

Nez Perce National Historic Trail



Inventory Section 1

Enterprise to Lewiston

Section 1– Enterprise to Lewiston

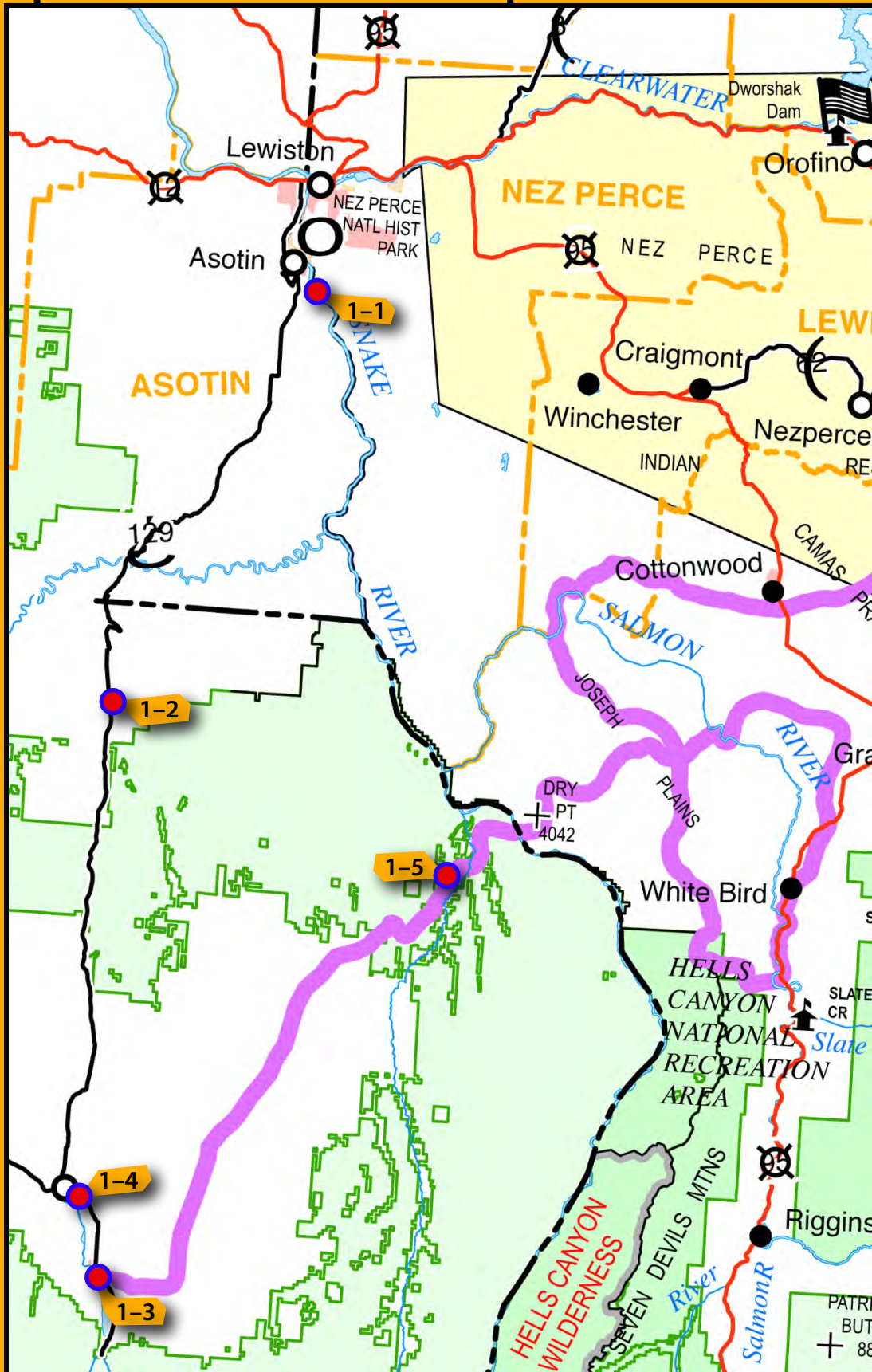
Site Number	Title
1-1	Chief Looking Glass Park
1-2	Joseph Canyon Overlook
1-3	Chief Joseph Monument
1-4	The Nez Perce War of 1877
1-5	Oregon History
1-6	Dug Bar

*New NPS signs – to be installed

Burning the Cache – Joseph Canyon Overlook

Nez Perce NHP – Orientation Panel – Joseph Canyon Overlook

Section 1 Joseph to Lewiston



Site #: 1-1

Name: Chief Looking Glass Park

Location: Located in the center of Asotin next to the river along Hwy #129

Ownership: city of Asotin

Site description: A city park and boat launch next to the river and adjacent to an Assembly of God church

A staging area for float or boat trips down the Snake River

Bulletin board with information about boating – no interpretation



Site #: 1-2

Name: Joseph Canyon Overlook

Location: MP 14 Hwy #129

Ownership: National Park Service and Forest Service

Site Description: developed parking, rock and log retaining wall with etched design on columns, one low angled interpretive sign panel in and a second panel blank at overlook, possibly two more in kiosk at the end of the overlook wall, benches in bermed seating area, two toilets

Sign Material: porcelain enamel

Sign Text:

Joseph Canyon

The canyon before you was the winter home of the Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce. People occupied this area for thousands of years, following well-established routes between summer and winter camps. When homesteaders arrived the Nez Perce did not understand why the newcomers did not move to lower elevations to escape the harsh winters. The settlers assumed the Nez Perce were nomads who did not call any one place home.

The Nez Perce hunted, fished and gathered plants in harmony with the seasons. Each year the cycle was repeated and life continued-without beginning, without end.

During the winter Nez Perce lived in communal long houses. Winter was a time to remember the past and to restore spiritual balance to the individual and the community.





Site #: 1-3

Name: Chief Joseph Monument

Location: North end of Wallowa Lake 1 mile south of Joseph Oregon

Ownership: National Park Service

Site Description: Historic cemetery and gravesite of Chief Joseph with one interpretive sign and a stone monument to Chief Joseph

Sign Material: fiberglass in a standard NPS sign mount

Text:

To the Memory of Chief Old Joseph Died 1870.

Chief "Old" Joseph

"Twaet Tu-Eka-Kas"

Born about 1783 – Died 1872

Baptized as Joseph by Dr Spalding

Donated by Peter Ciera Santa Rosa Brass Company 1954

Text:

Old Chief Joseph (Tiwiiteq'is)

Born between 1785 and 1790, Tiwiiteq'is came to be the principle leader of the Wallowa Nez Perce. In 1839 he was baptized and christened "Joseph", a name he carried for the rest of his life, despite later renouncing Christianity.

He died in 1871 at the traditional summer camp at the confluence of the Wallowa and Lostine Rivers. The leadership of the band passed to Hinmatoowyahtq'it, Young Joseph.

Old Joseph was a key player in the 1855 treaty negotiations. In 1863 he refused to sign the "Steal Treaty" which reduced the 1855 reservation by 90% and ceded all of the Wallowa country to the United States.

After his original grave near the present town of Wallowa was robbed twice, Old chief Joseph was reburied at this cemetery on September 26, 1926.





Site #: 1-4

Name: Nez Perce War of 1877

Location: On Hwy in Imnaha just across the river on the east side

Ownership: US Forest Service

Site Description: A painted wooden sign at the entrance to a parking lot

Sign Material: wood

Text:

Oregon History Nez Perce

Wallowa Valley, summer homeland of the Joseph Band Nez Perce, was part of the expansive Nez Perce Reservation established by the Treaty of 1855. Upon discovery of gold in the region, the U.S. eliminated the reservation in the Wallowas in 1863. The Joseph Band held on until 1877 when, under pressure from increasing white settlement, they were ordered to abandon their ancestral homeland. Violent conflicts ensued as the Joseph Band joined other Nez Perce and Palouse Bands in a historic 1,170 mile retreat. After five months of elusive flight, with his people exhausted, freezing and heavily outnumbered, Joseph in dignified surrender proclaimed: "From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever." With promises made by the generals at their surrender broken, the Nez Perce were never allowed to return home though Joseph pleaded their case until 1904.



Site #: 1-5

Name: Nez Perce War of 1877

Location: On Hwy in Imnaha just across the river on the east side

Ownership: US Forest Service

Site Description: A painted wooden sign at the entrance to a parking lot

Sign Material: wood

Text: The Nez Perce War of 1877

In May, 1877, Chief Joseph gathered his band of Nez Perce Indians from their winter villages along the Imnaha. Instead of heading for their customary summering country in the Wallowa Valley, they began their famous fighting retreat from General O.O. Howard. They could not accept his ultimatum to abandon their homes and migrate to the Lapwai Indian Reservation in Idaho. Chief Joseph's running fight toward sanctuary in Canada was nearly successful. After 3 months of outsmarting and outfighting his pursuers, Chief Joseph was captured within 30 miles of Canada at Bear Paw Battlefield in Montana.



Site #: 1-6

Name: Dug Bar

Location:

Ownership: National Park Service

Site Description: new site being developed

Sign Material: A new 2' X 3' wayside sign has been manufactured for this site and will be installed this season on a rock cairn.

Sign Text:

After the United States government ordered them to leave their homeland, the Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce crossed the Snake River at this site in May 1877. They were given one month to round up thousands of cattle and horses, pack entire villages, and move families across the raging river to re-settle on the Nez Perce Reservation in Idaho. The enormous task left little time to bid farewell to the graves of their ancestors or the land which held them.

"We gathered all the stock we could find, and made an attempt to move. We left many of our horses and cattle in Wallowa, and we lost several hundred in crossing the river. All my people succeeded in getting across in safety." Hinmatoowyalahq'it, Chief Joseph

Nez Perce National Historic Trail



Inventory Section 2

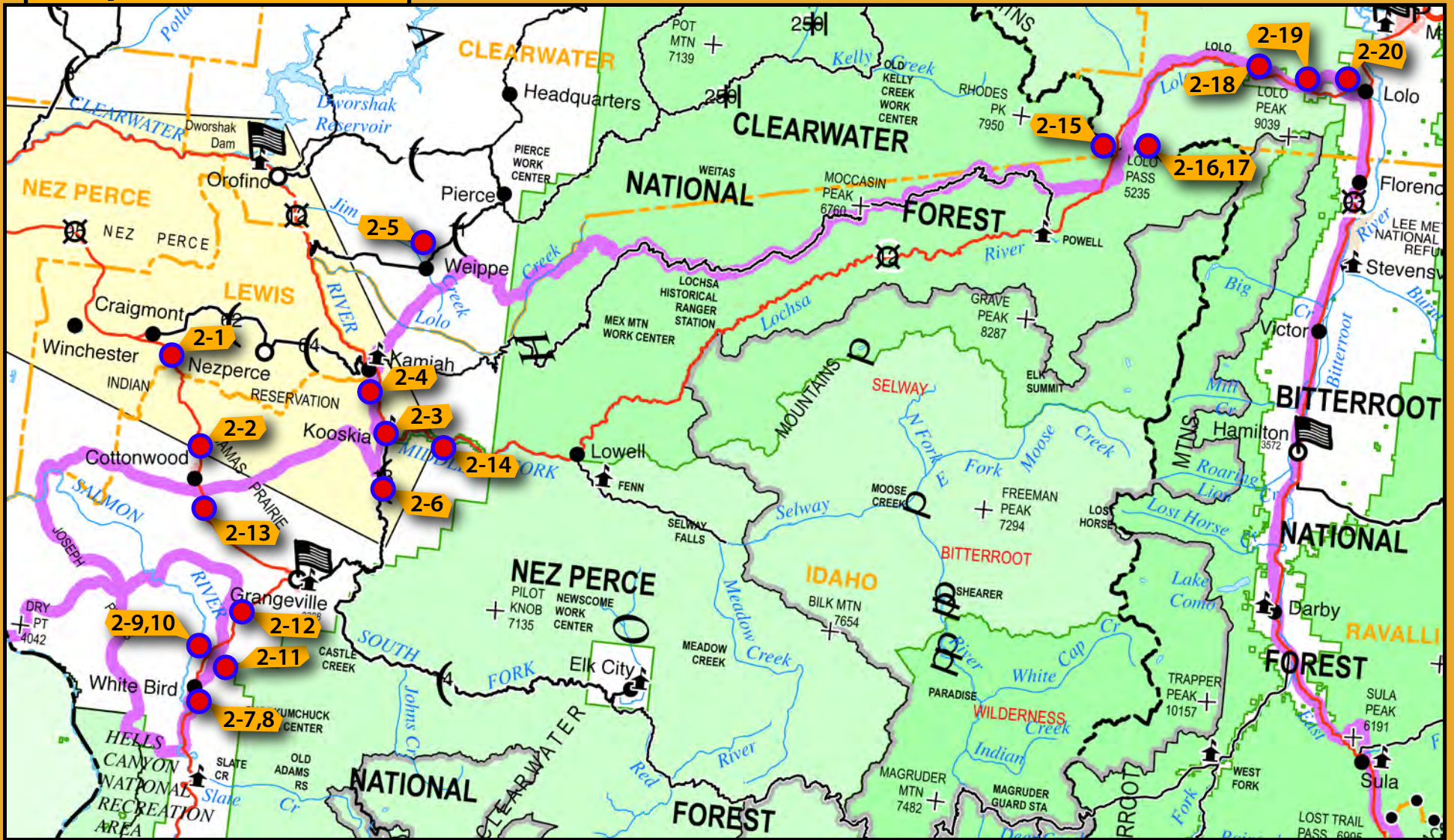
Lapwai to Lolo

Draft 2011

Section 2– Lapwai to Lolo

Site Number	Title
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2-3	Looking Glass Camp
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2-3b	Cycles of Life
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2-10d	Peace offer at Dawn
2-10e	The Battle at Whitebird Canyon
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2-11	White Bird Monument
2-12	Camas Prairie
2-13a	Nez Perce War (Idaho 38, Nez Perce 10)
2-13b	Idaho rock memorial to 17 volunteers
2-14	Looking Glass
2-15	Lolo Visitor Center
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2-17	Nimiipuu Flight at Lolo Pass
2-18	The Nez Perce Sikim
2-19	Fort Fizzle
2-19a	The Flight of the Nez Perce
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2-19f	Pauses and Parleys
2-19g	Outwitted and Outflanked
2-20	The Lolo Trail
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Section 2 Lapwai to Lolo



Site # 2-1

Site Description: highway pull off

Ownership: Idaho Transportation Department/Idaho State Historical Society

Location: on Idaho Hwy #95 near Lawyer Creek

Media: painted wooden sign

Sign Text: Lawyer's Canyon

Named for the Nez Perce Indian Leader who served as head chief 1818-1871 and who lived near the lower end of the canyon.

Called "The Lawyer" by early fur traders for his exceptional talents in languages and oratory. He was a friend of the whites. He had learned English before the missionaries came in 1836 and he helped them prepare dictionaries and translate the Bible into Nez Perce. He played an important part in all the treaties negotiated with his people before his death in 1876, a year before the Nez Perce War.



Site # 2-2

Site Description: fenced and landscaped pull out with memorial at a grave and an interpretive sign

Ownership: Cottonwood Lions Club

Location: about 5 miles north Cottonwood, Idaho on Cottonwood Butte Rd

Media: painted wooden sign, marble monument

Sign Text: 1853 William Foster 1877

William Foster a Civilian Scout for the US. Army was Killed by members of the Nez Perce Tribe near this spot during the Nez Perce War of 1877. Also Killed in this action was Lt. Sevier Rains and 11 Troopers of the US Army who were on a scouting mission, from fortifications at Cottonwood, to find the body of Blewett, another scout, who was Killed the day before in the Icicle flats area to the west of this spot. Unknowingly these scouting parties had engaged the entire hostile Nez Perce Force who had escaped General Howard by crossing the Salmon River from the Joseph Plains en route to the Clearwater River. Foster, Blewett, Rains and their allies were all that stood between the Nez Perce and the settlements of Mt. Idaho and Grangeville.

Monument inscription:

Public Tribute to
William Foster
Killed by Indians
July 4, 1877
Aged 24 Years





Site # 2-3 Looking Glass Camp

Site Description: interpretive trail with signs and monument

Ownership: Idaho Transportation Department/ Idaho State Historical Society

Location: across from Kooskia National Fish Hatchery south of Kooskia on Clear Creek

Media: enamel sign (?), wooden bulletin board kiosk, bronze and granite monument



2-3a

Site # 2-3a A Changing Land A Changing Land

This land has seen many changes during the century following the Nez Perce War of 1877. At the end of the 19th century, a portion of the land on the Nez Perce reservation was allotted to tribal members under the terms of the 1889 General Allotment Act. At this site, allottees fished and farmed the land.

In 1942, the Twin Feathers Mill, Inc., constructed a sawmill to take advantage of the wealth of timber in the area and the rapid growth of the nearby community of Kooskia.

The mill leased and later purchased the land from descendents of the original allottees. The millpond in front of you was excavated to hold logs before they were cut into lumber. The short-lived mill was nothing but concrete foundations when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acquired the property in 1965.

Kooskia National Fish Hatchery was established in 1969 to enhance fishing and to mitigate losses of spring Chinook salmon resulting from the construction of federal dams in the Columbia River Basin.

Photo Captions: Farming the Land, Early 20th Century; Twin Feathers Mill



Site # 2-3b Cycles of Life

Sign Text:

Cycles of Life

Cycles are a part of life. The Nez Perce followed a seasonal cycle of fishing, hunting, and gathering. Salmon historically returned to Clear Creek to complete their life cycle. In the plant world, the cycle of change through time is called "succession."

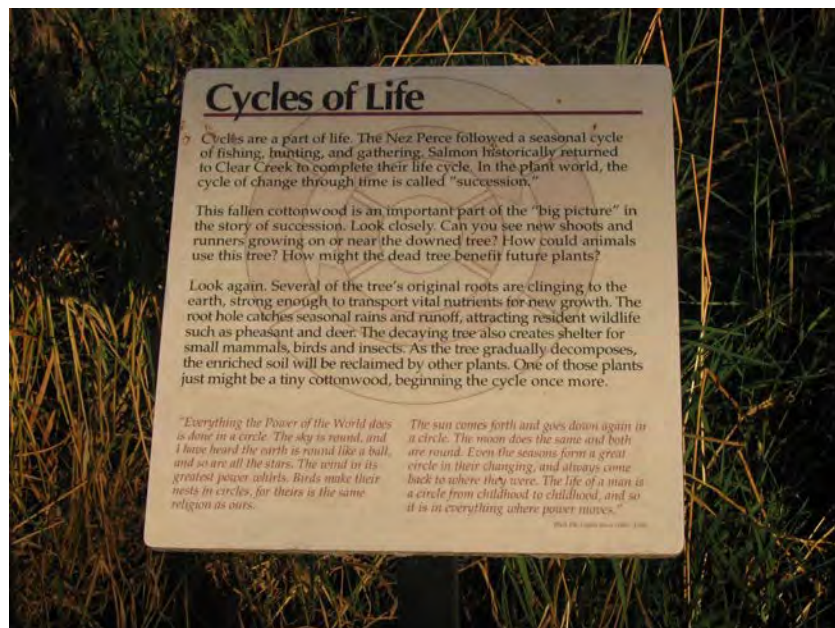
This fallen cottonwood is an important part of the "big picture" in the story of succession. Look closely. Can you see new shoots and runners growing on or near the downed tree? How could animals use this tree? How might the dead tree benefit future plants?

Look again. Several of the tree's original roots are clinging to the earth, strong enough to transport vital nutrients for new growth. The root hole catches seasonal rains and runoff, attracting resident wildlife such as pheasant and deer. The decaying tree also creates shelter for small mammals, birds and insects. As the tree gradually decomposes, the enriched soil will be reclaimed by other plants. One of those plants just might be a tiny cottonwood, beginning the cycle once more.

Everything the Power of the World does is done in a circle. The sky is round, and I have heard the earth is round like a ball, and so are all the stars. The wind in its greatest power whirls. Birds make their nests in circles, for theirs is the same religion as ours.

The sun comes forth and goes down again in a circle. The moon does the same and both are round. Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing, and always come back to where they were. The life of a man is a circle from childhood to childhood, and so it is in everything where power moves."

Black Elk, Oglala Sioux, 1863-1950



Site # 2-3c Looking Glass Village

Sign Text: Looking Glass Village

Fifty years after the war, Peo Peo Tholekt drew this sketch of the attack on his village as he remembered it.

Looking Glass is my chief. I bring you his words. He does not want war! He came here to escape war. We do not want trouble with you whatever!"

Peo Peo Tholekt

The air was cool and crisp the morning of July 1, 1877. The Looking Glass band had settled at this traditional seasonal village called Kam'-nak-ka to demonstrate neutrality and avoid becoming involved in the conflict escalating between non-treaty Nez Perce bands and the U.S. Government.

At daybreak, soldiers appeared on the hillside across Clear Creek. As Peo Peo Tholekt, a young envoy, delivered a message of peace from Chief Looking Glass, an anxious civilian volunteer fired a shot into the camp, wounding a Nez Perce man. Other soldiers began firing and the troops stormed down the hillside into the camp, looting the village and burning it to the ground.

Terrified, the people fled for safety - some up the hill behind you, others along the riverbank. One young woman with her baby strapped to her back attempted to cross the Clearwater River on horseback, but the current was swift and they were drowned.

Enraged by the unprovoked attack, Chief Looking Glass and his people joined the other non-treaty bands on a fateful journey to find freedom that lasted 4 months and covered 1170 miles. A powerful and respected leader, Chief Looking Glass was killed in Montana at Bear Paw, the final battle of the Nez Perce War.

Caption: Chief Looking Glass, Smithsonian Institution National Anthropological Archives, Sketch Courtesy of Washington State University Libraries



Site # 2-3d Land with a Past Land with a Past

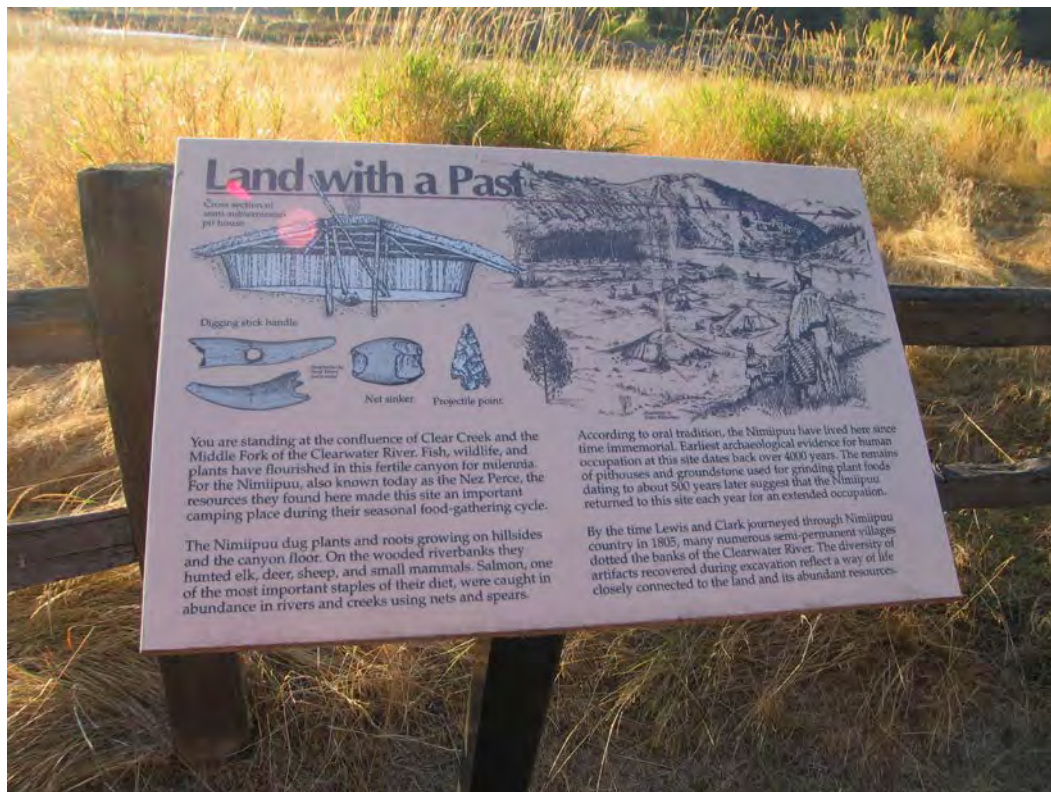
You are standing at the confluence of Clear Creek and the Middle Fork of the Clearwater River. Fish, wildlife, and plants have flourished in this fertile canyon for millennia. For the Nimiipuu, also known today as the Nez Perce, the resources they found here made this site an important camping place during their seasonal food-gathering cycle.

The Nimiipuu dug plants and roots growing on hillsides and the canyon floor. On the wooded riverbanks they hunted elk, deer, sheep, and small mammals. Salmon, one of the most important staples of their diet, were caught in abundance in rivers and creeks using nets and spears.

According to oral tradition, the Nimiipuu have lived here since time immemorial. Earliest archaeological evidence for human occupation at this site dates back over 4000 years. The remains of pithouses and groundstone used for grinding plant foods dating to about 500 years later suggest that the Nimiipuu returned to this site each year for an extended occupation.

By the time Lewis and Clark journeyed through Nimiipuu country in 1805, many numerous semi-permanent villages dotted the banks of the Clearwater River. The diversity of artifacts recovered during excavation reflect a way of life closely connected to the land and its abundant resources.

Drawings: Cross section of semi-subterranean pit house, Digging stick handle, Net sinker, Projectile point, Illustrations by Sarah Moore, (not to scale)



Site # 2-3e The Monument Story

The Monument Story

Though Looking Glass lost his life in the war, his young envoy Peo Peo Tholekt lived to tell the story. In 1928 he returned to Kam'-nak-ka with ethnographer L.V. McWhorter and sculptor A.L. Lewis for the dedication of a monument commemorating the warriors of the Nez Perce War.

The monument you see here is a replica. The bronze plaque was mounted on a tall thin shaft, crowned by a stone bust of a Nez Perce Chief. The Kooskia plaque, one of only two originals remaining, is curated at the Nez Perce National Historical Park.

Photo: Yellow Wolf, Peo Peo Tholekt, and Many Wounds stand beside one of six commemorative monuments, Kooskia, ID, 1928.

Design sketch of Nez Perce War monument by sculptor Alonzo Lewis. Lewis ordered the monument be made of "molded stone."

Sketch and photo by A.I. Lewis are courtesy of Washington State University Libraries



The Monument

Sign Text: To the everlasting memory of the brave warriors chief joseph's band who fought on these grounds in the Nez Perce War of 1877

Erected by Nez Perce Indians and the Chief Joseph Memorial Association June, 1928

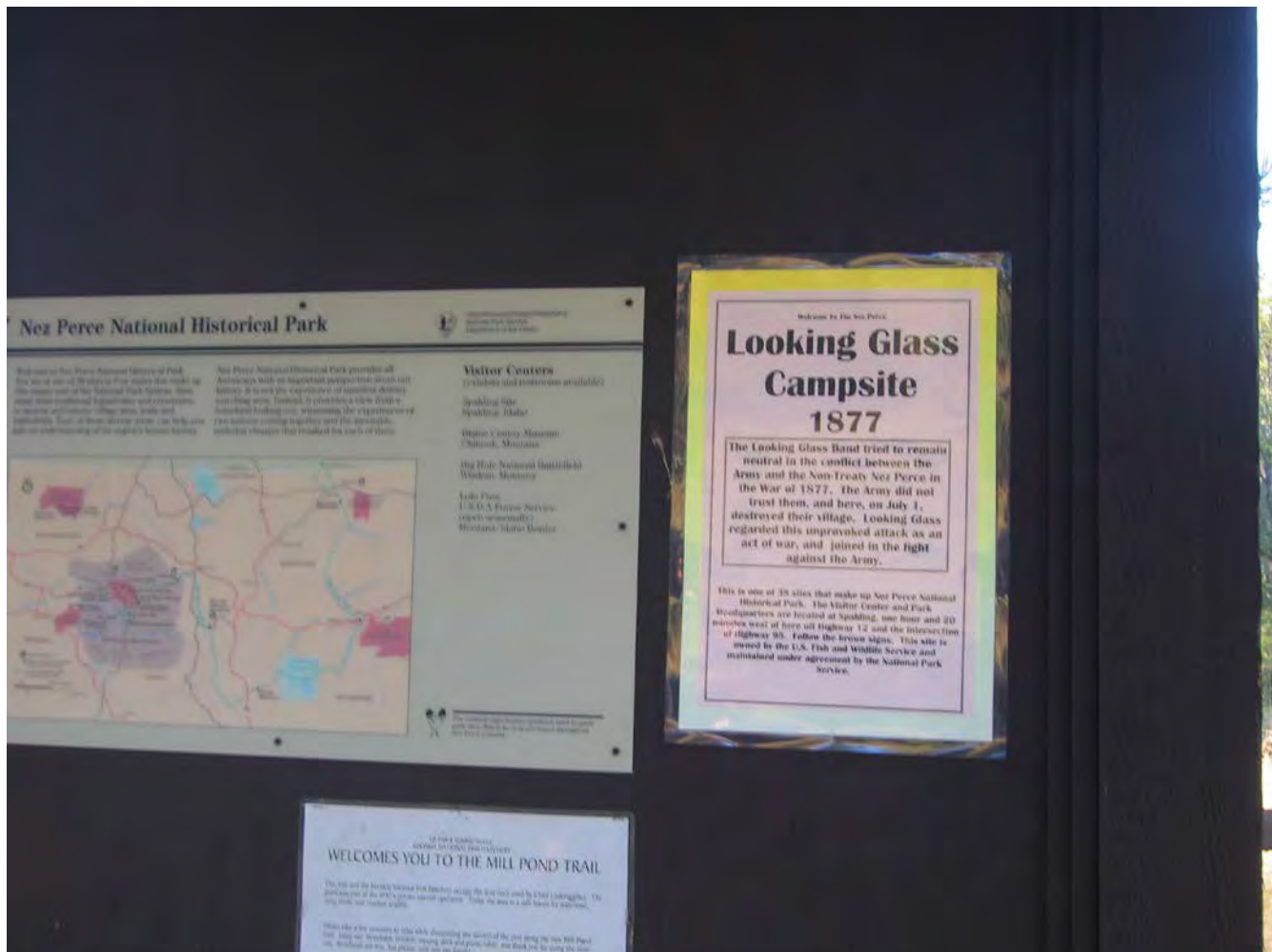


Site # 2-3f Bulletin Board

Sign Text: Welcome to the Nez Perce Looking Glass Campsite 1877

The Looking Glass Band tried to remain neutral in the conflict between the Army and the Non-Treaty Nez Perce in the War of 1877. The Army did not trust them, and here, on July 1, destroyed their village. Looking Glass regarded this unprovoked attack as an act of war, and joined in the fight against the Army.

This is one of 35 sites that make up Nez Perce National Historical Park. The Visitor Center and Park Headquarters are located at Spalding, one hour and 20 minutes west of here off Highway 12 and the Intersection of Highway 95. Follow the brown signs. This site is owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and maintained under agreement by the National Park Service



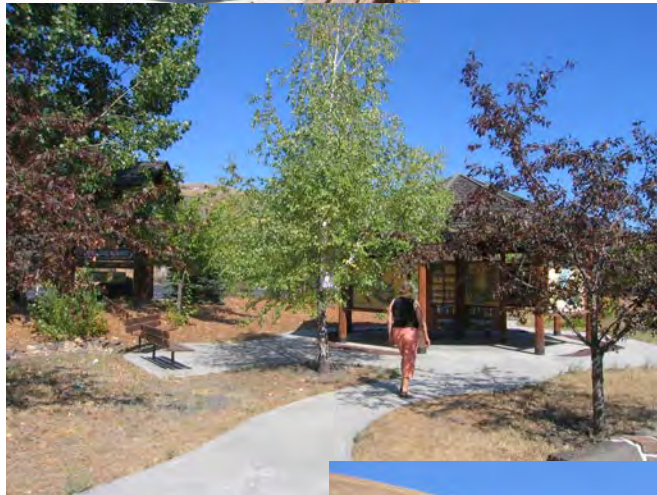
Site # 2-4 Kooskia Gateway Kiosk

Site Description: paved and landscaped parking area and park with kiosk and benches

Ownership: multiple partners

Location: Junction of Hwy #12 and Hwy #13

Media: painted signs



Sign Text: The Nez Perce Flight of 1877

The Nez Perce Flight of 1877

In 1863, the United States Government forced a new treaty on the Nez Perce Indians, reducing their reservation to one tenth the size of the 1855 boundary. After more than a decade of government pressure, the five separate bands known as the non-treaty Nez Perce, reluctantly agreed to move to the new reservation in north-central Idaho.

During their journey to the reservation in 1877, several young warriors, avenging past wrongs, attacked and killed white settlers along the Salmon River. The military responded by engaging the Nez Perce in battle at White Bird, Idaho. Following the battle, a fateful 1300 mile journey began as the Nez Perce fled in an attempt to be free and live in peace. They were pursued across Idaho and Montana, surrendering just short of Canada and freedom.

Looking Glass Village Attacked

Two miles from this spot at the confluence of the Middle Fort of the Clearwater River and Clear Creek, the Nez Perce were attacked by Captain Whipple on July 1, 1877. Surprised and outnumbered, Chief Looking Glass and his people escaped the unprovoked attack which destroyed their village. Looking Glass then joined the main Nez Perce forces being pursued by General Howard.

Nez Perce National Historical Park

Within the four-state area of Idaho, Montana, Washington and Oregon, the Nez Perce National Historical Park has 38 sites that include traditional legend sites, ancient and historic village sites, trails, cemeteries, and battlefields. Each of these areas can help you gain an understanding of the region's history.

Sponsored by the Nez Perce National Historical Park



Site # 2-5 Weippe Visitor Center

Site Description: three interpretive panels inside the main visitor entrance

Ownership:

Location: Weippe Montana

Media: display board





2-5a

Site # 2-5a Nez Perce

Sign Text: Nez Perce. For thousands of years the valleys, plains and plateaus along the Clearwater and Snake Rivers and their tributaries have been home to the Nez Perce people. The name, “pierced nose” was given them by early French fur traders; Lewis and Clark referred to them by the Flathead name “Chopunnish”; they thought of themselves as Ne-Mee-Poo, “the people.”

Their selective breeding of Mau-mons, the famed Appaloosa horse, aided their quest for food and helped them to become major traders between the mid-Columbia River area and the Montana plains. Mounted on handsome Appaloosa, the Nez Perce quickly crossed the Bitterroot Range using the Lolo Trail to hunt and trade.

Today the Nez Perce live primarily in northern Idaho. They have a strong attachment to their heritage and maintain an appreciation of centuries-old ways and traditions.

Captions:

“Old Nez Perce Trail,” John Clymer

Nez Perce encampment in Kamiah, Idaho about the turn of the century

Nez Perce men in traditional dress 1906

Site # 2-5b

Sign Text: Flight of the Nez Perce

In late July of 1877 the meadows of Lolo Pass were once again filled with a large Indian encampment. Their mood was somber, however. Instead of pleasantly anticipating coming buffalo hunts and trade, as in previous trips, these people felt sorrow. They had left their homes forever.

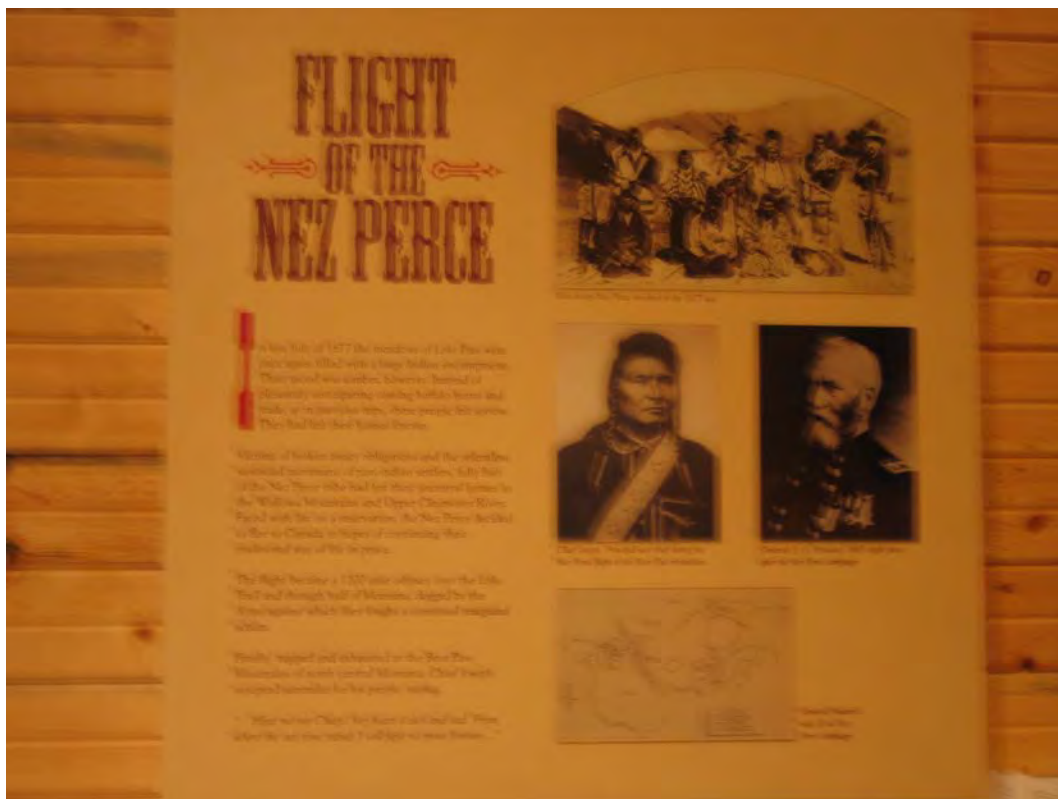
Victims of broken treaty obligations and the relentless westward movement of non-Indian settlers, fully half of the Nez Perce tribe had left their ancestral homes in the Wallowa Mountains and Upper Clearwater River. Faced with life on a reservation, the Nez Perce decided to flee to Canada in hopes of continuing their traditional way of life in peace.

The flight became a 1200 mile odyssey over the Lolo Trail and through half of Montana, dogged by the Army against which they fought a continual rearguard action

Finally, trapped and exhausted in the Bear Paw Mountains of north central Montana, Chief Joseph accepted surrender for his people, saying, "...Hear me my Chiefs. My heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever...."

Captions:

Non treaty Nez Perce involved in the 1877 war; Chief Joseph, principal war chief during the Nez Perce flight to the Bear Paw mountains; General O.O.Howard, 1885, eight years after the campaign; General Howard's map of the Nez Perce campaign



2-5c

Site # 2-5c Nez Perce Leaders

Sign Text: The 1877 journey of the Nez Perce was a complex undertaking. The 750 men, women, children and old people brought all of their belongings and 2,000 horses with them. They travelled 1200 miles from the rugged vastness of the Bitterroot Mountains, through the wonders of the Yellowstone, to eventual defeat only 42 miles short of their goal, Canada.

Despite tremendous odds against them, the fact that they almost reached their goal with the majority of their people and horses is mute tribute to the wisdom of their leaders.

The six leading Chiefs were Joseph, Ollikut (Joseph's brother), Whitebird, Too-Hoo-Hoo-Zote, Looking Glass, and Hahtalekin. Each of these men was known for special talents - orator, hunter, warrior, administrator, or spiritual leader.

They made major decisions in council. Depending on what experience was required, different chiefs led different stages of the journey.

Captions:

Ah-pahs-wyach Looking Glass, Peo-Peo-tal-ikt White Bird, Hin-mah-too-yah-lat-kekht Joseph, Ollikut



Site # 2-6 The Nez Perce War

Site Description: highway pull off

Ownership: Idaho Transportation Department/Idaho State Historical Society

Location: west side of Hwy #13 two miles south of Stites, Idaho

Media: painted wooden sign

Sign Text:

Nez Perce War. After the Clearwater battle on the heights above here, July 11-12, 1877, the Nez Perce Indians crossed the Lolo Trail to Montana.

Advancing northward along the high ground with 600 troops and artillery, General Howard found the Indian camp on the flat across the river. But 24 brave Nez Perce blocked his advance and 100 more pinned him in rifle pits for a day. Then the Nez Perce, camp and all, moved slowly northward past Kamiah, while Howard followed without fighting. There the Nez Perce decided to move east away from the troops.



Site # 2-7 The White Bird Interpretive Trail

Site Description: self guided interpretive trail

Ownership: NPS

Location: just north of White Bird on old highway #95

Media: brochures available at trailhead keyed to markers along trail



Site # 2-8 June 17, 1877.....

Site Description: low angle interpretive sign

Ownership: NPS

Location: just north of White Bird on old highway #95 at beginning of interp trail

Media: fiberglass sign in metal sign mount

Sign Text:

“On the more distant of the ridges Lieutenant Theller halted and deployed his advance guard, at the same time sending word that the Indians were in sight. I immediately formed my company ‘left front into line at a trot, gave the order to drop carbine and draw pistol, intending to charge the Indians. I turned to my trumpeter to give the order when I found out that he had lost his trumpet...” Captain David Perry, U.S. Cavalry

“Unlike the trained white soldier, who is guided by the bugle call, the Indian goes into battle on his own mind’s guidance....

In this charge against the soldiers’ right flank, Wahlitits, Sarpsis Uppilp and Tipyahlahnah Kapskaps were the first to start in the charge, all of the three wearing full-length red blanket coats of same make and pattern. These coats were to show their contempt, their fun-making of the soldiers to draw their rifle shots, of which they were not afraid.

Other warriors follow after them riding singly, and many hanging on the side of their horses, shielded thus from the soldiers’ sight...” Weyahwaahsitskan



Site # 2-9 Nez Perce War

Site Description: highway pull off

Ownership: NPS

Location: 13 miles south of Grangeville

Media: painted wooden sign

Sign Text:

Nez Perce War. Near the base of this hill, over 100 cavalymen and volunteers met disaster in the opening battle of the Nez Perce war.

Rushing from Grangeville on the evening of June 16, 1877. Captain David Perry planned to stop the Indians from crossing Salmon River to safety from pursuit. At daylight the next morning, he headed down the ravine below you. Some sixty to eighty Indians wiped out a third of his force and the survivors retired in disorder. No Indians were killed.



2-10a

Site # 2-10a The path to war

Site Description: highway overlook

Ownership: NPS

Location: 13 miles south of Grangeville

Media: enamel sign

Sign Text:

They called themselves the Nee-me-poo, meaning “the people.” To the whites they were the Nez Perce, a people noted for their handsome appearance, intelligence, and friendliness. But as with other American Indian tribes, the western advance of the white man brought tragedy.

1855 In 1855 a treaty established a reservation for the Nez Perce. But miners, farmers and settlers encroached on the reservation and subjected the Indians to insult and injury.

1863 A new treaty in 1863 further reduced Nez Perce lands, excluding chief Joseph’s Band and others from their homes. Some called it the “steal treaty.”

Six weeks before the White Bird battle, Nez Perce chiefs met with General O.O. Howard at Fort Lapwai to discuss their problems. Chief Too Hul Hu Tsoot delivered a passionate speech on behalf of his people - General Howard responded by arresting the venerable leader. The young men remembered this insult.



1877 In addition, General Howard gave the Indians only thirty days to gather up their livestock and possessions and move their families across the swollen rivers to the new reservation.

In response to these and other wrongs, a small party of young warriors, filled with anger and liquor, led an attack on nearby settlers. Thirteen were killed. The Army, under pressure from the settlers to avenge these deaths, pursued the Indians. They found them here.

Caption:

“We buy your country and pay you for it and give the most of it back to you again.” - Gen. Joel Palmer 1855 Treaty Council

Too Hul Hu Tsoot: “What person pretends to divide the land and put me on it?”

General Howard: “ I am that man.”

2-10b

Site # 2-10b

Site Description: highway overlook

Ownership: NPS

Location: 13 miles south of Grangeville

Media: enamel sign

Sign Text: The Indians had won the first battle of the Nez Perce War. Warriors collected over sixty rifles and pistols from the battlefield. They would need them in the next four months.

From here they began a 1,300 mile fighting retreat to the Bear paw Mountains near Canada where Chief Joseph and most of his homesick people finally surrendered to the Army.



Site # 2-10c The path to war

Site Description: highway overlook

Ownership: NPS

Location: 13 miles south of Grangeville

Media: enamel sign

Sign Text:

Peace Offer at Dawn

As dawn broke on Sunday, June 17, 1877, about 100 cavalry troops and eleven citizen volunteers quietly rode their horses down White Bird Canyon. Most of the soldiers, recruited from farms and trades, had little training in riding and shooting. After a two-day forced march from Fort Lapwai, 80 miles away, both men and horses were tired as they neared the Nez Perce camp on White Bird Creek.

Forewarned of the cavalry's approach, about 70 Nez Perce warriors led by Ollokot, Two Moons, and other chiefs prepared to defend their village. Chief Joseph was nearby, but did not lead the fighting.

According to most written accounts, the Nez Perce chiefs sent out a peace party to meet the soldiers under a flag of truce. But when a volunteer militiaman accompanying the army fired two quick shots at the Indian delegation, both sides were committed to a fight.



2-10d

Site # 2-10d A Running Retreat

Site Description: highway overlook

Ownership: NPS

Location: 13 miles south of Grangeville

Media: enamel sign

Sign Text:

Title: A Running Retreat

The cavalry officers' attempts to reorganize their soldiers failed as the Nez Perce pursued on all sides. The withdrawal soon turned into a running fight up the canyon. Although the outnumbered Indians fought uphill with only bows and arrows and a few firearms, they shot skillfully.

Yellow Wolf, a Nez Perce warrior, later remembered, "I did some bow shooting. Two of my arrows struck soldiers only 5 steps away—one in the shoulder, the other in the breast. We did not stop to fight the wounded. We chased hard after the others."

The warriors chased and fought the exhausted soldiers for 10 miles Yellow Wolf recalled, "We drove them back across the mountain, down to near the town they came from. Then some of the chiefs commanded 'Let the soldiers go! We have done them enough. No Indian killed!'"

When the morning's fighting was over, more than one-third of the 1st Cavalry had lost their lives. No Nez Perce were killed.



Site # 2-10e The Battle at White Bird Canyon

Site Description: highway overlook

Ownership: NPS

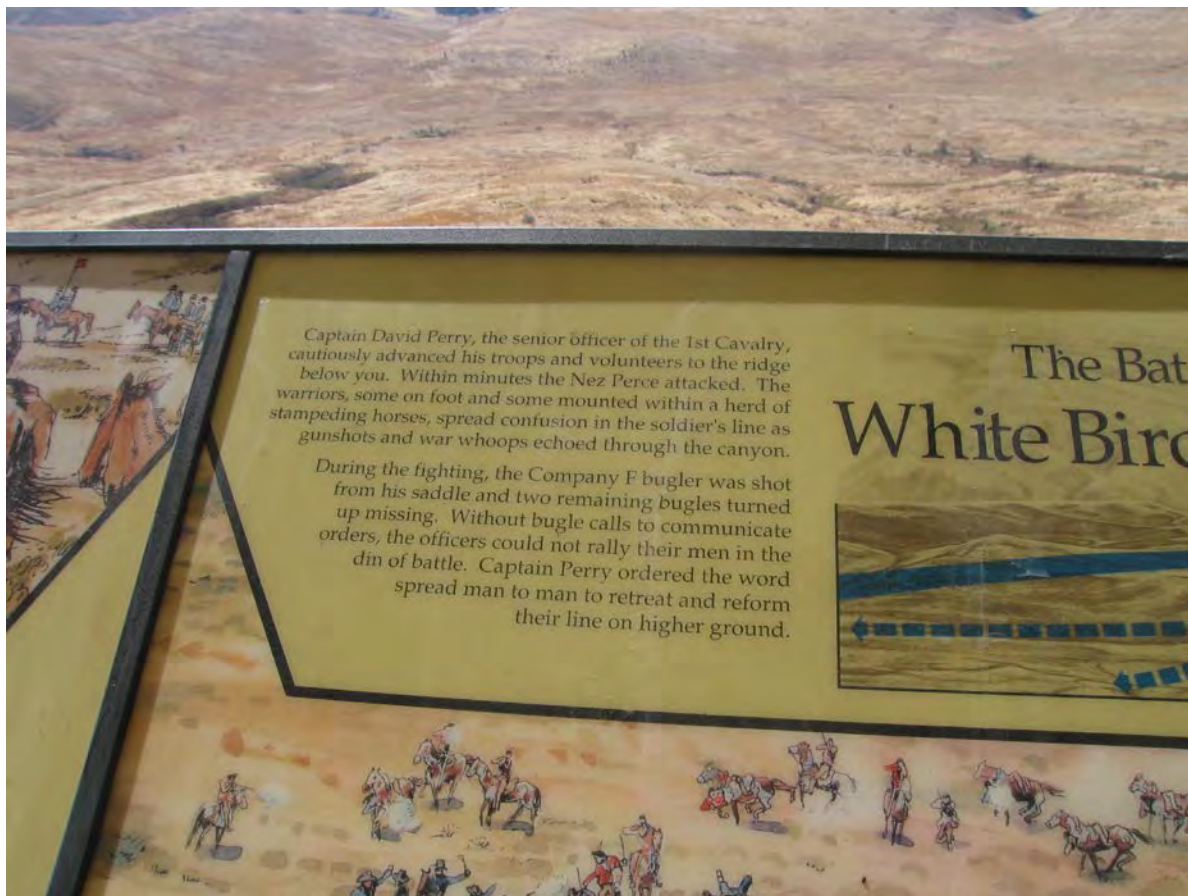
Location: 13 miles south of Grangeville

Media: enamel sign

Sign Text:

Captain David Perry, the senior officer of the 1st Cavalry, cautiously advanced his troops and volunteers to the ridge below you. Within minutes the Nez Perce attacked. The warriors, some on foot and some mounted within a herd of stampeding horses, spread confusion in the soldier's line as gunshots and war whoops echoed through the canyon.

During the fighting, the Company F bugler was shot from his saddle and two remaining bugles turned up missing. Without bugle calls to communicate orders, the officers could not rally their men in the din of battle. Captain Perry ordered the word spread man to man to retreat and reform their line on higher ground.



Site # 2-11

Site Description: monument in a bend in the road

Ownership: unknown

Location: old Hwy 95 just beyond battlefield walk entrance

Media: marble

Sign Text:

Before you to the westward lies the historic Whitebird Battle Ground of the Nez Perce Indian war in which thirty five men gave up their lives in service for their country June 17, 1877
Beneath this shaft lies one of those brave men laid to rest where he fell.



Site # 2-12 Camas Prairie

Site Description: highway pullout

Ownership: Idaho Historical Society

Location: Hwy 95 south of Grangeville

Media: painted panel

Sign Text:

Camas Prairie

Named for the blue flowering camas - an important root food for all interior northwestern indians - Camas Prairie is a traditional Nez Perce cultural center.

Tolo Lake - visible below - provided a campground for Joseph's Wallowa band and White Bird's Salmon River band when war broke out on Salmon River directly south of here, June 14, 1877. Both of these bands were under military pressure to settle on Camas Prairie when three young men from White Bird's band avenged a long series of past wrongs and army authorities retaliated.



2-13a

Site # 2-13a Nez Perce War

Site Description: highway pullout

Ownership: Idaho Historical Society

Location: Hwy 95 south of Cottonwood

Media: painted panel

Sign Text:

Nez Perce War

A Gatling gun firing from the top of a low hill a mile northwest of here beat off a Nez Perce attack, July 4, 1877.

Next day, Indians just east of here surrounded 17 Mt. Idaho volunteers: 2 were killed and 3 wounded before cavalymen from Cottonwood came out to rescue them. Meanwhile, Chief Joseph's people, screened by this well-planned diversionary skirmish, crossed the prairie to join their allies on the Clearwater. From there the Indians retired across the mountains to Montana, where the Nez Perce War ended 3 months later.



2-13b

Site # 2-13b Nez Perce War

Site Description: highway pullout

Ownership: Idaho rock monument

Location: Hwy 95 south of Cottonwood

Media: cast or carved rock

Sign Text:

Erected in memory of the seventeen volunteers who engaged in battle with the Indians 2000 feet east from this point with two killed and three wounded the 5th day of July 1877 during the Nez Perce Indian War

Captain D. B. Randall

C.M. Day James Buchanan H.C. Johnson

F.A. Fenn Frank D. Vansise L.P. Wilmot

A.D. Bartley Charles Johnson A.B. Leland

E.J. Bunker Charles W. Case B.F. Evans

J.L. Cearley William B. Beemer D.H. Howser

George Riggins

Donated and erected by Evan Evans
Through Idaho County Pioneer
Association Grangeville, Idaho the 5th
Day of July 1931



Site # 2-14 Looking Glass

Site Description: highway pullout

Ownership: Idaho State Historical Society

Location: Hwy 12 east of Kooskia

Media: painted panel

Sign Text:

Looking Glass

During General O.O. Howard's 1877 Nez Perce campaign, Looking Glass and his band were camped up Clear Creek near here.

Looking Glass told army authorities "Leave us alone. We are living here peacefully and want no trouble. But after a military attack, July 1 that destroyed his village, ruined his gardens and captured 750 Nez Perce horses, Looking Glass and his band joined other Nez Perce refugees and soon headed for Montana's buffalo plains. Howard spent three more months pursuing Joseph, White Bird, Looking Glass and their warriors after that fiasco.



Site # 2-15 Trail of Sorrow

Site Description: inside interpretive panel

Ownership: Clearwater National Forest

Location: Visitor Center near Lolo Pass on Hwy 12

Media:



Site # 2-16 Lolo Hot Springs

Site Description: temporary interior exhibits

Ownership: NPNHT

Location: Visitor Center near Lolo Hot Springs on Hwy 12

Media: Pop up display and foam board panels

Sign Text:

Follow the Nez Perce Trail and Rediscover the 1877 Nez Perce War

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

The trail symbolizes the dramatic collision of cultures that continues to shape the west and its people. This Trail parallels the lives of all people who strive for peace, homeland and a chosen way of life.

A native people were forced to flee their homeland in a futile attempt to avoid warfare and live in their own way. A transported 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. Reluctant military leaders found little pleasure in an empty victory against an honorable and valiant foe.

There's no better way to get in touch with our common heritage than to retrace the footsteps of the Nez Perce tribe and the soldiers who pursued them over some of the most spectacular country in the Northern Rockies. Surviving Nez Perce were exiled several years to Oklahoma before they were allowed back in the Northwest

The Nez Perce National Historic Trail ends at the Bear Paw Battle Site, but the Nez Perce story continued.

The 431 Nez Perce survivors were taken down the Missouri River by flatboat to an unexpected exile, first at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and then Indian Territory, Oklahoma. There they were joined by others captured while trying to return to Idaho from Canada. Despite the efforts of honorable officers and citizens throughout the country, Chief Joseph and his people remained in exile for eight years.

Of the nearly 500 Nez Perce taken to Indian Territory, only 301 survived the extreme weather and poor conditions in exile. In 1885 the Non-Treaty Nez Perce were returned to the Northwest. Joseph and 149 Nez Perce were re-settled on the Colville Reservation in Washington State. The other half of the Nez Perce were returned to the Nez Perce Reservation in Idaho. Over time, many of the Nez Perce who escaped to Canada returned to live on the Colville, Umatilla, and Nez Perce Reservations while some chose to stay in Canada. Chief Joseph was never permitted to live again on his ancestral home in the Wallowa Valley.



A Prelude to War

Lapwai Council May 3, 1877

Fort Lapwai

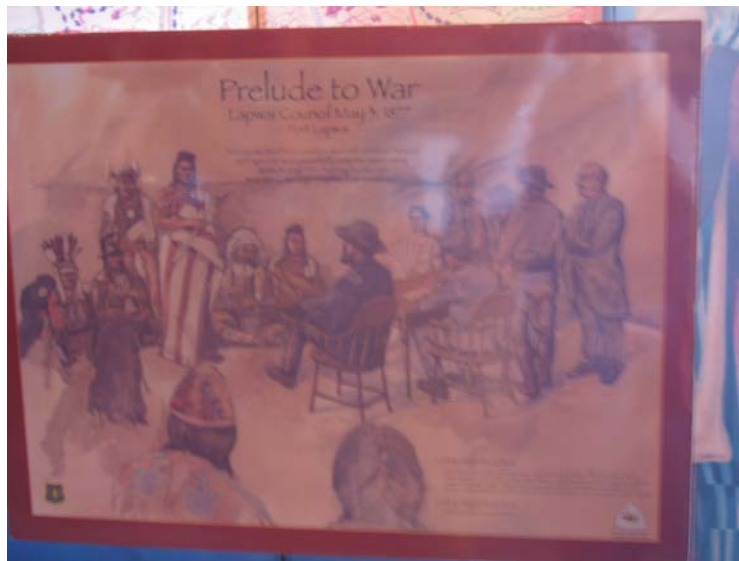
Non-treaty Nez Perce Leaders meet with General Howard and agree to move peacefully onto the reservation. Some 36 days later fighting breaks out near Tolo Lake beginning the four month war.

Left to Right Back Row:

Huis Huis Kute, Chief Looking Glass, Too-Hool-Hool-Zote (The Dreamer Chief) Chief Joseph, Chief White Bird (White Pelican), Ollokot (War Chief, Joseph's Brother), General Howard, Emily Fitzgerald (Observer), Charles Monteith (Translator/Clerk), Settler, Howard's Aid (Cavalry), Howard's Aid (Infantry), John Monteith (Indian Agent)

Left to Right Front Row:

Nez Perce Warriors and Women



Site # 2-17 Nimiipuu Flight at Lolo Pass

Site Description: low angle interpretive panel at the east end of the parking lot

Ownership:

Location: Visitor Center near Lolo Pass on Hwy 12

Media:

Text:

Nimiipuu Flight at Lolo Pass At the Edge of Their Homeland

Crossing the mountains was something the Nimiipuu had done for generations, but never under such duress as when they were pursued by the U.S. Army in 1877.

After traveling through the mountains for six days with the Army following, they rested near here in Packer Meadows in late July 1877. Leaving Lolo Pass meant leaving the land of their mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers.

“We come from no country, as have the whites. Nature placed us in this land of ours, land that has been taken from us. I am telling my story that all may know about the war we did not want. War is made to take something not your own.” Yellow Wolf

“They were the ones who said I will not follow. I will not be put on a reservation. I will not be dictated to. I will not have a life that tells me I have to ask somebody else how to live.” Alta Guzman - “Sacred Journey of the Nez Perce”



Site # 2-18 The Nez Perce Sikum

Site Description: upright interpretive panel at Hwy 12 pullout

Ownership:

Location: between MP 26 and 25

Media:

Sign Text:

The Nez Perce Sikum

Sikum is the Nez Perce word for horse. The Nez Perce people were introduced to the horse in the 1730's. The word "appaloosa" was created by white settlers. The Nez Perce learned through selective breeding that they could produce a horse uniquely suited to their homeland and the country around you where they frequently traveled.

The Nez Perce National Historic Trail travels down Lolo Canyon and was a critical and frequently used route for the Nez Perce between their homeland and the bison rich plains to the east. According to Samuel Penny, Chairman of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee:

"This was our commerce trail. We followed this trail east to hunt buffalo. We came here for camas. We came here in our flight from the soldiers."

Caption:

Nez Perce man's saddle, ca. 1870-1900, with American cinch, ca. 1888-1910

Nez Perce woman's saddle, ca. 1870 - 1890



Site # 2-19 Fort Fizzle

Site Description: upright interpretive panel at Hwy 12 pullout. Lewis and Clark site. Well developed newer site with visitor amenities – restrooms, picnic area, short interpretive trail, trail to creek access with stone bench and sign about fishing and natural resources.

Ownership: Lolo National Forest

Location: near MP 28

Media: fiberglass



Site # 2-19a The Flight of the Nez Perce

Site Description: 3 panel upright interpretive display at Hwy 12 pullout.

Ownership: Lolo National Forest

Location: near MP 28

Media: fiberglass

Title:

The Flight of the Nez Perce

In Search of Peace

In the mid 1870's the United States government attempted to force the Nez Perce (Nee-Mee-Poo or Nimiipu) people of Oregon, Idaho and Washington onto an Idaho reservation.

For those who didn't move to the reservation a tragic sequence of events resulted in open warfare. After several fights and two major battles in Idaho at Whitebird Canyon and the Clearwater, five bands reluctantly left their homeland. They followed the Nee-Mee-Poo (Nimiipu) Trail, one of their traditional routes over the Bitterroot Mountains.

When they reached this point in late July 1877, many Nez Perce thought they had left hostilities behind them. They anticipated safety in Montana, among a white and Indian population who had always been friendly. It was here, however, that they received the first indication of the relentless pursuit that was to come.



Unknown to the Nez Perce, soldiers in Montana had received orders to assist in cutting off their escape. Soldiers and citizen volunteers set up a system of barricades here to prevent the Nez Perce from passing. Fort Fizzle was not just a tactical obstacle - it was an ominous symbol of the government's determination to stop the flight of the Nez Perce.

Captions:

Ollakot, chief Joseph's younger brother and warrior-leader of their band.

Chief Looking Glass was in leadership here. He and Ollakot were killed in the final clash at Bear Paw Mountain.

The Nez Perce bypassed the soldiers and citizen volunteers by traveling behind the ridges in front of you.

Site # 2-19b Fort Fizzle

Site Description: 3 panel upright interpretive display at Hwy 12 pullout.

Ownership: Lolo National Forest

Location: near MP 28

Media: fiberglass

Sign Text:

Fort Fizzle

A Successful Failure

What occurred here was one event among many in an American tragedy—the flight of the Nez Perce

In July 1877, scouting parties from the 7th Infantry at Missoula verified rumors that “hostile Nez Perce” were approaching over the Lolo Trail. Ordered to block the passage of the Nez Perce, about 35 soldiers headed up Lolo Creek where on July 25, Captain Charles Rawn selected the terrace in front of you for his defensive position. His soldiers, joined by citizen volunteers, constructed a breastworks from earth and logs, and dug shallow rifle pits. Over 200 men joined forces to prevent the Nez Perce from passing.

About four miles west of here, at Woodman Flats, parleys were held between the Nez Perce and Rawn’s forces; the Nez Perce were ordered to surrender arms, ammunition, and horses. They refused, promising to pass peacefully.

Many of the citizen volunteers accepted the Nez Perce promise. Sharing fears of destructive retaliation on families and property, they abandoned the “fort” and trickled home. Soon Captain Rawn had insufficient forces to fulfill his orders – orders from an Army still embarrassed by the Little Big Horn disaster of 1876 and now stung by Nez Perce victories in Idaho.

On the morning of July 28, the Nez Perce bypassed the breastworks by climbing up the low ridge to your left and traveling just out of sight behind the ridge in front of you. They descended east of here and entered the Bitterroot Valley. The “fort” had “fizzled.”

But it was a successful failure. The battle few participants wanted was avoided. The Nez Perce proceeded south through the Bitterroot Valley, confident that they had a non-aggression pact.

Caption:

When the confrontation here was over, locals sarcastically named this place “Fort Fizzle” to ridicule a mission that failed.



Site # 2-19c Regulars and Volunteers

Site Description: 3 panel upright interpretive display at Hwy 12 pullout.

Ownership: Lolo National Forest

Location: near MP 28

Media: fiberglass

Sign Text:

Regulars and Volunteers

An Uncomfortable Alliance

The events here at Fort Fizzle brought citizen volunteers shoulder to shoulder with Army regulars. It was, however, an uncomfortable alliance. The Army regulars viewed volunteers as a disorganized, undependable mob looking for thrills and booty. The volunteers thought soldiers were illiterate immigrants, drunks and shiftless Easterners unable to hold a job.

Upon hearing of the imminent arrival of the Nez Perce, the Governor issued an emergency call for citizen volunteers. Missoula's newspaper ran the plea, "HELP! HELP! COME RUNNING!" Scores responded, coming from nearby communities. Leading the volunteers were their "officers," elected in democratic fashion based on prior military experience and local reputation.

The soldiers were volunteers too, but for five years of service. Some were career soldiers, several were Civil War veterans, and many were immigrants. Most had been laborers or tradesmen prior to enlistment; their ages ranged from 18 to 49. Some of these soldiers were killed or wounded 12 days later at the Battle of the Big Hole.

Although skeptical about the volunteers, Captain Rawn realized that he could not hold his position without them. When the citizen volunteers began leaving after accepting the Nez Perce promise to pass peacefully, Captain Rawn bristled at the militia's refusal to submit to his authority. Another officer threatened to shoot a volunteer officer to prevent "desertion." But the volunteers left anyway.

Captions: Captain Charles Rawn, a veteran of the Civil War was the 7th Infantry's senior captain.

Many area landmarks bear the names of Fort Fizzle volunteers, McCormick, Buckhouse, Rankin, Stephens, Hammond, Higgins, Bancroft, Catlin, and Chaffin.

E. A. Kenney, was the elected captain for one company of volunteers from Missoula. He held the first brief parley with the Nez Perce.

Territorial Governor Benjamin F. Potts visited the breastworks twice.

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2-19d

Site # 2-19d The Soldier's Corral

Site Description: low angle interpretive display at Hwy 12 pullout.

Ownership: Lolo National Forest

Location: near MP 28

Media: fiberglass

Sign Text:

You're standing in a replica of an entrenchment and breastworks similar to those built north of this point in July 1877. Notice the gap between the bottom and top logs. Rifle barrels could be slid through this opening while the logs provided soldiers some protection from return fire.

When Chief Looking Glass heard about the entrenchments, he called them the "soldiers' corral." The soldiers hid behind the barrier of two to three logs set on top of the dirt that was thrown forward when they dug the trenches.

The original network of trenches, individual rifle pits, and log breastworks were located to your right across Highway 12. The remains were visible until homesteading, logging, and finally a 1934 forest fire destroyed the shallow depressions and rotting logs.

The Army regulars had been constructing buildings for the new Fort Missoula, so a good supply and variety of tools were available for the field work the soldiers did here.



2-19e

Site # 2-19e Taking Cover

Site Description: low angle interpretive display at Hwy 12 pullout.

Ownership: Lolo National Forest

Location: near MP 28

Media: fiberglass

Sign Text:

During the Civil War soldiers often fought out in the open causing thousands of casualties. Because of this, the military decided to formally instruct and equip soldiers to entrench themselves. Soldiers and citizens here fully embraced this new strategy.

But in the mountainous terrain of “Lolo Canyon” holes in the ground had their limits of protection. One citizen volunteer “labored arduously” to prepare his pit. When he was finished....

“He looked with pride at the resultsand then climbed a short way up the hillside to give it a better ‘once over’. He returned with a look of genuine disgust....‘Hell, I can see plumb to the bottom of my pit!’”

Brevet Lt. Col. Edmund Rice invented the trowel-bayonet which was one tool the infantry used to dig the trench and at least three rifle pits. One of the plates from his instruction manual is shown. The Model 1875 Rice trowel-bayonet was designed to be a hand-shovel, a hatchet, and a bayonet. It was credited with helping save the Regiment twelve days later at the Battle of the Big Hole.



Site # 2-19f Pauses and Parleys

Site Description: low angle interpretive display at Hwy 12 pullout.

Ownership: Lolo National Forest

Location: near MP 28

Media: fiberglass

Sign Text:

About twenty miles west of here at Lolo Hot Springs, the Nez Perce heard that soldiers were coming, so they moved cautiously and set up camp four miles from here.

Three parleys (meetings) between Nez Perce, soldiers, and citizens were held over the next three days. Neither side found the other's terms acceptable.

They were going to meet again on the fourth day, but by then the Nez Perce found they could end the stalemate. Nez Perce scouts had found a way to pass around the soldiers without further confrontation.

The military demanded the surrender of arms, ammunition and horses: the Nez Perce refused, saying they needed these for their trek to the east but that they would pass peacefully.



2-19g

Site # 2-19g Outwitted and Outflanked

Site Description: low angle interpretive display at Hwy 12 pullout.

Ownership: Lolo National Forest

Location: near MP 28

Media: fiberglass

Sign Text:

One half mile west of here, a steep, narrow ravine runs north from Lolo Creek. In the early morning of the fourth day of the standoff, the Nez Perce ascended the ridge next to this canyon. Using skills acquired by life in the mountains and plateaus of their homeland, Nez Perce elders, children, and wounded climbed the ridge with their herd of horses and headed east.

A screen of warriors appeared along the crest of the ridge north of you and taunted the soldiers below. The Nez Perce were now out-of-range and out-of-reach.

After descending from the mountains east of here the Nez Perce passed peacefully through three separate ranks of volunteers and soldiers, some in route to and others leaving, Fort Fizzle. The Nez Perce then turned south and began a leisurely trek along the west bank of the Bitterroot River.



Site # 2-20 The Lolo Trail

Site Description: upright interpretive display at Hwy 12 pullout.

Ownership: Lolo National Forest

Location: just east of intersection of Hwy 93 and Hwy 12

Media: fiberglass

Sign Text:

Mostly Lewis and Clark interpretation. The Nez Perce Trail is mentioned in the last paragraph of text:

Except for changes in the vegetation, the Lolo Trail looks much like it did hundreds of years ago. Watch for other interpretive signs that will tell you more of the story. If you do, ;you'll understand why Congress chose to preserve the settings as the Nee Mee Poo National Historic Trail and the Lewis and Clark national Historic Trail which together make up *the Lolo Trail*.....



Nez Perce National Historic Trail



Inventory Section 3

Lolo to Yellowstone

Draft 2011

Section 3– Lolo through Yellowstone

Site Number	Title
3-1	Chief Looking Glass
3-2	The Nee-Me-Poo Trail
3-3	Leaving War Behind
3-4	On the Eve of Tragedy
3-5	In the Paths of History
3-6*	Big Hole Battlefield
3-7	Nez Perce Trail
3-8	Nez Perce Flight
3-9	Smokey Cubs
3-10	Bannock Pass
3-11	Massacred
3-12	Nez Perce War
3-13	The Battle of Camas Meadows
3-14	Camas Meadows Battlefield
3-15	Targhee Pass
3-16a	Avenue of Travel
3-16b	The Nez Perce Campaign - 1877
3-16c	Captive Tourists

*** new NPS signs not yet installed**

Nez Perce NHP – Orientation panel – Big Hole Parking Lot

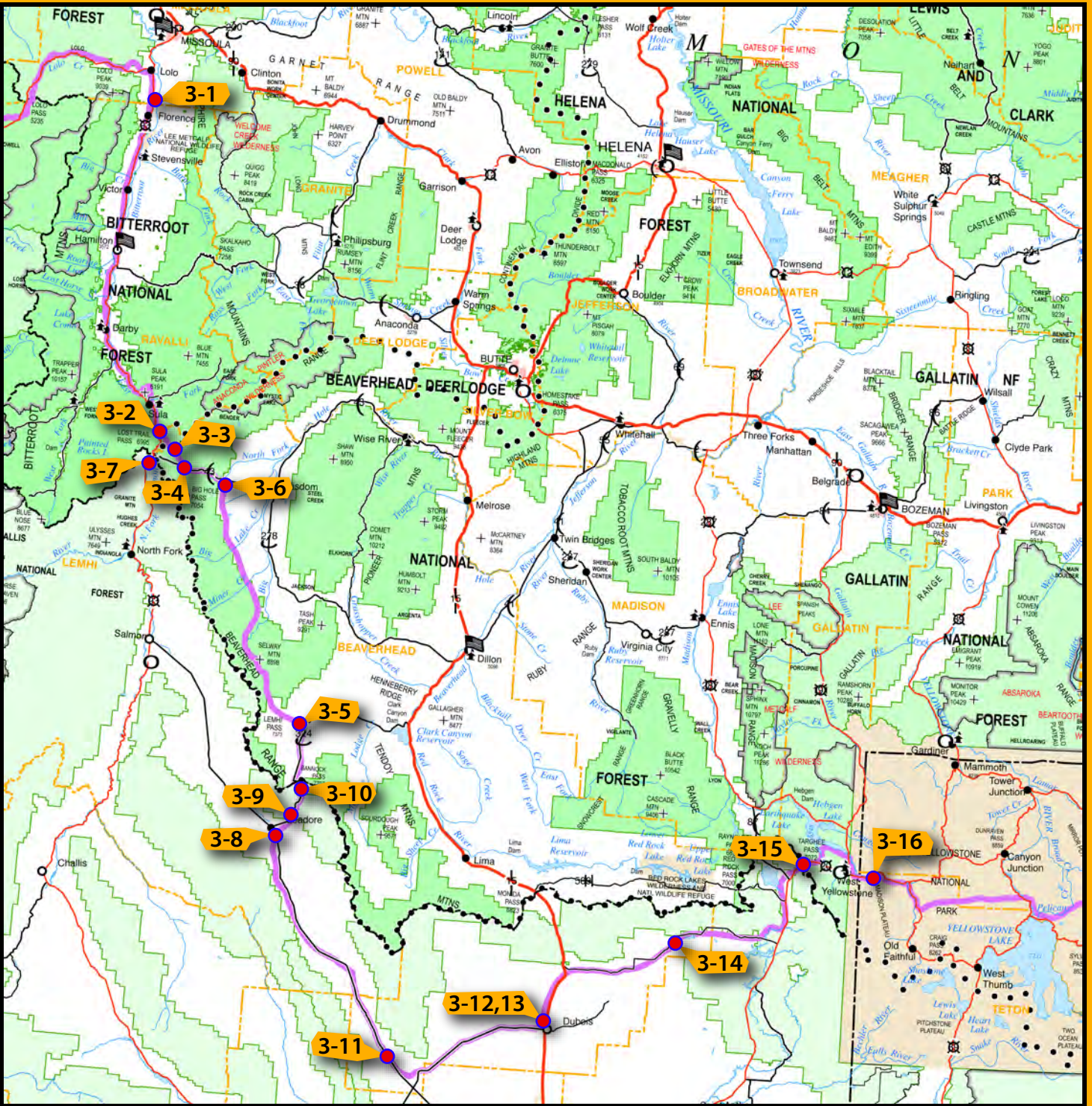
Battlefield Landscape – Big Hole Overlook

Battlefield Trails – Big Hole Trailheads

Nez Perce Encampment – Big Hole Battlefield Encampment Trail

Siege Site – Big Hole Battlefield Siege

Section 3 Lolo through Yellowstone



Site # 3-1: Chief Looking Glass Recreation Area

Site Description: fishing access, campground with restrooms, picnic area, short interpretive trail, Sign about Chief Looking Glass.

Location: Hwy 93 – MP 78, .9 mi off of Hwy 93.

Site Ownership: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

Media: Particle Board

Comments: Shot up, faded, mounted on two treated posts.

Color: 2 colors, Cream and Sepia

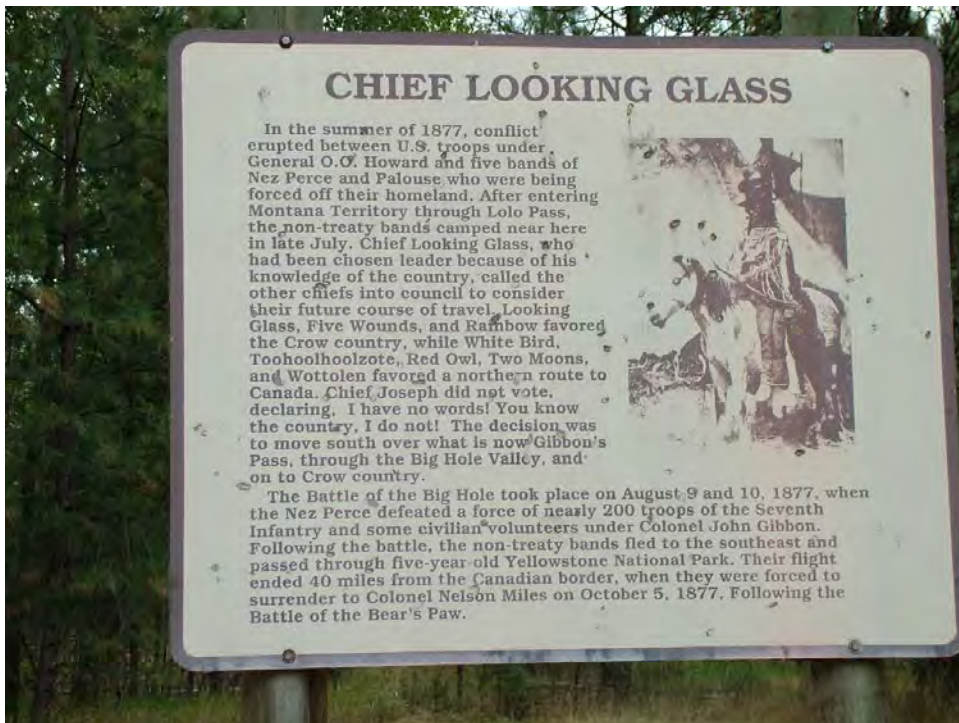
Sign Text:

Chief Looking Glass

In the summer of 1877 conflict erupted between US troops under General O.O. Howard and 5 bands of Nez Perce and Palouse who were being forced off their homeland. After entering Montana territory thru Lolo Pass the non-treaty bands camped near here in late July. Chief Looking Glass who had been chosen leader because of his knowledge of the country, called the other chiefs in the council to consider their future course of travel. Looking Glass, Five Wounds, and Rainbow favored the Crows country while White bird, Toohoolhoolzote, Red Owl, Too Moons, and Wottolen favored a northern route to Canada. Chief Joseph did not vote declaring I have no words, you know the country I do not! The decision was to move south over what is now Gibbon's Pass, thru the Bighole Valley and onto Crow country.

The Battle of the Bighole took place on Aug 9 & 10, 1877, when the Nez Perce defeated a force of nearly 200 troops of the 7th infantry and some civilian volunteers under Colonel

John Gibbon, following the battle, the non-treaty bands fled to the southeast and passed thru 5 year old Yellowstone National Park, their flight ended 40 miles from the Canadian Border, when they were forced to surrender to Colonel Nelson Miles on October 5, 1877 following the Battle of the Bear's Paw.



Brown Metal Sign, fishing access and Rules.



Site # 3-2: Nee-Me-Poo Trailhead

Site Description: Parking, Regulation sign, Interpretive sign

Location: Bitterroot NF, Hwy 93 - MP 6.5

Media: Fiberglass

Comments: Sign in a kiosk that has space for 2 more panels.

Sign Text:

“The Nee-Me-Poo Trail”

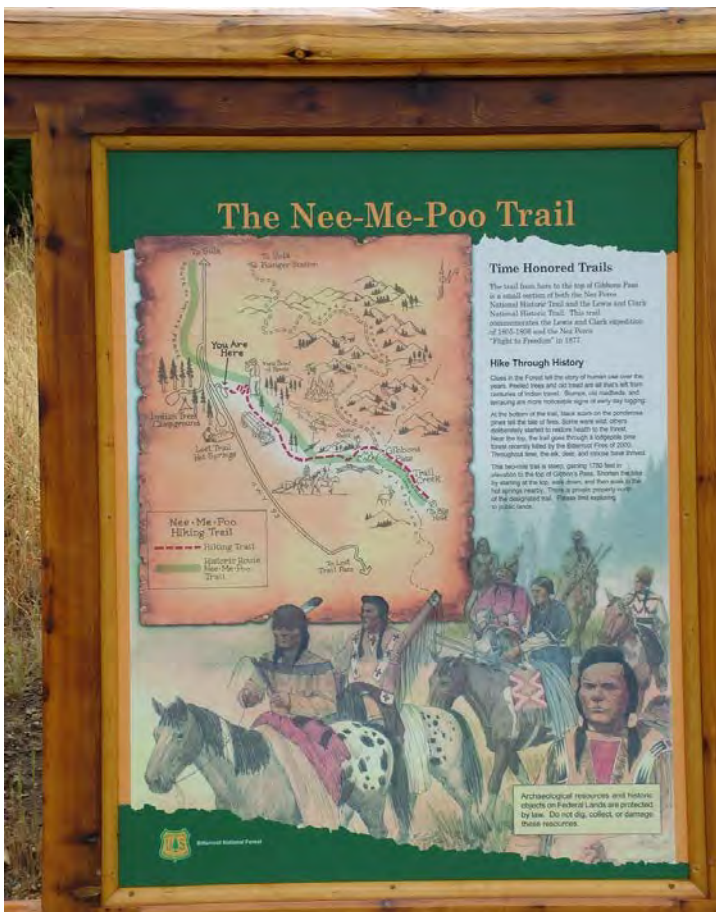
Time Honored Trails and Hike Through History

Time Honored Trails

The trail from here to the top of Gibbons Pass is a small section of both the Nez Perce National Historic Trail and the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. This trail commemorates the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1805-1806 and the Nez Perce “Flight to Freedom” in 1877.

Hike Through History

Clues in the Forest tell the story of human use over the years. Peeled trees and old tread are all that’s left from centuries of Indian travel. Stumps, old roadbeds, and terracing are more noticeable signs of early day logging.



At the bottom of the trail, black scars on the ponderosa pines tell the tale of fires. Some were wild; others deliberately started to restore health to the forest. Near the top, the trail goes through a lodge pole pine forest recently killed by the Bitterroot Fires of 2000. Throughout time, the elk, deer, and moose have thrived.

This two-mile trail is steep, gaining 1780 feet in elevation to the top of Gibbon’s Pass. Shorten the hike by starting at the top, walk down, and then soak in the hot springs nearby. There is private property north of the designated trail. Please limit exploring to public lands.

Pictures on signs: Nez Perce Indians and Map of Nez Perce Trail

Color: Multi-colored

Other Signs: Regulations on separate sign board.

Comments: Road side sign had Nee-Me-Poo logo. The sign at the trailhead was in great shape. Sign framing was nice. Area around sign was cleared with a sparing amount of crushed rock around sign.



Site # 3-3: Gibbons Pass

Site Description: 3 panel sign board, parking area, new outhouse (nice), Trail and Road signs, Continental Divide Trail

Location: Bitterroot National Forest – Beaver Deerlodge NF

Media: Folia signs, fiberglass, wood log style sign mounts.

Sign Text:

Following Ancient Trails

Clark's Return Route

The buffalo and the Indians followed the best route, and here both were joined. In 1806 Clark and his party left the bitterroot Valley. They crossed over this well-worn pass to retrieve their canoes left at Camp Fortunate the summer before. Along Glade Creek (Trail Creek) the travelers passed through fields of camas long cultivated by the tribes for food.

Clark wrote: "Sunday 6th July 1806. some frost this morning the last night was so cold I could not Sleep....."

We Set out and proceeded up the Creek on which we camped 3 Miles and left the road which we came on last fall to our right and ascended a ridge with a gentle Slope to the dividing mountain which Separates the waters of the Middle fork of Clarks river from those of Wisdom and Lewis's River and passed over prosueing the rout of the Oat lash shute band which we met last fall...

The timber is small and a great proportion of it Killed by the fires. I observe the appearance of old buffalo roads and some heads on this part of the mountain"

Gibbons Pass

Why is it called Gibbons Pass?

The Nez Perce were forced to leave Wallowa Valley, OR, in 1877. They were pursued over this trail, now called Gibbons Pass, by Colonel Gibbon and his men. The colonel chose speed over fire power, and left Joe Blodgett to catch up later with the supply wagons and howitzer. The colonel's choice led to a surprise attack on the fleeing Nez Perce.

Things to See and Do

Leaving War Behind

Flight of the Nez Perce

On August 6, 1877 an estimated 800 men, women, and children of the Nez Perce crossed this pass. Five Nez Perce chiefs had refused to sign a treaty that would have forced their people onto reservations in Idaho. Fleeing their homeland they traveled through the Bitterroot valley in peace, wanting to leave the fighting and abuse behind them. They hoped some day to return.

This trail took them through the homeland of the Bitterroot Salish. The terrain was difficult, but familiar. The Nez Perce had frequently passed through the valley to hunt in the upper Missouri buffalo grounds.

“We traveled through the Bitter Root Valley slowly. The white people were friendly. We did much buying and trading with them. No more fighting! We had left Howard and his war in Idaho.” – Yellow Wolf

Unknown to the Nez Perce, Colonel Gibbon was right behind them. On August 8, 1877 the colonel’s scouts had located the Nez Perce camp. Leaving the supply wagons and howitzer to catch up later, Colonel Gibbon pressed on into the night. He planned a surprise attack on the camp.

Pictures on signs:

Lewis & Clark (panel 1), Map (panel 2), Nez Perce Indians (panel 3)

Color: Multi Color



Other Signs: Road Signs (2) Gibbons Pass,

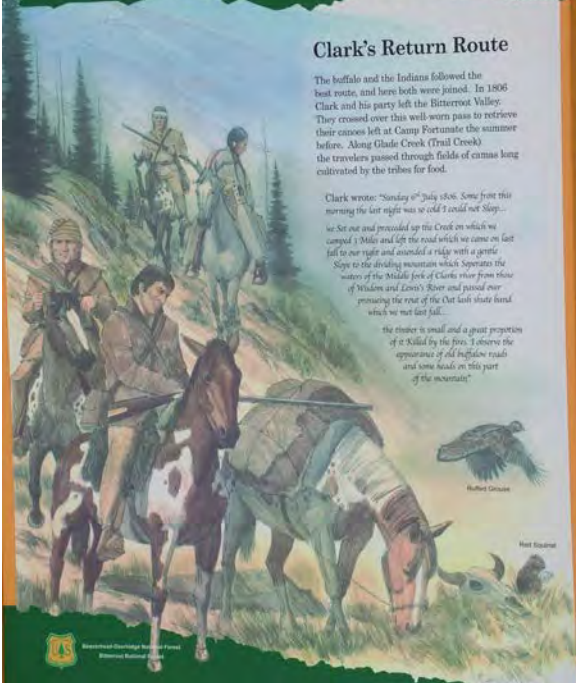
Following Ancient Trails

Clark's Return Route

The buffalo and the Indians followed the best route, and here both were joined. In 1806 Clark and his party left the Bitterroot Valley. They crossed over this well-worn pass to retrieve their canoes left at Camp Fortunate the summer before. Along Glade Creek (Trail Creek) the travelers passed through fields of camas long cultivated by the tribes for food.

Clark wrote: "Sunday 9th July 1806. Some from this morning the last night was so cold I could not sleep... we set out and proceeded up the Creek on which we camped 3 Miles and left the road which we came on last fall to our right and ascended a ridge with a gentle slope to the dividing mountain which separates the waters of the Middle fork of Clarke river from those of Widens and Lewis's River and passed over promising the view of the last stage found which we met last fall..."

the timber is small and a great proportion of it killed by the fire. I observe the appearance of old Indian roads and some beads on this part of the mountains"



Buffalo Chinook

West Equinox



Leaving War Behind

Flight of the Nez Perce

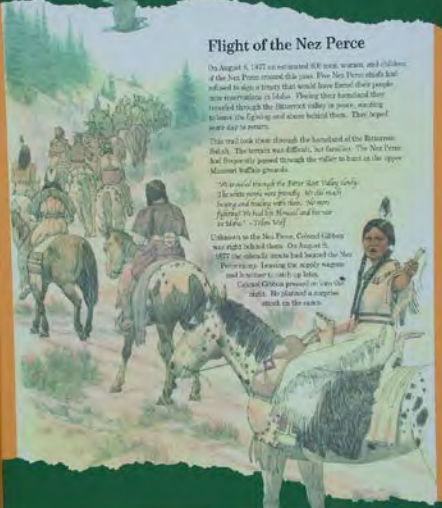
On August 1, 1877 an estimated 600 Nez Perce women and children of the Nez Perce crossed the pass. Five Nez Perce chiefs had led and to sign a treaty that would have forced their people into reservations in Idaho. Having been betrayed they traveled through the Bitterroot valley in peace, wanting to save the fighting and spare behind them. They hoped more day to return.

This trail took them through the homeland of the Bitterroot Salish. The terrain was difficult, but familiar. "The Nez Perce had frequently passed through the valley to hunt in the upper Missouri Valley grounds."

"It is a trail through the Bitterroot Valley only. It is not a new one, but it is the best, being and finding out there. No more fighting. We had to be good and the way to make it. -Tribes talk"

Chickens in the Nez Perce, Colonel Gibbon was right behind them. On August 2, 1877 he observed smoke had burned the Nez Perce camp. Leaving the supply wagon and he returned to camp in Idaho.

Colonel Gibbon passed on the Nez Perce. He obtained a surprise attack on the camp.



Site # 3-4: Trail Creek (Road side sign board)

Site Description: Road Junction Side. No amenities.

Location: Jct. of Hwy. 43 & FS Rd.106. east of Chief Joseph Pass. MP: 7.5

Media: Fiberglass folia signs.

Sign Text:

On the Eve of Tragedy

Battle in the Big Hole

On August 6th, 1877 an estimated 800 Nez Perce passed this way on their flight to freedom. Many in the group thought they had left the conflict behind.

They did not know that the Colonel Gibbon was right behind them. Several young men wanted to scout back along the trail, just to be sure. But Chief Looking Glass would not agree. Scouting would violate the trust of their peace agreement with the Bitterroot settlers.

“All right, Looking Glass, you are one of the chiefs! I have no wife, no children to be placed fronting the danger that I feel coming to us. Whatever the gains, whatever the loss, it is yours”

-Five Wounds, a Nez Perce warrior who wanted to send scouts back over the trail.

August 9th, 1877 the dawn’s silence was shattered by the attack of Gibbon’s 7th U.S. Infantry and the Bitterroot Volunteers under Captain John B. Catlin.

Visit the Big Hole National Battlefield where the Nez Perce was asleep beside the river that morning.

Trail Creek

Why is it called Trail Creek?

Indian tribes traveled this route east to the buffalo on the plains and west for the salmon in the rivers. Clark wrote that they “entered an extensive open Level plain in which the Indian trail Scattered in Such a manner that we Could not pursue it”. (July 6, 1806)

“La-Im-Tse-La-Lik,” the name used by the Salish Indians, means “place of the ground squirrel.” Trappers called the area “Big Hole,” a term meaning “broad, flat, mountain-rimmed valley.”

Things to See and Do:

Welcome to Trail Creek, the primary route used for thousands of years between the Big Hole, Bitterroot and Salmon areas.

- ⤴ Walk through time on the Nez Perce National Historic Trail along Trail Creek Road to Gibbons Pass, or along Highway 43 to Big Hole National Battlefield.
- ⤴ Hike the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, which separates the water flowing toward the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans. Enjoy the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness area.
- ⤴ Drive the Trail Creek/Gibbons Pass road to Sula, or the Gibbonsville road over Big Hole Pass to Gibbonsville road over Big Hole Pass to Gibbonsville. These were the traditional travel routes before Highway 93 was opened. They are open during the summer only.
- ⤴ Camp or picnic near traditional Indian sites at May Creek, Indian Trees, or Spring Gulch campgrounds. Spend the night in a Forest Service cabin or lookout.
- ⤴ Visit Big Hole National Battlefield, Chief Joseph Pass. Relax at Lost Trail or Jackson Hot Springs.
- ⤴ Look for elk, moose, deer and birds along Trail Creek or Gibbons Pass roads, especially during the early morning or evening. Watch for ground squirrels and moose along Highway 43, fish the Big Hole River.

Natural Travel Corridor

Clark's 1806 Route

Captain Clark and his party found great quantities of camas just beginning to bloom when they passed here on Sunday July 6, 1806. as they left the forested mountains trails went in several directions. But Sacajawea knew the area well. She had gathered camas plants here as a child.

Clark wrote: "the Indian woman wife to Shabono informed me...when we ascended the higher part of the plain we would discover a gap in the mountains in our direction to the Canoes"

The high mountain plain (big Hole Valley) they were about to enter remains much the same as Clark found it. Wildfire has burned portions of this area, much like 200 years ago. The Columbian ground squirrel, or "whistling squirrel," continues to burrow in the meadows.

"we ascended a Small rise and beheld an open bountiful Level Valley or plain of about 20 Miles wide and near 60 long extending N. & S. in every direction around which I could see high points of Mountains Covered with Snow." -William Clark


Pictures on signs: Nez Perce Indians w/old map (panel 1), Map (panel 2), Native American woman with child & Lewis & Clark party in background (panel 3)

Color: Multi-colored



On the Eve of Tragedy

Battle in the Big Hole



On August 26, 1877 an estimated 800 Nez Perce passed this way on their flight to freedom. Many in the group thought they had hit the northern Indian.

They did not know that General Miles was right behind them. Several young men wanted to turn back along the trail, just to be sure. But Chief Looking Glass would not agree. Scouting would violate the trust of their peace agreement with the Government soldiers.

"I'll fight, looking after you will not if you don't know me, or children to be shot. I'm going to fight until I get away or I'm killed. I'll give, whatever the cost, I'll give."

The Nez Perce, a full force warrior was named in with them and one the most.

August 26, 1877 the down's silence was shattered by the attack of O'Leary's 7th U.S. Infantry and the Historical Volunteers under Captain John B. Carris.

Visit the Big Hole National Battlefield where the Nez Perce were caught inside the creek that morning.

Trail Creek

Why is it called Trail Creek?

Indian tribes traveled this route east to the hills on the plains and west for the soldiers in the river. Chief says that they "traveled in a narrow trail, looking for a hole in which the Indian could disappear in such a manner that we could not see them." (John A. Judd)

"Lakota, The Lakota," the name used by the Blackfoot Indians, means "people of the ground above." "Tongues called the name "Big Hole," a term meaning "small, flat, mountainous island."

Things to See and Do

Welcome to Trail Creek, the primary route used for thousands of years between the Big Hole, Blinnet and Salmon rivers.

- Walk through one of the Nez Perce National Historic Trails, Trail Creek Road to O'Leary Pass, or along Highway 44 to Big Hole National Monument.
- Stay in the O'Leary Historic District, O'Leary, Idaho, or along Highway 44 to Big Hole National Monument.
- Stay in the O'Leary Historic District, O'Leary, Idaho, or along Highway 44 to Big Hole National Monument.
- Stay in the O'Leary Historic District, O'Leary, Idaho, or along Highway 44 to Big Hole National Monument.

YOU ARE HERE

Site # 3-5: Shoshone Ridge Day Use Facility.

Sign Ownership: Beaverhead – Deerlodge NF - BLM

Site Description: Montana Day Use, picnic tables, restrooms, benches, parking

Location: County Road 324, Lemhi Pass

Media: Fiberglass

Comments: Flat mounted signs on wood base, 6 signs total, one mentioning the Nez Perce.

Sign Text: L & C Into the Mountains,
National Historic Trails In the Paths of History (Nez Perce mention)
The view West – Looking over the Land
The View NW
They are excellent Horseman – Horse Prairie Valley
In the Paths of History

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

The 1,170 mile Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail between Wallowa Lake, Oregon and the Bear Paw Battlefield in northern Montana follows some of the same ancient Indian roads Lewis and Clark traveled. These routes were part of a network that served Indian people for generations.

The Nez Perce War – 1877

In September of 1805 Lewis and Clark ended their portage over the Rocky Mountains in Idaho, exhausted and starving. The Nez Perce people came to their aid.

The Nez Perce remained friendly, but white settlers encroached on Nez Perce lands. Fighting broke out in northern Idaho in June of 1877. 800 Nez Perce men, women and children fled east into Montana with the U.S. Army in pursuit.

On August 9th, 50 miles north of here, the Nez Perce camped along the Big Hole River. The army launched a surprise attack and a fierce battle ensued. Bearing their wounded, the Nez Perce escaped, their supplies exhausted. On August 13th, they rode into Horse Prairie from Bloody Dick Creek, crossing the road to Lemhi Pass that Lewis and Clark had followed. Two ranches in this area were raided by warriors and five settlers were killed.

Pictures on signs: Several pictures

Color: Multi colored with brown trim

Other Signs: 1 signboard 2 panels

Lehmi Pass

Shoshone Ridge

No mention of Nez Perce



NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

IN THE PATHS OF HISTORY

The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail

The Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail follows the Expedition's 3,700-mile route from Hartford, Illinois to Fort Clatsop, at the Pacific Ocean. Much of their 1803 route followed the Indian road in upper Horse Prairie - from Red Butte up Trail Creek to the Continental Divide at Lemhi Pass - can be seen from here.

THE CROSSING OF CULTURES

In 1805 and 1806, Lewis and Clark followed ancient Indian roads across the Rocky Mountains. Help from the Indian tribes in the mountains proved essential to the Expedition.

The Shoshone were the first Indian tribe to assist the Lewis and Clark Expedition in the mountains. The Shoshone provided horses and a guide. They shared information about the trails that led west and other Indian nations - Salish and Nez Perce - that Lewis and Clark would meet along the way.

Lewis and Clark greeted Indian tribes with a diplomatic message of peace. Yet they were harbingers of future hardship, execution, and loss for Indian people the West. White settlers flooded into the country, treaties were made and broken, and Indian lands were taken.

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

The 1,770-mile Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail between Wallows Lake, Oregon and the Bear Paw Battlefield in northern Montana follows some of the same ancient Indian roads Lewis and Clark traveled. These routes were part of a network that served Indian people for generations.

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Nez Perce National Monument

Bureau of Land Management - Dillon Field Office



Site # 3-6: Big Hole Battlefield, NPS

Site Description: Day Use area, picnic tables, parking, rest areas, hiking trails to do with Big Hole Battlefield

Location: Sign location was at Visitor Centers Viewing Platform

Media: Fiberglass

Comments: Sign was situated on a viewing platform with a voice tape next to it describing the battle

Sign Text:

Passage Through the Big Hole

Nez Perce Trail

Forty-five miles of the 1,170 mile Nez Perce (Nee-Me Poo) National Historic Trail travels through the surrounding Beaverhead National Forest. Crossing over Gibbon's Pass, northwest of here, the route moves down the Trail Creek drainage, to the Battlefield. After the Big Hole Battle, Chief Lean Elk led the Nez Perce due south through Skinner Meadows and over the Big Hole Divide.

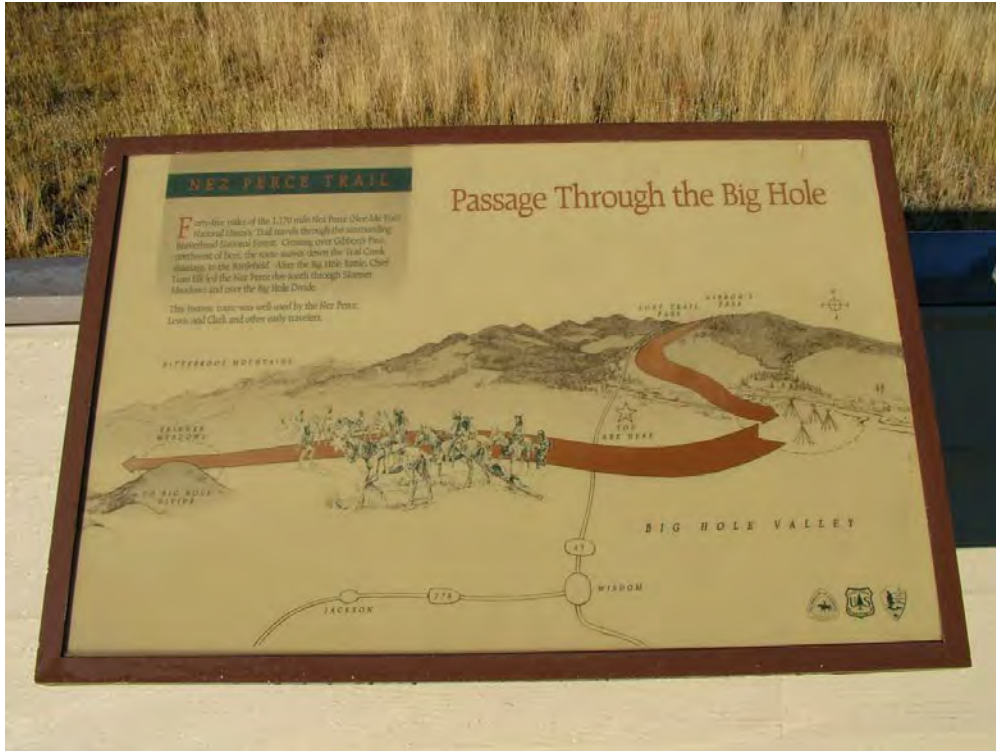
This historic route was well-used by the Nez Perce, Lewis and Clark and other early travelers.

Pictures on sign: Map & Nez Perce Indians

Color: Brown & Tan

Other Signs: Welcome to Big Hole National Battlefield





Site # 3-7: Roadside Sign – Historical Site

Location: Hwy. 93, MP 332

Site Description: Pull off with sign.

Sign Condition: bullet hole, scratched with engraved names, starting to fade, sign mounts looking worn.

Media: Metal on treated timber sign mount

Comments: Idaho Historical Society and IDOT

Sign Text: Nez Perce Trail

Following high ridges, buffalo hunters cut an old Indian trail along a direct route from Lewiston past here to Lemhi Valley.

This Trail was not available to Lewis & Clark in 1805, but an early missionary – Samuel Parker – crossed it with a Nez Perce trading party 30 years later. During an 1862 Montana gold rush eager miners joined Lewiston merchants who sent pack trains over it, with supplies for new gold camps. But bandits and robbers made wilderness travel unsafe along it.

Pictures on signs: Map of Idaho with road information,

Color: Brown, Yellow & Green

Other Signs: None, next to a sign that says Hughes Creek.



Site # 3-8: Leadore, ID Roadside sign

Location: Jct. Hwy 28 and Hwy. 29

Site Description: Pull off next to Post Office

Site Administrator: Salmon-Challis NF

Media: Particle Board on treated natural appearing logs

Comments: Signs in good shape and logs faded, Nez Perce display on outside of Post Office

Sign Text:

Panel 1 – Before the Roads

Nothing to do with Nez Perce – Shoshone Indian, Lewis & Clark party, Fir Trader

Panel 2 – Map – Leadore Crossroads in History – indicates short portion of Nez Perce Trail

Panel 3 – The Town at the Crossroads

1855 The Mormon Road

1866 Gold Discovered

1877 Nez Perce Flight

1879 Utah and Northern Railroad

1886-1920 Beacon's of Rest.

The Nez Perce crossed west over the divide near junction after the battle of the Big Hole on August 9-10, 1877, continuing South over Gilmore Summit to Birch Creek, they came upon freight wagons bound for Salmon and Leesburg. The resulting encounter left 5 in the wagon party dead and the rest scattered as the Nez Perce continued East on their flight.

Pictures on signs: 3rd panel – picture of train, gold panner, surrounding mountains, pictures of wagon trains, traders

Color: Cream background with multi-colored pictures.



Other Signs: Display outside of Post Office

The Town at the Crossroads

Named for its location at the intersection of the road from Montana across Bannock Pass and the Birch Creek road to Salmon, Idaho, the town of Junction was once the center of activity for freight wagons and stagecoach traffic as well as for ranchers and miners. In 1910 commerce shifted to Leadore when the Colville to Pritchburg railroad bypassed Junction by two miles, leaving it to memories of earlier times.

1855

The Mormon Road

In 1855 Brigham Young sent 17 missionaries north from Salt Lake City. After two difficult years of failed trips and failed negotiations, the Indians then were given permission to establish their station leading only the names of a road to their agents.

1866

Gold Discovered

The Indians were full of reports of gold and diamonds. A party of five men who explored their way from Montana across the Bannock Pass to the Lemhi River and across the mountains to a mine called Poplar Hill left on July 18, 1866. By this time, the population of the Lemhi basin was about 7,000.

1877

Nez Perce Flight

The Nez Perce Indians fled over the divide into Junction after the battle of the Big Lost on August 9, 1877. Combating attacks from General Crook's 8th Cavalry, they later spent eight months around Salween and Lemhi. The remaining 400-500 Nez Perce spent the winter of 1877-78 at Junction. They were eventually sent to the Colville Reservation.

1886 - 1920

Beacons of Rest

Stage lines proved a steady business. But instead of unstaffed beacons, stage companies were encouraged. A traveler might see a line of beacons in a row of water or a few signs set to a post behind them. Between 1886 and 1920 the stage lines connected Junction to Leadore with horses or the rail and later to the south.



Photograph No. 23 and 24 (captioned) Junction, Spent Leadore, Salween, Lemhi.

NEZ PERCE NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAIL



Historical Photograph

Photograph showing the landscape of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail.



Trail Map

Map showing the route of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail.



Historical Building

Photograph of a historical building along the trail.



LEADORE RANGER DISTRICT

Site #3-9: BLM Rest Stop – campsite – Smokey Cubs Recreation Site

Location: MP 4, Idaho Hwy. 29

Site Description: Rest Rooms, picnic tables, sign board and interpretive sign, fire rings, garbage cans, parking.

Media: Folia type

Comments: Nice stop, but you have to be looking to see the sign positioned in sagebrush off the path.

Sign Text:

Journey of the Bitterness

Weary and homesick the Nez Perce rode cautiously thru Bannock Pass on August 13, 1877. Many of their best and bravest – warriors, women, children and old people - had been killed or wounded four days ago in an early morning attack at the Big Hole.

In the small frontier community of Junction, about a mile west of here, families were barricaded inside a hastily-built stockade in dread of being attacked. The Nez Perce, in need of provisions, only confiscated some local beef and horses, before they turned their horses south, pressing on in hope of reaching buffalo country and safety.

General Howard's troops had just left Big Hole in pursuit of the Indians. They were worn thin from travel. They had averaged nearly 20 miles a day for fifteen days straight. Howard knew that the Nez Perce were headed for Bannock Pass and then the Yellowstone River. Howard hoped to outflank them by taking a shorter route through Montana.

Pictures on signs: Nez Perce Indians & map

Color: Cream colored with drawing in red,

Other Signs: No





Site # 3-10: Bannock Pass Summit, Elev. 7672

Location: MP 13.5, Hwy 29 at State Line.

Site Description: Pull Off with Interpretive sign,

Media: Metal on treated timbers,

Comments: Had some chipping and bullet holes.

Sign Text:

Bannock Pass

This traditional Indian route provided access from Montana's buffalo country to Snake and Salmon River Fishing Streams.

Hudson's Bay Company trapping expeditions came this way after 1822, and prospectors followed searching for mines. Then in 1877, Nez Perce war combatants returned from Montana to Idaho through Bannock Pass on their way from Big Hole battleground to Yellowstone Park and Canada. From 1910 to 1939, railroad trains from Dillon to Salmon steamed through here. Old Gilmore and Pittsburgh railroad tunnels and grades still can be seen from this highway.



Pictures on signs: None

Color: Brown with gold writing and green picture of Idaho.

Other Signs: Summit Sign, Regulation/info Sign Board, Idaho State Line sign.

Site # 3-11: Birch Creek Campground – BLM

Location: MP 44, hwy 28

Site Description: Campground & day use, picnic tables, fire rings, toilets

Sign Ownership: Dubois Lions Club

Media: metal sign on a rock

Comments: Homemade sign mounted on a rock. You can no longer get to the original monument; trail has been closed leading over the creek to the monument. You can see the monument in the second picture.

Title: Massacred by Nez Perce Indians

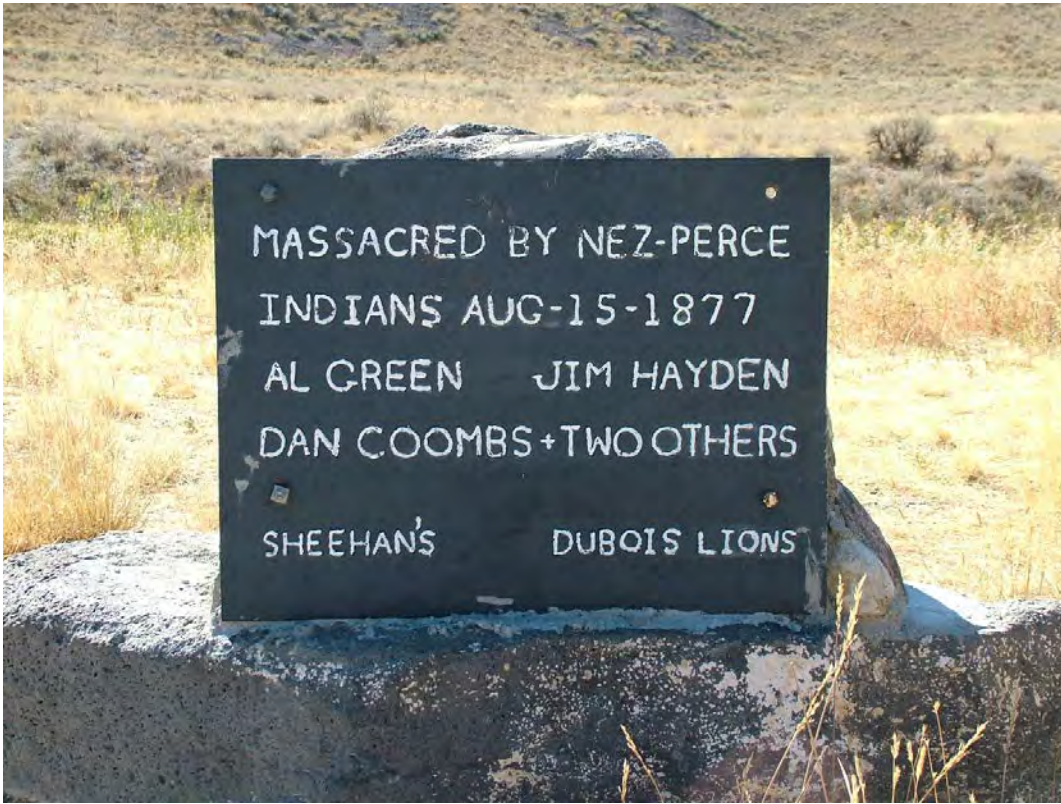
Sign Text:

Massacred by Nez Perce Indians Aug-15-1877
Al Green, Jim Hayden, Dan Coombs + two others.

Pictures on signs: No pictures.

Color: Black with white letters.





Site #3-12: Interstate 15 – Dubois Rest Stop

Location: Jct. Hwy 22 and I-15

Site Description: Typical of highway rest stops

Ownership: Idaho Historical Society, Idaho Transportation Dept.

Media: Metal sign on treated timbers

Sign Text:

Nez Perce War

When General O.O. Howard tried to get more than six hundred Nez Perce Indians to settle on a North Idaho Reservation in 1877 he ran into a lot of trouble here.

On their way to Yellowstone Park, Chief Joseph's Nez Perce people reached Hole in the Rock station (4 miles north of here) August 16 and shut down stage service to Montana. Howard's cavalry and volunteers followed only a day behind until August 20 when an Indian force made off with over 100 army mules. That raid halted military pursuit and forced Howard to continue his Nez Perce campaign for six more weeks.

Pictures on signs: Idaho State sign with small map.

Color: Brown background with gold writing and green pictures.

Other Signs: Normal Rest stop signs



Site # 3-13: Dubois Heritage Hall

Site Description: No amenities

Location: Dubois Heritage Hall – Reynolds St.

Media: Wood Sign on ground

Comments: Sign has been moved, most likely from Camas Meadows. The Heritage Hall was closed.

Sign Text:

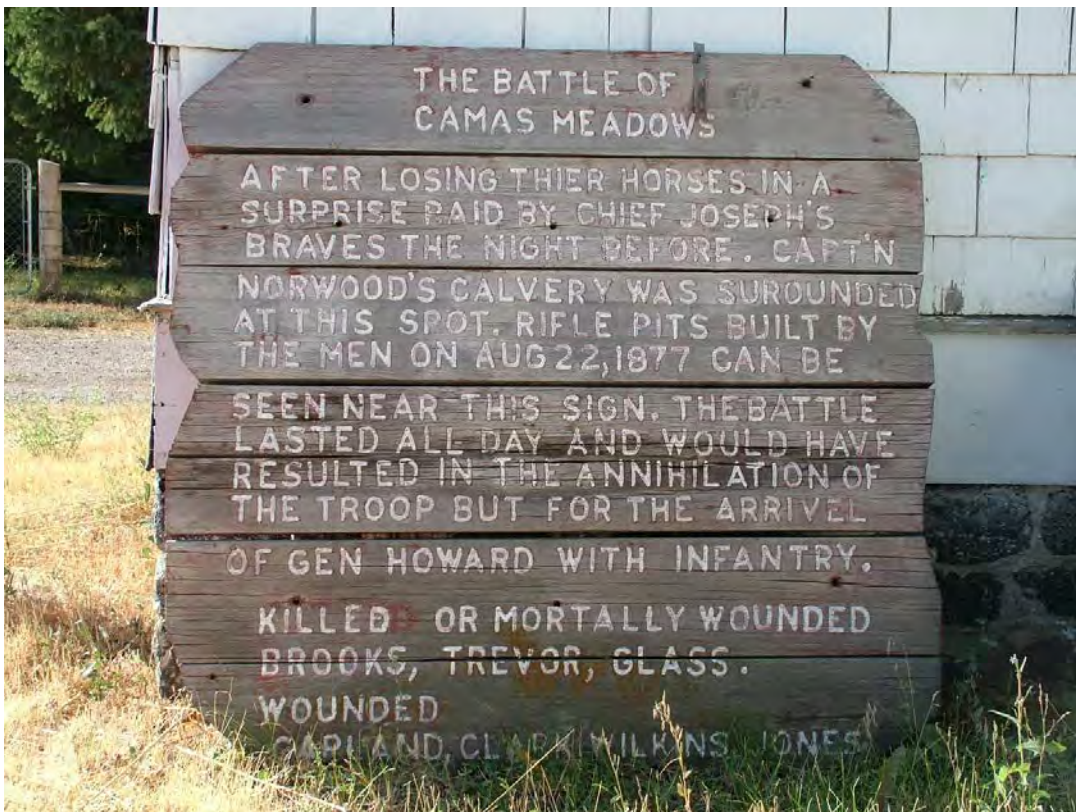
The Battle of Camas Meadows

After losing their horses in a surprise paid by Chief Joseph's braves the night before. Capt'n Norwood's Calvary was surrounded at this spot. Rifle pits built by the men on Aug 22, 1877 can be seen near this sign. The battle lasted all day and would have resulted in the annihilation of the troop but for the arrival of Gen Howard with Infantry.

Killed or mortally wounded Brooks, Trevor, Glass.
Wounded Garland, Clark, Wilkins, Jones

Pictures on signs: None

Color: Brown with faded yellow lettering



Site # 3-14: Camas Meadows Battlefield

Location: On Highway A-2 on side of the road.

Site Description: No amenities

Ownership: Upper Snake River Valley Historical Society, Varsity Scout Team 247 Moreland, ID 1992

Media: Wood panel sign framed in wood, and on 2 posts. Particle Board

Comments: Sign is positioned on side of a gravel road, by a fence, with the gate closed. Easy to see, sign is rustic looking, but in good shape.

Sign Text:

1877 Nez Perce Indian War

Camas Meadows Battle

After losing 250 of their horses and wagon mules in a surprise raid by Chief Joseph's warriors the night before, Capt'n. Norwood's cavalry was surrounded east of present day Kilgore, Idaho. His men built rifle pits with lava rocks for protection. The battle lasted all day and would have resulted in the annihilation of the troop but for the arrival of Gen. Howard with reinforcements. The command suffered ten casualties, three killed or mortally wounded. The Nez Percés had two wounded. Howard was delayed while he attempted to refurbish his pack train, and the Nez Percés crossed Yellowstone Park unmolested.

Pictures on signs: None

Color: White background with brown lettering.

Other Signs: None



Site # 3-15: Hwy. 20 – Targhee Pass

Location: Targhee Pass

Site Description: Roadside turnout

Ownership: None

Media: wood sign on treated timbers

Comments: Sign is located on the side of the road, has some wear, faded, wood looks worn.

Sign Text:

Targhee Pass

This pass across the Continental Divide takes its name from an early day Bannack Chief. Free trappers and the fur brigades of the Missouri River and Rocky Mountain Fur companies were familiar with the surrounding country in the early part of the last century.

Chief Joseph led his band of Nez Perce Indians through this pass in 1877 while making his famous 2000 mile march from the Central Idaho country in an effort to evade US Troops and find sanctuary in Canada. He was closely followed through the pass by the pursuing forces of General Howard. Joseph repulsed or outdistanced all the commands sent against him until finally forced to surrender to C. Nelson A. Miles at the Battle of the Bears Paw when within a comparatively few miles of the Canadian line.

Pictures on signs: None

Color: Wooden sign with engraved white lettering.

Other Signs: Welcome to Montana,



3-16a

Site # 3-16a: Yellowstone NP, West Entrance, NPS

Site Description: Chief Joseph Story Turnout

Location: Sign location was at M.P. 7.5 West Yellowstone Entrance

Media: Plexiglass, with wood mount structures

Comments: Sign is very faded, hard to read. NPS Sign no. 810

Sign Text: Avenue of Travel

Imprints of moccasins followed by horses hoofs and wagon wheels gradually established this river valley approach from the west.

Exploration Parties, Nez Perce Indians pursued by soldiers, and Park Visitors soon wore a rough wagon trail through the valley

Indians and mountain men came this way in search of meat and furs or to satisfy their curiosity. Some left fragmentary records.

Gold seekers led by Walter DeLacy entered Yellowstone from the south in 1863 and departed via the Madison River.

Stagecoaches travelled the route from 1880 to 1917. Early service was from Virginia City to the Lower Geyser Basin.

The 95 mile trip took 16 hours. Stages later met trains at Monida, Montana. In 1907 the railroad reached West Yellowstone.

"I had heard in the summer of 1833, while at rendezvous, that remarkable boiling springs' had been discovered, on the sources of the Madison... I determined to examine them myself...

I parted with the company after supper, and, taking with me two Pen-d'orielles, set out at a round pace... and reached the vicinity of the springs about dark, [next day] having seen several small lakes or ponds, on the sources of the Madison...



From the surface of a rocky plain or table, burst forth columns of water, of various dimensions, projected high in the air, accompanied by loud explosions and sulfurous vapors, which were highly disagreeable to the smell..."

NPS Sign no. 816

Sign Text:

The Nez Perce Campaign – 1877

White man desired the homeland of these Indians in the Kamiah and Wallow Valleys of Idaho and Oregon, Successive treaties established ever-shrinking reservations.

Some Nez Perce became farmers and stockmen. Others preferred a freer existence and would not sign treaties or occupy reservations. Under Chiefs Joseph, Whitebird, Looking Glass, Toohoolhoolzote and Hahtalekin they fled from General O.O. Howards troops.

Military pursuit intensified after brooding young warriors killed settlers who had previously wronged them.

In the early morning gloom of July 17 an advance scouting party of Captain Perry's command fired upon on, Indian truce party decisively defeated Perry's command.

The chiefs led their people towards sanctuary in Canada. Their circuitous route to avoid capture covered 1800 miles. About 500 troops were in the field against them and they fought with 2000 of them in four battles and six skirmishes.

The campaign ended on October 5. Chief Joseph led his forlorn people from the ravines and foxholes of Bear Paw Battlefield after a five day siege and surrendered to Colonel Miles and General Howard



NPS Sign no. 818

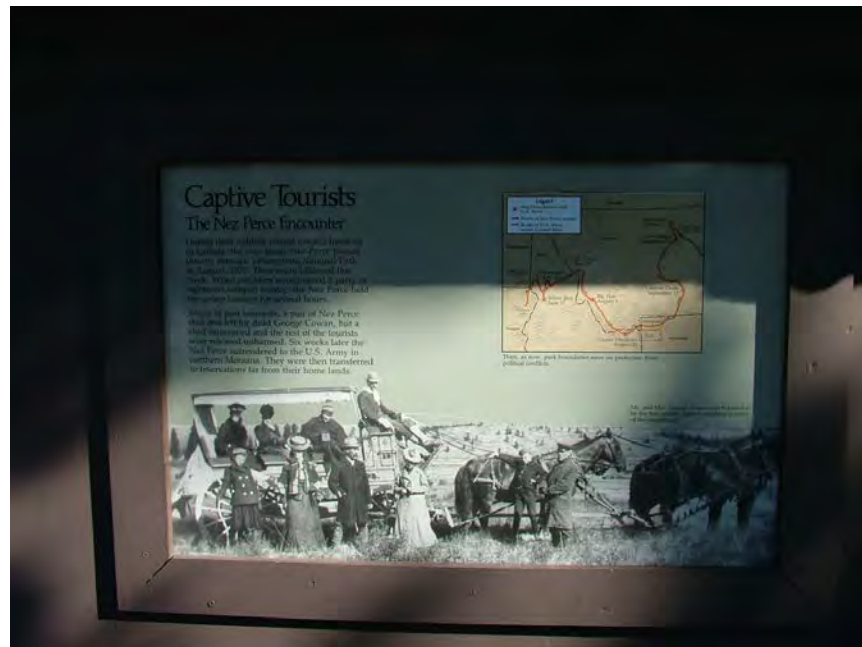
Sign Text:

Captive Tourists

The Nez Perce Encounter

During their fighting retreat toward freedom in Canada, the non-treaty Nez Perce passed directly through Yellowstone National Park in August, 1877. Their route followed this creek. When outriders encountered a party of sightseers camped nearby, the Nez Perce held the group hostage for several hours.

Angry at past betrayals, a pair of Nez Perce shot and left for dead George Cowan, but a chief intervened and the rest of the tourists were released unharmed. Six weeks later the Nez Perce surrendered to the U.S. Army in northern Montana. They were then transferred to reservations far from their home lands.



Nez Perce National Historic Trail



Inventory Section (

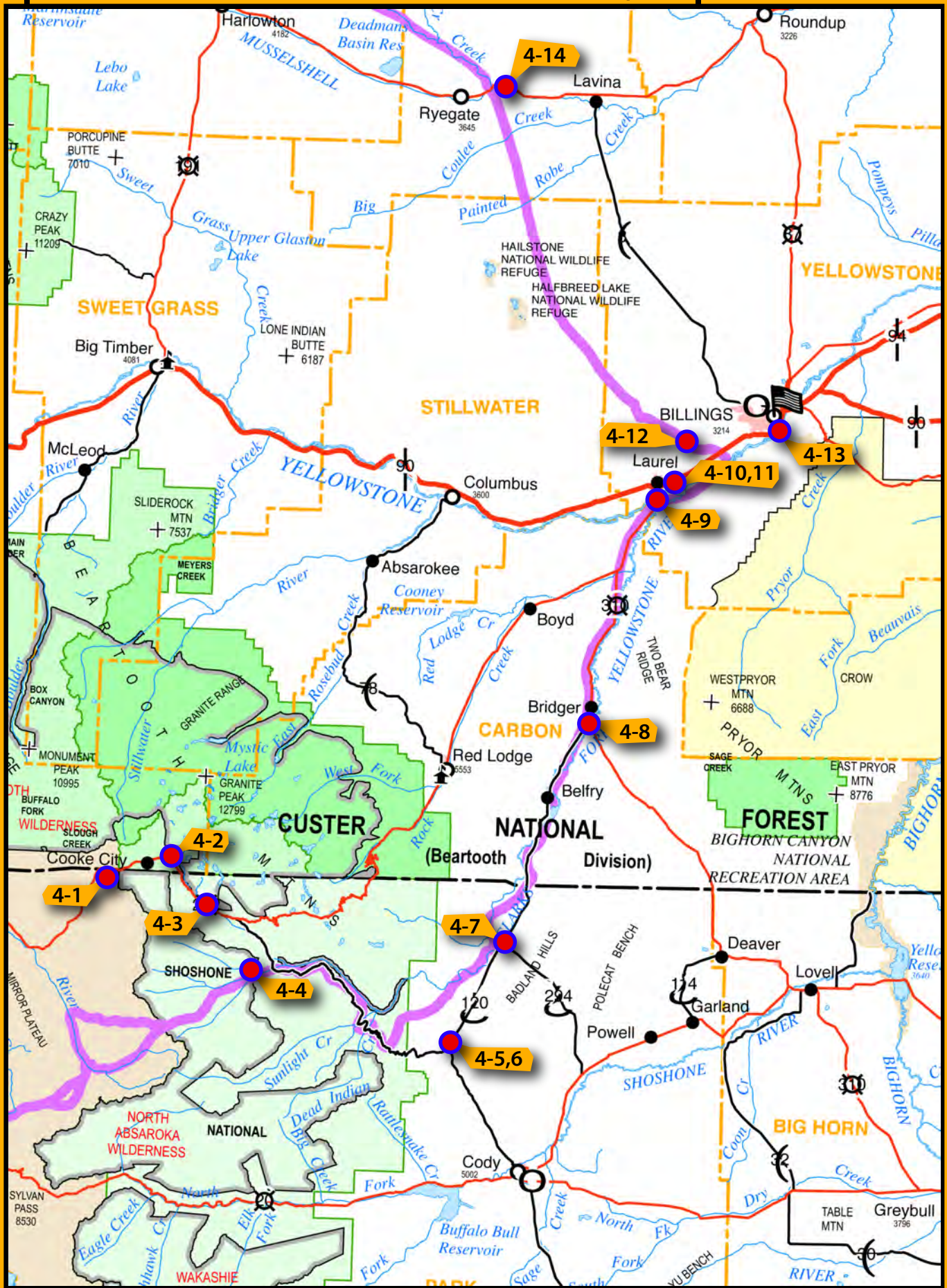
Lolo to Yellowstone

Draft 2011

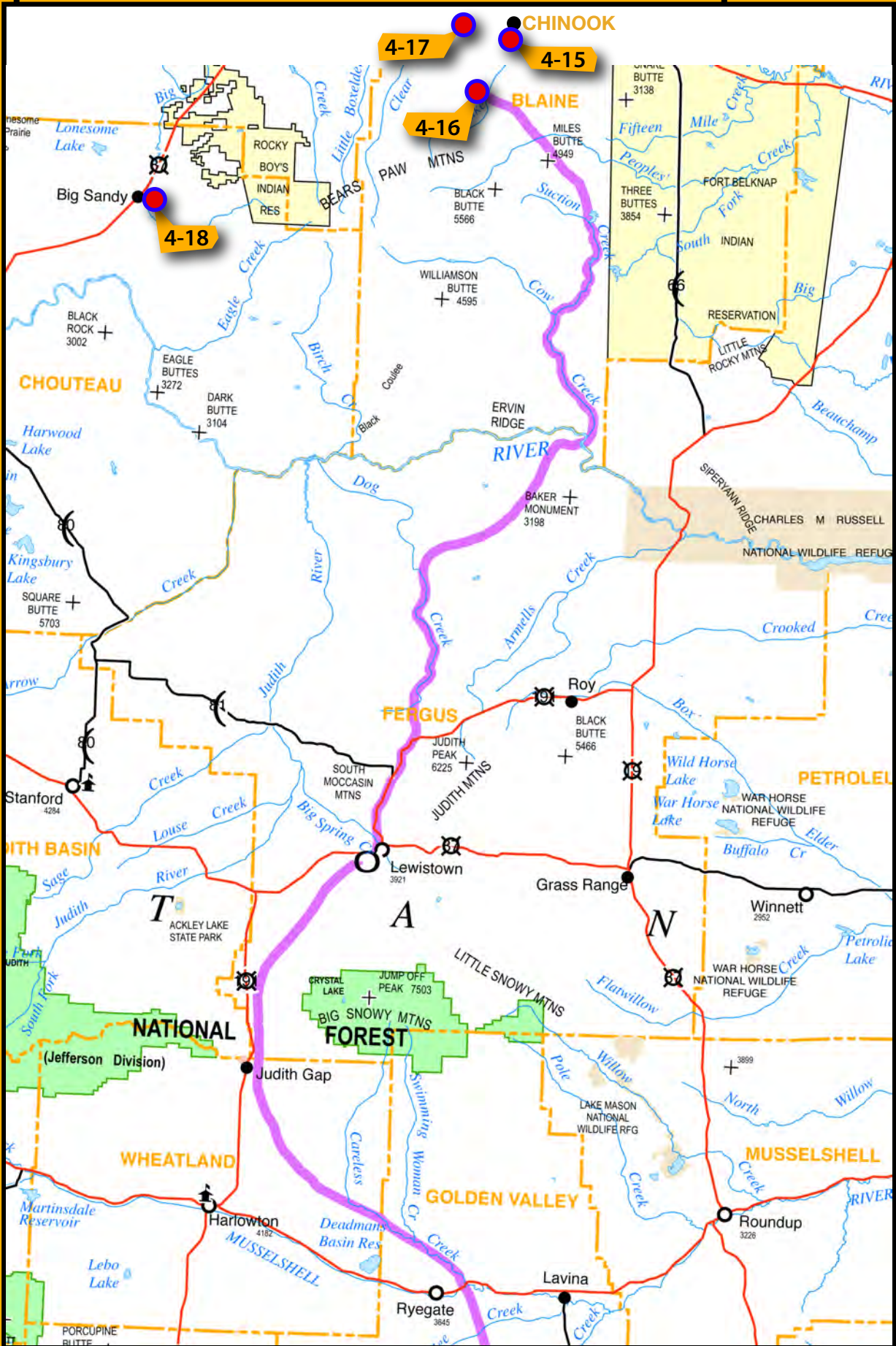
Section 4 – East Yellowstone to Bears Paw

Site Number	Title
4-1	NPNHT Highway sign
4-2	The Summer of 1877
4-3	Chief Joseph Scenic Byway highway sign
4-4a	The Military: The Nez Perce War
4-4b	One Last Mountain: The Nez Perce War
4-4c	Diversion and Escape: The Nez Perce War
4-4d	Dead Indian Hill Summit marker
4-5	Chief Joseph Scenic Highway
4-6	Chief Joseph Scenic Byway highway sign
4-7	Nez Perce Trail
4-8	Jim Bridger, Mountain Man
4-9	The Nez Perce Trail of Tears
4-10	Chief Joseph Monument
4-11	Canyon Creek painting
4-12	Canyon Creek visitor kiosk
4-12a	Canyon Creek monument
4-12b	Nez Perce National Historical Park
4-12c	Battle of Canyon Creek
4-12d	Aftermath of the Battle
4-12e	NP Trail orientation
4-12f	Calamity Jane
4-12g	Sikim
4-13a	Riverfront Park, Billings, MT, Orientation sign
4-13b	The Cochran Ranch
4-14	Chief Joseph Monument
4-15	Blaine County Museum
4-16a*	Bear Paw Battlefield Monuments
4-16b	Bear Paw Battlefield
4-16c	Nez Perce War of 1877
4-16d	Nez Perce National Historical Park
4-16e	The Surrender
4-17	The Battle of Bear Paw
4-18	Cow Island Trail
Miscellaneous	
M-1	Kiosk at Silvergate
M-2	Bronze replica of gun found at Canyon Creek battle site sold to raise funds
	for Canyon Creek kiosk
M-3	Fort Benton Visitor Center

Section 4.1 East Yellowstone to Bears Paw part 1



Section 4.2
East Yellowstone to Bears Paw part 2



***New NPS signs to be installed**

Nez Perce NHP – Orientation Panel – Chinook Office

Nez Perce NHP – Orientation Panel – Bear Paw Trailhead

Bear Paw Battlefield Trail – Bear Paw Trailhead

Last Battle – Bear Paw Trail

Nez Perce Encampment – Bear Paw Trail

No Place to Hide – Bear Paw Trail

Death's Point of Rocks – Bear Paw Trail

We will Stand our Ground – Bear Paw Trail

Soldiers Burials – Bear Paw Trail

October 5, 1877 – Bear Paw Trail

Site # 4-1: Yellowstone National Park Northeast Entrance

Site Description: Nez Perce National Historic Trail sign

Ownership: Hwy/Nez Perce National Historic Trail

Location: Just east of Yellowstone National Park Northeast Entrance on Hwy #212

Media: Standard metal highway sign



Site # 4-2: Cooke City Interpretation

Site Description: Metal cutout of three Indian riders and a sign mounted on iron cutout at a highway pullout with wooden, log barrier and landscaping

Ownership: Gallatin National Forest

Location: East of Cooke City near Colter Pass summit 4 + miles from Cooke City North side of Highway #212

Media: High density resin sign mounted on 1/4" iron, cutout figures also of 1/4" iron

Sign Text:

The Summer of 1877

For three months the members of the Nez Perce non-treaty bands had been constantly on the move evading the military. Scouts ranged in front and guarded behind the traveling village of mostly children, women and old people, as they sought safety and the hope of peace in Canada with Sitting Bull's band of Sioux. Guided for a time by a white miner captured at Yellowstone Lake, the Nez Perce now followed an obscure path over the Absaroka divide.

When General Howard's command passed through Cooke City, they found miners barricaded and ready to repulse an attack. But the Nez Perce had by-passed the area, traveling along a drainage south of here. The Army then proceeded over Colter Pass and found the abandoned Nez Perce camp at Crandall Creek. From here history swept Nez Perce and army troops across the Yellowstone River and north to the Bear Paws Mountains and the final battle of the war.

Passing through rough terrain The Army had a difficult time tracking the Nez perce through this country. Which way to go? The Indians might be traveling through the Wind River, Stinking Water River, or the Clark's Fork out of Yellowstone Park. Colonel Sturgis' 7th Cavalry was maneuvering to cut them off before they emerged toward the Yellowstone valley, while General Howard's command doggedly kept up the push from behind. The army scouts had been killed, breaking communication between the two commands and adding to the confusion.

The Absaroka divide was some of the toughest country the army had yet to cross. Relentlessly climbing by day, their blankets whipped off by the freezing wind at night, many of the soldiers thought they were not going to make it.

It was an even more remarkable journey over this very rugged terrain for the Nez Perce. Not only did they face the same hardships of cold and the physically demanding trail, but they were also able to successfully hide the passing of 800 people and 3,000 horses for almost 85 miles.



Site # 4-3: Chief Joseph Scenic Byway Sign

Site Description: Chief Joseph Scenic Byway beginning and ending sign

Ownership: Hwy/Chief Joseph Scenic Byway

Location: Beginning and end of Chief Joseph Scenic Byway just beyond the junction of Hwy #212 with Wyoming #296

Media: standard painted metal highway sign



Site # 4-4: Dead Indian Pass Overlook

Site Description: three interpretive signs and one historic marker at a highway pull-off with restrooms, paved parking area, sidewalk and paved and fenced (decorative iron fencing) viewing areas.

Ownership: Shoshone National Forest

Location: Dead Indian Pass Overlook on Wyoming Hwy #296

Media: high density urethane type material in black frames and mounted on stone bases and one historic marker bronze in sandstone.



Site # 4-4a

Sign Text:

The Military: The Nez Perce War

As a band of Nez perce Indians outfought and outmaneuvered the U.S. Cavalry in the fall of 1877, newspapers picked up on the drama. Some headlines read: "Comic Operas, Bungling of Pursuer, Salutes to a Most Remarkable Enemy, and the Nez Perce Splendid Military Intellect." This did not sit well with General Oliver O. Howard, who was leading the campaign, nor his superiors. The majority of public sentiment was blatantly against the Army in this David and Goliath war which had been costly in lives, funding and public acceptance.

The Seventh Cavalry had all but been wiped out with Colonel Custer a year earlier at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, and the unit was anxious for vindication. Colonel Samuel D. Sturgis, leading the Seventh, had also lost a son, Lieutenant Jack Sturgis, in that battle. General Howard also was without a single successful engagement to this point. The campaign became a personal crusade for the military officers.

But at last, in the Army's estimation, the campaign was coming to an end. The military strategists laid a broad net around Yellowstone, and all exits from the park were blocked with 20 companies in place. This would prevent any escape for the Nez Perce and put a quick end to this embarrassing conflict.



Site # 4-4b

One Last Mountain: The Nez Perce War

The ridge you are standing on was the last significant barrier for more than 600 Nez Perce Indians and their 2,000 horses as they fled the pursuing U.S. Cavalry. After the battle of the Big Hole a month earlier, they knew the Army did not intend to leave any survivors. This became a “flight for their lives.”

Now on the run for more than 60 days, they had hoped that by crossing this pass and reaching the plains they could join their old allies, the Crows, or hasten on to join Sitting Bull in Canada. They began climbing to this point from the valley below. By this time, all were exhausted and heartbroken from the long journey and aiding their sick and wounded. But they also knew that winter was closing in. If they could make it over this mountain fast enough they just might escape the Army and regain their freedom.

Accounts tell us that the Nez Perce left a wounded warrior on this mountain. He was discovered and killed by Army scouts. Thus this site became known as “Dead Indian Pass.”



Site # 4-4c

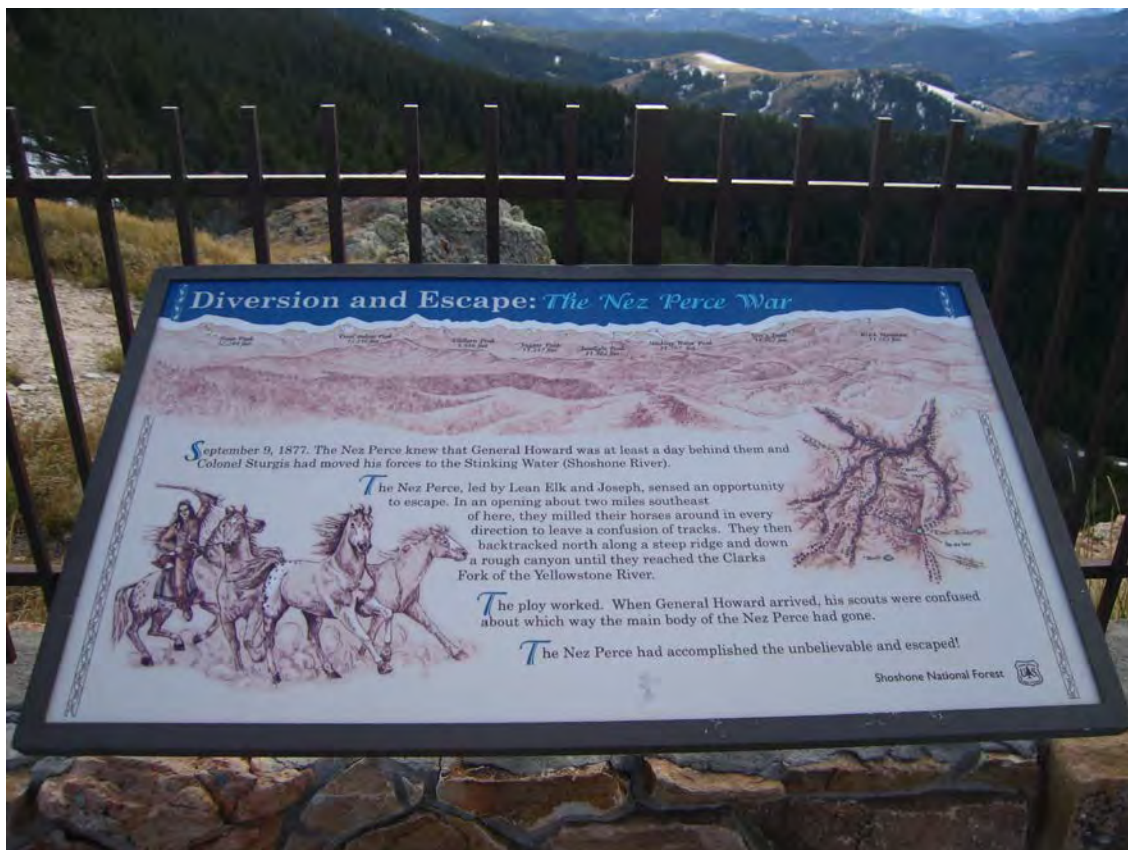
Diversion and Escape: The Nez Perce War

September 9, 1877. The Nez Perce knew that General Howard was at least a day behind them and Colonel Sturgis had moved his forces to the Stinking Water (Shoshone River).

The Nez Perce, led by Lean Elk and Joseph, sensed an opportunity to escape. In an opening about two miles southeast of here, they milled their horses around in every direction to leave a confusion of tracks. They then backtracked north along a steep ridge and down a rough canyon until they reached the Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone River.

The ploy worked. When General Howard arrived, his scouts were confused about which way the main body of the Nez Perce had gone.

The Nez Perce had accomplished the unbelievable and escaped!



Site # 4-4d

Dead Indian Hill Summit 8,000 feet

This pass is the summit of Dead Indian Hill, through this portal great herds of wild game seasonally migrated from the mountains to the plains. This high pass was the gate way for countless Indian hunting and war parties, and this portal Chief Joseph in 1877 led his Nez Perce Indians in a strategic and defensive retreat pursued by U.S. Army soldiers over this one and only opening of the valleys to the west traveled a vast army of miners to seek the wealth of Cooke City, and down this steep hill the early settlers of sunlight basin braved its dangers. The first road improvement was made possible in 1909 by dwellers of Sunlight Valley whose names are here inscribed.

Oliver Whitney-Hervy G. Marvin-Samuel Thompson-John R. Painter-Evelyn T. Painter-Mary B. Painter-Wm. T. Painter-Marguerite M. Painter-John K. Rollinson-Willard D. Ruscher

This historical marker dedicated 1940



Site #: 4-5: Chief Joseph Scenic Highway

Site Description: gravel highway pullout, no amenities

Ownership: Wyoming Department of Transportation

Location: Highway pullout just before the junction of Wyoming #296 with Wyoming #120

Media: Painted metal sign

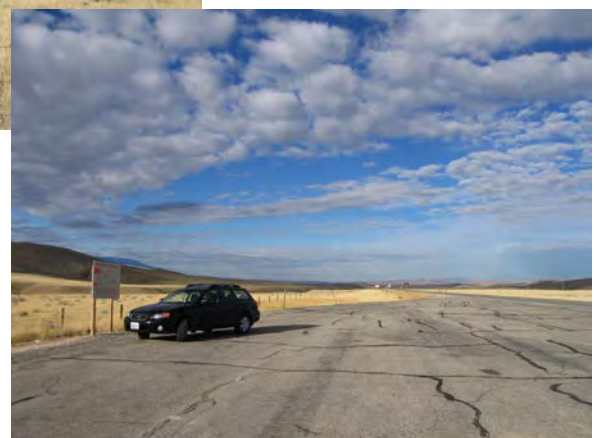
Sign Text:

Chief Joseph Scenic Highway

North of here on September 9, 1877, the Nez Perce, led by Joseph (Hin-mah-too0yah-lat-keht, or Thunder Traveling to Loftier Mountain Heights”) and other chiefs eluded Colonel Samuel D. Sturgis and troops of the 7th Cavalry. General O.O. Howard had directed Sturgis to block escape routes eastward out of Yellowstone, in support of Howard’s forces in relentless pursuit of the Nez Perce.

Sturgis had only a year earlier lost his son in the defeat of the 7th at the Battle of the Little Big Horn, and had been anxious to avenge himself. The Nez Perce, however, decoyed Sturgis southward to the Shoshone River (then called the “Stinkingwater”) doubled back north across the plain, and headed toward Canada where they hoped to rendezvous with Sitting Bull.

They met instead Colonel Nelson Miles’ forces at the Battle of the Bear’s Paw. On October 5, 1877 only 40-miles from the Canadian border, Joseph surrendered. “From where the sun now stands. I will fight no more forever.”



Site # 4-6

Site Description: highway sign End of Chief Joseph Scenic Byway

Ownership: Wyoming Department of Transportation

Location: 1/4 mile from junction with Wyoming State Hwy #120

Media: Painted metal sign



Site # 4-7:

Site Description: parking lot for a community park, fishing access and tavern

Ownership: erected by the Boy Scouts in 1983

Location: community of Edelweiss population 3; across from access to the fish hatchery on the Clark Fork River, near MP 129.5 on Wyoming State Hwy #120

Media: Routed wooden sign

Sign Text:

Wyoming

Nez Perce Trail

In 1877, The Nez perce Indians of Idaho, led by chief Joseph, fled the U.S.Army. They crossed the Clark's River near this point, while trying to outrun the soldiers to Canada.

Erected 1987 by Boy Scout Troop 53



Site # Miscellaneous-1: Welcome to Silvergate

Site Description: Highway pullout with a sign that says Welcome to Silvergate. Empty two-panel wooden kiosk and two individual signs one, on either side of the kiosk, with cutouts on the top of the sign mounts. Signs have been covered for the season

Ownership:

Location: Just east of the Northeast entrance to Yellowstone National Park and before Cook City on Hwy #212.

Media:



Site # 4-8: Jim Bridger, Mountain Man.

Site Description: sign in city park along with visitor information, picnic shelters, restrooms

Ownership: Montana Department of Transportation

Location: along Hwy #212/210 in the town of Bridger, Montana

Media: routed wood sign, rock sign mount and carved header, carving of tipis and Indian riders on horseback

Sign Text:

Jim Bridger, Mountain Man

Jim Bridger arrived in Montana in 1822 as a member of a Rocky Mountain Fur Co. brigade. He roamed the entire Rocky Mountain region and often came through this part of the country. A keen observer, a natural geographer and with years of experience amongst the Indians, he became invaluable as a guide and scout for wagon trains and Federal troops following the opening of the Oregon Trail.

He shares honors with John Colter for first discoveries in the Yellowstone Park country. He was prone to elaborate a trifle for the benefit of pilgrims. It was Bridger who embroidered his story of the petrified forest by asserting that he had seen "petrified bird, sitting in a petrified tree, singing a petrified song."

The Clarks Fork of the Yellowstone was named for Capt. Wm. Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Chief Joseph led his band of Nez Perce Indians down this river when he made his famous retreat in the summer of 1877.



Site # 4-9: The Nez Perce Trail of Tears

Site Description: sign in a city park, picnic facilities, restrooms, extensive historic buildings used as a gun club

Ownership: city?

Location: Riverside Park, Laurel, Montana

Media: painted, routed wood

Sign Text:

The Nez Perce Trail of Tears

On Sept. 12, 1877., Chief Joseph and his small band of about 450 Nez Perce Indians crossed the Yellowstone near here on their 1800 mile flight to freedom in Canada. They fought 5 major battles with the army before meeting final defeat in the Bearpaw Mtns near Havre. One of these battles was fought against Col. Sturgis at Canyon Cr., 7 miles north of Laurel.



Site # 4-10:

Site Description: monument to Chief Joseph in city park and adjacent to Chamber of Commerce visitor information center, to commemorate Montana state centennial

Ownership: Laurel Chamber of Commerce

Location: on the east side of Hwy #212

Media: concrete base with sheet steel medallion cutouts and sculpture by Gary L. Temple, 1989

Sign Text:

The non-treaty Nez Perce Indians led by Chief Joseph, passed near this area on their 1300 mile flight from the U.S. Army known as the Nez Perce Indian War of 1877. They engaged in the famous Canyon Creek Battle north of here., this battle is marked by a plaque seven and one half miles north of this point.



Site # Miscellaneous-2

Site Description: replica of revolver found on the battle site cast as a fund raiser to fund the visitor kiosk at the battle site

Ownership: friends of Canyon Creek

Location:

Media: cast bronze mounted on a wooden base Described by Milt Wester at the Laurel newspaper office. He said most of the replicas were purchased by the National Park Service



Site # 4-11

Site Description: mural of the battle at Canyon Creek

Ownership: Laurel Bank

Location: First Avenue on Hwy #532 in Laurel, Montana

Media: painting by Bernard P. Thomas 1970



Site # 4-12

Site Description: open visitor kiosk with a parking area and a historic monument
(incomplete)

Ownership: Friends of Canyon Creek (NPS)

Location: where Hwy #532 crosses Canyon Creek

Media: an open shelter of four stone columns holding a roof over a cement pad with a sandstone monument holding a bronze plaque



4-12a

Site# 4-12a: Canyon Creek monument

Site Description: Sandstone boulder with a bronze plaque

Sign Text:

Canyon Creek Battle

September 13, 1877

Soldiers were elements from the Seventh and First Cavalry and the Fourth Artillery.

Colonel Samuel D. Sturgis, commanding.

Casualties, three dead, eleven wounded.

Indians engaged were the Nez Perce tribe, escaping from their reservation and fleeing to Canada. Leader, chief Joseph. The Indians crossed the Yellowstone River,

The Indians crossed the Yellowstone River east of Laurel, burned a stage station on Canyon Creek and cut spokes from a stagecoach wheels for use as quirt handles. They proceeded to this point, where they met and fought the Sturgis command in the area south of this marker.

Yellowstone Historical Society 1958

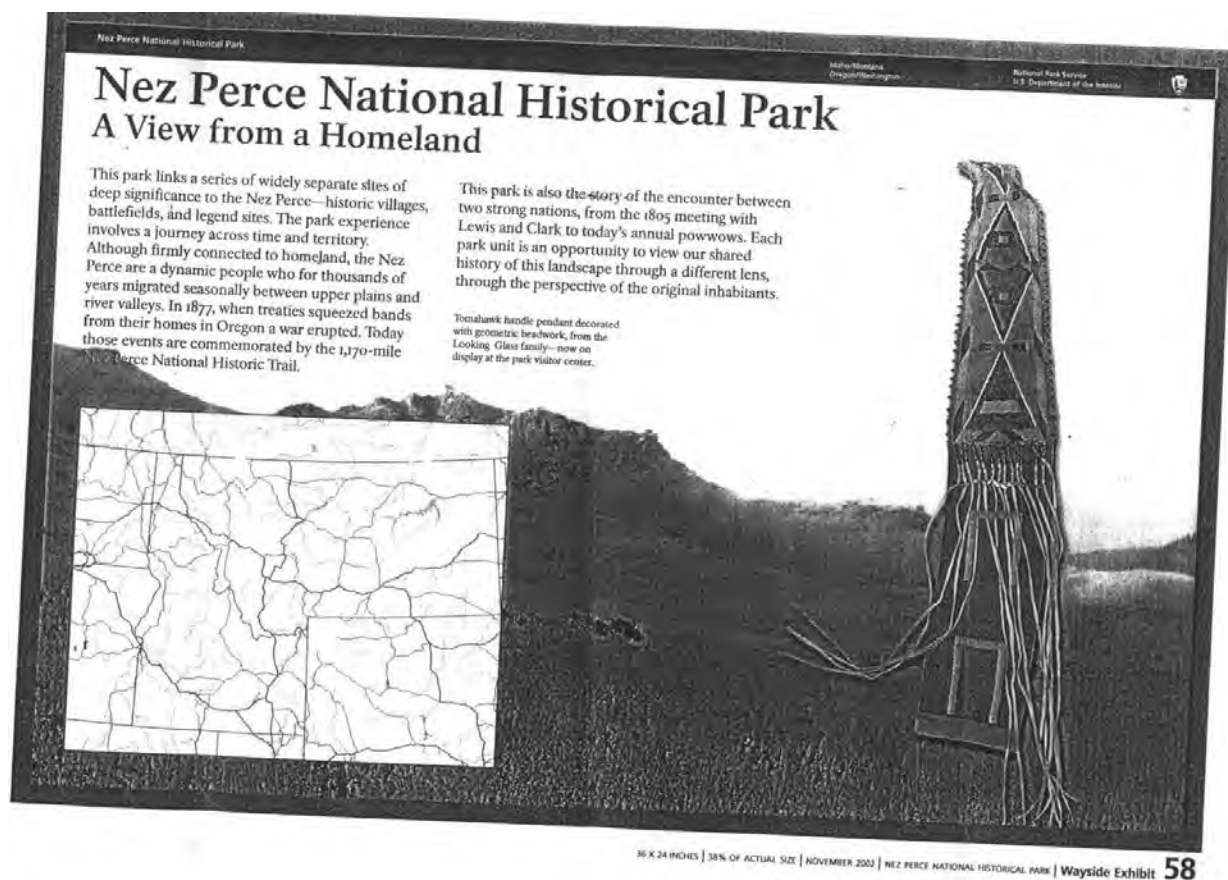


4-12b: NPS sign scheduled to be completed spring of 2006

Sign Text:

This park links a series of widely separate sites of deep significance to the Nez Perce - historic villages, battlefields, and legend sites. The park experience involves a journey across time and territory. Although firmly connected to homeland, the Nez Perce are a dynamic people who for thousands of years migrated seasonally between upper plains and river valleys. In 1877, when treaties squeezed bands from their homes in Oregon a war erupted. Today those events are commemorated by the 1,170-mile Nez Perce National Historic Trail. This park is also the story of the encounter between two strong nations, from the 1805 meeting with Lewis and Clark to today's annual powwows. Each park unit is an opportunity to view our shared history of this landscape through a different lens, through the perspective of the original inhabitants.

Photo caption: Tomahawk handle pendant decorated with geometric beadwork, from the Looking Glass family—now on display at the park visitor center.



Site # 4-12c: NPS scheduled to be completed spring of 2006

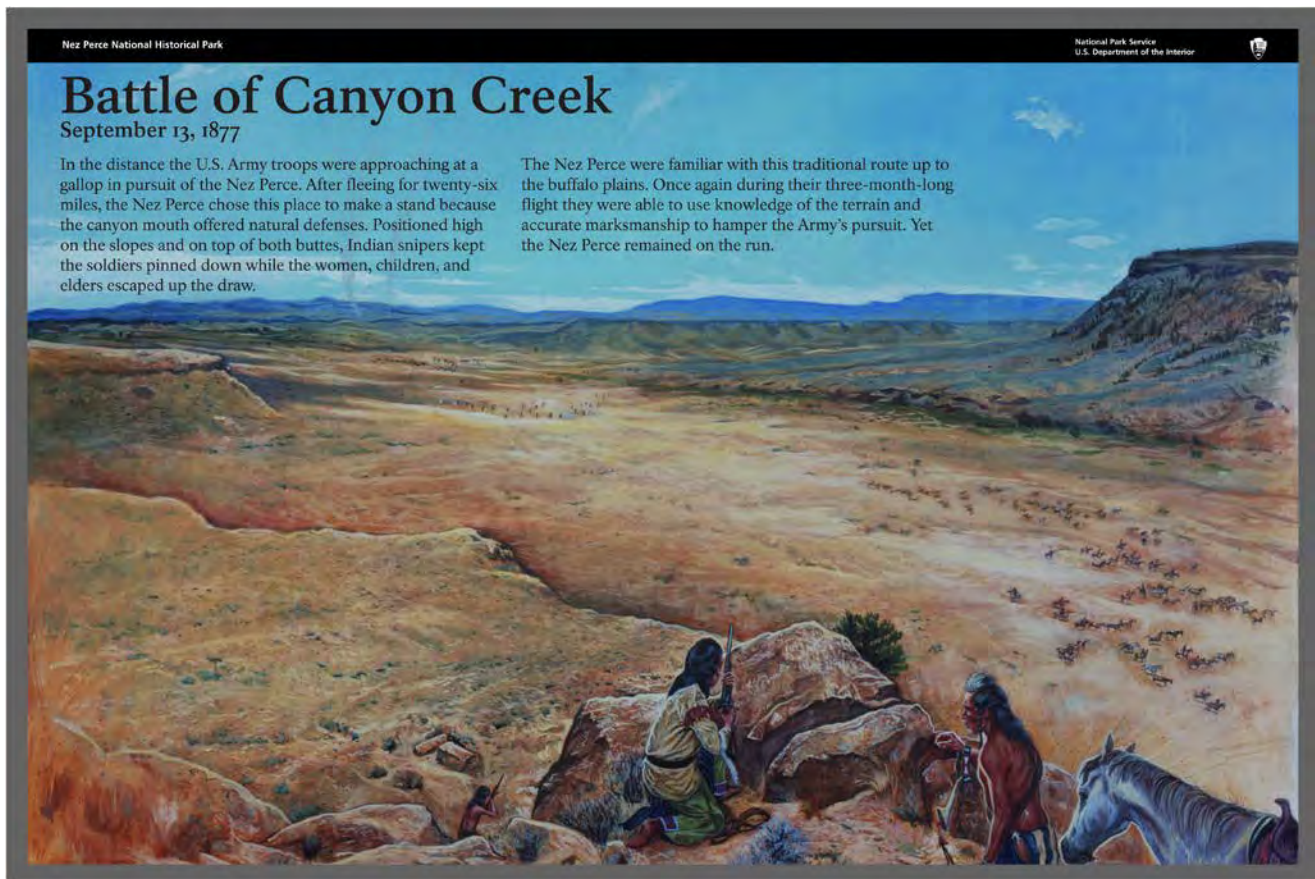
Sign Text:

Battle of Canyon Creek

September 13, 1877

In the distance the U.S. Army troops were approaching at a gallop in pursuit of the Nez Perce. After fleeing for twenty-six miles, the Nez Perce chose this place to make a stand because the canyon mouth offered natural defenses. Positioned high on the slopes and on top of both buttes, Indian snipers kept the soldiers pinned down while the women, children, and old people escaped up the draw.

The Nez Perce were familiar with this traditional route up to the buffalo plains. Once again during their months'-long flight they were able to use knowledge of the terrain and accurate marksmanship to hamper the Army's pursuit. Yet the Nez Perce remained on the run.

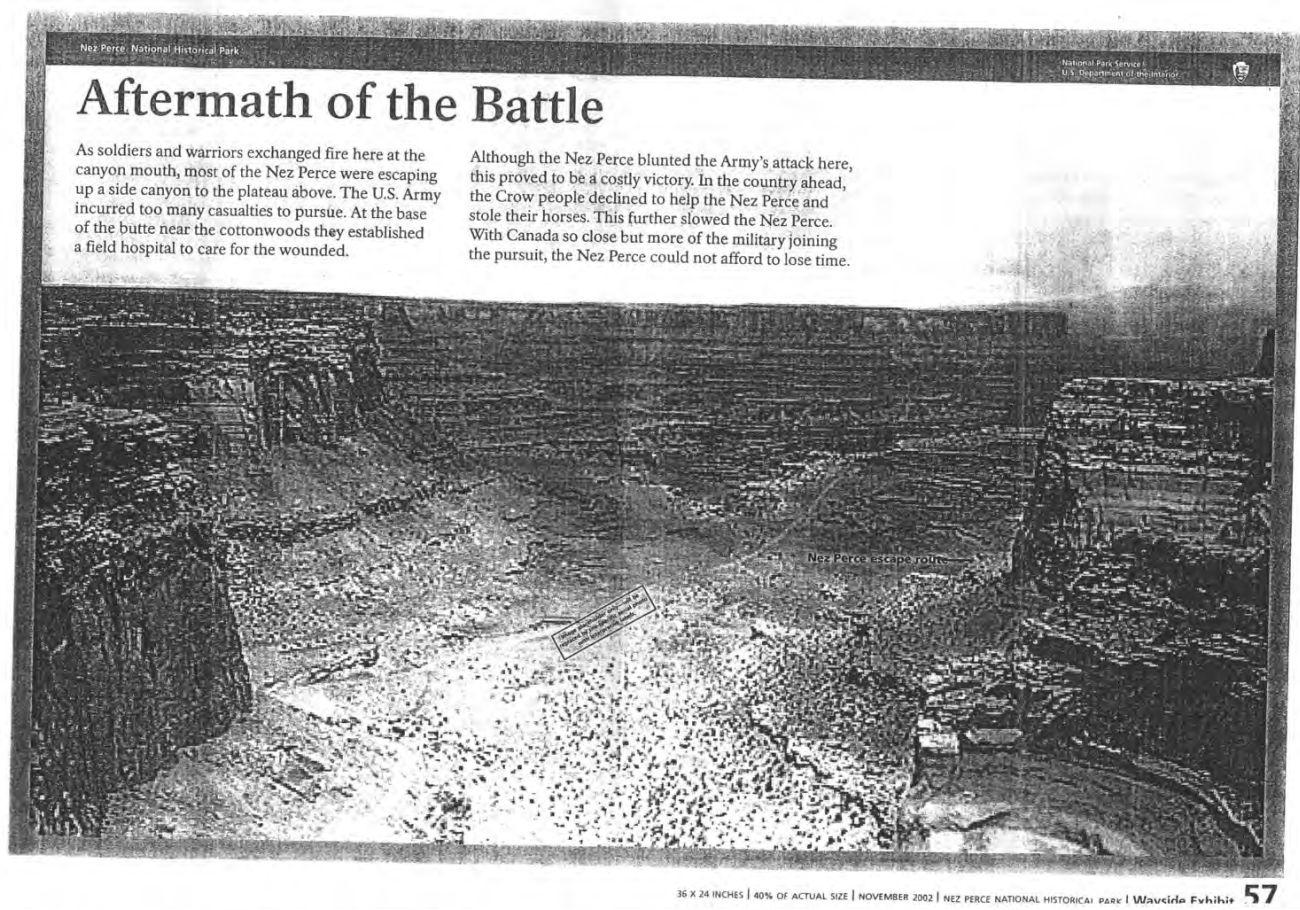


Site # 4-12d: NPS scheduled to be completed spring of 2006

Sign Text:

As soldiers and warriors exchanged fire here at the canyon mouth, most of the Nez Perce were escaping up a side canyon to the plateau above. The U.S. Army incurred too many casualties to pursue. At the base of the butte near the cottonwoods they established a field hospital to care for the wounded.

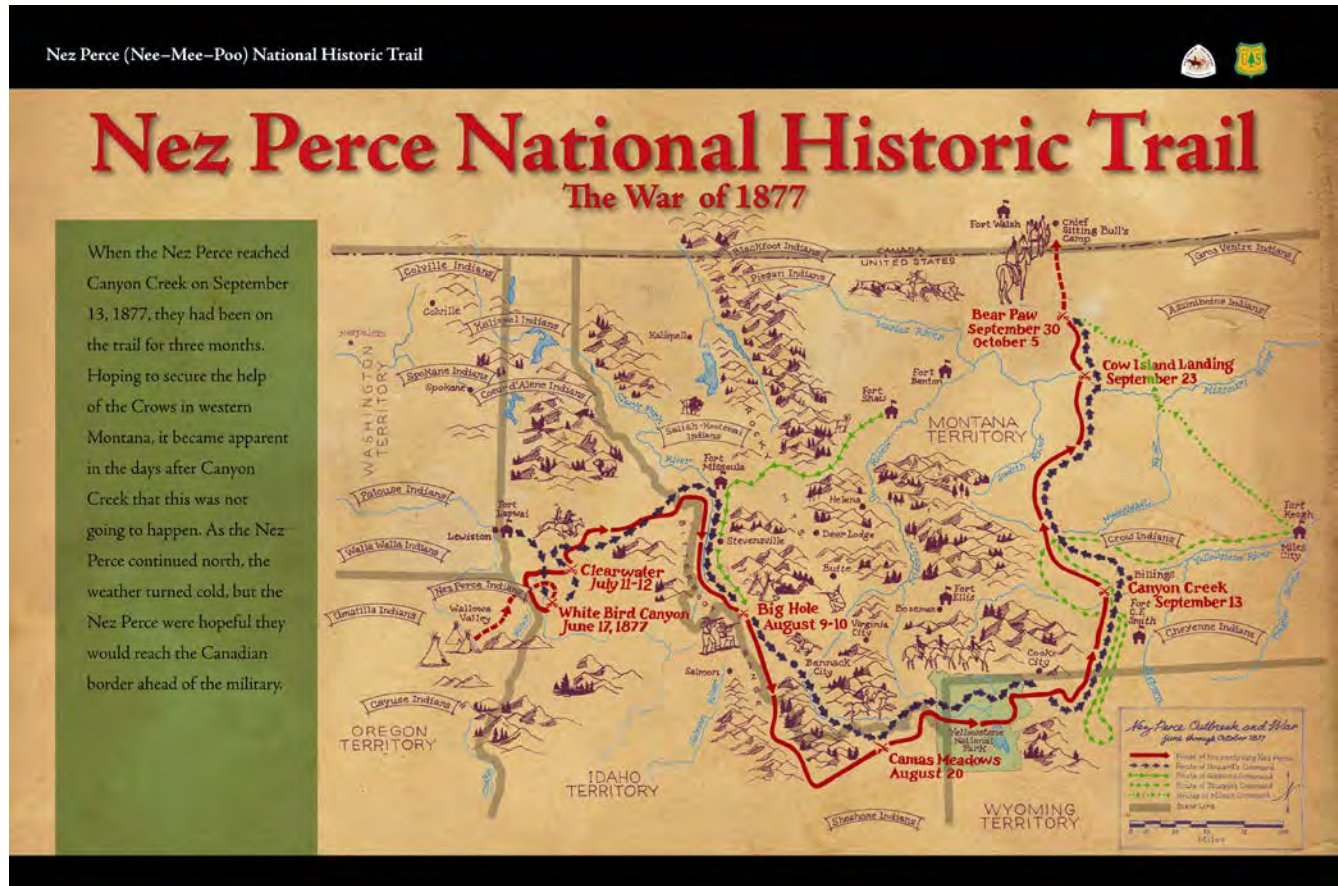
Although the Nez Perce blunted the Army's attack here, this proved to be a costly victory. In the country ahead, the Crow people declined to help the Nez Perce and stole their horses. This further slowed the Nez Perce. With Canada so close but more of the military joining the pursuit, the Nez Perce could not afford to lose time.



Site # 4-12e: HD scheduled to be completed spring of 2006, has not completed final review

Sign Text:

When the Nez Perce reached Canyon Creek on September 13, 1877, they had been on the trail for three months. Hoping to secure the help of the Crows in western Montana, it became apparent in the days after Canyon Creek that this was not going to happen. As the Nez Perce continued north the weather turned cold, but the Nez Perce were hopeful they would reach the Canadian border ahead of the military.



Site # 4-12f: HD scheduled to be completed spring of 2006, has not completed final review


Sign Text:

Life was not easy for Martha Jane Canary, a woman on her own in 1877. Stories about “Calamity Jane”, say she developed the skills to handle horses, drink and j”cuss” like a man. While her ability to live in a man’s world was legendary, she had a softer side.

In September of 1877 she was living at the mouth of the Canyon. After the battle at Canyon Creek, she agreed to nurse the eight injured soldiers as they were transported down the Yellowstone River.


From Canyon Creek, the wounded men traveled forty miles down the north bank of the Yellowstone River to Pompey’s Pillar. There, they secured a wide-bottomed mackinaw. This riverboat, used to haul freight, took them to a hospital on the Tongue River. The entire trip took eight days.

Nez Perce (Nee–Mee–Poo) National Historic Trail



Calamity Jane


Martha Jane Canary



Life was not easy for Martha Jane Canary, a woman on her own in 1877. Stories about “Calamity Jane”, say she developed the skills to handle horses, drink and “cuss” like a man. While her ability to live in a man’s world was legendary, she had a softer side.

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Martha Jane Canary (ca. 1852-1903)

4-12g

Site # 4-12g : HD scheduled to be completed spring of 2006, has not completed final review

“The Nez Perce were skilled around horses and bred animals that had stamina, strength and agility. Their horse herd at Canyon Creek seemed to stretch out for a mile. This supply of fresh mounts allowed them to travel fast while the military often struggled along on worn out mounts. Capturing the horse herd was a chief objective of the Army.”

“The Nez Perce Tribe has revived an active horse breeding program. The Nez Perce Horse Registry has crossed Appaloosas with Akhal-Teke stallions from Central Asia creating a new breed that have the same qualities as the horses seen more than a century ago.”

Nez Perce (Nee-Mee-Poo) National Historic Trail



“Sik'em”

The Nez Perce word for Horse



The Nez Perce were skilled around horses and bred animals that had stamina, strength, and agility. In 1877, a large horse herd accompanied the Nez Perce and their allies. At Canyon Creek the herd stretched out for over a mile. This supply of fresh mounts allowed the Nez Perce to travel fast while the military often struggled along on worn out mounts. Capturing the horse herd was a chief objective of the Army.



The Nez Perce Tribe and Chief Joseph Foundation have both established successful breeding programs to preserve their Appaloosa line and to reconnect Nez Perce people with their strong horse heritage.

Site # 4-13a

Site Description: city park on the river with walking trails, interpretation, picnic and playground facilities, restrooms

Ownership: Western Heritage Center, Billings, Montana

Location: South of I-90 at Lake Josephine on the Yellowstone River

Media: photo engraved or etched metal (signs are all badly scratched with graffiti)

Map Text:

Riverfront Park Historic Points of Interest

1. Joseph Cochran Farm

Mr. Joseph M.V. Cochran was the first settler to file for government land in present-day Yellowstone County. Two trappers died here September 1877 during the Nez Perce Conflict (See marker).

(topics at other markets)

Captain William Clark

3. The Josephine

4. Newman Settlement

5. Indian Point (Crow burials)

6. River Crossings

7. Newman School

8. Amusement park



4-13b

Site # 4-13b: The Cochran Ranch

Joseph Cochran settled here in 1877. He was the first white settler near present-day Billings. Six Indians burned his first home, a tent, and killed two trapper guests. The warriors were strays from the main body of chief Joseph's Nez Perce who fled through Montana towards Canada.

Determined to stay, Cochran built a home 500 feet due east of this point (Today the site is in Lake Josephine). To earn a living Cochran farmed, sold vegetables to the army and cut timber for the Coulson sawmill. After this area was surveyed and platted, Cochran filed for a homestead on this section at Bozemen Land Office in 1879 - the first for Yellowstone County. This section has been set aside for use by the State to support schools. Cochran moved to another homestead a few miles to the northeast.



Site # 4-14

Site Description: Chief Joseph Monument

Ownership: 1975 Golden Valley Bicentennial Commission

Location: just west of the intersection of Hwy 3 with Hwy 12, north of Lavina heading west toward Harlowton at a highway pullout on the north side of Hwy 12.

Media: carved or sand blasted granite on a concrete base

Sign Text:

The Nez Perce people, under the leadership of their great chief, Joseph, crossed the Musselshell River near here on September 17, 1877. They had left their Idaho homeland in a valiant but futile effort to reach Canada. Their march marked by several skirmishes with the U.S. Army, ended at the fateful battle of the Bear's Paw with their surrender to Colonel Nelson A. Miles October 5, 1877.



Site # 4-15

Site Description: Blaine County Museum

Ownership: Blaine County

Location: Chinook, Montana

Media: multi-media video presentation

Site Description: A recounting of the battle consisting of narrative, sound effects and featuring the above oil paintings and bronze sculptures by Lorenzo Ghiglieri highlighting the narrative.



Site # 4-15

Site Description: Various displays relating to the conflict throughout the museum; historic photos of Cow Island Landing and Steamer, photos of Miles, Howard, Joseph; various military artifacts, 1936 map of Bears Paw battle site, 50th Anniversary photos of battle site.











Site # 4-16: Bear Paw Battlefield

Site Description: Parking, restrooms and interpretive trail

Ownership: NPS

Location: Nez Perce National Historical Park, Bear Paw Battlefield

Media: fiberglass interpretive signs in low angle metal bases, bronze plaques on stone monuments, obelisk



4-16a

Site # 4-16a

Site Description: monuments

Ownership: NPS

Location: Nez Perce National Historical Park, Bear Paw Battlefield

Media: boulders with bronze plaques



4-16a



4-16a



Site # 4-16b**Site Description:** low angle interpretive sign: Bear Paw Battlefield**Ownership:** NPS**Location:** Bear Paw Battlefield**Media:** fiberglass interpretive sign in metal sign mount Bear Paw Battlefield**Sign Text:**

C'Aynnim 'Allkinwaaspa

On September 19, 1877, about 700 Nez Perce men, women and children camped in the basin before you. Exhausted from four months of flight, they hoped to rest and hunt buffalo. This was an ideal location, providing food, water, and shelter from the wind. Just two days from the Canadian border and freedom, their long journey was about to come to a tragic end.

Early on the morning of September 30, Colonel Miles scouts discovered the camp. As Nez Perce warriors rushed to the defense, 400 soldiers and scouts attacked. The 7th Cavalry charged the village, while the 2nd Cavalry captured the Nez Perce horses. The 5th Infantry was held in reserve. The Nez Perce repelled the attack.

Another attempt to overrun the camp was made in the early afternoon. The battle became a siege. During the six-day siege about 200 Nez Perce, which included Chief White Bird, managed to reach Canada where they joined Sitting Bull's Lakota near Fort Walsh. On the afternoon of October 5, Chief Joseph surrendered his rifle to end the suffering of women and children.

This site is sacred. Please treat offerings with respect. Do not touch or remove them. Help preserve the battlefield by staying on the 1.5 mile trail. Collecting artifacts is illegal. Watch for rattlesnakes. C'Aynnim 'Allkinwaaspa is the Nez Perce name for this site. It means "Place of the Manure Fire" because the Nez Perce used buffalo chips as fuel here.

Outside the camp I had seen men killed. Soldiers ten, Indians ten. That was not so bad. But now, when I saw our remaining warriors gone, my heart grew choked and heavy.... Children crying with cold, no fire. There could be no light. Everywhere the crying, the death wail.

Yellow Wolf, Nez Perce

I remained to help care for the wounded and bury the dead. There were fourteen men killed and thirty wounded besides a great many horses were shot and crippled...One cannot realize the feeling engendered by taking part in such a carnage as a battle produces until they have had the actual experience in warfare. It was a horrible and gruesome sight.

Alexander Cruikshank, Army Scout



Bear Paw Battlefield

O Agriem Akkwarapah
On September 26, 1877, about 1,000 Nez Perce, women and children, escaped to the town of Bear Paw. Embarrassed from their inability to fight, they sought to seek and raise cattle. This was a great mistake, providing food, water, and shelter from the army. But you, dear Nez Perce, should have sought and hidden, like your ancestors, about 40 miles to a better spot.

Early on the morning of September 26, Captain Miles sought to surround the camp. As the Nez Perce were gathered on the eastern hill, soldiers and scouts attacked. The Nez Perce fought the battle, while the Nez Perce captured the Nez Perce horses. The Nez Perce were held in reserve. The Nez Perce repulsed the attack.

As the attempt to surround the camp was made in the early afternoon, the battle became a struggle. During the day, they were about 100 Nez Perce, which included Chief White Bird, retreated to north Canada where they joined Sitting Bull's Lakota near Fort Walsh. On the afternoon of October 3, Chief Joseph surrendered his title to end the suffering of women and children.



Originally the Nez Perce had a great victory. They were not so bad. They were, after a long day, victorious. They were, after a long day, victorious. They were, after a long day, victorious.

I understand to help, here for the Nez Perce. I understand to help, here for the Nez Perce. I understand to help, here for the Nez Perce. I understand to help, here for the Nez Perce.

This site is sacred.
Please wear appropriate shoes.
Do not touch or remove items.
Collecting is strictly prohibited.
Watch for rattlesnakes.

Site # 4-16c

Site Description: low angle interpretive sign: Nez Perce War of 1877

Ownership: NPS

Location: Bear Paw Battlefield

Media: fiberglass interpretive sign in metal sign mount

Sign Text:

The Nez Perce War

You know how you feel when you lose kindred friends through sickness-death. You do not care if you die. With us it was worse. Strong men, well women, and little children killed and buried. They had not done wrong to be so killed. We had only asked to be left in our homes, the homes of our ancestors. Our going was with heavy hearts, broken spirits. But we would be free.....

Wetatonmi, Nez Perce woman

The people who defended themselves at this site were know as the Nee-Me--Poo, Nez Perce. With the discovery of gold, the Nez Perce homeland was reduced in 1863 by nearly 90%. In 1877, General Oliver O. Howard received orders t move all Nez Perce onto the reservation in Idaho. In early June violence broke out and approximately 800 Nez Perce men, women, and children began a flight that covered over 1600 miles.

After several battles and skirmishes in Idaho, the U.S. Army pursued the Nez Perce into Montana. On August 9 they were attacked at the Big Hole Valley. Fleeing east through Yellowstone National Park they sought refuge and aid from the Crow tribe. Unable to obtain help, they fled northward, hoping to reach sanctuary in Canada. They were attacked agin on September 11 at Canyon Creek near Laurel.

The final battle of the war was fought here from September 30-October 5, 1877.



Site # 4-16d

Site Description: low angle interpretive sign: Nez Perce National Historical Park

Ownership: NPS

Location: Bear Paw Battlefield

Media: fiberglass interpretive sign in metal sign mount

Sign Text:

Welcome to Nez Perce National Historical Park. You are at one of 38 sites in four states that make up this unique unit of the National Park System. Sites range from traditional legend sites and cemeteries, to ancient and historic village sites, trails and battlefields. Each of these diverse areas can help you gain an understanding of the region's human history.

Nez Perce National Historical Park provides all Americans with an important perspective about our history. It is not the experience of manifest destiny marching west. Instead, it provides a view from a homeland looking out, witnessing the experiences of two nations coming together and the inevitable, enduring changes that resulted for each of them.

Visitor Centers (exhibits and restrooms available)

Spalding Site, Spalding, Idaho; Blaine County Museum, Chinook, Montana; Big Hole National Battlefield, Wisdom, Montana; Lolo Pass, U.S.D.A. Forest Service (open seasonally) Montana/Idaho Border



Site # 4-16e

Site Description: low angle interpretive sign: The Surrender

Ownership: NPS

Location: Bear Paw Battlefield

Media: fiberglass interpretive sign in metal sign mount

Sign Text:

The Surrender

On October 5, near this site, Chief Joseph surrendered to Colonel Miles and General Howard. One witness reported that Chief Joseph delivered these remarks.

Tell General Howard I know his heart. What he told me before I have in my heart. I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed. Looking Glass is dead. Tu-huul-hu-tsiut is dead. The old men are all dead. It is the young men who say yes or no. He who leads the young men is dead. It is cold and we have no blankets. The little children are freezing to death. My people, some of them, have run away to the hills and have no blankets, no food; no one knows where they are - perhaps freezing to death. I want to have time to look for my children and see how many I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me my chiefs. I am tired; my hart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever.

The Nez Perce with Chief Joseph returned to their camp, urging their people to surrender their weapons.

Courtesy of the Blaine County Museum, Lorenzo Ghiglieri, artist



Site # 4-17

Site Description: gravel highway pull out in front of equipment yard

Ownership: MDOT

Location: just west of Chinook on Hwy #2

Media: routed and painted wooden sign with carved top on a cement pedestal

Sign Text:

The Battle of Bear Paw

This battle was fought September 30 to October 5, 1877 on Snake Creek, about 20 miles south of here near the Bear Paw Mountains, where after a five days, siege Chief Joseph, one of five remaining Nez Perce leaders surrendered to Colonel Nelson A. Miles of the U.S. Army.

The usual forked-tongue methods of the shites, which had deprived these Indians of their hereditary lands, caused Joseph and six other primary chiefs to lead their people on a tortuous 2,000 mile march from their home in Idaho to evade U.S. troops and gain sanctuary in Canada.

These great Indian generals fought against fearful odds. They and their warriors could have escaped by abandoning their women, children and wounded. They refused to do this.

Joseph's courage and care for his people were admired by Colonel Miles who promised him safe return to Idaho. One of the black records in our dealings with the Indians was the Government's repudiation of this promise and the subsequent treatment accorded Joseph and his followers.



Site # 4-18

Site Description: gravel highway pull at city park

Ownership:

Location: Big Sandy, Montana

Media: enamel sign

Sign Text:

Freight was unloaded at Cow Island when water dropped so low that steamboats could not traverse the upper river to Fort Benton. For 130 miles the Cow Island Trail wound along the southern foothills of the Bear's Paw to the junction at Big Sandy then southwest into Fort Benton. In 1877 during his famous retreat across Montana, Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce crossed the Missouri at Cow Island. They helped themselves to some freight at the landing and attacked a wagon train in the hills, before meeting their destiny at Snake Creek south of Chinook in the Bear's Paw. There Chief Joseph uttered the famous words, "...from where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever," then passed his rifle in surrender to General Howard and Colonel Miles.



Kiosk at Big Sandy city park with four interpretive panels: Big Sandy, Judith Landing, Carroll Trail, Cow Island Trail.

