

Waterfowl Loving Pipe Organ Pond

Jim Roscoe, Dillon Field Office

A little water is good, and more is definitely better, especially for waterfowl searching for a home after seven years in southwestern Montana.

Late snowstorms and spring rains added enough runoff to Clark Canyon Reservoir and the Beaverhead River to allow the Dillon Field Office to fill the Ducks Unlimited Pipe Organ project in June this year for the first time since it was constructed in 2001. Drought conditions had precluded filling the pond earlier, and the Dillon FO felt that the pond could wait a few years while irrigation water was in such short supply.

This tract of river bottom was acquired, along with important water rights, with Land and Water Conservation and North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) funding in 1998. The shallow, 29-acre wetland was created by constructing 1,100 feet of dike to contain water diverted from the Beaverhead River. River water is diverted just until the pond is filled and then turned off. Consequently, water levels in the wetland fluctuate as under natural conditions, and require periodic recharging with additional diversions. A second filling occurred in July and again in August to keep the pond as full as possible late into the season.

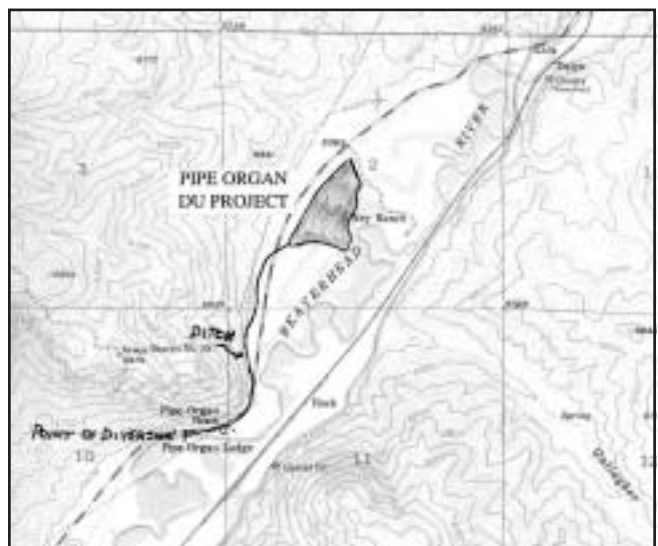
Although the Pipe Organ pond wasn't filled early enough in the season to attract nesting waterfowl and shorebirds this year, the birds showed up on the pond as soon as water was present. Within days, sandhill cranes and great blue herons were prowling the shallow wetland for prey, and Canada geese, mallards and various shorebirds were happily in residence. A group of molting mallard drakes appeared, and stayed on the pond until their flight feathers were regrown, and at least five duck broods moved to the pond from adjacent sloughs. Beaver and muskrat have also been seen at the site.

Partnership expenditures for the Pipe Organ project completed Phase 1 of the Beaverhead Wetlands Protection Project and served as the funding match to support phase 2, which built two more ponds and secured several conservation easements in the Centennial Valley, all for wetland creation and protection. Located just 10 miles south of Dillon, the river bottom tract and pond provide great potential

for environmental education programs, and already is receiving a lot of recreational use by anglers, birdwatchers and folks just out for a pleasant walk.



Wild irises flourish along the shore of the newly filled Pipe Organ Pond constructed primarily with a grant from Ducks Unlimited. *Photo by Jim Roscoe*



Be Safe

If you've spent much time around Marty Ott, then you know he's a man who enjoys telling a story. You also may know that many of his stories have a point.

One such yarn has to do with the time when Marty worked in Zion National Park and found he needed a little help with his irrigation system. He asked a buddy who worked for the local power company for a hand with the project, which involved chipping concrete. Marty says it was a Saturday-morning, backyard kind of project, not really a big deal at all. So he was a little surprised when his friend insisted that both of them wore safety goggles, gloves, earplugs, long-sleeved shirts and over-the-ankle leather footwear. And his friend also preached a quick sermon to Marty about safety on this particular project before they began the work.

"Safety was part of his culture. It was absolutely the biggest part of the equation with him," Marty says. "We rode horses together, and it was the same way then – safety came first."

The backyard project was completed without incident. It's one of those stories that are memorable for what *didn't* happen. The lesson is simple. Safety needs to be a way of thinking, an attitude, something that is inherent in what we do. It needs to be the biggest part of the equation for us. Supervisors and peers can talk about safety until they're a deep blue in the face, but until safe practices become ingrained in our BLM

culture, we're at a higher risk for close calls, accidents, injuries and fatalities.

In Montana and the Dakotas, most things are going well. Our organization is working cohesively. We're getting our jobs done as individuals and collectively. Our organization is generally recognized as one of the best in BLM. We should all take pride in the reputation that we've earned and the work we do.

Yet our accident rate continues to rise. The personal injury frequency rate in Montana and the Dakotas has gone from 4.2 in 2003, to 4.22 in 2004, to 7.15 for the first part of 2005. It's a huge concern to me. We need to reverse that trend, which is well above BLM's national average. More important, those figures represent an increase in employees' pain, suffering and ability to complete their jobs.

Here's something that might come as a surprise. It's not that accidents are occurring in extraordinary or unusual circumstances. Most of our accidents in Montana and the Dakotas happen doing the routine, such as driving, lifting or merely walking around the office, parking lot or ware yard. That indicates many of us are simply not paying attention to what we're doing. We all need to do simple things to decrease our accident rate. Keep an eye on your footing, be aware of your surroundings, and especially, be alert when you sit behind the wheel. Take simple precautions. Recognize risk before it becomes too late. *Pay attention!*



As Marty's story points out, there's only one right way to approach our work: Safety first, safety always. Any other means of conducting our business is not acceptable. Safety needs to be a core value of our organization. It needs management interest and support. And when the safety record slips, managers need to take action. Our goal needs to be nothing less than a perfect safety record. It can be done.

No matter what we accomplish as individuals or as an organization, it will quickly be forgotten if someone is seriously hurt or a fatality occurs within our BLM Montana/Dakotas family. We're too good of an organization to allow that.

Let's remember the example of Marty's friend. When it comes to our well-being and health, there is no gray area. It's either black or white. We're either safe or not. Let's make sure the way we do *everything* in Montana and the Dakotas is the *safe* way.

A. Jerry Meredith
Montana/Dakotas
Associate State Director

Can cattle, sheep and goats be used to manage spotted knapweed?

George Hirschenberger, Missoula Field Office

Seein's Believin'

About 45 landowners and land managers took a close look at a spotted knapweed grazing trial on August 10. They saw for themselves the result of using a combination of cattle, sheep and goats to graze spotted knapweed as a control measure.

Beginning in 2000 the Mannix Brothers Ranch near Helmville began grazing trials to see if goats would graze enough spotted knapweed to contain its spread and improve grass production. After three seasons the goats were no longer available and sheep were used instead for the next three years.

Well?

The Mannix cattle readily eat the basal leaves of the bitter but surprisingly nutritious spotted knapweed in the spring and early summer. Once the plant "bolts," or elevates a seed stalk, however, cattle use becomes less predictable. In some locations cattle will carefully nip off the young flower buds and eat some of the seed stalk; in

others, they may ignore the plant entirely. Both sheep and goats will seek out knapweed flowers in the bud and early flowering stages - before the seed is mature. Sheep, and to a lesser extent goats, also used the knapweed seed stalks after cattle use dropped off.

A rule of thumb discovered in this trial is that a sheep will use knapweed roughly in proportion to the amount that is available to them, up to about 50 percent of their total diet. For example, if knapweed accounts for 30 percent of a

Jerry Marks, Missoula County Extension Agent, estimates that Missoula County has over 600,000 acres of noxious weeds. "It would take \$12 to \$14 million a year for the next 15 years using herbicides to eradicate these weeds in Missoula County alone," commented Marks. "And, even then we would still have noxious weeds. A simple economics analysis dictates that we have to implement long-term and sustainable solutions if we are going to solve the noxious weed problem."

pasture's production, that's about the amount that will be taken free choice in their diet. So, herding sheep into areas where knapweed is concentrated will increase the overall consumption of the plants? Not so fast! The sheep in this trial did not respond well to being "pushed" onto knapweed patches. Herders found that a light touch in moving the sheep was more effective than concentrating the sheep on knapweed patches.

Why not just use herbicides?

While herbicides are effective in controlling knapweed, the most effective ones typically give control for only two to three years. After that, knapweed begins to re-establish. Five years after herbicide application, the landowner is often back to square one. So, while aggressive herbicide use can make economic and ecologic sense for controlling weeds that are not widespread and well established, a better long-term strategy would be a big benefit for managing large infested areas.

In the words of David Mannix, "Spotted knapweed isn't noxious in the environment it evolved in. It is just another forb. Why? Because there is balance with its competitors and enemies. It seems to be in our best interest to enhance the natural progression in our environment to a balance point where, here too, knap-



An interested but skeptical audience listens to David Mannix talk about the grazing trials.

Photo by George Hirschenberger

weed is just another plant in the community. Adding grazing pressure to knapweed without unduly stressing the grass community should reduce its ability to out-compete native species while complementing the effects of biological control. It all boils down to finding long term economic/ecologic sustainable practices.”

Is it practical?

While this multi-species grazing trial has demonstrated that knapweed can provide good forage for livestock, and that well-timed grazing by different kinds of livestock can greatly reduce knapweed’s seed production, some important questions remain.

Can sheep or goats fit into what is now primarily a cattle enterprise and show a profit on the ranch’s books? Or is it better to hire custom grazers for weed management? Maybe forming a local co-operative that owns and manages the sheep would be the best. Can sheep or goat

grazing be used at a large enough scale to make a real difference in western Montana’s knapweed infestations?

And what about the interaction with wildlife?

Sheep and goats attract bears, wolves and other predators. Will multi-species grazing just lead to more conflicts between domestic and wild animals, or can predation be limited by guard dogs and herding?

Many of these questions were tackled after the field tour at an evening panel session. Here local cattlemen had a chance to talk with researchers and practitioners with specialized knowledge in managing sheep and goats. Sev-

eral suggestions were made on how the trials might be changed and improved in coming years. The upshot of all this? It looks like the Mannix Brothers Ranch and their advisory group have more work to do before the jury is in on this grazing trial.

The Mannix Ranch and many others in the Blackfoot Valley are using several other tools to squelch spotted knapweed, leafy spurge and other noxious invaders. These tools include herbicides, early detection and eradication of new invaders, and biological control agents such as the knapweed seed head fly (*Urophora affinis* and *U. quadrifasciata*), the lesser knapweed flower weevil (*Larinus minutus*), the knapweed root weevil (*Cyphocleonus acbates*), and the *yellow winged knapweed root weevil (Agapeda zoegana)*. Revegetation of farmed fields with weed resistant grasses and inter-seeding weedy areas are also being used to lessen the problem with invasive weeds.



Photo by Ali Duval-Jonkel

Ground Broken for Long-Awaited Interpretive Center

Craig Flentie, Lewistown Field Office

Just about everyone you met in Fort Benton this past June 30 was smiling.

That was the morning of the groundbreaking for the new Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Interpretive Center. This new center will be a significant addition to the community.

The groundbreaking was an opportunity for the BLM to thank our partners who have worked so hard to make the new interpretive center a reality. The City of Fort Benton donated the 3.5-acre building site adjacent to the river. The River and Plains Society will be providing staff and volunteers during the summer season and will assist with the gift store operations when the center is open. Various members of these two entities have been involved with the effort to bring an interpretive center to Fort Benton for nearly two decades.

After welcoming the 50-60 audience members and making the necessary introductions, Montana State Director Marty Ott turned the program over to the Department of the Interior's Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management Rebecca Watson. Rebecca talked about the importance of partnerships

in achieving goals as lofty as building new interpretive centers and thanked the citizens of Fort Benton for their support and enthusiasm.

Rebecca then thanked Jack Lepley, a noted local and regional historian and a driving force with the River and Plains Society, for his persistent efforts to make the area's remarkable history available to everyone interested. She also thanked Fort Benton Mayor Rick Morris for leading the city's determined efforts to bring this interpretive center to Fort Benton. Rebecca presented each with an attractive Lewis and Clark plaque as a visible "thank you" for their work.

Jack and Rick each spoke briefly of the tedious journey the partners and the BLM had endured to find their way to this groundbreaking. They also spoke of the rewards the interpretive center would bring and thanked BLM staffers and the agency for their dedicated work.

Other noted guests and participants included Kit Kimball from the Secretary of the Interior's office; June Bailey, Lewistown Field Manager; Gary Slagel, monument manager; Connie Jacobs, interpretive center director; and Dick Fichtler, BLM's Lewis and Clark national coordinator. The primary contractor, architects and engineers who will design and construct the center were also present.

Marty Ott wrapped up the ceremony by inviting the participants to step up to the new red and gold shovels "for a little fun." They all paused briefly to enjoy the moment and then dug in to turn the first shovels of soil, symbolic of the construction work that would soon begin. The center is expected to open in the summer of 2006.



Rebecca Watson presents thank you gifts to Jack Lepley and Rick Morris to acknowledge their contributions toward making the new interpretive center a reality.



Let the construction begin!

MOTHER NATURE REJUVENATES WINSLOW FIRE AREA

Marilyn Krause, Western Zone

Two years ago a lightning-caused fire burned in the Centennial Mountains south of Dillon. More than 6,000 of the burned acres were on BLM-managed land in the Dillon Field Office. As with most wildfires, some areas burned very hot while others were barely scorched, creating a mosaic of regrowth.

A recent thesis on the fire history of the Centennials indicates that Douglas-fir stands of timber experienced fire every 15 to 30 years while high elevation lodgepole pine had a fire interval of 150-300 years. Quite a difference!

Lodgepole pine requires heat to drop its seeds; consequently most trees in lodgepole stands are close to the same age. When the area burns, a new crop of trees is started.

Beginning with European settlement, fire became more excluded on the landscape either through fire suppression

or removal of vegetation through grazing and harvest.

“In an ideal world, you need fire at the right time and interval to create a diverse, healthy stand of timber,” stated Paul Lenmark, fuels program manager with the Dillon Field Office. “Given time, Mother Nature usually figures out a way to rejuvenate the landscape.”

Unchecked conifer growth crowds other desirable plants such as sage brush and savannah-type habitat. Aspen groves also lose out when Douglas-fir trees grow tall enough to shade the sun. Research continues to recognize the value of aspen groves to a variety of wildlife.

With abundant spring moisture, the area has rebounded – grasses are tall and aspen saplings are making a comeback.

“This doesn’t mean the drought is over,” commented Kipper Blotkamp, Dillon fuels specialist.



Some areas burned very hot and, after two years, still have not revegetated.

“After seven years of drought, the large trees are slow to recover and they will still carry fire.”

“Historically, the Centennials were more diverse with a Douglas-fir savannah landscape and aspen groves,” said Blotkamp. “Now it’s more of a stagnant forest at lower elevations due to insect infestations and disease.”

Imitating Nature

While some fires are part of the natural order, other fires are planned or prescribed to maintain open parks and meadows and reduce encroachment by conifers such as Douglas-fir.

Such is the case at Badger Pass west of Dillon where the BLM burned 200 acres in April 2005.

The area provides a good comparison of burned vs. non-burned areas and the effect on the landscape.

“The timing of prescribed burns is tricky,” commented



From a distance, the mosaic burn pattern of the Winslow Fire is visible.

Lenmark. "There are usually only four or five days a year when conditions are right to burn and all the agencies are trying to get their projects done at the same time." BLM was assisted at Badger Pass by the Forest Service, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and the Alaska Fire Service.

Two months after the burn, the area looked great thanks to good spring moisture. Sagebrush is knocked back initially along with the conifers, but it will come back. The meadow will be rested for two years to allow grasses to become established before it is grazed.

"It's important to remember that whether an area burns naturally or through a controlled burn, many plant and animal species depend on fire to improve or maintain their habitat. It's our job to re-introduce fire where it can be beneficial for the landscape," stated Lenmark.

(Photos by Marilyn Krause)



Fuels specialists felt this area was a perfect burn with reduced conifer encroachment and rejuvenation of shrubs and grasses.



Paul Lenmark points out an aspen already making a comeback after the Winslow Fire. The importance of aspen groves as wildlife habitat is being recognized in the biological arena.



Kipper Blotkamp shows evidence of how willows and other shrubs adjacent to the stream burned in 2003.



A prescribed fire earlier this spring was used in the Badger Pass area to remove pine trees that had encroached on a meadow.

Beetles roam range in recent central Montana roundup

By CATHY MOSER, For The Prairie Star
reprinted with permission

GRASS RANGE, Mont. - The hallmark of central Montana roundups may be whooping cowboys and bellowing cattle, but once in awhile it's the rhythmic swishing sound of canvas nets brushing stalks of leafy spurge.

This year, the Finkbeiner Ranch, seven miles southwest of Grass Range, hosted the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) annual flea beetle roundup. On July 6, the 40 volunteer sweepers fanned out across stands of spurge in pursuit of *Aphthona lacertosa* and *Aphthona nigriscutis*, two species of flea beetles that feed on spurge.

That mix of sweepers included BLM employees, landowners, and employees of agencies co-hosting the roundup, such as the Fergus County Weed District, MSU/Fergus County Extension Service, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

BLM biological technician Vic Roberts, who has spearheaded noxious weed biological control projects since 1992, supervised the roundup. While sweepers slathered on sunscreen and donned hats, Roberts gave a quick demonstration on the art of sweeping a net. Then, with nets in hand, they dispersed into stands of leafy spurge. Swish, swish, swish.

Bio-control and flea beetles

Biological control, or bio-control, is managing noxious weeds by using their natural enemies, such as insects or fungi. As such, it's a long-term, effective solution in controlling large, well-established stands of leafy spurge. In the plant's native homeland of Europe and Asia, insect predators, such as *A. lacertosa* and *A. nigriscutis*, keep leafy spurge under control.

The same is true in Montana. *A. lacertosa* and *A. nigriscutis* are two of the state's most effective leafy spurge bio-control agents. The first, *A. lacertosa*, is native to Eurasia where it thrives in loamy/loamy-clay soils in either dry or wet habitats. Therefore, establishing populations of *A. lacertosa* is most successful in moderately dry to moist sites. The second, *A. nigriscutis*, is a European native that favors sandy-loam soil. Unlike *A. lacertosa*, building a successful population of *A. nigriscutis* is restricted to drier areas. Thus, *A. lacertosa* may have greater potential controlling leafy spurge across a broad range of habitats.

Home on the range

Vic Roberts, who was at the ranch on the original flea beetle release day in 1994, explained the outfit's beetle

history. That year, 277 insects were released into areas where leafy spurge was overtaking the rangeland. Three years later, stands of spurge had noticeably decreased in size. He called the flea beetles' 11-year impact "significant."

"Successful establishment of a flea beetle population is crucial to a viable bio-control program," Roberts said. "The technique requires careful monitoring by the landowner. The beetles do scatter, sometimes preferring one site to another. They'll eventually move to the places where you most want or need control."

During the day's roundup session, Roberts fielded questions about the cyclic relationship between leafy spurge and the beetles. In short, *A. lacertosa* and *A. nigriscutis* work in tandem. Both spend the winter in their larval stage deep in the soil. In late spring, warmer temperatures bring the larvae closer to the surface where they feed exclusively on new spurge roots. Adult flea beetles emerge from the soil between late May and mid-June. They feed only on spurge leaves and stems, which creates wounds, stresses the host plant, and reduces the plant's resistance to pathogens.

After the beetles thin a stand of spurge, they'll move to another spurge-infested area. While that relief allows the spurge to grow again, the beetles return when the stand begins its recovery. Before embarking on a bio-control program, landowners should understand the spurge-flea beetle cycle takes three to four years before it's effective.

The ultimate results are weaker plants, thinner stands, delayed flowering, and decreased seed procreation. All of this gives native grasses and plants a better chance to compete with spurge. Thus, bio-control can be an important tool in a noxious weed control, especially when combined with proper herbicide applications.

"Spraying herbicides won't hurt the beetles," Roberts said. "A good practice is to spray the edges of the spurge stands. That will keep the insects concentrated in the middle."

After sweeping the spurge 15 to 20 minutes, the sweepers then gathered beneath a tarp shading the collection site. From under the wide brim of her straw hat, Ruth Otto, a Grass Range rancher, peered into her net and studied the tiny, crawling beetles. On the Otto ranch, bio-control is an important component of their noxious weed management plan.

"We have spurge on our place, and we've released beetles," Otto said. "We got them five or six years ago at a BLM

seminar. Although it takes a long time to see results, give them time and they'll do a good job. We help them by spraying herbicides.”

Fergus County Weed District supervisor Jim Sparks carefully removed the insects from Otto's net into a collection device resembling a water jug atop a water cooler. A wire filter separated the beetles from other captives such as spiders, grasshoppers, caterpillars, and ladybugs. All but the fleas were returned to the range.

Her net now empty, Otto returned to the field. Swish, swish, swish.

Roberts used a two-inch vial to scoop wads of fleas and empty them into cardboard containers about half the size of an oatmeal canister. It's his "volume way" of estimating how many insects, between 500 and 3,000, he then placed in each container laced with leafy spurge. After securing

the lids with masking tape, the containers were placed in coolers.

After three hours rounding up beetles under a blazing sun, Roberts announced a good harvest and called it a day. He estimated the 40 weed-conscious Montanans collected 300,000 beetles. The containers, each filled with a battalion of tiny soldiers ready for the war on leafy spurge, were handed out to landowners and agencies wanting insects.

"Flea beetle collection days and site tours are important to our commitment raising noxious weed awareness," said Lowell Hassler, BLM Natural Resources Specialist, at the end of the roundup. "It's encouraging to see such a good turnout."

For more information about releasing flea beetles onto your spurge-infested sites, contact your local county extension office.

Fuels Reduction Takes on Historical Flair

Carrie Kiely, Butte Field Office

Several Butte Field Office employees recently gathered for a special fuels hazard reduction outing. The tools were the same as usual (chainsaw, loppers, ax) but the structure to be protected was a wooden bridge, dating back to the mid-to-late 1800s on the historic Ward Ranch, a recent Butte FO acquisition.

The wooden bridge, measuring over 70 feet long and 20 feet high, was built using "cribbing," the same construction style used for log cabins. The logs are peeled and notched and then

stacked perpendicular to each other to create a very solid base for the road surface. There are very few logs left that made up the "deck" or surface of the bridge.

Built in three segments, the bridge spans a small drainage, incorporating two granite outcrops. One cast iron drill steel from a hydraulic mine drill anchors the easternmost segment with the other two. The drill steel was placed into the outcrop to lend support to the bridge some time after it was built.

The project was a cooperative effort, with the BLM Butte Field Office, the National Park Service and Lewis and Clark County Historical Society participating.



BLM and National Park Service employees pack up gear after removing ladder fuels from around a historical wooden bridge. *Photo by Terina Mullen*



They proceeded on . . .

Fall 1805



September 9

They camp south of present-day Missoula, Montana, at a spot the captains call Travelers Rest, preparing for the mountain crossing. Indians tell them that by following the Missouri to its source, they missed a shortcut from the Great Falls which could have brought them here in four days. Instead it has taken them 53.

September 11

The Corps of Discovery ascends into the Bitterroot Mountains, which Sergeant Patrick Gass calls "the most terrible mountains I ever beheld." Old Toby loses the trail in the steep and heavily wooded mountains. They run short of provisions and butcher a horse for food; snows begin to fall; worst of all, John Ordway writes on September 18th, "the mountains continue as far as our eyes could extend. They extend much further than we expected." Clark names a stream Hungry Creek to describe their condition.

Eleven days later, on the brink of starvation, the entire expedition staggers out of the Bitterroots near modern-day Weippe, Idaho.

Late September

After debating what to do about the strangers who have suddenly arrived in their homeland, the Nez Perce (on the advice of an old woman named Watkuweis) decide to befriend them. The men get sick from gorging themselves on salmon and camas roots. A chief named Twisted Hair shows them how to use fire to hollow out pine trees and make new canoes.

October 7

Near what is now Orofino, Idaho, the expedition pushes its five new canoes into the Clearwater River, and for the first time since leaving St. Louis, has a river's current at its back.

October 16

Having raced down the Clearwater, then the Snake rivers, they reach the Columbia. The river teems

with salmon – Clark estimates 10,000 pounds of salmon drying in one village – but the men want meat to eat, so they buy dogs from the Indians.

October 18

Clark sees Mount Hood in the distance. Seen and named by a British sea captain in 1792, it is a fixed point on the expedition's map, proof they are at last approaching the ocean. Soon they pass through the raging falls of the Columbia and into the Gorge, emerging from the arid semi-deserts of eastern Washington and Oregon into the dense rainforests of the Pacific Northwest.

November 7

Thinking he sees the end of land in the distance, Clark writes his most famous journal entry: "Ocan in view! O! the joy." But they're actually only at the eastern end of Gray's Bay, still 20 miles from the sea. Fierce Pacific storms, rolling waters, and high winds pin them down for nearly three weeks, "the most disagreeable time I have experienced," according to Clark.

Later, Clark estimates they have traveled 4,162 miles from the mouth of the Missouri to the Pacific. His estimate, based on dead reckoning, will turn out to be within 40 miles of the actual distance.

November 24

To make the crucial decision of where to spend the winter, the captains decide to put the matter to a vote. Significantly, in addition to the others, Clark's slave, York, is allowed to vote – nearly 60 years before slaves in the U.S. would be emancipated and enfranchised. Sacajawea, the Indian woman, votes, too – more than a century before either women or Indians are granted the full rights of citizenship.

The majority decides to cross to the south side of the Columbia, near modern-day Astoria, Oregon, to build winter quarters.

(source: www.PBS.org)

TWO CAMPS VISTA DEDICATED

Marilyn Krause, Western Zone

A Lewis and Clark site that had been in the planning stages for several years became reality on July 20 when it was dedicated in front of a crowd of more than 100 people. Two Camps Vista Interpretive Site was named because Lewis and Clark both camped in this area, only in different locations. Lewis camped upstream and Clark downstream.

Located on Hauser Lake between Devil's Elbow Campground and Clark's Bay Day Use Site, Two Camps has a commanding view of Hauser Lake and the Helena Valley.

Thanks to BLM's partners, this site became reality. Most instrumental was the Lewis and

Clark Trail Bicentennial Commission of Lewis and Clark County. This group worked on the twelve interpretive panels from start to finish. The panels recognize the importance of the Corps of Discovery, but also tell the story of the Helena Valley.

Other partners including the Lewis and Clark County Park Board, the US Forest Service and National Park Service, the architect, and PPL – Montana were recognized at the ceremony.

In comments at the dedication, Field Manager Rick Hotaling mentioned the site is well-suited to BLM's management capabilities with self-guided panels and a low maintenance facility.



Rick Hotaling as emcee with members of the Corps of Discovery during the ceremony. *Photo by Ann Boucher*



Discovery Expedition re-enactment group from St. Charles, Missouri, retires the colors. *Photo by Ann Boucher*



Rick Hotaling and Mike Griffith of the Lewis and Clark Trail Bicentennial Commission of Lewis and Clark County unveil the commemorative plaque. *Photo by Ann Boucher*



Discover Expedition re-enactment group leaves Clark's Bay Day Use Area via dug-out canoes. *Photo by Ann Boucher*

Attention BLM Retirees

The BLM Retirees Association meets at 11:30 a.m. on the first Tuesday of odd-numbered months at the Old Country Buffet in Billings. If you would like to receive email or postcard notifications of these meetings, please call Shirley Heffner at 259-1202, Cynthia Embretson at 252-1367, or send your address to Cynthia at ceatsage@wtp.net.

The Public Lands Foundation offers new retirees a free one-year membership. Please contact Bill Noble, PLF Montana Representative, at 406-656-0267 to join.

Please also help us keep our *Quarterly Steward* mailing list current by contacting Ann Boucher of the External Affairs staff at 406-896-5011 or aboucher@mt.blm.gov with address changes.

Retired from Montana/Dakotas BLM since June 1, 2004:

Joe Frazier — 28 years
Hydrologist, Lewistown Field Office

James Gruber — 32 years
Geologist, Montana State Office

Montana Minster – 33 years
Legal Assistant, Montana State Office

Keith Wittenhagen — 31 years
Rangeland Management Specialist, Miles City Field Office

Jerry Meredith – 34 years
Associate State Director, Montana State Office

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