

Happy Trails!

The new Spalding trail system takes shape



This past winter and spring park staff, members of the Nez Perce tribe, University of Idaho students, and community volunteers have been hard at work clearing brush, pulling weeds, picking up garbage, and building trail for the park's Spalding site. There are now three new trails which can be used for walking, wildlife viewing, and as a way for visitors to interact with the historic and natural landscape resources of the park. Each trail features different scenery and will expose you to both the cultural and natural resources of the park.

The Old Townsite Trail (1 mile) meanders along the flat grassy area below the visitor center. There are excellent views of the basalt hillsides across from the Clearwater River. Subtle landmarks along the trail help you imagine how the area was used as a village site by the Nez Perce, missionaries, and settlers. For what the trail lacks in terms of shade, it makes up for by way of opportunities to see wildlife - deer, skunks, voles and other

rodents, raptors, song birds, insects, and snakes are just a few examples of the critters found in this area.

Lapwai Creek Trail (.2 miles) leads you through riparian vegetation and onto a gravel bar which overlooks the confluence of Lapwai Creek and the Clearwater River. From the trail you can see many song birds and waterfowl, rabbits, insects, salmon and other fish. You may even be able to catch a glimpse of our resident beavers who, in years past, have built dams and lodges near the mouth of the creek. At times of high water, much of the area to the north of the trail is a backwater overflow area which provides a special habitat for native species. In the spring and fall you may be able to watch the salmon run.

Watson's Trail (.1 mile) is very short, but leads you off the main road in the shade towards the Watson's store, a historic building that was once the bustling center of Spalding's main street. During certain times of the year, native flowers like lomatiums and stonecrops can be seen growing out of cracks in the basalt rock columns bordering the trail. The trail is actually an old raceway—a manmade ditch that carried water to the mills.

We hope these trails will bring you closer to the tangible resources at the Spalding site, including historic buildings, natural features, and native species and that continued trail work will help us develop more avenues for discovery and enjoyment.

Archeological sites, battlefields and artifacts are protected by state and federal law. Anyone who injures, destroys or appropriates artifacts or objects of antiquity on park lands is subject to arrest and prosecution to the maximum extent of the law.

Please call (208) 843-7001 in Idaho and (406) 689-3155 in Montana to report incidents.



Looking for a hands-on way to help the park? Consider sharing your time and talents as a Nez Perce VIP (Volunteer-In-Parks). Volunteers are needed throughout the year to help staff our visitor center, present interpretive and education programs and help out with miscellaneous tasks. If you are interested, please call the volunteer manager at the Spalding visitor center at (208) 843-7038 or Big Hole National Battlefield at (406) 689-3155.

Nez Perce National Historical Park - Quick Reference

Nez Perce National Historical Park
PO Box 1000
Lapwai, ID 83540

Phone: (208) 843-7001
Fax: (208) 843-7003
E-Mail: NEPE_Visitor_Information@nps.gov
Website: www.nps.gov/nepe

Spalding Visitor Center
Located ten miles east of Lewiston, Idaho on U.S. Highway 95.

Summer: Memorial Day to Labor Day
Daily, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Fall and Spring: Daily, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm
Winter Hours: Daily, 9:00 to 4:00 pm
Closed: Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's.

The visitor center offers exhibits, films, and a bookstore on Nez Perce culture and history. Restrooms are accessible.

Park film has open captions and audio description is available for the park film and museum exhibit.

Big Hole National Battlefield
PO Box 237
Wisdom, MT 59761

Phone: (406) 689-3155
Fax: (406) 689-3151
E-Mail: BIHO_Visitor_Information@nps.gov
Website: www.nps.gov/biho

Visitor Center
Located ten miles west of Wisdom, Montana on State Highway 43.

Summer: End of May to beginning of September: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
Rest of the Year: 10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Closed: Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's

The visitor center offers exhibits, a film, and a bookstore on the Nez Perce War of 1877.

Restrooms and visitor center are accessible.

Bear Paw Battlefield
301 Ohio
Chinook, MT 59523

Phone: (406) 357-3130
Fax: (406) 357-3140
E-Mail: NEPE_Bear_Paw@nps.gov
Website: www.nps.gov/nepe/planyourvisit/bear-paw-battlefield.htm

Visitor Center
Located in the Blaine County Museum
501 Indiana St., Chinook, Montana.

Summer: Memorial Day to Labor Day
Mon. to Sat. 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Closed between noon and 1 pm
Sunday: Noon to 5:00 pm.

Rest of the Year: Monday through Friday, 1pm to 5pm

Bear Paw is 16 miles south of Chinook, Montana on Route 240. The battlefield is open daily from dawn to dusk with a self guided trail, picnic tables, and vault toilets.



Comments?
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Lapwai, ID 83540-6086

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National Park Service

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West Glacier, MT 59936-0310
(410) 888-5756



Visitor Guide



Students from Lapwai High School in Lapwai, Idaho, counting camas lily plants on Weippe Prairie. Over the course of several weeks of classroom instruction and field work, students learn about camas and the importance of protecting and preserving this special plant. After several sessions of classroom instruction, students have the opportunity of working for a day, side-by-side with NPS scientists inventorying camas plants and learning about possible careers with the National Park Service. (Nez Perce NHP/National Park Service Photograph)

Welcome to the Park



Welcome to Nez Perce National Historical Park. I invite you to experience a park that is not a typical unit of the national park system.

Established in 1965, this national historical park is devoted to telling the story of a people who have lived here since the beginning of time.

We invite you to look at the exhibits and films at the park's two visitor centers in Spalding, Idaho and Wisdom, Montana to learn more about the history, culture, and contributions of the Nez Perce. If you need more information, our rangers are here to help about activities going on in the park and how to access the park's sites. Enjoy your visit!

Gary Somers
Superintendent

Citizen Science

To the Nez Perce and too many other tribes, camas is and was one of the most widely used root foods in the Pacific Northwest. On their trek through Idaho, Lewis and Clark wrote that fields of camas were like "blue lakes" on the landscape. Over the last one hundred years, however, camas populations have declined as seasonal wetlands have virtually disappeared due to development and agriculture.

Today, Nez Perce National Historical Park and the Upper Columbia Basin Network are monitoring the status and trends of national park resources. Just as a doctor monitors the vital signs of a patient, scientists are looking at plant or animal species and ecosystem characteristics to monitor the health of park sites. Camas (*Camassia quamash*), a lily, was chosen for the Park's Weippe Prairie site (Idaho) and Big Hole National Battlefield (Montana) because of its value as both a cultural and natural resource.

Camas tends to grow in seasonal wetland prairie ecosystems. Monitoring existing camas populations will allow park staff to find ways to promote their survival in the places they can still thrive.

In historic times, camas was critical for survival and was a trade item. Weippe was one of the largest camas gathering grounds for the Nez Perce. People traveled there to play games, arrange weddings, dance, organize hunts, meet with friends, and trade goods. Nez Perce also dug and ate camas

during the battle of 1877 in the Big Hole valley. As in times past, Nez Perce still harvest camas bulbs in the traditional way.

To determine the status of camas populations, data is collected annually by dedicated staff and local "citizen scientists" – volunteers who are trained to perform research-related tasks. Students from high schools near the Weippe Prairie are taught every year about camas biology, the cultural importance of camas, and data collection methods. In May, after classroom instruction, volunteers go into the field, using Global Positioning Systems (GPS), compasses, and field computers to collect data. Within a given research plot—or "quadrat"—students and staff record the number of camas plants; depth to the hard "pan"—or dense soil layer below the surface which creates a perched water table; the presence of two weeds: orange hawkweed (*Heiracium auranticum*) and sulphur cinquefoil (*Potentilla recta*).

By tracking long term trends, park managers are able to make objective decisions about restoration and weed control, based upon scientific findings. This program engages the public in a unique and compelling way. Students get exposed to the field of natural resources and are taught to understand the value of camas, not only as a cultural resource for the Nez Perce, but also as an indicator for the health of the prairies they live around. The collaborative efforts between students, teachers, National Park Service personnel, volunteers and scientists help preserve national park sites for the enjoyment of future generations.



The glaciers in Glacier National Park are disappearing as temperatures increase.

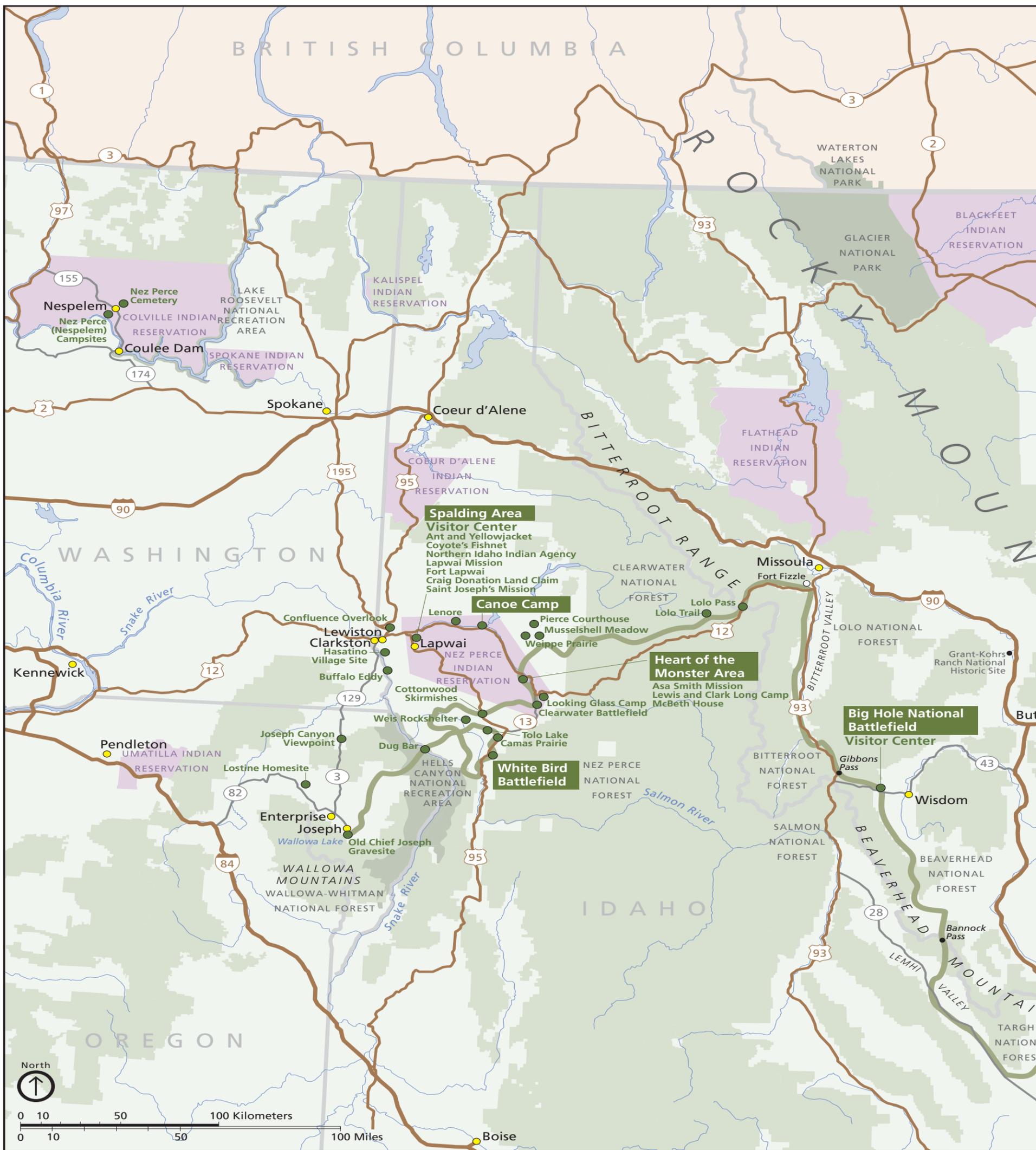
Climate Change

Can you imagine Glacier National Park without glaciers? What if the Everglades are permanently submerged? Climate change is potentially the most far-reaching challenge the National Park Service has encountered.

The physical infrastructure, natural and cultural resources, and visitor experience at national parks are at risk from climate change. The long-range effects of climate change challenge the NPS to find new strategies to meet its mission.

The NPS response to climate change will require the collaboration of all existing program areas across all levels of the agency. Specifically, the NPS is responding to climate change a number of ways. Using the best available science, the agency will make sound decisions to adapt to and moderate the effects of climate change on our special places. These efforts will also be communicated to the public.

Failure to act now will severely limit our options in the future and place the NPS in a reactive rather than proactive mode. No action may carry the greatest risk as climate change is a problem that carries a huge penalty.



Idaho

Confluence Overlook

Donald MacKenzie established a trading post near the confluence of the Clearwater River in September 1812. The Nimiipuu were not interested in the fur trade and MacKenzie sold out to the British.

Coyote's Fishnet

Coyote and Black Bear got into an argument. In frustration, Coyote threw his fishing net on a hill and tossed Black Bear on another, turning him into stone. Both features are visible today.

Ant and Yellowjacket

Ant and Yellowjacket were arguing over who had the right to sit on a particular rock to enjoy some Salmon when they got into an argument. Coyote asked them to stop. They continued to fight, whereby Coyote turned them into a stone arch that is visible today.

Spalding

The Spalding site has seen many uses by the Nimiipuu and was the location of Henry and Eliza Spalding's mission. The park's visitor center and museum is located here as well.

Northern Idaho Indian Agency

As part of the treaty process, the U.S. Government set up an agency to oversee the implementation of the terms of the treaties.

Fort Lapwai

In 1862, a detachment of volunteers chose this location for their fort. The 1883 officers' quarters at the southwest end of the parade ground is one of the few original buildings to have survived.

Craig Donation Land Claim

This is the site of the claim by the first Euro-American settler in Idaho. William Craig was a mountain man, an interpreter, and friend of the Nimiipuu.

St. Joseph's Mission

This was the first Roman Catholic mission among the Nimiipuu. It was dedicated in Sept. 1874 by Father Joseph Cataldo, who had built it. *The church and grounds are currently closed.*

Cottonwood Skirmishes

Skirmishes with the U.S. Army and volunteers occurred near here on July 3 and 5, 1877.

Weis Rockshelter

More than 8,000 years ago humans first made this home and continuously inhabited the area until about 600 years ago.

Camas Prairie

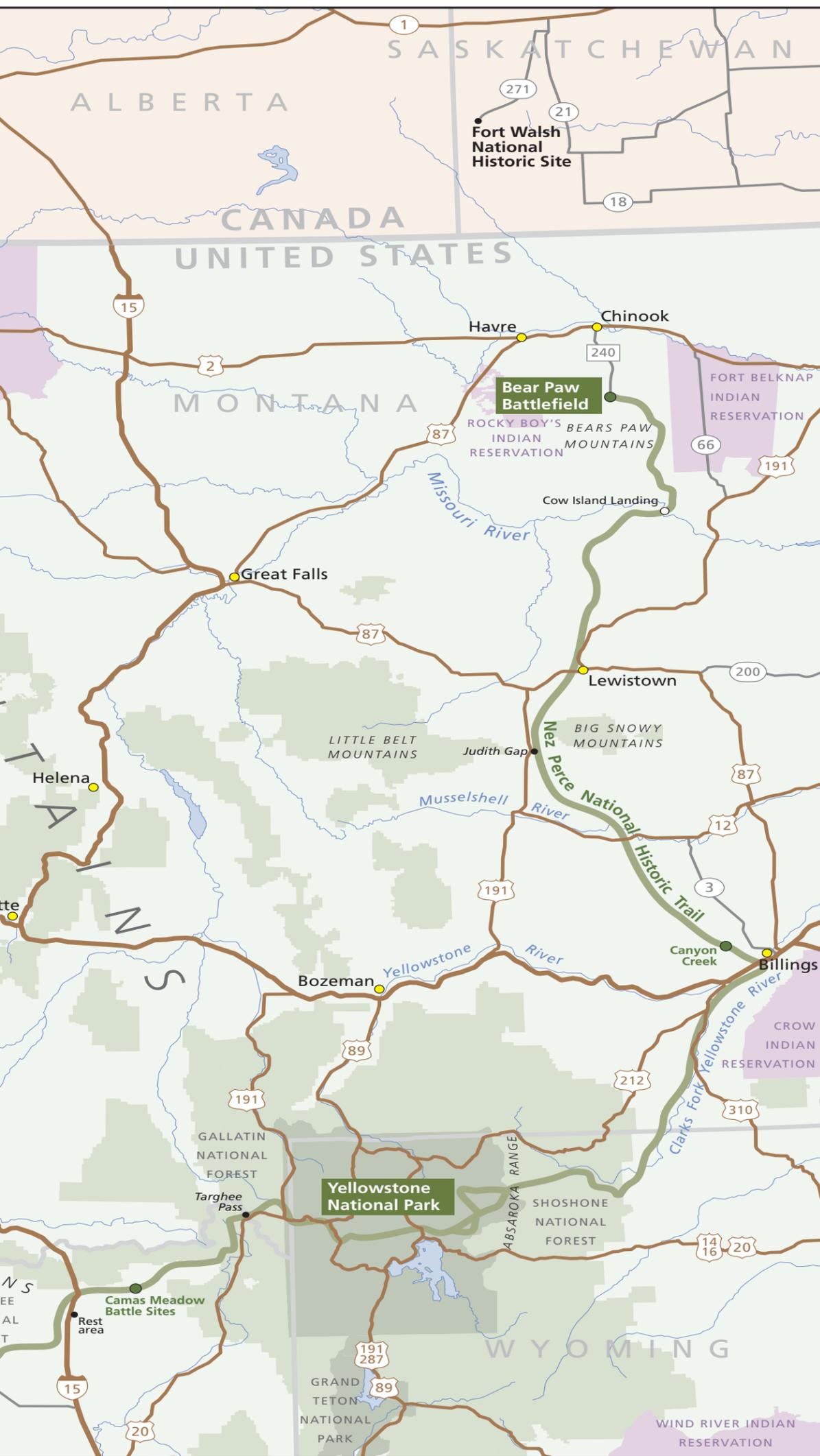
Where wheat fields stretch to the horizon today, camas once grew. Camas bulbs were a major food source for the Nimiipuu. They gathered here in late summer and early fall to dig them.

Tolo Lake

In 1877, the non-treaty bands congregated at this ancient council site, known as Tephalewam, before moving onto the reservation. Frustrated by injustices against the Nez Perce, three Nimiipuu warriors raided homesteads on the Salmon River from this site.

White Bird Battlefield

On June 17, 1877, the first battle of the Nez Perce War was fought here. The U.S. cavalry was defeated with heavy losses and the Nimiipuu began their long journey to find safety and sanctuary. A self-guided walking tour of the battlefield is available at the trailhead.



Montana

Big Hole National Battlefield

On the morning of August 9, 1877, U.S. troops surprised the Nez Perce who crossed the Bitterroots trying to evade capture. Between 60 and 90 Nez Perce men, women, and children were killed. The Army lost 29 soldiers and 40 wounded.

Canyon Creek

After emerging from Yellowstone National Park, the Nez Perce were pursued by the cavalry. In a rearguard action the Nez Perce were able to gain time by successfully stopping the pursuing troops.

Bear Paw Battlefield

Just 40 miles short of the Canadian border, the Nez Perce were besieged by the Army. With losses mounting, Joseph gave his rifle to General Howard, ending the siege on October 5, 1877. They had traveled 1,170 miles in the nearly four months since the first skirmishes.

Oregon

Dug Bar

At this traditional crossing of the Snake River, Joseph and his band crossed in May, 1877 as they left their homes in Oregon for the reservation in Idaho. Located in Hell's Canyon National Recreation Area, the site is accessible by either boat or a high clearance vehicle.

Joseph Canyon Viewpoint

The canyon seen from the overlook was one of the winter homes of the Nez Perce. Tradition holds that Chief Joseph was born in a cave along the east bank of the creek. Restrooms are available.

Old Chief Joseph's Gravesite

The remains of the elder Chief Joseph were reburied here in 1926. Nearby are the graves of other Nez Perce and some settlers.

Lostine Campsite

At the junction of the Lostine and Wallowa Rivers is a traditional Nez Perce summer campsite where Old Chief Joseph died in 1871. This landscape has changed little from the days before the area was settled. **Not a developed site.**

Washington

Burial Site of Chief Joseph the Younger

In 1885 Chief Joseph and his band were allowed to return to the Northwest from Indian Territory in Oklahoma. Joseph spent his remaining years on the Colville Reservation and died here in 1904. **The cemetery is private property and a sacred place.**

Nez Perce Campsites at Nespelem

Chief Joseph's band continued their traditional way of life while living on the Colville Reservation. These were their winter and summer homes and were the last places where Joseph lived. **Not a developed site.**

Buffalo Eddy

The unique petroglyphs of this area are evidence of the longevity of the Nimiipuu occupation of the area. Defacing federal archeological sites is a criminal offense.

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

In 1986, Congress established the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail to commemorate the 1877 War. The trail begins at Wallowa Lake, Oregon and extends 1,170 miles to the Bear Paw Battlefield, Montana. The trail is managed by the U.S. Forest Service. Further information can be found on the web at: www.fs.fed.us/npnht/.

Clearwater Battlefield

On July 11, 1877 Gen. Oliver O. Howard crossed the Clearwater River and hoped to take the Nez Perce by surprise. His hopes came to naught and the fighting ended with the Nimiipuu withdrawing.

Heart of the Monster

This is the location of the Heart of the Monster, where Coyote defeated a monster and, in turn, created the Nimiipuu. Audio stations tell the story in English and in the Nez Perce languages.

Asa Smith Mission

In April 1839, Rev. and Mrs. Asa Smith established a mission in the Kamiah area. Unsited to the demands of such work, the Smiths left in 1841.

Lewis and Clark Long Camp

Near here Lewis and Clark camped in the spring of 1806 for nearly a month.

Canoe Camp

In the early fall of 1805, the Lewis and Clark expedition rested here and built canoes of hollowed-out logs for the final leg of their trip to the Pacific Ocean.

Lenore

For thousands of years, this village site was used by the Nez Perce and their ancestors.

Weippe Prairie

This was a root-gathering place for the Nimiipuu and it was here on September 20, 1805, that Lewis and Clark first met the Nez Perce. During the 1877 War, the Nimiipuu gathered here after the Battle of the Clearwater.

Pierce

In September 1860, gold was found on the Nez Perce reservation, triggering another treaty that reduced the size of the reservation. The other site of interest is the old Shoshone County courthouse, completed in 1862 and the oldest public building in Idaho.

Musselshell Meadow

For many generations, Nimiipuu have come here to dig for camas. General Howard camped here at the end of July, 1877 while pursuing the Nez Perce over the Lolo Trail.

Lolo Pass and Trail

This historic Nez Perce trail was used by Lewis and Clark in 1805 and 1806. During the 1877 War the Nez Perce followed the trail on into Montana. The U.S. Forest Service maintains

a visitor center at Lolo Pass. During the summer months it is open daily. In the off season, they are open on weekends. Please contact the Forest Service at (208) 942-1234 for more information on hours and activities.

Looking Glass' 1877 Campsite

The Looking Glass Band tried to remain neutral in the conflict between the non-treaty Nez Perce. The Army attacked the village. Looking Glass regarded this as treachery and joined the others against the Army.

Hasotino

Hasotino was a site used until the end of the nineteenth century and was located near an important eel fishery.

Camas Meadow Battle Site

After the tragedy at Big Hole, the Nimiipuu gained time by stealing more than 200 of the Army's pack mules and horses, halting their advance.