



Partners and Friends

Partnerships and the National Park Service: Building Bridges to our Partners and Friends

The National Park Service (NPS) is charged with protecting and preserving America's special places. Increasingly, as responsibilities grow and resources shrink, the Park Service is turning to its friends and partners for help. Fran Mainella, the current director of the National Park Service, has made partnerships one of her

“The Service relies on a strategy that recognizes that park protection and conservation is a shared responsibility.”

top priorities. In a recent memo to Park Service employees, the director stated that, “the Service and our partners understand it is only through our combined efforts that we can help our society to succeed in passing on unimpaired to future generations the national system of parks and special places we together manage and enjoy. Our most effective work results from engagement with others, where the collective effort extends the reach of all.”

At the National level, the National Park Foundation has built bridges with corporate America. The Ford Motor Company assisted Glacier National Park in restoring their famous red bus fleet and is exploring ways to develop alternative fuel vehicles for use in the parks. Across the National Park system, parks are building connections with their communities through friends groups, volunteers, and local businesses to help preserve America's special places.

At Nez Perce National Historical Park and Big



Volunteers are important partners, providing vital assistance in day-to-day operations of Nez Perce National Historical Park and Big Hole National Battlefield. Pictured above, student volunteers are pulling weeds at the visitor center picnic area in Spalding, Idaho.

Hole National Battlefield, their partners are engaged in helping the parks tell their stories. The counsel and assistance Nez Perce people in Idaho, Washington, and Oregon provide is invaluable in guiding the park's policies and practices. Nez Perce and Big Hole work with other federal agencies such as the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management to preserve sites and stories outside of the jurisdiction of the NPS. Local civic groups and volunteers have devoted hundreds of hours assisting in the day-to-day operations at both parks.

In the spirit of the director's words, Nez Perce National Historical Park and Big Hole National Battlefield are inaugurating a newsletter for our partners and friends. The newsletter will be

published two to four times a year to keep our community of partners apprised of park projects and initiatives. Please share with us what you think. If you would like to contribute an article for a future issue or have your

“Partnerships . . . are integral in how we provide services in our natural, cultural and recreational programs.”

name/organization removed from the mailing list, please contact the editor. See you at the park!

To our Partners and Friends

Welcome!

It is with great pleasure we share the first issue of this newsletter with the partners and friends of Nez Perce National Historical Park and Big Hole National Battlefield.

Park friends and partners have contributed enormously over the years to our success in preserving and protecting resources and educating visitors. Creating this newsletter is just one way the park staff hopes to keep you updated on events, issues, and accomplishments. We also seek your feedback and comments as we face new challenges and look to the future. This newsletter will help the parks introduce partners and friends to each other - to celebrate successes and work together on the issues.

Many projects would not have happened without your advice, enthusiasm, and just plain hard work. While it will be impossible to list all the ways partners and volunteers are assisting us, we hope to highlight some of them.

In the past two years our partners have brought their expertise and knowledge to our parks. At Nez Perce National Historical Park, students from local schools participated in the park's exotic weed program, pulling Star Thistle from the park's picnic area. In a partnership with the Forest Service, Nez Perce Tribe and the National Park Service, experts from all three groups worked together to survey archeological resources at Dug Bar, Oregon. The park's library and archives benefited by scanners and digital cameras from the Kodak Corporation. At Big Hole National Battlefield, volunteers contributed over 3,000 hours of service, providing the public with interpretive programs and helping out with service projects.

We thank you one and all.

Doug Eury
Superintendent
Nez Perce National Historical Park

Jon James
Superintendent
Big Hole National Battlefield

Parkwide Wayside Plan

Visiting Nez Perce National Historical Park is a unique experience. Rather than one site with a centrally located visitor center, Nez Perce has thirty-eight sites spread over four states and 1,000 miles. With two visitor centers, one in Spalding, Idaho and the other at Big Hole National Battlefield near Wisdom, Montana, the park must depend upon other means of communication to tell the story of the Nez Perce people and their culture.

To accomplish this daunting task, the National Park Service partially depends upon exterior exhibits, known as waysides, to tell the parks stories to visitors twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. A wayside exhibit allows a visitor to interact with a particular site by connecting the place or geographic feature with a story, provoking the visitor intellectually or simply answering a question.

In 1999, an initial plan called for wayside exhibits in twenty-four park sites. Funding was secured in 2000 and the plan was revised. Beginning in late 2003, the park will be replacing old, outdated panels at some sites and putting in waysides for the first time at others.

The current plan calls for installing wayside and orientation panels at the following park locations:

Ant and Yellow Jacket
Bear Paw Battlefield
Big Hole National Battlefield
Buffalo Eddy
Canoe Camp
Canyon Creek Battlefield
Dance Arbor at Tick Hill
Dug Bar
Fort Lapwai Officers Quarters
Heart of the Monster
Joseph Canyon Overlook
Neespelem Long House
Nez Perce NHP Visitor Center
Old Chief Joseph's Grave
Pierce Court House
St. Joseph's Church
Weis Rockshelter
Weippe Prairie
White Bird Battlefield and Overlook

To familiarize visitors with park sites and services, orientation panels will be placed at: Bear Paw Battlefield, Big Hole National Battlefield, Canyon Creek Battlefield, Heart of the Monster, Joseph Canyon Overlook, Weippe Prairie, and the White Bird Battlefield.



Wayside exhibits reveal the significance of places that might otherwise not be apparent. Many of the park sites, such as Canoe Camp in Orofino, Idaho (pictured above) are slated to receive new panels.

News From the Field

Partnership With Parks Canada

In the immediate aftermath of the battle at Bear Paw in October 1877, Chief White Bird's band eluded capture and settled in Canada around Fort Walsh in Saskatchewan, Canada. Today, Parks Canada has preserved the fort as a National Historical Site, to commemorate the role of Northwest Mounted Police played in the region.

To tell the story of the Nez Perce at Fort Walsh, Bear Paw Battlefield, Big Hole National Battlefield and Fort Walsh National Historic Site are working on an initiative to exchange staff and develop exhibits about the Nez Perce who came to Canada. Jon James, Superintendent of Big Hole National Battlefield is leading this partnership. "These exchanges," says James, "would allow us to learn more about each other, share resources, and help to educate the American and Canadian public about the Nez Perce War of 1877 and related educational themes."



Fort Walsh National Historical Site, Merryflat, Saskatchewan, Canada.

125th Anniversary of the 1877 War

2002 was the 125th anniversary of the Nez Perce War of 1877. Big Hole National Battlefield played host to a series of special events of commemoration and reflection in July and August 2002.

The anniversary began with a lecture series on topics related to the Nez Perce War. The annual commemoration held at battlefield sites

saw more tributes and cultural events including a dinner held on August 9, 2002 at Big Hole for descendants from both sides of the battle. In addition to traditional events of pipe and empty saddle ceremonies, the Nez Perce Appaloosa Horse Club held commemorative rides, interpretive programs were given, contributing to the sharing of cultures and important stories of our past.

Employee News

The Administrative Officer at Nez Perce National Historical Park, Kathy Tustanowski-Marsh went to Yellowstone National Park to serve as the park's Comptroller.

In the last six months, several new employees have joined the staff at Nez Perce National Historical Park: Marc Blackburn, Interpretive Specialist, Spalding; Scott Eckberg, Idaho Unit Manager, Spalding. At Big Hole National Battlefield, Charlie Gay and Wayne Challoner joined the maintenance staff. Curtis Galvez is the new park ranger at Bear Paw Battlefield. Welcome!

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Nez Perce National Historical Park offers for all Americans an important perspective about our history as a people. It is not the view from the Gateway Arch looking west; it is a view from a homeland looking out, witnessing the march of history and change, yet continuing today and tomorrow to commemorate and celebrate Nez Perce culture and traditions. It is a park about a people for all people.

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Canoe Camp Expansion

Encamped on the Clearwater River in 1805, the Lewis and Clark Expedition built dugout canoes to continue their journey to the Pacific. Today, the National Park Service preserves Canoe Camp as a unit of Nez Perce National Historical Park. Located near Orofino, Idaho, Canoe Camp tells the stories of Nez Perce inhabitants and their interactions with the Corps of Discovery.

Visitor safety, access and enjoyment of Canoe Camp have long been a concern, particularly given the increased public interest in the Expedition's Bicentennial (2003-06). Last year, the park had an opportunity to acquire private land that was for sale west of the site.

After extensive consultation with citizens and elected officials, in December 2002 the NPS bought the adjacent 3.3-acre mobile home park. Of this, a 1.5-acre parcel will be added to Canoe Camp, leaving the mobile home park intact for eventual resale. "Our plan is to provide permanent restroom facilities, expanded bus and RV parking, and a safer vehicle access from Highway 12," said Nez Perce NHP Superintendent Doug Eury. "Our goal is to ensure minimal disruption to the residents of the mobile home community as we work together to return that part of the property to private ownership."

The acquisition was made possible through the assistance of U.S. Senator Larry Craig. The land was purchased through congressional appropriation from the Land and Water Conservation Fund which is generated from offshore oil drilling royalties, said Eury. A natural and archeological resource evaluation will precede facility development. "We see this as a win-win situation for the park, the community, and the public," Eury said. "We will continue to work closely with all parties as we make these long-needed improvements at Canoe Camp a reality."



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Employee Profile: Scott Eckberg

Welcome to Scott Eckberg, the newest member of our team at Nez Perce National Historical Park and Big Hole National Battlefield.

Scott was previously the chief ranger at Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in Deer Lodge, Montana. He fills the position held by Otis Halfmoon, who is now a National Park Service tribal liaison in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Scott majored in history at the University of Minnesota, but found his heart was in the west. He began his career with the National Park Service as a seasonal interpretive ranger in 1976 at Fort Laramie National Historic Site in Wyoming. He worked at several other historic sites from Utah to southeast Alaska, before beginning his fulltime career with the National Park Service in 1984.

"I learned about the Nez Perce people through

my work at the Lewis and Clark Expedition site at Fort Clatsop National Memorial in the late 1980s," Scott said, "and ever since I have wanted to come to Nez Perce country." He will be responsible for managing the 28 distinct sites comprising the Idaho unit of Nez Perce National Historical Park.

Scott is married to Jill Campbell Eckberg, a ranger and naturalist he met at the Grand Canyon. Earlier in her resource management career with the US Army Corps of Engineers, Jill had lived and studied in Orofino and Moscow. Please join us in welcoming them to their new home.