuke Picnic Area, trace the steps of a Nez Perce scouting party as well as those of many of the surviving tourists as they left the Park.

## 13 Blacktail Deer Creek, Wyoming

August 26, 1877 - The Cowan's are escorted out of the Park

Proceed northwest from Tower Junction on the Grand Loop Road for the next 11.2 miles to Blacktail Deer Creek. You can stop at the Blacktail Deer Trailhead turnout.

Emma, Frank, and Ida Cowan were escorted out of the Park by Lieutenant Schofield's detachment, and traveled home by way of Bozeman, Montana. All nine of the Radersburg tourists had survived their encounter with the Nez Perce. However, they did not yet know that the others were also safe. It would be nearly a month before Emma Cowan learned that her husband George was still alive.

*"In rounding a point of timber, we saw in a little meadow not far beyond, a number of horses and men. At the first glance we thought them Indians. Frank drew our horses back into the timber and went forward to investigate. He returned in a very few minutes and declared them soldiers. Oh, such a feeling of relief!*

*This company of soldiers was a detachment from Fort Ellis (Bozeman), with Lieutenant Schofield in command. They were sent out to ascertain the whereabouts of the Nez Percés, and were returning in the belief that the Indians were not in that vicinity...*

*The soldiers quickly prepared supper for us...*

*As we were about to move off, a man came hurrying down the trail. He [Pfister] proved to be one of the Helena party. He said they were attacked at noon... A horse was provided for this man, hurry orders given, and we set out for the [Mammoth Hot] Springs."*

*- Emma Cowan (tourist, Radersburg party)*



Blacktail Deer Creek  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

## 14 Mammoth Hot Springs, Wyoming

August 31, 1877 - Tourist Richard Dietrich is killed

From Blacktail Deer Creek, continue driving west for 6.7 miles to Mammoth Hot Springs.

Several members of the Radersburg party and all members of the Helena party who escaped at Otter Creek found their way to Mammoth Hot Springs. The wounded man, Jack Stewart, was put in a wagon and left for Bozeman, Montana on the morning of August 30. Richard Dietrich, a music teacher from Helena, Montana, stayed behind. Dietrich had promised the mother of 18-year-old Joseph Roberts that he would be responsible for him and he didn't want to leave until the boy was found. Later that day a Nez Perce scouting party came through on their way to Henderson's ranch but those remaining at the springs managed to evade them.

When Lieutenant Doane arrived at Mammoth Hot Springs the next day he found the still-warm body of Richard Dietrich. Apparently Dietrich felt the danger of the previous day was past and had been standing in the doorway of the hotel when a group of Nez Perce warriors approached.

*"It was coming towards sundown when we saw a white man standing in the doorway of a house. We stopped not far from him but did not dismount. We sat on our horses, six or seven of us, thinking. Chuslum Halap Kanoot (Naked-footed Bull) said to me, "My two young brothers and next younger brother were not warriors. They and a sister were killed at Big Hole. Just like this man did that killing of my brothers and sister. He is nothing but a killer to become a soldier sometime. We are going to kill him now. I am a man! I am going to shoot him! When I fire, you shoot after me.*

*Chuslum Hahlap Kanoot then fired and clipped his arm. As he made to run, another warrior, Yettahtapnat Alwum (Shooting Thunder) shot him through the belly."*

– Hímiin Maqsmáqs (Yellow Wolf)



Mammoth Hot Springs  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

## 15 LaDuke Picnic Area, Montana

August 31, 1877 - Nez Perce and military clash at Henderson ranch



LaDuke Picnic Area  
Roger Peterson - USDA / Forest Service

From Mammoth Hot Springs, proceed 5.5 miles through the North Entrance to Gardiner, Montana, driving along the Gardiner River. Drive through town, and continue north on Montana State Highway 89 for 5.9 miles to the LaDuke Picnic Area turnout.

*“The Indians came up behind the house, got the horses out of the corral, set fire to the house, and went back to join ten others who had stopped, watching from the hillside. Then the eighteen went back, driving the horses up the river. The white men put us on the Indian trail at once, and we pushed them hard enough to get back nineteen horses.”*

*– Lieutenant Hugh L. Scott*

On August 31, at Bart Henderson's ranch near the present town of Corwin Springs, Montana, another chapter was unfolding. Lieutenant Doane from Ft. Ellis, near Bozeman, Montana, was headed toward the Park with a large group of Crow scouts and a company of cavalry when they spotted smoke and went to investigate. A Nez Perce scouting party led by *Hímiin Maqsmáqs* (Yellow Wolf) had just captured a number of horses and set fire to the ranch house. They exchanged gunfire with the men at the ranch but no one was injured. Lieutenant Doane followed the Nez Perce back into the Park and recaptured some of the horses. Oral history from 1877 war descendents reveal that *Hímiin Maqsmáqs* (Yellow Wolf) had driven the horses out of the Henderson corral and only took those that were fast and fresh; the others he left behind.

From LaDuke Picnic Area, retrace your route back into Yellowstone Park. At Mammoth Hot Springs turn east on Grand Loop Road toward Tower Junction. Join the main tour at Baronett's Bridge on the next page.



## 16 **Baronett's Bridge, Wyoming**

*Sept. 5, 1877 - Howard's forces reach Baronett's Bridge*

Turn east at Tower Junction for 0.9 mile. After crossing the Yellowstone River, turn north onto a service road that leads to a small parking area near the site of Baronett's Bridge. Enjoy a hike to Baronett's Bridge or continue with the main tour to Soda Butte.



Tower Falls, Yellowstone National Park  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

**B**aronett's Bridge, which

sat astride the Yellowstone River at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Lamar Rivers, was built in 1871 as a toll-bridge. Jack Baronett profited more

from miners on their way to and from the Clarks Fork River than he did from tourists in Yellowstone. General Howard's forces reached this point on September 5. They found the bridge burned by a Nez Perce scouting party, led by *Hímiin Maqsmáqs* (Yellow Wolf) as they sought to join the main band in the eastern part of the Park. The army set about repairing it with some timbers they took from a nearby Jack Baronett's cabin, crossed the river, and continued up the East Fork of the Yellowstone River.

*"On arriving at Barronett's [sic] bridge, we found that a small raiding party had been there and had made an unsuccessful attempt to burn the bridge. We were delayed here several hours in repairing the damage."*

*- Thomas A. Sutherland (war correspondent)*



Baronett's Bridge  
Courtesy Yellowstone National Park

## For Hikers

### Baronett's Bridge – 1.5 miles round trip

Starting at the parking lot, on the trail closest to the river, walk north along the Yellowstone River for 0.3 mile. Right after passing a boulder about 6 feet high, step closer to the edge and look down to the river. From this point you should be able to see the stonewall abutments for Baronett's bridge on this side of the river. They sit on top of a ledge at the narrowest part of the river.



As you continue to walk east, in another 0.1 mile you will be able to see traces of the wagon road as it switchbacks down the north bank of the Yellowstone River. Another 0.1 mile walk, staying close to the river, will bring you to the remains of the wagon road on the south side of the river. The hillside has eroded severely enough that the original roadbed is mostly covered with loose rock, which provides very unsure footing.

Continue walking east for 3 or 4 minutes to the confluence of the Yellowstone and Lamar Rivers. Now, keeping the Lamar River on your left, walk upstream about 0.2 mile. Then you can follow the traces of the wagon road back to the parking lot. The return trip should take about 15 minutes. Join the main tour for the trip to Cooke City, Montana.

## 17 Soda Butte, Wyoming

September 6, 1877 - Soldiers begin moving up Soda Butte Canyon

Proceed east on the Northeast Entrance Road through the gentle Lamar Valley for 14.7 miles to Soda Butte.

Soda Butte is a travertine (calcium carbonate) mound that was formed more than a century ago by hot springs. When the U.S. Army passed by this feature in 1877, the springs hydrothermal water and hydrogen sulfide gases were much more active. It was near this spot that troops under the command of Captain Orlando (Rube) Robbins and a correspondent from the Idaho Statesman were ordered by General Howard to follow the Nez Perce. A short distance from the Soda Butte Trailhead there is a trail that passes close by the spot where S.G. Fisher and his scouting party killed a deer and stopped for a meal.

General Howard was moving on toward Crandall Creek. Upon entering the Hoodoo Basin, Captain Robbins discovered that additional Nez Perce, possibly scouting parties, had joined with the main Nez Perce group and Chief Looking Glass. The very evening that Captain Robbins and his troops entered the Hoodoo Basin a storm moved into the area. Many of the men recalled the extreme cold and how they feared they would freeze to death.

*“That night our efforts were principally directed toward keeping our blankets wrapped around us. No sooner did we fall into a doze that one of these zephyrs would rush along, ripping our blankets open and exposing to the chill air of the night. Next morning we resumed our travels along another high ridge, but for several miles could not find a descending place.”*

*Idaho Statesman Journal Correspondent*

## 18 Cooke City, Montana

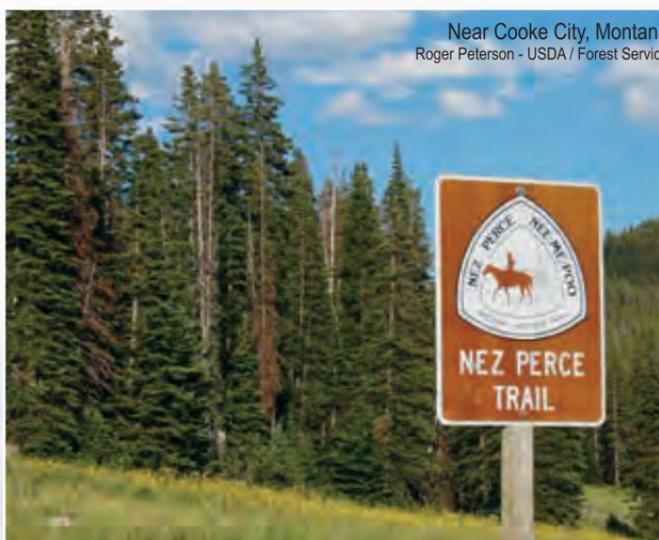
September 7, 1877 - General Howard passes Cooke City

Continue east from Soda Butte exiting Yellowstone National Park and traveling 16.3 miles to Cooke City, Montana.

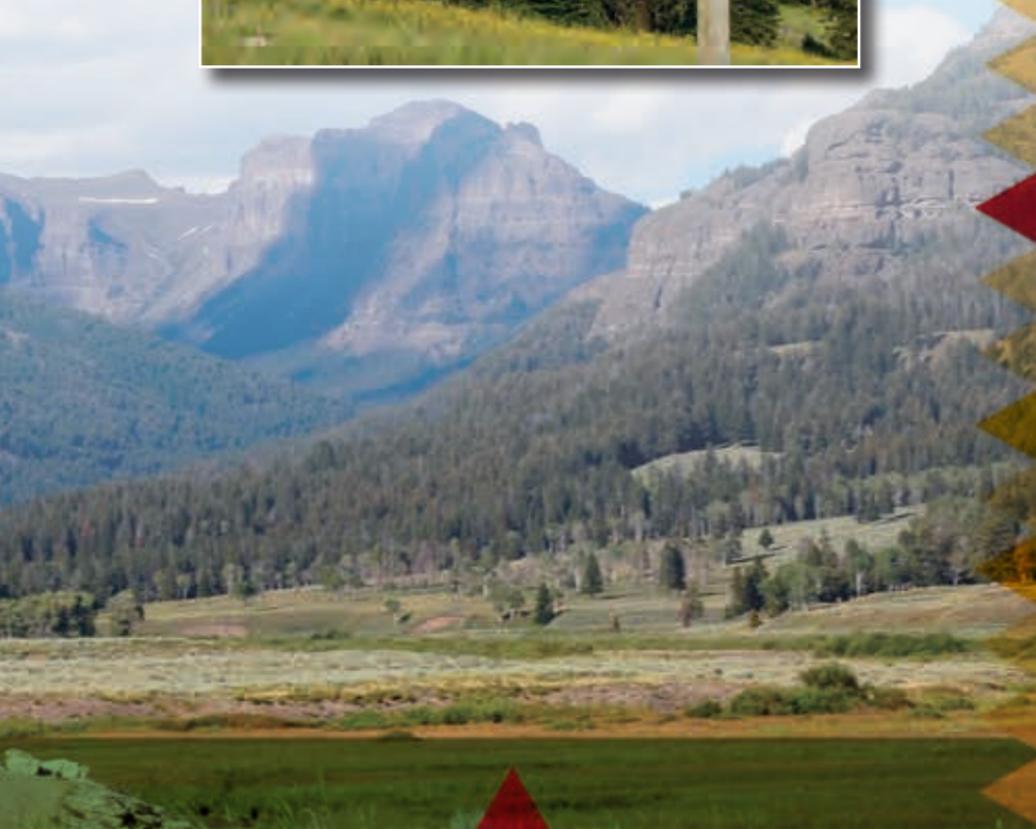
*"The soldiers fixed up the Baronett bridge, burned by a war-party, and marched on up Soda Butte creek and passed Cooke City, where several pioneer miners volunteered to service against the Indians. Along here Captain Fisher and his little bunch of Bannacks rejoined the command and again rode out far in the advance on the heels of the enemy."*

- John W. Redington (Retired U.S. Army Scout - volunteer scout)

When General Howard passed through Cooke City he found miners gathered there, nervously waiting, prepared to defend themselves against the Nez Perce who passed by 10 to 15 miles south of them.



Near Cooke City, Montana  
Roger Peterson - USDA / Forest Service



## 19 Nez Perce National Historic Trail Interpretive Site, Wyoming

3.6 miles further east of Cooke City, MT, along Highway 212 is the Nez Perce NHT Interpretive site on the north side of the road.

While General Howard and his men traveled the main access route used by prospectors, the Nez Perce, intent on evading the army, wound their way through the mountains to the south. Braving the cold and treacherous landscape, the Nez Perce left the Park and slipped past the military without being detected.

*"The Indians camped here and it looks as though they had got brushed, or rather, lost; for the trail is new and they have had a most difficult matter to get out, but out they have got of course, and over a trail that beats anything we have yet found..."*

*-member of scouting party as reported by the  
Boise, Idaho Tri-Weekly Statesman,  
September 29, 1877.*



Nez Perce artist Abraham Yearout, who created the iron sculpture at this site speaking at the Blessing Ceremony to celebrate the completion of this site, with his wife Brittney and son Titus. The Yearout family raises Appaloosas whose bloodlines can be traced back to the old Nez Perce herds. Through his artwork Abraham communicates respect for traditional culture. "I believe that many of my art pieces reflect the lives of my ancestors. It's through their lives and stories that I am able to find my inspiration to create the art work I do today. My hope is that future generations will see my artwork and gain a strong respect for those that came before us."



Jane Ruchman - USDA / Forest Service





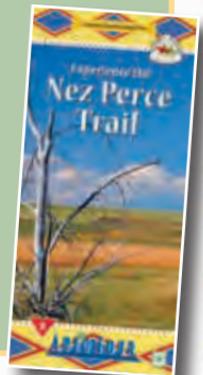
## Nez Perce National Historic Trail Auto Tours

See the Auto Tour brochure for each trail segment indicated on the map below for specific route information.



- 1** Wallowa Valley, Oregon, to Kooskia, Idaho
- 2** Orofino, Idaho to Lolo, Montana
- 3** Lolo, Montana, to the Big Hole National Battlefield, Montana, through the Bitterroot Valley
- 4** Big Hole, Horse Prairie and Lemhi Valleys
- 5** Leadore, Idaho, to Yellowstone National Park, Montana
- 6** Through Yellowstone National Park
- 7** Yellowstone National Park to Canyon Creek, Montana
- 8** Canyon Creek to Bear Paw

Auto Tour Brochures are available at local visitor centers, from the NPNHT Staff or from the NPNHT website at [www.fs.usda.gov/npnht/](http://www.fs.usda.gov/npnht/)



For an interactive Google Earth virtual tour of the trail please visit the Nez Perce Trail Foundation website at [www.nezpercetrail.net](http://www.nezpercetrail.net)

# This Trail is a Sacred Trust for All Americans

*“We, the surviving Nez Perces, want to leave our hearts, memories, hallowed presence as a never-ending revelation to the story of the event of 1877. These trails will live in our hearts.*

*We want to thank all who visit these sacred trails, that they will share our innermost feelings. Because their journey makes this an important time for the present, past and future.”*

*– Frank B. Andrews, Nez Perce descendant*

For more information on the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail visit on the Web at [www.fs.usda.gov/npnht/](http://www.fs.usda.gov/npnht/) or contact:

Nez Perce  
National Historic Trail  
Administrator's Office  
12740 Highway 12  
Orofino, ID 83544  
(208) 476-8234  
npnht@fs.fed.us

**Nez Perce  
National Historical Park**  
39063 US Highway 95  
Spalding, ID 83540  
(208) 843-7009  
www.nps.gov/nepe

Nez Perce Trail Foundation  
www.nezperctrail.net

The Confederated Tribes  
of the Colville Reservation  
(509) 634-2200  
www.colvilletribes.com

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla  
Indian Reservation  
(541) 276-3165  
ctuir.org

Yellowstone National Park  
P.O. Box 168  
Yellowstone National Park,  
WY 82190-0168  
(307) 344-7381  
www.nps.gov/yell

Nez Perce Tribe  
P.O. Box 305  
Lapwai, ID 83540  
(208) 843-2253  
www.nezperce.org

Caribou-Targhee  
National Forest  
1405 Hollipark Drive  
Idaho Falls, ID 83401  
(208) 557-5900  
www.fs.usda.gov/ctnf

**Cody Field Office**  
Bureau of Land Management  
1002 Blackburn  
Cody, WY 82414-8464  
(307) 578-5900  
www.blm.gov/wyoming

Custer Gallatin National Forests  
P.O. Box 130  
10 E Babcock Ave  
Bozeman, MT 59771  
(406) 587-6701  
www.fs.usda.gov/custergallatin

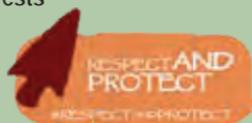
Shoshone National Forest  
808 Meadowlane Ave  
Cody, WY 82414  
(307) 527-6241  
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Island Park Historical Society  
P.O. Box 224  
Island Park, ID 83429

Yellowstone Historic Center  
104 Yellowstone Ave  
PO Box 1299  
West Yellowstone, MT 59758  
(406) 646-7461  
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