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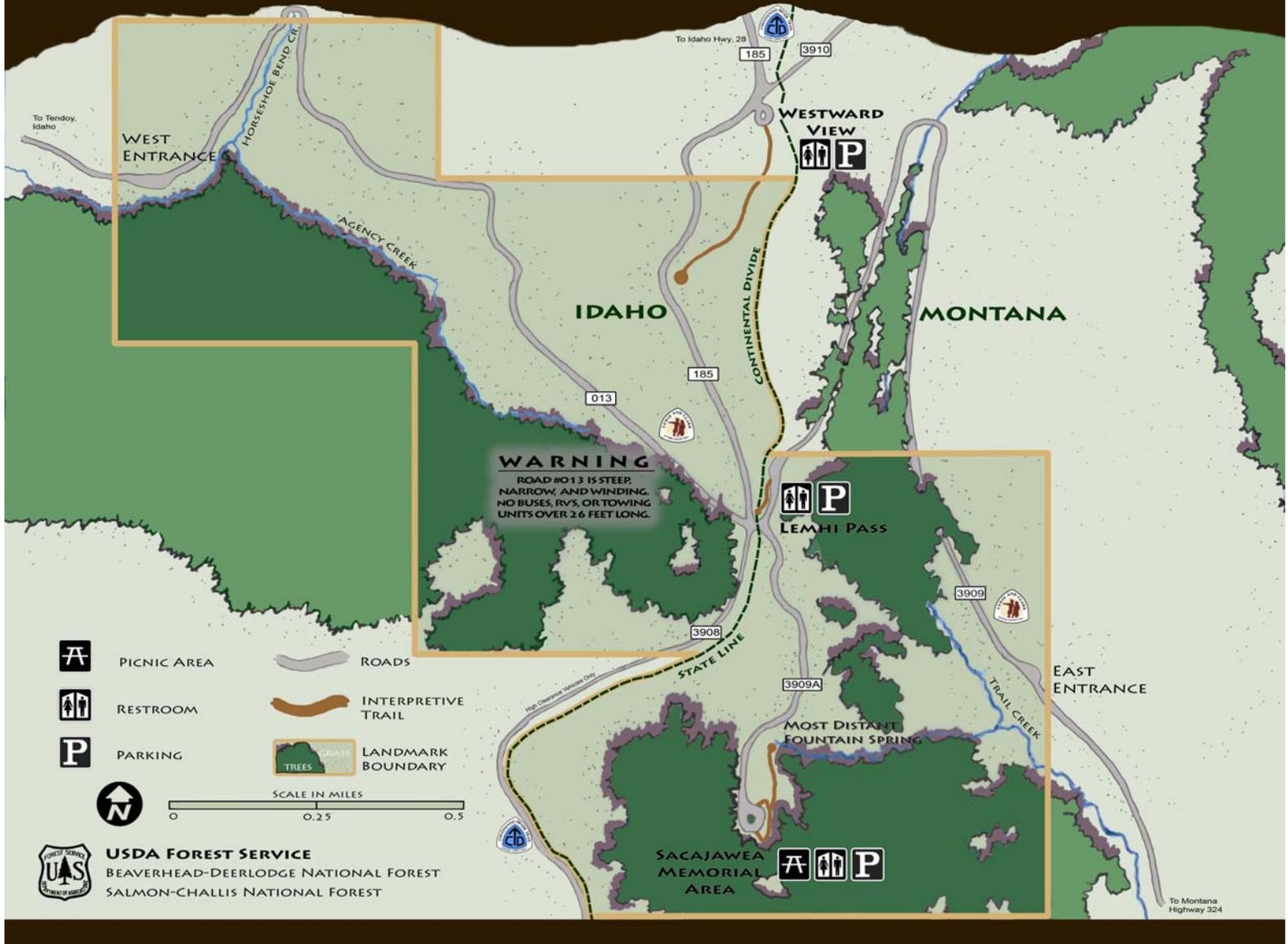
**Beaverhead-Deerlodge  
and Salmon-Challis National Forests**

**Lemhi Pass National Historic Landmark**



*we proceeded on to the top of the dividing ridge  
from which I discovered immense ranges of high mountains still to the West of us  
—Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805*

# LEMHI PASS NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK



# Welcome to Lemhi Pass

**Please Note!** Lemhi Pass National Historic Landmark is a day-use area, closed to overnight camping. No motor vehicles are permitted off the established roads. Campfires are permitted only in the fire rings at Sacajawea Memorial Area. The route along Agency Creek between Lemhi Pass and Horseshoe Bend Creek in Idaho is closed to horses. Horses and packstock are not permitted in developed sites or on the interpretive trails.

## An Historic Site of National Significance

In August of 1805, aided by Shoshone people of this region, Lewis and Clark crossed the Continental Divide at Lemhi Pass. At that time, this was the western edge of U.S. territory. In the context of the Expedition, this was an important accomplishment, and a celebrated event. However, even though Lewis and Clark carried a diplomatic message of peace, they were harbingers of hardship and loss for western Indian nations. At Lemhi Pass, we reflect on a broad scope of history connected with this narrow gap in the formidable Rocky Mountains, a place bearing the footprints of many generations of people.

## Establishment of Lemhi Pass National Historic Landmark

Lemhi Pass is within an area reserved from the public domain by president Theodore Roosevelt in 1906 as part of the National Forest System. Following the centennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1903-06), the people of Beaverhead County, Montana and Lemhi County, Idaho sought national recognition of Lemhi Pass as an historic site.

In 1932, after persistent lobbying organized by Laura Tolman Scott of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Secretary of Agriculture established the Sacajawea Recreation Division of the Salmon and Beaverhead National Forests at Lemhi Pass, honoring Sacajawea, the Shoshone woman who served with her husband Touissant Charbonneau as an interpreter and guide for the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

In 1960 the area was designated a National Historic Landmark, and the Landmark boundaries were established in 1991, encompassing 480.41 acres. Under the National Trails System Act of 1968 the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail was authorized, and ten years later, the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail was also designated by Congress.

## Key Features of the Historic Landscape

- The uppermost source of water in Trail Creek, in the area east of Lemhi Pass –Lewis’s *“most distant fountain of the waters of the mighty Missouri”*
- Lemhi Pass itself, the *“gap at the head of this rivulet through which the road passes”*
- The crest of the Continental Divide north of Lemhi Pass, which commands an broad view to the west of *“immense ranges of mountains”*
- The confluence of Horseshoe Bend and Agency Creeks, west of Lemhi Pass, where Lewis *“first tasted the water of the great Columbia river”*

## Management of the Landmark

At Lemhi Pass, the Forest Service has two management purposes:

- (1) preserve the historic landscape and route of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, and
- (2) permit public access and enjoyment of the area.

For the Bicentennial, we have improved the roads—although they are still single-lane gravel roads, added a new interpretive site north of the pass (Westward View), and updated facilities at Sacajawea Memorial Area and Lemhi Pass. We designated the Landmark a day use area –closed to overnight camping, due to the limited number of sites at Sacajawea Memorial Area, a very popular picnic ground.

Maintaining the natural landscape is critical to the historic character of the site, yet public access and enjoyment requires some facilities that may detract from naturalness or reduce the similarity between the modern landscape and the way it was in 1805. We manage this area to serve our visitors and preserve the historic character of the landscape for years to come.

Archaeological resources and historic objects on federal lands are protected by law. Please do not dig, collect, disturb, or damage such cultural resources. Also, the historic character of Lemhi Pass depends on the natural landscape and the plants and animals remaining much as they were in 1805. Tread lightly, so that this landscape can continue to provide visitors with authentic Lewis and Clark Trail experiences.

# Lemhi Pass Questions and Answers

## What will I see at Lemhi Pass?

The landscape at Lemhi Pass is much like it was 200 years ago. You will find open slopes covered with native sagebrush and bunch grasses, edged with patches of douglas-fir and lodgepole pine trees. The plant communities and species are the same as they were in 1805, but today there are probably more pine and fir trees on the mountains, and fewer willows and beaver dams along the streams. The only wildlife species of Lewis and Clark's time that is no longer present in the area is the grizzly bear. Visitors today have a greater chance than Lewis and Clark did to see elk and deer –even moose are often seen at Lemhi Pass. The westward view from Lemhi Pass is of distant ranges of steep, rocky mountains, just as it was in 1805.

The winding gravel road over Lemhi Pass remains remote and rural. The landscape is open rangeland very similar to what Lewis and Clark witnessed, even though it is now sparsely punctuated by ranch buildings, road signs, fences, electric power lines, picnic areas, cows, mining prospects, timber harvest areas, and automobiles.

## What is the weather like at Lemhi Pass?

There is a remote weather station near Lemhi Pass, called Lemhi Ridge. You can check the current weather conditions for this site through the National Weather Service at Missoula at this web site:

<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mesonet/getobext.php?wfo=mso&sid=LMHM8&num=168&raw=0>

## What are the facilities at Lemhi Pass?

### Roads

The Lemhi Pass Road (No. 3909, from MT Hwy 324 to Lemhi Pass, 12 miles) was improved in 2002-3, and the Warm Springs Wood Road (No. 185, Lemhi Pass to Tendoy, Idaho, 25 miles) was improved in 2003-4. These roads have new gravel surface, improved drainage, turnouts, and directional signs. Trailer towing units, RV's and buses may use the Lemhi Pass Road and Warm Springs Wood Road. Agency Creek Road (No. 013, Lemhi Pass to Tendoy, Idaho, 12 miles) has been maintained, but has about 2 miles of very steep grade (over 20 percent) at the top, and is very narrow and winding with few turnouts. Agency Creek Road is not suitable for trailer towing, RV's or bus traffic. The vehicle length limit on Agency Creek Road is 26 feet. The road to Sacajawea Memorial Area (from Lemhi Pass south in Montana 0.2 miles) was resurfaced with gravel in 2003, and extended with a loop for parking at the picnic area. On all these roads, drivers need to be attentive to oncoming traffic and use turnouts. A pilot car is recommended for buses.



### Developed Recreation Sites

**Lemhi Pass** parking area is about 500 feet north of the pass on the Montana side, along the Lemhi Pass Road. There is a vault toilet, an information kiosk, and a paved trail (with interpretive signs and benches) leading to the pass. A monument stone has been set at the end of the trail, on the crest of the Continental Divide in the pass. Visitors are encouraged to use the new parking area instead of parking roadside on the pass, to keep the views at the pass open in all directions. There is a register box near the parking area. Don't forget to sign in! This register is how we know that our visitors come from all across the nation and around the world. The register is maintained by members of the Camp Fortuante Chapter of the Lewis & Clark trail Heritage Foundation.

*Lemhi Pass area – interpretive sign and monument stone.*



*Sacajawea Memorial Area – group picnic site.*

**Sacajawea Memorial Area**, about 0.2 miles south of the pass on the Montana side of the Divide, is open for day use only. Facilities include a vault toilet, an information kiosk, two individual picnic sites, two group picnic sites and a trail to Most Distant Fountain Spring (about 300 feet long). The trail and picnic sites are hard-surfaced. There are interpretive signs along the trail, and visitors can “bestride” the Missouri headwaters on large stones placed for this purpose. There is no potable water. The spring head is fenced to protect the vegetation. The Laura Tolman Scott Wildflower Trail should be completed in 2006 - a native-surfaced trail approximately one mile long, allowing visitors to walk through a variety of Rocky Mountain plant communities.



*Westward View Vista Point – view southwest to the Lemhi Range*

**Westward View Interpretive Site** is about one mile north of Lemhi Pass on Warm Springs Wood Road, just north of the National Historic Landmark. There is a parking loop, information kiosk, vault toilet, and about 800 feet of gravel-surfaced trail with benches and interpretive signs, leading to a vista point. This area is designated for overflow parking (especially for buses) at times when Lemhi Pass is full.

## What is there to see and do at Lemhi Pass?

Contemplate history, geography, and nature. Have a picnic. Take a hike. Photograph wildflowers.

### Hiking the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail within Lemhi Pass National Historic Landmark

While no one knows the exact route of the Indian road Lewis & Clark followed over Lemhi Pass, traces of the 1880s stage road covering much of the same route still exist. On the east side of Lemhi Pass it is about ½-mile from the top of the pass down to Trail Creek, about 370 feet lower in elevation. If you would like to hike to the pass, you may begin from the Forest Boundary at the Landmark's East Entrance, walking cross-country downhill to Trail Creek from the road and then up to the Pass, about one-half mile along the old stage road. Or, you might want to reverse this route and hike downhill from the pass to Trail Creek, and then up to the East Entrance at the Forest Boundary.

West of Lemhi Pass in Idaho, it is about ¾-mile downhill to the confluence of Agency Creek and Horseshoe Bend Creek, about 970 feet lower in elevation. Just as Lewis commented in his journal of 1805, the route is much steeper west of the Divide. These are not developed trails, but you are welcome to hike the route cross-country.

### Motor, Bicycle, and Horse Routes: Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail, Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, Lewis & Clark Backcountry Byway/Adventure Road



*Approaching Lemhi Pass parking area from the Montana side.*

Within the National Historic Landmark, motor vehicles and bicycles must stay on the roads (except snowmobiles are permitted off-road, in winter). On the Montana side, the Lemhi Pass Road and the Sacajawea Memorial Area Road are open to bicycles and motor vehicles. In Idaho, the Continental Divide Road south from Lemhi Pass, Agency Creek Road, and Warm Springs Wood Road are open to bicycles and motor vehicles. The Agency Creek Road and Warm Springs Wood Road together form a loop drive in Idaho, called the Lewis & Clark Backcountry Byway/Adventure Road. For more information about the Backcountry Byway, see the Salmon-Challis National Forest or Idaho BLM web sites (links below).

The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (CDNST) intercepts the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail at Lemhi Pass. South of the pass, the CDNST route is on a wheeltrack road (No. 3980), suitable for high-clearance vehicles. This road extends south along the Continental Divide about 7 miles. North of Lemhi Pass, there are two CDNST routes. Motor vehicles and bicyclers must use the Warm Springs Wood Road (No. 185). Hikers and horseback riders may follow the route more directly along the Continental Divide.

### **Laura Tolman Scott Wildflower Trail**

The Lemhi Pass area holds an outstanding variety of Rocky Mountain plant communities. The abundant wildflowers change throughout the season, and are at their colorful peak in June and July. In 1940, a wildflower trail was built at Sacajawea Memorial Area, dedicated to the memory of Laura Tolman Scott, a Montana woman who was a Lewis and Clark enthusiast, as well as a wildflower collector. Mrs. Scott was instrumental in the establishment of the special recreation area at Lemhi Pass. Some of Mrs. Scott's wildflower collection is on display in the Beaverhead County Museum in Dillon. The wildflower trail will be reconstructed in 2006. The trail is about one mile long, has a native soil surface, and includes some moderate grades up to 20 percent. An interpretive brochure will be available for the wildflower trail. The wildflower trail is closed to bicycles, horses, and motor vehicles.

### **Picnic Sites**

Sacajawea Memorial Area has a vault toilet, picnic tables and fire rings. There are two single-table sites and two double-table sites, all with fire rings. The area is shaded by large Douglas-fir, engelmann spruce, and lodgepole pine trees. All the sites are paved, and the toilet and tables are designed to accommodate wheelchairs. There is no potable water, and visitors must pack out their trash. Parking at Sacajawea Memorial Area includes pull-ins for the two individual picnic sites and parallel parking around the edge of the parking loop road. The parking loop is designed to accommodate buses.

### **Interpretive Signs**

Interpretive signs are located along the Lemhi Pass trail, in Sacajawea Memorial Area, and along the Westward View trail. The text of the interpretive signs is included at the end of this document. **You can view PDF files of the interpretive signs from the link on our photo album page.**

## Related Lewis & Clark Links

Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center, Great Falls MT - <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/lewisclark/lcic.htm>

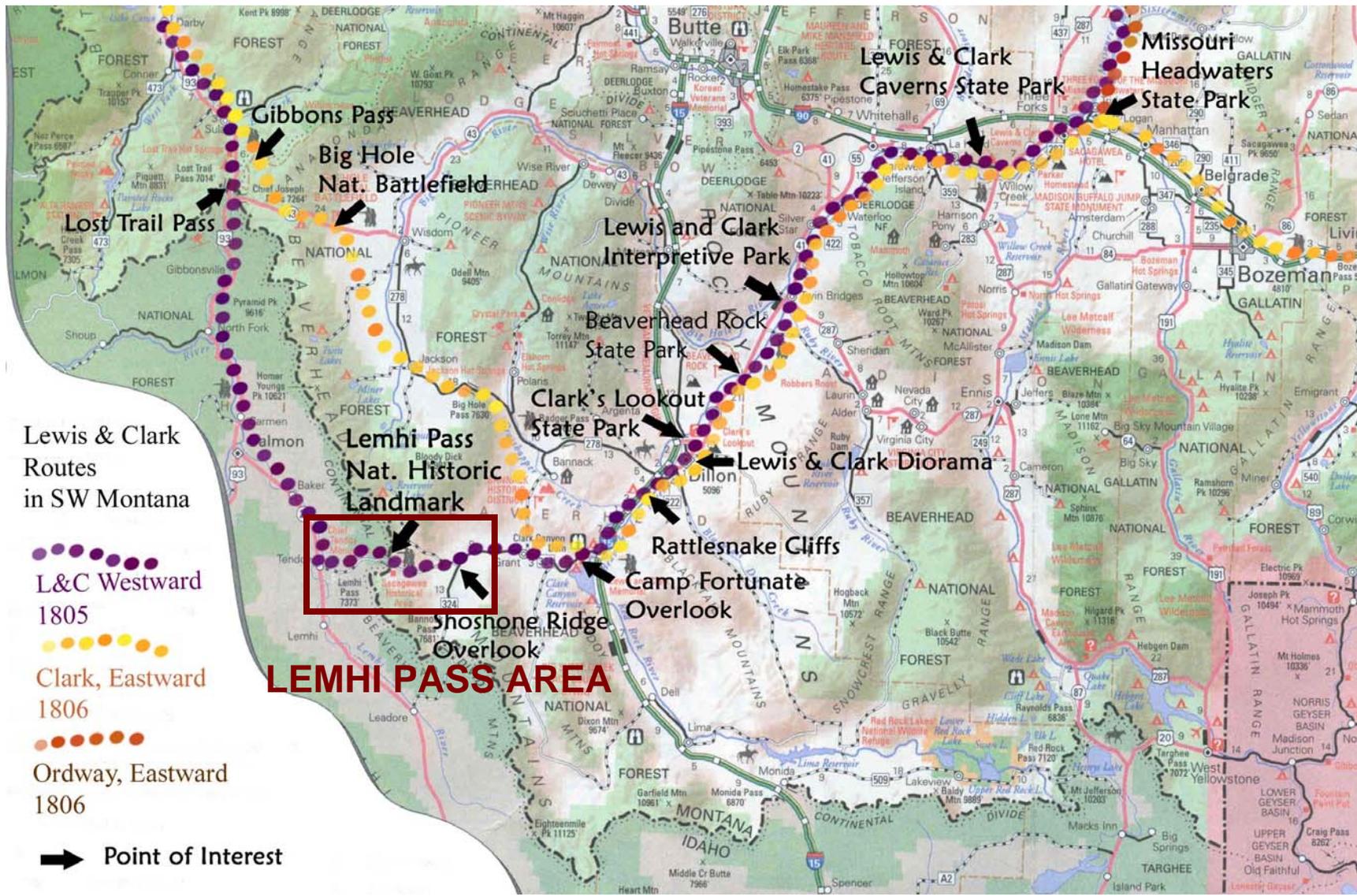
National Park Service, Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail - <http://www.nps.gov/lecl/index.htm>

Montana Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission - <http://www.montanalewisandclark.org/>

Idaho Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Commission - <http://www.lewisandclarkidaho.org/>

Salmon-Challis National Forest - <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/sc/>

Salmon, Idaho BLM - [http://www.id.blm.gov/spec\\_places/nlcs\\_lc.htm](http://www.id.blm.gov/spec_places/nlcs_lc.htm)

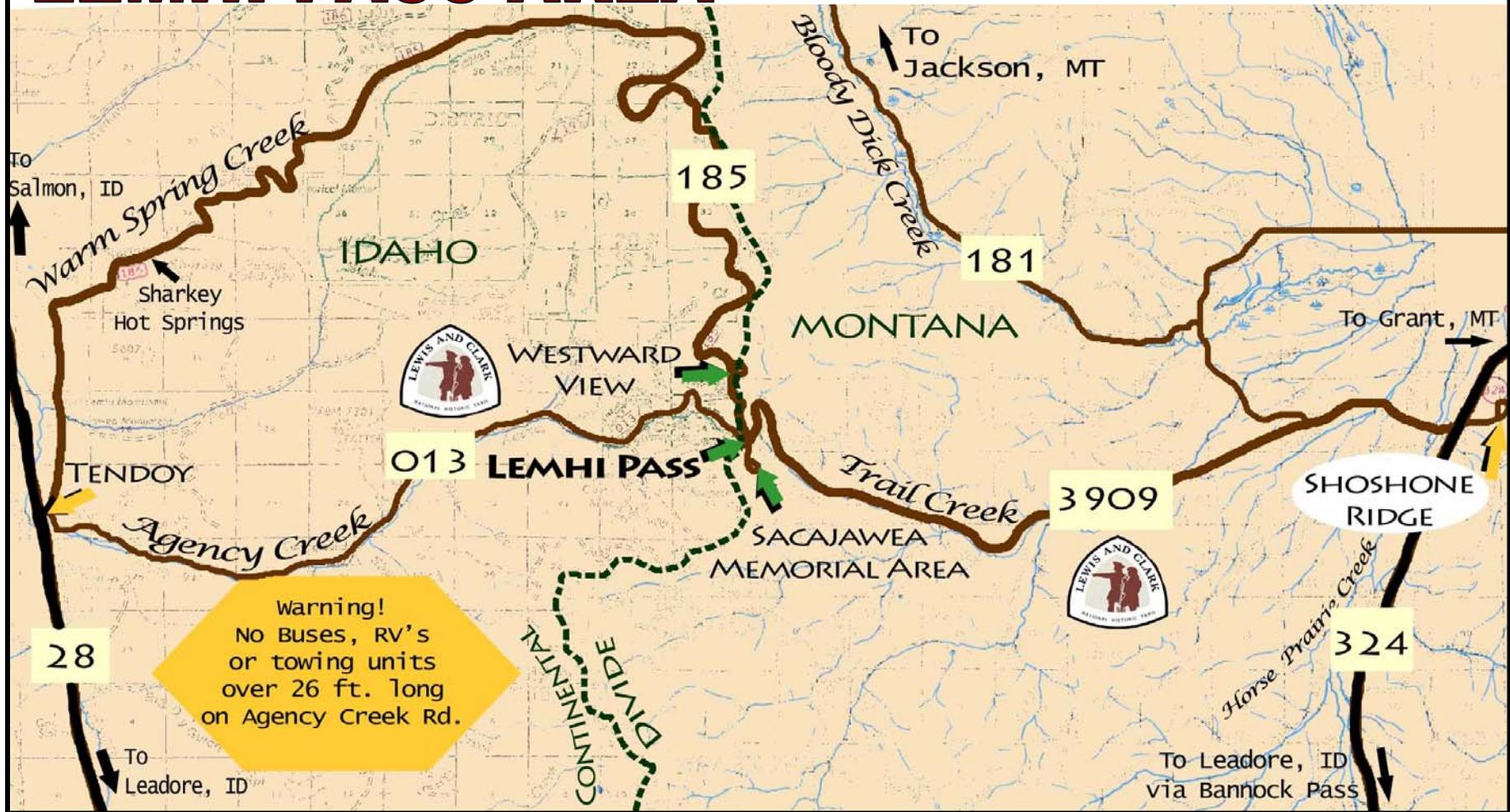


Lewis & Clark Routes in SW Montana

- L&C Westward 1805
- Clark, Eastward 1806
- Ordway, Eastward 1806
- ➔ Point of Interest

**LEMHI PASS AREA**

# LEMHI PASS AREA



## How do I get to Lemhi Pass?

**From Dillon, Montana**, take Interstate Highway 15 south to Clark Canyon Dam, about 19 miles. Turn west onto Montana State Highway 324, a paved, two-lane road that crosses the dam and skirts the reservoir along its northwest shore. Clark Canyon Reservoir, completed in 1963, is managed by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. The site of Lewis and Clark's "Camp Fortunate" is now under water, but an overlook, picnic site, and campgrounds have been developed above the shoreline, along the highway.

As you leave the reservoir, you will be driving west on Highway 324, up the Horse Prairie Creek Valley, which Lewis called Shoshone Cove (using the old term "cove" for "valley"). Along the way, you'll pass a small town called Grant, about 12 miles from Clark Canyon Dam. In this area, Lewis sighted the first Shoshone on horseback. About 3 miles west of Grant, look for a wayside interpretive sign on the north side of the road, telling the story of Lewis's first attempt to contact the Shoshone.

It's about 21 miles on Hwy 324 from Clark Canyon Dam to the junction of Lemhi Pass Road, a gravel road joining Highway 324 from the west. At this intersection, a new interpretive site has been constructed east of the highway, by the Bureau of Land Management. This site is called **Shoshone Ridge Overlook**. Parking area, picnic tables, a toilet, and interpretive signs are available at this site. If you are towing a trailer or driving an RV with a passenger vehicle in tow, we recommend parking your trailer or RV at Shoshone Ridge, and using your passenger vehicle to make the drive over Lemhi Pass.

The road to Lemhi Pass is an improved gravel road (No. 3909). From Highway 324 to Lemhi Pass on the Continental Divide, the distance is about 12 miles. Except for the last 1.4 miles, the road crosses private ranch land. Please respect private property along the road.

The upper four miles of road in Montana below Lemhi Pass is a narrow, single-lane mountain road, with turnouts to allow vehicles to pass. This segment of the road is usually closed due to snow from late November through early June.

You may call the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, in Dillon, Montana, at (406) 683-3900, or the Salmon-Challis National Forest, in Leadore, Idaho, at (208) 768-2500 for up-to-date information about road conditions.

You'll want to be sure you have a good spare tire, and equipment to change a tire if needed. The last four miles of road below the pass are quite narrow - a single driving lane. Watch for oncoming traffic and be prepared to use a turnout, or back up if you meet a vehicle. Keep in mind that generally, downhill traffic has the right-of-way. **BUSES need to have a pilot car** ahead of them, to warn oncoming traffic to use turnouts to allow the bus to pass.

**West of Lemhi Pass** you enter Idaho, in the Salmon-Challis National Forest. You have a choice of two routes from Lemhi Pass into Idaho: Agency Creek Road (No. 013), or Warm Springs Wood Road (No. 185). The Agency Creek and Warm Springs Wood roads together are designated the **Lewis and Clark Back Country Byway and Adventure Road**, a 37-mile loop drive.

The Agency Creek Road is extremely steep, narrow, and winding. It's not suitable for trailer towing, buses, or motor homes. It is about 12 miles from Lemhi Pass to Tendoy, Idaho via Agency Creek Road. The Warm Springs Wood Road is less steep, and offers spectacular views of the Lemhi Valley and surrounding mountains as you drive north along the Continental Divide before dropping into Pattee and Warm Springs Creek canyons. There are several interpretive sites along this road, as well as Sharkey Hot Spring, with soaking pools open to the public. It is about 26 miles from Lemhi Pass to Tendoy, Idaho via Warm Springs Wood Road.

### **If I can't make it to Lemhi Pass from the Montana side, what are my options?**

If you want to keep close to the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, but road conditions won't allow you to drive to Lemhi Pass from the Montana side, you can detour over Bannock Pass. (See below for directions.)

Often, weather and road conditions will allow vehicles to reach Lemhi Pass from the Idaho side when the road in Montana is impassible. When the Montana road is still blocked by snow it may be possible to reach Lemhi Pass on Agency Creek Road from the Idaho side, even though you can't continue into Montana.

**To detour over Bannock Pass**, from the Lemhi Pass Road intersection stay on Montana State Highway 324. It is about 12 miles to Bannock Pass. The road changes from pavement to improved gravel a few miles before you reach the pass. From the top of Bannock Pass, it's about 13 miles to the town of Leadore, Idaho. This route is part of another historic trail, the Nez Perce National Historic Trail. The Nez Perce came this way following the Battle of the Big Hole, in 1877.

From Leadore, turn northwest on Idaho State Highway 28 toward Salmon. This paved, two-lane road will take you down the Lemhi Valley about 26 miles to the country store and post office at Tendoy. (It's another 20 miles from Tendoy to Salmon.) At Tendoy, you'll be back on the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.

**To drive to Lemhi Pass from Tendoy, Idaho**, turn off the highway at the store. A short distance behind the store, you will come to an intersection where you have a choice of the Agency Creek Road or the Warm Springs Wood Road. If you are prepared for a steep, narrow, and winding mountain road, and you're not towing a trailer or driving a motor home, you can take the Agency Creek Road, which is the shortest route (about 12 miles). Otherwise, turn left at the intersection and head north about three miles

to where the Warm Springs Wood Road takes off to the right. On this road, it's about 22 more miles to Lemhi Pass. Early in the season, the upper portion of Warm Springs Wood Road along the Continental Divide may be blocked by snow, while Agency Creek Road may be open.

## What camping and services are available in the Lemhi Pass area?

**In Montana**, the closest developed campgrounds near the Lewis and Clark Trail are at Clark Canyon Reservoir, managed by the U.S. Department of Interior's Bureau of Reclamation, about 33 miles west of Lemhi Pass. For information about Clark Canyon Reservoir facilities, contact the Bureau of Reclamation in Dillon, Montana (406) 683-6472 or visit <http://www.recreation.gov/detail.cfm?ID=131>.

About 20 miles north of Lemhi Pass, the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest manages a campground at Reservoir Lake. For Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest information, call (406) 683-3900 or visit the Recreation page on our web site.

For information about local points of interest, services, and accommodations in Montana, contact the Chamber of Commerce in Dillon, Montana, at (406) 683-5511 or visit <http://www.bmt.net/~chamber>.

**In Idaho**, there's a small campground about eight miles west of Lemhi Pass on Agency Creek, managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management, Salmon Field Office. Call this office at (208) 756-5466 or visit <http://www.id.blm.gov/>.

The Salmon-Challis National Forest manages two campgrounds in the vicinity of Leadore: Smokey's Cubs Campground, about three miles east of Leadore, and McFarland Campground, about 14 miles north of Leadore. For information about the Salmon-Challis National Forest, call (208) 756-5100. or visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/sc>.

In Idaho, the closest service station to Lemhi Pass is the Tendoy Store and Post Office, 12 miles east, at Tendoy, Idaho. If you are traveling over Bannock Pass, you will find a service station in Leadore, Idaho. For information about other local points of interest, services, and accommodations, contact the Chamber of Commerce in Salmon, Idaho, at (208) 756-2100.

**Outfitter and Guide Services:** The services of an outfitter or guide may enhance your visit to this historic site. A permit is required to outfit or guide commercially. For information on outfitter or guide services, please contact the Dillon Ranger District office at (406) 683-3900. Tour companies that visit multiple Forests along the Trail may obtain permits through the Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center in Great Falls, MT, (406) 727-8733.

## What local maps and Lewis and Clark Trail guides are available from the Forest Service?

The Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, at 420 Barrett St., Dillon, MT 59725, tel. (406) 683-3900, has the following maps and trail guides:

***Discovering the Legacy of Lewis and Clark – 2003***, a folded interagency map/brochure covering the Trail route from Philadelphia to Fort Clatsop. Free.

***Enduring Landscapes***, a 16–page illustrated brochure about the Lewis & Clark Trail on National Forests and Grasslands throughout the U.S. Free.

***Lewis and Clark Trail*** – National Park Service National Historic Trail Brochure, showing the Trail route from Illinois to Oregon. Free.

***Lewis and Clark in the Rocky Mountains***, a folded map with historical notations, published by the Northern Region of USDA Forest Service (publication R1-95-106) shows the route of Lewis and Clark from Great Falls, Montana to Lolo Creek, Idaho, and their return routes (for Lewis, as far north as the headwaters of the Marias River, for Clark, the route over Gibbons Pass and Big Hole Pass). Free.

***Lewis and Clark in Beaverhead County Montana***, a 10-page illustrated brochure telling the story of Lewis & Clark’s journey through southwestern Montana, from Beaverhead Rock to Lemhi Pass, and the return trip of Capt. Clark, from Gibbob’s Pass to Beaverhead Rock. Free.

***Lewis and Clark Expedition - Lemhi County, Idaho***, a folded map with historical notations, showing the route of Lewis and Clark from Lemhi Pass to Lost Trail Pass, including the side-trip down the Salmon River, published by the Salmon District of the Bureau of Land Management and Salmon-Challis National Forest, with Idaho Power Company, River of No Return Interpretive Association, and the Idaho Travel Council. Free.

***Idaho - Lewis and Clark National Backcountry Byway and Adventure Road***, a folded brochure providing brief information about the 39-mile loop drive on Warm Springs Wood and Agency Creek roads. Published by the Salmon District Bureau of Land Management and Salmon-Challis National Forest. Free.

***Interagency Visitor Map of Southwest Montana (West Half)***, a folded map at 1/2 inch per mile scale, shows roads and trails, campgrounds, geographic features such as streams, lakes and mountain peaks, and land ownership (public, private, State, National Forest, etc.), seasonal and motorized/nonmotorized travel restrictions. Cost: \$6.00. The East Half map is also available for \$6.00.

***Montana Highway Map, Lewis & Clark Commemorative Edition 2005-2006.*** Free

***Lemhi Pass National Historic Landmark*** - a brochure for Lemhi Pass National Historic Landmark, and coming in 2006, a brochure for the Laura Tolman Scott Wildflower Trail.

You may order the maps from our web site. You can send the form either to the address shown on the form or to the Forest Service office in Dillon (address above.)

# Lemhi Pass Stories

(Plain text from our interpretive signs--you can view PDF files of the interpretive signs from the link on our photo album page.)

## The Corps of Discovery

### Crossing the Great Divide...at the Edge of an Empire

#### High Point of the Journey

*“thus far I had accomplished one of those great objects on which my mind has been unalterably fixed for many years,”* wrote Meriwether Lewis 465 days after setting out from St. Louis.

Lewis, George Drouillard, Hugh McNeal, and John Shields crossed the Continental Divide here on August 12, 1805, in advance of the main expedition. They left the headwaters of the Missouri and entered the upper Columbia River Basin. At 7,373 ft. (2,247 m.), Lemhi Pass is the highest elevation on the westward route of Lewis and Clark.

#### The Louisiana Purchase

Today Lemhi Pass is on the border of two states. In 1805, it was a boundary between nations. Purchase of the Louisiana Territory from France in 1803 strengthened the United States’ drive to span the North American continent. British and U.S. interests were racing to occupy the Pacific Northwest, wanting control of the valuable trade routes and commerce in the region. Both countries failed to fully acknowledge the sovereignty of resident Indian nations.

#### Portage Hill

*The road was still plain, I therefore did not despair of shortly finding a passage over the mountains and of tasting the waters of the great Columbia this evening.* —Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805

Lewis and Clark hoped to find a practical land route—a portage—between the Missouri and Columbia Rivers. Optimistically, they called this place “portage Hill.” Later, after five weeks of arduous travel through the rugged Rocky Mountains, they learned this was not the Northwest Passage they sought.

## From Route to Road...

# A Well-Worn Travel Way

### Moving Over the Mountains

The Shoshone Indians call this pass *Wee-yah-vee*. For thousands of years, the *Aqui-dika* or Salmoneater people of the Shoshone, and other tribes, crossed the Continental Divide here. Their moccasins and horses' hooves created a plain trail for Lewis and Clark to follow in 1805.

People use this place as a natural doorway in through the rugged wall of the Bitterroot Range of the Rocky mountains. It is a passageway between the valley of the Salmon River to the west, and Horse Prairie Creek to the east. In the years after Lewis and Clark, mountain men and fur traders called it "North Pass."

The name Lemhi Pass dates to 1855, when Mormon pioneers established Fort Limhi in the valley west of here. The name "Limhi" came from a king in the Book of Mormon. Later, the spelling was changed to "Lemhi." The fort was abandoned in 1858, but the name remained with the land and its people, the Lemhi Shoshone.

### Wheeling to the Top

Idaho's gold rush in the Leesburg district near Salmon City created the need for a road over Lemhi Pass. Freight wagons and stagecoaches traveled this new road by the early 1880s. The route remained busy until 1910, when the Gilmore & Pittsburgh Railroad opened over Bannock Pass.

Since the 1930s, the Civilian Conservation Corps, U.S. Forest Service, and local governments have relocated and improved sections of the old stage road. Today vegetation and newer roads obscure the Indian trail followed by Lewis & Clark, but portions of the old stage road can still be traced on either side of the pass.

The Red Rock-Salmon City Stage Company covered the 68 miles between the Utah and Northern Railroad at Red Rock, Montana, and Salmon City, Idaho. The company ran eight stagecoaches daily. \$8.00 bought a one-way fare. They employed 14 Concord coaches, 12 freight wagons, 80 horses, and 35-40 people. In one banner year, the stageline carried 3,000 passengers and 1,200,000 pounds of freight and U.S. mail over Lemhi Pass.

## Honoring a Heroine

# Sacajawea Memorial Area

*We know that she was a good woman and a fine mother...To us, she represents all that is good about our people, the Lemhi Shoshoni.* –Rod Ariwite, Fort Lemhi Indian Community, January 1997

### There are Many Stories of Sacajawea

As time goes on, Sacajawea continues to inspire admiration and curiosity. Many continue to debate the details of her life and even the spelling and pronunciation of her name (here, we use the spelling preferred by the Lemhi Shoshone). People delight in the stories of Sacajawea, stories that continue to be retold in many ways, generations after her passing. This memorial area was created in 1932, honoring Sacajawea as an interpreter, guide, and counselor to the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

### Interpreter, Guide & Counselor

At Camp Fortunate, Sacajawea was a vital link between the Expedition and the Shoshone Indians as they traded for horses and learned about the road ahead. In southwestern Montana, Sacajawea pointed out important landmarks for Lewis and Clark. Throughout the Expedition, she shared her knowledge of native plants as food and medicine.

*There were many heroes in this band of intrepid explorers; there was but one heroine. Denied in life –and after– that recognition which was due her, it is fitting that we meet here today to dedicate this spot in honor of that heroine.* –R.F. Hammat, assistant Regional Forester, 1932

### Creation of a Mythic Heroine

Before the Centennial of the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1903-1906), very little was known of Sacajawea. However, the days of woman suffrage coincided with the Lewis and Clark Centennial. Activists for women's rights embraced Sacajawea as a symbol of the importance of women in American history. Sacajawea became a mythic figure and national heroine. Writers and artists were inspired, celebrating Sacajawea in books, paintings, statues, and pageants. This memorial area is one of many places dedicated in her honor across the nation.

### Women's Work –History and “Her”story

Establishing Sacajawea Memorial Area at Lemhi Pass was the dream of Laura Tolman Scott, of Armstead, Montana. Mrs. Scott joined the Daughters of the American Revolution (D.A.R.) in 1907. A national women's service organization founded in 1897, the

D.A.R. seeks to preserve American history. Many historic sites in the Pacific Northwest are preserved through Mrs. Scott's leadership in the D.A.R.

Working with the citizens of Beaverhead County, Montana, and Lemhi County, Idaho, Mrs. Scott campaigned many years for this special memorial to Sacajawea. On August 14, 1932 more than 500 people gathered here to dedicate Sacajawea Memorial Area.

## The Beginnings of the “Endless Missouri”

*Two miles below McNeal had exultingly stood with a foot on each side of this little rivulet and thanked his god that he had lived to bstride the mighty & heretofore deemed endless Missouri.* –Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805

### Finally! Bigger than the river!

After months laboring to pole, paddle, and drag the heavy boats of the Lewis and Clark Expedition upstream against strong currents of the Missouri, Hugh McNeal was finally able to straddle that great river. He stood over Trail Creek, about two and a half miles downstream from Lemhi Pass. This little stream is just one of hundreds of small tributaries that flow into the Missouri River.

## “Most Distant Fountain” Of the Mighty Missouri

*The road took us to the most distant fountain of the waters of the mighty Missouri in surch of which we have spent so many toilsome days and wristless nights.* –Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805

### What's in a name?

In 1921, historians named the spring at what is now Sacajawea Memorial Area “Most Distant Fountain,” identifying it at the source of water Meriwether Lewis referred to in his journal. Lewis described water “*issuing from the base of a low hill*” about 1/2 mile below Lemhi Pass. Was Lewis writing about this spring? We may never really know.

Geographically, the source of water flowing farthest in the Missouri River lies at the head of the Red Rock River. Water from Brower's Spring flows about 125 miles farther than water from Most Distant Fountain Spring.

### **Where does the water come from?**

Water from rain and snowmelt seeps into the ground until it meets a solid layer of rock or clay. It pools above these impermeable layers, forming an aquifer. Influenced by gravity, water in an aquifer flows back out to the surface if it can find a path. It often follows fault lines or fractures underground. When water reaches the surface, it appears as a spring.

## **“Immence Ranges of High Mountains still to the west of us”**

**–Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805**

### **Filling in the Blanks**

The maps of North America carried by Lewis and Clark showed only a vast, uncharted space between the Mandan villages of the Missouri River and the Pacific Coast. The mountains separating the Missouri and Columbia river drainages were drawn as a single ridge. There was hope of finding a simple land route, or portage, over the Rocky Mountains. Map makers 200 years ago did not know what the west was like.

Lewis and Clark recorded their discoveries, as well as information provided to them by Indians along their route. Over the last 200 years, the blank spaces on the map have been gradually filled. The modern map above is just a small slice of the United States along the Lewis and Clark Trail. Imagine trying to find your way across this land without such a map.

### **A Communication Across the Continent by Water...**

**“This I can scarcely hope...”**

Two days before reaching the Continental Divide, Meriwether Lewis speculated that the Columbia River would not have the same moderate character as the Missouri.

*I do not believe that the world can furnish an example of a river running to the extent which the Missouri and Jefferson's rivers do through such mountainous country and at the same time so navigable as they are. If the Columbia furnishes us such another example, a communication across the continent by water will be practicable and safe. But this I can scarcely hope from a*

*knowledge of its having in it comparatively short course to the ocean the same number of feet to descend which the Missouri and Mississippi have from this point to the Gulph of Mexico.* –Meriwether Lewis, August 10, 1805

### How did he know?

Lewis estimated the gradients of the two river systems by this formula:

$$\text{GRADIENT} = \frac{\text{“RISE” (Elevation)}}{\text{“RUN” (Distance)}}$$

### Dividing the Waters of North America

North America’s Rocky Mountains split the waters of the Continent. To the east, the Missouri-Mississippi River system rolls placidly through the plains to the Gulf of Mexico. To the west, the Columbia River system roars to the Pacific through deep, narrow canyons filled with whitewater rapids.

The Continental Divide at Lemhi Pass is 7,373 ft. above sea level. Water on its western slope runs about 600 miles to the Pacific Ocean. On the east side, water runs about 2,400 miles to the Gulf of Mexico.

At the headwaters of the rivers, Lewis knew the distance he had traveled up the Missouri, and the distance to the Pacific. Lewis could use the formula at left to calculate river gradients. Thus, he suspected the gradient of the Columbia River would be about four times greater than that of the Missouri/Mississippi rivers.

As gradient increases, water flows faster. Lewis expected the rivers west of the Divide to be much swifter and more dangerous than the Missouri.

## Living Life & “Going to Buffalo”

### Birth and Battle at Lemhi Pass

The Aqwi-dika, or Salmoneater Shoshones, like many other western Indian tribes, made long treks from the mountains to the plains of the Missouri to hunt bison. For months, even years, they lived their lives on the trail. Sacajawea, like most Aqwi-dika children, learned the landmarks of a large area stretching many miles from the Lemhi Valley.

Some tribes were friendly. Lewis and Clark found Flathead (Salish) Indians living with the Shoshones. Others were fierce enemies. By the 1800s, roaming parties of the Blackfeet tribe dominated the region, equipped with guns obtained through trade in Canada.

Shoshone and Salish people suffered many losses due to the superior weapons of their enemies.

Lewis and Clark, and other white men who lived among the Indians, wrote about their experiences and recorded stories told by their hosts. Several artists, too, captured the lifeways of Indian people. It is wise to remember that these accounts come to us from an earlier time, filtered through non-Indian eyes and ears.

### **A New Life Arrives along the Trail**

*“one of the women who had been assisting in the transportation of the baggage halted at a little run [creek] about a mile behind us, and sent on the two pack horses which she had been conducting by one of her female friends. I enquired of Cameahwait the cause fo her detention, and was informed by him in and unconcerned manner that she had halted to bring forth a child and would soon overtake us; in about an hour the woman arrived with her newborn babe and passed us on her way to the camp apparently as well as she ever was.”* –Meriwether Lewis, August 26, 1805

### **A Deadly Battle on the Pass**

*“...thirty of his people were massacred last spring, one at a time, by a large party of Black-feet, on the east fork of Salmon river [Lemhi] The little devoted band had started expressly to retake horses from, or fight the Black-feet, who were, it appears, approaching in considerable number, at the same time, determined to fulfill a threat thay had made Ist fall, that they would exterminate the Flat-heads, root and branch. The two parties met on the summit of the pass from that fork to Horse prairie, and a most desparate conflict ensued, which resulted in the total defeat of the Flat-heads, who fought to the last, and perished to a man. The only individual of the party who escaped was separated from the rest in the early part of the action, and fled to tell the disastrous tale.”*

A Flathead (Salish) Chief told this story to Warren Ferris, who was employed by the American Fur Company in this region from 1830 to 1835. This tale is from *Life in the Rocky Mountains* by Warren Angus Ferris, used with permission of Far West Publishing Company.

## First Taste of the Columbia

# The Westward View

### Who passed this way?

In August of 1805 members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and Shoshone Indians crossed Lemhi Pass six times in 15 days.

Monday, the 12th	Lewis, McNeal, Drouillard, and Shields	headed west
Thursday, the 15th	Lewis & 3 men with Cameahwait & 60 Shoshones	headed east
Monday, the 19th	Clark & 11 men, Charbonneau, Sacajawea, Pomp, Cameahwait & Shoshones	headed west
Wednesday, the 21st	Charbonneau, Sacajawea, Pomp, Cameahwait & Shoshones	headed east
Sunday, the 25th	Shoshone messengers sent by Cameahwait	headed west
Monday, the 26th	Lewis and the main expedition aided by Shoshones	headed west

### First Taste of the Columbia

*“we proceeded on to the top of the dividing ridge from which I discovered immense ranges of mountains still to the West of us with their tops partially covered with snow. I now descended the mountain about 3/4 of a mile which I found much steeper than on the opposite side, to a handsome bold running Creek of cold Clear water. Here I first tasted the water of the great Columbia River.”*

### First Camp on the Columbia

*“after a short halt of a few minutes we continued our march along the Indian road which lead us over steep hills and deep hollows to a spring on the side of a mountain where we found a sufficient quantity of dry willow brush for fuel, here we encamped for the night having traveled about 20 Miles.”* –Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805