



## FORT UNION TRADING POST National Historic Site

Safety and  
Authenticity  
Standards

Version = 2026.1

# Contents

Historical Representation: .....	4
Event Focus: .....	4
Engagement with Visitors:.....	4
Interpretation Focus:.....	4
Key Groups: .....	4
Learn More:.....	5
PARK CONTACTS:.....	5
VOLUNTEERS IN PARKS AGREEMENTS 2026 .....	5
Participant INFORMATION .....	5
Smoking Policy: .....	5
Artifact Collection Prohibition: .....	5
Event Attire: .....	6
Visitor Interaction:.....	6
CAMPING AT RENDEZVOUS.....	6
Vehicle Access:.....	6
Mandatory Camp Meetings: .....	6
GENERAL INFORMATION:.....	7
Visitor Center Hours: .....	7
Charging Devices:.....	7
Restroom and Water Facilities: .....	7
Complimentary Ice:.....	7
Complimentary Firewood: .....	7
ACCESSING THE CAMP.....	8
Dry Conditions:.....	8
Wet Conditions:.....	8
PARKING DURING RENDEZVOUS.....	9
FOR RVs .....	9
CAMPFIRES.....	9
Fire Pits:.....	9
Braziers:.....	10

Self-Contained Gas or Propane Fires:.....	10
FIRE BAN PROTOCOLS .....	10
WEATHER IN ND .....	11
Wind:.....	11
SEVERE WEATHER PROTOCOL.....	11
Site Storm Shelters: .....	11
Severe Weather Watch: .....	11
Severe Weather Warning:.....	11
Tornado Warning or Mandatory Evacuations: .....	11
CAMP EQUIPMENT.....	12
Tent Requirements:.....	12
Modern Equipment: .....	13
Cookware: .....	13
Tobacco Use: .....	13
Historic Flags and Banners: .....	13
TRADER/TRADE BLANKET SALES ITEMS.....	13
Period Appropriate Items:.....	13
Trader Attire:.....	14
FUR TRADE FASHIONS .....	14
Men’s Clothing: .....	14
Women’s Clothing:.....	14
ParticipantsSAFETY.....	15
Hazard Awareness:.....	15
Flashlight Use (NEW 2025): .....	15
FABRIC SAFETY .....	15
BLACK POWDER RULES.....	15
PETS.....	15
ALCOHOL USE .....	16
ParticipantSAFETY –HARASSMENT POLICY .....	16
Participant Conduct Expectations:.....	16

The staff at Fort Union Trading Post NHS aims to portray a historically correct representation of life during the period from 1828 to 1867. To achieve this, we expect all participants to adhere to certain standards.

## Historical Representation:

- Clothing, camp equipment, and materials should be representative of the 1828-1867 period.
- While our focus is primarily on this timeframe, we also welcome participants dressed in colonial-era attire from the 1770s, as it is appropriate for the event.

## Event Focus:

- Rendezvous events are centered around recreating historic lifestyles and material culture, which includes activities, camping equipment, fashion, and weaponry common to the Northern Plains during Fort Union's historic period.

## Engagement with Visitors:



- We encourage participants to engage warmly and personally with our visitors. These interactions are crucial for creating an immersive and interactive learning environment.
- Living History Volunteers play a crucial role in helping visitors connect with our shared past. You can assist visitors in understanding daily activities, the challenges faced by people during that time, and how these challenges were addressed. Use your camp setup, demonstrations, and historical representation to bring the fur trade story of Fort Union Trading Post to life.

## Interpretation Focus:

Your interpretation should highlight the interactions between the Upper Missouri Tribes and Euro-Americans at Fort Union, both of whom lived, worked, traded at, or visited the site in the early to mid-19th century.

### Key Groups:

- a) Upper Missouri Tribes:
  - a. Assiniboine, Crow, Blackfeet, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Lakota, and Dakota.
- b) Euro-Americans at Fort Union:

- a. Employees of the American Fur Company, trappers, independent traders, hunters, rivermen, missionaries, enslaved individuals, visiting artists and scientists, military personnel, and others.
- c) Métis:
  - a. Individuals of both American Indian and Euro-American ancestry who were involved in trade with and employment at Fort Union.

## Learn More:

To deepen your understanding of Fort Union's history and significance, check out informative videos on our park's website: <https://go.nps.gov/park.film>

## PARK CONTACTS:

1. Philip McCall, Acting Operations Manager – Fort Union Trading Post NHS  
[Philip\\_McCall@NPS.GOV](mailto:Philip_McCall@NPS.GOV)
2. Rachel Daniels, Superintendent  
Theodore Roosevelt National Park /Fort Union Trading Post  
[Rachel\\_Daniels@NPS.GOV](mailto:Rachel_Daniels@NPS.GOV)
3. Emilee Franklin, Acting Supervisory Park Ranger and Volunteer Coordinator  
Fort Union Trading Post NHS  
[Emilee\\_Franklin@Nps.gov](mailto:Emilee_Franklin@Nps.gov)

## VOLUNTEERS IN PARKS AGREEMENTS 2026

- All participants must abide by this Safety and Authenticity Statement
- To count volunteer hours you must sign as a volunteer via signing an **Individual/Group VIP Form**: This form must be completed by each individual or by one adult member of a group. These agreements will be signed at nightly camp meeting **Blacksmithing Participation**: All blacksmithing activities must receive approval from park staff prior to entering the Blacksmith Shop. Additionally, volunteers involved in blacksmithing must complete a separate VIP agreement and undergo a safety orientation.

## Participant INFORMATION

Help protect and preserve the site's history and resources for the education and enjoyment of future visitors while ensuring your safety and the safety of current visitors.

### Smoking Policy:

Smoking is prohibited inside the Trade House, Clerk's Office, and all park buildings.

### Artifact Collection Prohibition:

Collecting or removing artifacts from the park is illegal.

### Event Attire:

Please respect the event's historical purpose. Traders, buck-skinners, and participating families are required to wear period-appropriate clothing—no blue jeans or tennis shoes. Keep any non-period camp

items out of sight under period covers.

#### Visitor Interaction:

Be courteous to visitors, maintain a clean camp, and keep pets on leash and under control.

#### Insect Protection:

Mosquitoes can be numerous and aggressive; please bring bug spray, citronella candles, or other deterrents of your choice.

## CAMPING AT RENDEZVOUS

Camping shall be on the grounds outside the fort only. No camping shall be permitted in fortification buildings including the: Bourgeois House, Fortification Palisade walls, Bastions, hunters and carpenters' shacks or catwalks.

#### Vehicle Access:

Vehicles are permitted in the camp from 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM and from 4:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Please note that no vehicles are allowed in the camp during visitor hours, which are from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM Central Time. We appreciate your cooperation in ensuring a safe environment for our visitors during these hours.

#### Mandatory Camp Meetings:

Please make sure to attend the nightly camp meeting at 7:00 PM for all campers. These meetings will be held under the large camp awning in the center of camp. The first night of your stay and the meeting on Friday are mandatory. Each nightly meeting will provide important weather updates, critical information, and details about upcoming events. Thank you for your commitment and participation!



## GENERAL INFORMATION:

### Visitor Center Hours:

The Visitor Center (VC) is open from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM CDT. The VC offers running water, flush toilets, and air conditioning during extreme heat—showers are not available on-site. Free Wi-Fi is also provided. Volunteers in period clothing using modern technology (cell phones, laptops, etc.) should do so discreetly and out of public view. Please ask at the front desk if you would like to use the upstairs breakroom.

### Charging Devices:

We encourage participants to plan ahead for their mobile electronic devices. While charging at the front desk and in public areas of the Visitor Center is not available, we recommend bringing a power pack with you to camp or turning off your devices for the day. This way, you can enjoy the full experience of the Rendezvous! Emergency phone calls are allowed from the Visitor Center if necessary, just ask an NPS employee.

### Restroom and Water Facilities:

Porta-potties and potable water (available via a garden hose) are accessible at the campsite. Additionally, filtered water from a bottle filler water fountain is available in the VC during open hours.

### Complimentary Ice:

As a thank you to all participants, the Fort Union Association provides free ice for all campers. Ice will be available in a large self-serve chest located in the camp area.

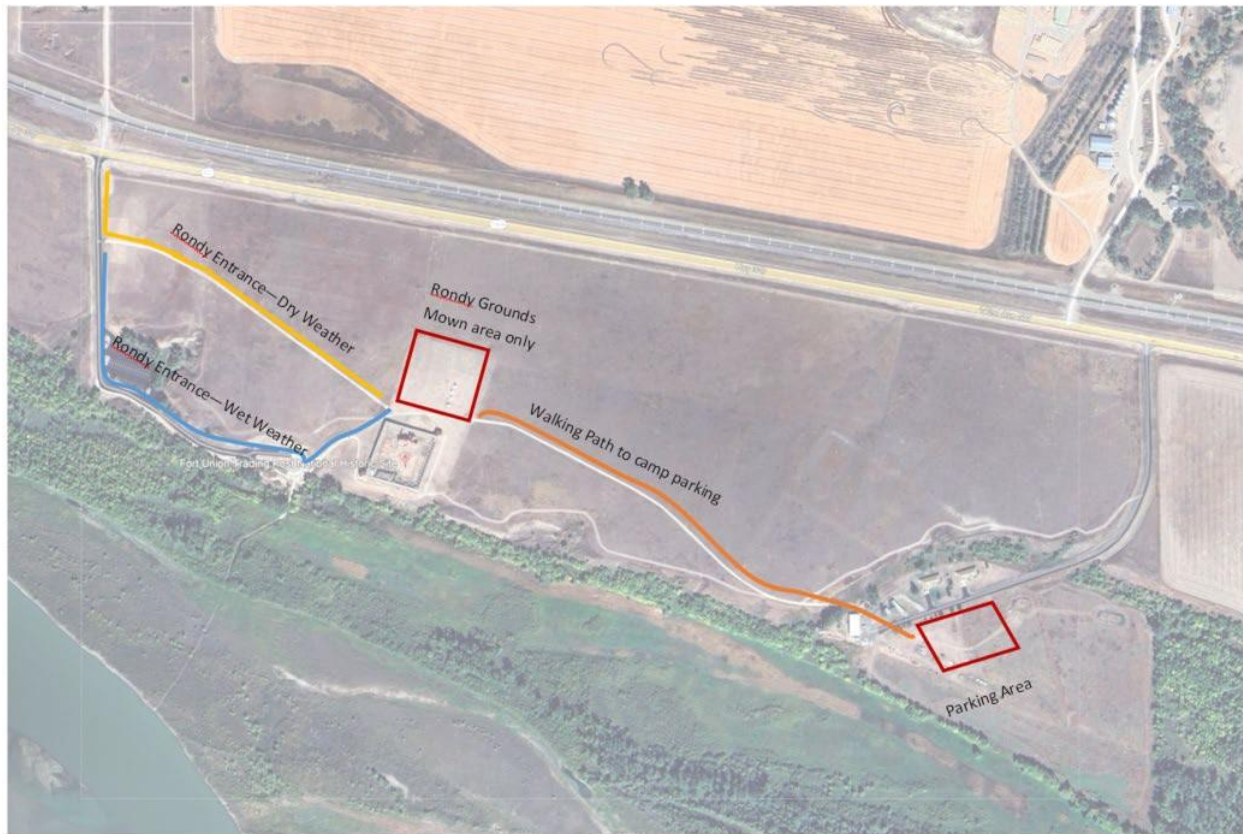
### Complimentary Firewood:

- To protect Fort Union's trees, please do not bring outside firewood. This helps prevent the spread of invasive pests such as the emerald ash borer. Locally sourced wood will be provided for your use.
- Use of any firewood other than what is provided by the park prohibited.

### On-site Staff and Security:

Staff will be camping on-site, and National Park Service (NPS) will be present on Friday and Saturday nights.

## ACCESSING THE CAMP



### Dry Conditions:

Camp Entrance Road is the preferred route. It is located approximately halfway between our park entrance and the large parking lot. This road is only available during dry weather for archaeological preservation. Please remember to be courteous while using this road, as it is single-lane.

### Wet Conditions:

- The Sidewalk serves as the alternate route during wet weather when the dirt road is closed.
  - Situation A: If a volunteer or staff member is present at the parking lot (information station), they will coordinate with the cart driver to escort vehicles.
  - Situation B: If no volunteer or staff member is available, vehicles may wait for a cart to make a round and will follow it up the sidewalk.
    - Pedestrians on the sidewalk have the right of way.
    - If the sidewalk is in use due to wet weather, we will have signs at the park entrance and the sidewalk entrance detailing the current situation and rules to help clarify your arrival process.

**Our goal is to ensure that participants can safely access the Rondy grounds with minimal confusion or wait times. We understand that many participants travel long distances, sometimes taking hours or even days to participate in Rendezvous. We appreciate you. If the camp road is closed due to wet**

**conditions, please do not remove the sidewalk-closed sign or attempt to drive around it. We will get your vehicle up the sidewalk.**

## PARKING DURING RENDEZVOUS

The designated camp car park is located in the park housing/maintenance area, on the riverside of the maintenance access road.

- Please unload your gear quickly at the camp. Once you've unloaded it, move your vehicle to the designated parking area. Vehicles may not remain overnight on the Rendezvous grounds or in visitor parking areas.
- No vehicles are allowed on the path leading east from the camp to the maintenance area.
- Please help us keep the camp clean by picking up all litter and returning unused firewood, sand, and rocks to their appropriate piles.

## FOR RVs

- Parking and primitive camping for RVs are allowed in the maintenance parking area.
- Please note that the site currently does not have power or sewer hookups.
- There are no dump stations available on-site.
- Generators may be used in the parking area during the day and evening; however, quiet hours are from 10 PM CDT to 8 AM CDT, during which generators cannot be used.
- No campfires or braziers are permitted in the parking area.

## CAMPFIRES

Campfire Guidelines:

- Campfires are permitted at Rendezvous only within the designated mown areas of the camp.
- A fire may be ignited and maintained only by using fuel sources designed and commonly used for warmth or food preparation charcoal briquettes or natural firewood.
  - This restriction protects public health and safety, preserves environmental and cultural resources, and reduces wildfire risk
  - Prohibited materials include, but are not limited to:
    - Flammable liquids
    - Garbage
    - Fireworks
    - Plastics
    - Aerosol canisters
    - Batteries
    - Synthetic or manufactured materials

## Fire Pits:

- Please note that fire pits are no longer allowed at Fort Union. This measure is in place to protect fragile archaeological areas.
- Ground Disturbance must be limited to tent stakes to safely anchor tents or tipis.
  -

## Setting Up Your Fire Area:

- When setting up camp, please fully encircle your fire area with available rocks and place a layer of sand within the circle to cover any exposed ground. Sand will be provided in the Rendezvous area.
- Fires should only be built to the size necessary for cooking purposes.
  - Even if there are no active fire bans in the camp, please exercise caution with all fire sources, including candles.
- Never leave a burning fire unattended.
- Fire extinguishers, water cans, and flappers will be available at all firewood pallets for safety.

#### Braziers:

- Braziers are allowed in camp.
- Fort Union has several braziers available for participants use. Please see fort staff to check one out.
- Hardwood coal will be provided for use in the braziers.

#### Self-Contained Gas or Propane Fires:

- Self-contained gas or propane fires are permitted.
- Camp stoves should be small, table-top sized; large BBQ grills are not allowed.
- Please keep these items concealed, just like all non-period items, during the day.
- Never leave a flame unattended while in use.

## FIRE BAN PROTOCOLS

### Monitoring Conditions:

As Fort Union is situated in a rural open prairie, we will adhere to all City, County, and State burn bans and limitations. Park staff will monitor conditions and may impose a ban outside of declared bans. We understand this can be challenging for campers who need to cook and plan meals, so here's our policy:

#### **No Ban in Place:**

- When no burn ban is in effect, campfires and braziers are allowed in the mown area of the Rendezvous grounds.
- Campfires are permitted in camp.
- Braziers are permitted in camp.
- Fires are allowed in camp stoves within tents.

#### **Open Fire Ban:**

- Campfires are prohibited.
- Braziers are allowed in camp.
- Fires are allowed in camp stoves within participants tents. Fire Ban/Red Flag Warning:

#### **During a total fire ban:**

- Fires will only be permitted for cooking purposes in designated areas of the fort.
- No fires are allowed in anywhere in the park, including Campgrounds campfire circles or sand/fire rock areas.
- Braziers are not permitted in camp.
- Fires in camp stoves inside participants tents are not allowed.

- Cold Meals (Sandwiches and similar cold food items only)
- The fire ring in front of the Carpenter's Shack will be open for general use.
- Braziers will be made available behind the Bourgeois House in the kitchen area for participants use.
- Park staff will request that participants use only candles in lanterns and exercise extra caution with any open flames.
- The park may have enclosed lanterns available for loan to campers.

## WEATHER IN ND

Weather in western North Dakota can be unpredictable, with extreme temperatures and the potential for sudden storms. Please be prepared for the following:

- Rapidly Changing Conditions:
- Stay ready for changes in weather, as conditions can shift quickly.
- Severe Thunderstorms and Hail:
- Be aware that sudden and violent thunderstorms or hailstorms may occur.
- Summer Temperatures:
- Summers can be warm, with average high temperatures in the 80s to 90s from May through September, and highs exceeding 100°F are not uncommon.

## Wind:

Expect significant wind year-round; consider bringing storm ropes and extra tie-downs for stability.

## SEVERE WEATHER PROTOCOL

### Site Storm Shelters:

- Bourgeois House Visitor Center
- Trade House

Park staff will continuously monitor the weather during Rony. In the event of severe weather:

### Severe Weather Watch:

Staff will notify campers of the expected weather event and its timing.

### Severe Weather Warning:

- Staff will inform campers of the expected weather event and its timing.
- Voluntary camp evacuations will be permitted, and all storm shelters will be available for campers.

### Tornado Warning or Mandatory Evacuations:

- Evacuation Procedures:
  - Park staff will ring the Kitchen Bell followed by two blasts of an air horn, repeated twice.
  - Park Staff will walk through the camp to ensure all campers are evacuated and assist those with special needs.

- Child Safety:
  - Children must remain with at least one guardian during severe weather evacuations. Parents/guardians are responsible for accounting for their children; park staff will not be able to assist with this. There will be no exceptions to this rule for safety and accountability.
- Safety in Shelters:
  - Once inside the fort, participants will not be allowed to return to camp until the weather event has passed.

#### Alcohol Policy:

- Please leave any alcohol in your camp; it is not permitted in evacuation areas.
- There SHALL BE NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES Consumed within the Fortification or Fortification Buildings.
- Alcohol consumption shall only be in evening hours after the event and not during public visitation.
  - Excessive alcohol consumption that creates safety, conduct or behavioral concerns will be treated as a law enforcement matter and subject to dismissal from the event with revocation VIP agreements or CUA's.

#### Pets:

- Pets excluding livestock, are allowed in all storm shelters during voluntary and mandatory evacuations.
- Animals must remain under the owner's control and always leashed at lengths of 6' or less.
- Livestock/Horses:
  - All livestock must be approved in advance by the Superintendent or Operations Manager.
  - If there are livestock or horses in camp, they may be housed inside the walls if deemed safe by park staff. This will be assessed case by case and is not a common occurrence.
  - Any hay must be certified weed-free.

## CAMP EQUIPMENT

### Tent Requirements:



Period-style canvas or hide tents are mandatory modernamping tents are not allowed.

### Modern Equipment:

- Items like coolers, sleeping bags, cameras, and plastics must be kept covered or stored out of sight to maintain the historic atmosphere.

### Cookware:



- Acceptable materials for cookware include wood, tin, ceramic, copper, brass, and iron. Modern enamelware or aluminum ware is discouraged.

### Tobacco Use:

<https://www.nps.gov/fous/learn/management/superintendents-compendium.htm>

- Clay pipes and chewing tobacco are allowed in camp; however, cigarettes are not permitted.

### 36 CFR §2.21 – SMOKING

- (a) The following portions of the park, or all or portions of buildings, structures or facilities are closed to smoking as noted:
- Smoking is prohibited in all government owned or leased vehicles and government buildings except for permanent employee quarters. Smoking is also prohibited where posted, and along trails during periods of high, very high, and extreme fire danger as posted according to the park's Fire Management Plan.
- Determination: Smoking is prohibited in all government vehicles and buildings, except permanent employee residential quarters, to comply with government-wide health and safety policies. Smoking is prohibited where posted during high fire danger to protect park resources and reduce the risk of fire.

### Historic Flags and Banners:

- All flags and banners displayed on canoes or within your camp should represent the time-period being interpreted during Rendezvous. You may be asked to remove any flags or banners that do not align with our event's theme.

### TRADER/TRADE BLANKET SALES ITEMS



If you have specific questions about the items for sale, please reach out the park.

### Period Appropriate Items:

- All items sold must be period-appropriate, and all furs should fit the fort's historic period. Domestic animal skins or pelts (except farm stock, such as sheep or cows) may not be sold or displayed.

### Trader Attire:

- All traders must wear period clothing and use period displays; modern items like baseball hats, jeans and sneakers are not allowed.

### FUR TRADE FASHIONS

This list provides general guidelines for clothing but is by no means exhaustive. For questions or recommendations for clothing sources, please contact Fort Union Trading Post NHS and speak with a park ranger. The park also has some period clothing and camp gear available for loan—please reach out to the park to request these items. Remember, modesty in dress and behavior is required, as this event

is open to the public.

### Men's Clothing:

- Typical men's attire may include:
- Long-sleeved shirts made from natural fabrics like leather, linen, cotton, or wool—please avoid polyester and non-period prints.
- Drop front or French fly breeches or pants made from leather, linen, cotton, or wool.
- A blanket coat or capote.
- A woven sash and leg ties.
- Headwear such as knit caps, tuques, beaver, rabbit, or wool felt hats, and scarves made from period fabrics.
- Appropriate footwear includes moccasins, brogans, or leather shoes. Modern footwear, like slippers, sandals, or tennis shoes, is discouraged.
- Renaissance Fair or "Pirate" style clothing is not appropriate for this event.
- Fur trade era military clothing is not allowed unless pre-approved by the site volunteer coordinator.

### Women's Clothing:

Typical women's garments may include:

#### American Indian Style Dresses:

- Strap dresses, Trade Dresses, leggings, and sleeves made from leather or natural fabrics like linen, cotton, or wool—please avoid faux leather and polyester materials.
- Moccasins of period-appropriate designs.
- A woven sash, shawls, and wool blankets for outerwear.
- Accessories like scarves, beads, and trade silver representative of the period.

#### Euro-American Style Dresses:

- Late colonial to Romantic era dresses, including chemises, short-gowns, and skirt combinations made from natural fabrics like linen, cotton, or wool—avoid polyester and non-period prints.
- Civil War era dresses, including hoop skirts, are not appropriate, and "saloon girl" outfits are prohibited.
- Shawls and wool blankets for outerwear.
- Appropriate footwear includes moccasins, brogans, or leather shoes, while modern footwear is discouraged.

## Participants SAFETY

### Hazard Awareness:

- Be vigilant about hazards and report any new or ongoing issues to park staff immediately.  
Ground Safety:
- Watch your footing, as ground squirrel holes may pose tripping hazards.

### Fire Safety:

- Exercise caution with fire. Use candle lanterns for all candles, keep campfires small, and moderate fires in the fort's fireplaces to be extinguished at night.

#### Cutting Wood:

- Be careful when cutting wood and use axes and knives responsibly to avoid accidents.

#### Flashlight Use (NEW 2025):

According to Park Service policy, using a flashlight is required when moving around the camp. This helps ensure everyone's safety, so make sure to have yours handy!

#### FABRIC SAFETY

If you'll be around an open fire, carefully consider your historic clothing:

- Wool is the safest fabric.
- Cotton and linen can ignite quickly unless treated.
- Polyester will melt onto your skin.
- Tight sleeves are safer than loose ones.
- Women can protect themselves by wearing a long wool apron over their skirts.
- In case of an emergency, remember the important safety tip: stop, drop, and roll.

#### BLACK POWDER RULES

Prohibited Items:

- Black Powder; loose, in horn, canister, barrel or any other container

Allowed Items:

- Unloaded firearms appropriate to the period are allowed, as are empty powder containers including empty powder horns, empty flasks, empty barrels, or other typical "black powder" containers.

#### PETS

Leash Requirements:

- All pets must be kept on a leash no longer than 6 feet at all times.
- Pets may not be left alone in camp for extended periods.

#### ALCOHOL USE

Moderate consumption of alcoholic beverages is permitted during Rendezvous only when the park is closed to the public, after 5:30 PM Central Time.

- Responsible Consumption:
  - Excessive intoxication and any inappropriate behavior resulting from it will not be tolerated.
  - Park staff reserve the right to terminate individual volunteer agreements and require anyone participating in Rendezvous to leave for excessive alcohol use or belligerent behavior.

## Participant SAFETY –HARASSMENT POLICY

All participants deserve a safe environment to work in. Harassment will not be tolerated at Fort Union. All reports of harassment will be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Anyone found to be engaging in harassment will have their agreement(s) terminated and will no longer be allowed to participate at Fort Union. All reported claims of harassment will be handled confidentially.

### Participant Conduct Expectations:

- All staff and participants must refrain from harassing conduct.
- Fully cooperate in any inquiry or investigation.

### Reporting Harassment:

- Participants who have experienced harassment, whether in the past or present, are encouraged to report the behavior to any NPS employee.
  - If you experience or witness harassment, please report it to any Fort Union staff member you feel comfortable approaching.

---

Thank you for your attention to these guidelines, and your commitment to making this event safe and enjoyable for everyone!