

# NEWS RELEASE

USDA  
Forest Service

**Northern Region**

200 E. Broadway  
PO Box 7669  
Missoula, MT  
59807

Date: June 18, 2003

Contact: Olleke Rappe-Daniels  
406-329-3028

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Schedule for Lolo Pass Visitor Center and Rest Area Grand Opening Announced**

MISSOULA, Montana – The USDA Forest Service, Idaho Transportation Department, and Montana Department of Transportation are hosting a daylong grand opening celebration for the recently completed Lolo Pass Visitor Center and Rest Area on Friday, June 27.

A formal visitor center dedication will be held from 10:00-12:00 Pacific Daylight Time. The program includes a tribal blessing, tribal drumming and singing, a brief history lesson, and music from an all-youth fife and drum corps.

Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne will lead the distinguished group of speakers. He will be joined by Idaho Transportation Board Chairman Charles Winder; Montana Department of Transportation Commissioner Kevin Howlett; Forest Service Deputy Chief Joel Holtrop; Forest Service Regional Forester Bradley Powell; Nez Perce National Historical Park Superintendent Doug Eury; and Chairman of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Gary Burke. Charlie Moses will represent the Confederated Tribes of the Colville and Tony Incashola will speak on behalf of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. Anthony Johnson, Chairman for the Nez Perce Tribe, has also been invited to speak.

The Lewis and Clark Fife and Drum Corps from St. Charles, Missouri, and the Quequesah Drum Group of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes will perform during the lunch break. Sack lunches will be provided by the Trapper Creek Job Corps Center for \$2.00 apiece.

Fun and educational activities focused on the rich history of the area will be held from 1:00-4:00 p.m., Pacific Daylight Time.

At 1:00 p.m. the Idaho Governor's Lewis and Clark Committee and the Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission will jointly unveil a memorial to nationally renowned author, the late Stephen E. Ambrose. It will be placed at a site directly behind the new visitor center along the new nature trail overlooking a wetland.

Ambrose is being recognized for generating momentum for the commemoration of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial with his book *Undaunted Courage*. In addition, he identified the need to acquire and preserve the nearby Glade Creek Lewis and Clark campsite. This important piece of land is now in public ownership, managed by the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.

Speakers at this ceremony include Idaho Governor Dirk Kempthorne; Beryl DeBoard, Chair of the Idaho Governor's Lewis and Clark Committee; Hal Stearns, Chair of the Montana Lewis and Clark Commission; and Stephenie Ambrose Tubbs, Ambrose's daughter.

Also attending the Ambrose ceremony will be Mrs. Ambrose and memorial artist Agnes Vincen (Rusty) Talbot.

At 2:00 p.m. Idaho Humanities Council actor Tim McNeil will portray Captain Meriwether Lewis in a dramatic reading of letters written to Captain Lewis' mother during the Lewis and Clark expedition. McNeil will be in costume, surrounded by the supplies and tools used on the journey.

At 3:00 p.m. The Nez Perce Young Horsemen, in full regalia, will parade in picturesque Packer Meadows. They will be riding The Nez Perce Horse, an Appaloosa-Akahl-Teke cross. A narrator will share information about the riders and their prized horses.

-MORE-

*Lolo Pass Schedule, page 2*

At 1:30, 2:30, and 3:30, Lewis and Clark historian Norm Steadman will conduct interpretive hikes along the newly constructed, accessible hiking trail. Steadman will share information about plants documented by Lewis and Clark as well as tell stories about their arduous journey across the Bitterroot Mountains.

Visitors can peruse displays and talk to experts on a variety of subjects throughout the afternoon from 1:00-4:00. Participants include:

- Weippe artisan Ed Kuchynka sharing handcrafted maps of Idaho and Montana;
- Nez Perce National Historical Park Rangers discussing and demonstrating aspects of Nez Perce history and culture;
- Nez Perce National Historic Trail Administrator Sandi McFarland presenting information about the Lolo Trail Corridor, a major travel route for the Nez Perce and Salish people as well as miners, trappers, herdsman, and modern-day travelers;
- Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation's Larry Mink explaining the cultural significance of the Glade Creek Camp and the State's plans for protecting this national treasure;
- Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpreter Billy Maxwell portraying a typical soldier on the Lewis and Clark expedition and demonstrating the soldier's equipment;
- Lewis-Clark Bitterroot Corps of Discovery in period costume providing living history lessons from the Lewis and Clark era; and
- Travelers' Rest Preservation and Heritage Association displaying and discussing historic replicas of items that would have been used by the Corps of Discovery.

Due to the limited space at Lolo Pass, visitors must park at designated parking areas. These areas, which will be clearly signed, are located at the Shotgun Creek chain up area 5 miles west of Lolo Pass and Lolo Hot Springs 7 miles east of Lolo Pass. A van will shuttle visitors back and forth to the festivities at Lolo Pass.

Individuals not planning to purchase a lunch may want to bring food and a beverage. Individuals are invited to attend all or part of the festivities.

#

For information about the grand opening, contact:

Elayne Murphy  
Clearwater National Forest  
(208) 476-8200

Mel Coulter  
Idaho Transportation Department  
(208) 334-8002

Lisa Vander Heiden  
Montana Dept. of Transportation  
(406) 431-8977