

Nez Perce National Historic Trail Vocabulary

Annual Growth Rings: A single band of growth around the circumference of a tree that represents one year of growth. The rings are visible in cross section.

Archaeological Site: A place where human activity occurred and their material remains were left.

Archaeologist: A person who studies the life and culture of ancient peoples.

Archaeology: A method for studying past human cultures and analyzing material evidence (Artifacts & Sites).

Artifact: Any object made or used by humans.

Chinook Jargon: A pidgin language based on Lower Chinook and other Indian Languages, French and English. It was used as a trade language.

Chronology: Placing something in the order in which it happened. (First to Last)

Companies: They are composed of men or troops. During the 1877 War, companies had been downsized from their civil war size and contained 60 to 80 men, with a limit of 100 per company.

Culturally Modified Trees: Trees that have been stripped off in small patches using an adze, ax or antler to reach the cambium layer for emergency food for people and horses.

Dawes Act: It's aim was to assimilate the Indians into the body of the nation. It was passed in 1887. Also known as the General Allotment Act. See General Allotment Act.

Dendrochronology: A way to determine the age of wood by counting the number of annual growth rings produced by the tree.

General Allotment Act: This Act was passed by the United States Congress in 1887. This provided for the division of tribal lands into parcels to be owned by individual Indians. This was also called the Dawes Act. See also Dawes Act.

Legend: A story that has been handed down for generations that has a historical basis.

Lingua Franca: Any of the various hybrid or other languages that are used over a wide area as common or commercial tongues among peoples of diverse speech.

Manifest Destiny: Expansion of American commerce and civilization.

Nee-Me-Poo (Also spelled Nimiipu): The name the Nez Perce used to call themselves. It means "Real People" or "The People."

Nez Perce: A term given the Nee-Me-Poo by French trappers. It means pierced nose; although not all Nez Perce people pierced their nose.

Non-Treaty: Those Indians who refused to sign the 1863 Treaty.

Regiments: Numbered and are composed of companies, named with a letter. During 1877 there were generally no more than 12 companies to a regiment.

Reservations: They are small parcels of land on which Indian people were suppose to live. These lands were "reserved" by the Indian Tribes for their own use through the treaties.

Settlers: A person who settles in a new country.

Stewardship: A guardian of another person's property.

Strata: (Singular: Stratum) Layers of earth (one layer)

Stratigraphy: The arrangement of layers of earth representing different geologic events. Younger levels are above older levels.

Treaty: A contract between two or more sovereign nations that is binding.