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NEZ PERCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY



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**Nez Perce National Historical Park
Administrative History**

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**by
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Cover Photograph. Two Nez Perce women, Elizabeth Wilson and Agnes Moses, digging camas roots in Musselshell Meadows, Nez Perce National Historical Park, 1965. Courtesy National Park Service, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Neg. 0452.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN FOOTNOTES

BSU	Boise State University
CCSO	Columbia-Cascade Cluster System Support Office
DSC	Denver Service Center
FRC	Federal Records Center
NAPNWR	National Archives, Pacific Northwest Region
NEPE	Nez Perce National Historical Park
NPTEC	Nez Perce Tribal Executive Council
RG	Record Group
WSU	Washington State University

PROLOGUE

The Nez Perces call themselves Nimíipu, meaning “we the people” or “the real people.” According to tribal legend, the Nez Perces were created from the heart of monster, whose gross body completely filled the valley of the upper Clearwater River in what is now north central Idaho. When monster had devoured nearly all the animals in the land, coyote slew monster by jumping down its throat and cutting out its heart. Coyote then dismembered the body and flung the pieces to distant parts of the land, where different peoples sprang up. Last of all, coyote took monster’s heart and squeezed the blood out of it. These drops of blood from monster’s brave heart mingled with the earth and created the noblest of tribes, the Nez Perce people.¹

The homeland of the Nez Perces centered upon the Clearwater, lower Snake, and lower Salmon rivers and their tributaries. It extended to the northeastern edge of the Columbia Plateau where it meets the Bitterroot Valley. Lapwai Creek was considered the dividing line between the buffalo-hunting Nez Perces, who took the Lolo Trail to the hunting grounds east of the Continental Divide, and their fishing and hunting fellow tribesmen.² By the time the Nez Perces acquired horses in the early 1700s, the tribe had come to occupy a strategic location as intermediaries between the Flatheads and Crows on the northeast and the natives of the Columbia Plateau on the north and west. Trade generally fostered good relations with these peoples. The Coeur d’Alenes to the north, and the Shoshones and Bannocks to the south, meanwhile, were the Nez Perces’ traditional enemies. There were raids back and forth, but sometimes the Nez Perces traveled with the Coeur d’Alenes to the buffalo grounds.³ By the early nineteenth century, the Nez Perces had numerous permanent villages on the Clearwater River, at least eleven villages on the Snake River as far upstream as the Imnaha River, three permanent villages on the Salmon River and its tributaries, six villages between the Grande Ronde River and the Wallowa Mountains of northeastern Oregon and on the Snake River below the Clearwater, and three villages in what is now the southeast corner of Washington state.⁴

¹ Francis Haines, *The Nez Perces: Tribesmen of the Columbia Plateau*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1955. The Nez Perce people do not capitalize these characters’ names.

² Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest*, revised ed., University of Oklahoma, Norman, 1992, p. 145.

³ Haines, *The Nez Perces: Tribesmen of the Columbia Plateau*, p. 17.

⁴ Ruby and Brown, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 145.

As early as 1805-06, when the Lewis and Clark expedition passed through their country, the Nez Perces became known for their friendship with Americans. In 1831, Nez Perces participated in the native expedition to St. Louis in search of the "white man's religion." This resulted in the establishment of a mission at Lapwai in 1836 by the Reverend and Mrs. Henry H. Spalding of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, and another at Kamiah in 1839 by the Reverend Asa Bowen Smith. However, the American Board mission was abruptly terminated following the killing of the Reverend Dr. and Mrs. Marcus Whitman and others at their Waiilatpu mission, near present-day Walla Walla, Washington, in 1847.⁵

The missionaries left a legacy of dissension between Christian and nativist (non-Christian) tribal factions, which deepened as the tribe became more entangled in the westward expansion of the United States. The U.S. government formed Washington Territory in 1853, and dispatched the first appointed governor and ex-officio superintendent of Indian affairs, Isaac Stevens, to negotiate land cession treaties with the Pacific Northwest Indians. The rival factions of Nez Perces and other tribes convened with Stevens at the Walla Walla Treaty Council in 1855. Governor Stevens offered terms that satisfied Lawyer, whom Stevens recognized as the head chief of the tribe, but angered Looking Glass and other head men among the nativist Nez Perces. Still, the governor coerced all the Nez Perce head men into signing the treaty. Compared to most other tribes, the Nez Perces retained a large part of their lands in a reservation of some 7,694,270 acres.⁶

After gold was discovered on the reservation in 1860, the federal government did little to prevent prospectors from intruding on the reservation. The towns of Lewiston (a supply center on the lower Snake River) and Pierce (in the heart of the gold fields) were illegally established in Indian country. In 1861, federal officials negotiated an unratified agreement with the Nez Perces that allowed Americans to conduct mining operations in the area lying north of the Snake and Clearwater rivers and granted a right-of-way through the area south of that line. The agreement also provided that troops be stationed on the reservation. This the government accomplished in 1862 with the establishment of Fort Lapwai. In 1863, a federal commission negotiated a new land cession treaty with the Nez Perces. Lawyer again led numerous other head men in signing the treaty, but now his authority to represent the whole tribe was even more doubtful than in 1855. The new reservation was approximately one tenth its former size and many bands had been dispossessed without consent. The rift between Christian and nativist Nez Perces that was born in the missionary period widened as the nativist faction refused to accept the treaty. Old Joseph, leader of the Wallowa band of Nez Perces, tore up his New Testament in protest of the govern-

⁵ Ibid., p. 146.

⁶ Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1965, pp. 329-337.

ment's treatment of his people.⁷ Reverend Spalding returned to the Lapwai area in the early 1870s and conducted revival meetings, reinforcing the Presbyterian Nez Perce community in the face of growing Roman Catholic and nativist influence.

The so-called "non-treaty" Nez Perces continued to dwell in their traditional areas off the reservation. They experienced growing difficulties from encroachment by white settlement. In May 1877, federal officials gave the non-treaty Nez Perces an ultimatum that they must move to the reservation or face war with the U.S. The non-treaty Nez Perces decided to yield. However, on their way to the reservation, some young members of the tribe rode out of the Nez Perces' camp at Tolo Lake and killed a group of white settlers in revenge for past injustices done to them. This precipitated the battle of White Bird Canyon and the onset of the War of 1877.

Seeking to avoid further encounters with the U.S. Army, the non-treaty chiefs led their people on a 1,170-mile journey over the Bitterroot Mountains, southward and through Yellowstone National Park, and finally northward toward Canada. During their trek, the Nez Perces fought additional battles at the Clearwater, Big Hole, Camas Meadows, Canyon Creek, and finally near the Bear Paw Mountains in north central Montana, where most of the surviving non-treaty Nez Perces surrendered.

The flight of the non-treaty Nez Perces left a complicated legacy. In addition to the suffering and loss of life during the war itself, the bitter memory of the war widened the breach between tribal factions. The defeated Nez Perce were scattered in many directions. A few escaped to Canada. Most were taken as prisoners of war to Indian Territory (Oklahoma) where dozens of them perished in the hot climate. Eventually they were allowed to return to the Pacific Northwest: some to Lapwai, others with Chief Joseph to the Colville Indian Reservation in Washington, and still others to the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Oregon.

Yet the legacy of the war was not entirely bitter. As capable foes, and ultimate victims, in the last major Indian war of the nineteenth century, the Nez Perces secured for themselves a place of honor in the history and myth of the American West. Americans found the Nez Perces' story all the more poignant given the tribe's reputation as a proud and noble people who began the nineteenth century with an exceptionally friendly disposition toward the United States. In the twentieth century, various historians and anthropologists gave substance to this popular conception of the Nez Perce. The historian Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., went one step further and advanced the thesis that the tribe had played a key role in the opening of the Pacific Northwest. The creation of the Nez Perce National Historical Park in 1965 and the Nez Perce National Historic Trail in 1986 further attested to the popular appeal and historical significance of the Nez Perce story.

⁷ Ruby and Brown, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 146; Josephy, *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest*, pp. 408-442.

CHAPTER ONE

ORIGINS OF NEZ PERCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Introduction

The idea for Nez Perce National Historical Park originated in two separate causes, or movements. The first movement featured the longstanding efforts of white residents of the Clearwater Valley to commemorate the mid-nineteenth-century activities of Protestant missionaries Henry and Eliza Spalding. The second movement sprang from the efforts of the Nez Perce Tribe to foster job growth on their reservation through tourism development. Beginning about 1961, activists in the two movements began working together toward a common goal of establishing a national historical park. The resulting campaign garnered support from both the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the National Park Service (NPS), and culminated in the Nez Perce National Historical Park Act on May 15, 1965.

The Non-Indian Preservationists

The small delta at the confluence of Lapwai Creek and the Clearwater River was the site of some of Idaho's earliest recorded history, and so it appealed strongly to non-Indian Idahoans with an interest in commemorative local history. The idea that this site should be preserved initially drew support from such organizations as local pioneer associations, the Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Presbyterian Board of Missions. Later it gathered adherents from county historical societies and state universities. Although the movement evolved through more than four decades, its vision remained essentially the same: to develop the Spalding site in order to provide Idahoans and out-of-state visitors with a better appreciation of the Nez Perce role in U.S. history.

As early as 1920 a few non-Indian valley residents proposed that the state or federal government establish a park to commemorate the Spaldings and their activities among the Nez Perce. A Clarkston fruit grower by the name of E.A. White wrote a letter on behalf of a local pioneers association urging officials in Washington, D.C. to preserve the site of the Spalding mission and school. Whether this letter was directed to the National Park Service is unclear; it may have been the first proposal for a national historical park in the area.⁸

⁸ Marcus J. Ware, "Looking Backward," July 12, 1977, and "The Impetus of the Alice Whitman Chapter on the Projected Visitor Center at Spalding Park," no date, NEPE, Library Vertical Files, Spalding Museum Foundation. These sources do not indicate to whom the letter was sent or whether it was referred to the NPS.

In 1922 the state regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Mrs. James Babb, created a stir when she successfully opposed a plan by the Idaho State Highway Department to build a new bridge and approach road directly through the historic site. Apparently Mrs. Babb drove to the site and bodily positioned herself in the way of the surveyors, “calmly informing [them] that if they put that bridge across the site they would have to put it over her because she was going to stay right there.” The surveyors agreed to relocate the highway fifty feet to the east.⁹

Inspired by Mrs. Babb’s protest, the Alice Whitman Chapter of the DAR now spearheaded the park movement. About 1923 it succeeded in having a memorial placed at the Spalding home site consisting of a large rectangular rock on which was mounted a bronze tablet. Displaying a degree of ethnocentrism that later generations would find offensive, the DAR’s memorial proclaimed that the Spalding mission site represented the “first home” in Idaho. In 1935 the DAR marked the site of the Spalding home with two piles of stones, erected an iron fence around the site, and identified it with a second memorial plaque. The following year the Alice Whitman Chapter of the DAR achieved its initial objective when Governor C.C. Moore of Idaho dedicated a large acreage surrounding the homesite as Spalding State Park. In the following months, the Idaho State Highway Department developed the site with an arboretum, picnic grounds, and winding foot paths (see Chapter Six).¹⁰

The next goal of the Alice Whitman Chapter of the DAR was to establish a museum at Spalding. A few DAR members, notably Mrs. John Alley, wife of the physician in charge of the Nez Perce Indian Tuberculosis Hospital at Lapwai, collected artifacts. Their intent was to display them in a public museum eventually. Beginning in 1949, the DAR prevailed on Idaho’s Senators Glen Taylor and Henry C. Dworshak and Representative Compton I. White to introduce bills that would appropriate funds for “an Indian museum.” Senator Taylor’s bill called for an appropriation of \$85,000 for the Secretary of the Interior to establish a museum at Spalding “for the purpose of preserving, classifying, and displaying relics and artifacts of the American Indian, and historical material relating to the early history of the Northwest.” Senator Dworshak’s bill called for a \$50,000 appropriation and assigned the development of a museum to the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Although the DAR organized a letter-writing campaign in support of these various bills, none of the bills was passed.¹¹

Despite that disappointment, the DAR succeeded in generating enough local interest in the museum proposal to call a public meeting on May 29, 1953, which led directly to the formation of

⁹ “The Impetus of the Alice Whitman Chapter on the Projected Visitor Center at Spalding Park,” no date, NEPE, Library Vertical Files, Spalding Museum Foundation.

¹⁰ Ibid; see also, *Lewiston Tribune*, May 10, 1936. In recent years, tribal cultural leaders have pointed out to park officials that the rock used to memorialize the Spalding homesite was removed from its original location where it was known in Nez Perce oral tradition as “Coyote’s cradle board.” (Susan Buchel comments on draft, March 20, 1996.)

¹¹ Virginia Leckenby to Fellow Citizens, February 2, 1950, WSU, Ted Little Papers, Box 2, Folder 20.

the Spalding Museum Foundation, Inc. In the fall of that year, Marcus Ware, a Lewiston attorney, headed the new organization, assisted by DAR member Virginia Leckenby. Other charter members included Joseph Blackeagle of Lapwai, J.E. Buchanan, president of the University of Idaho, and fifteen others, most of whom were residents of Lewiston or Clarkston.¹²

Proponents of the Spalding State Park and a Spalding Museum probably always saw some economic benefit in their efforts, but it was not until about 1960 that tourism development became a major part of their arguments. At least two factors were at play in bringing about this change. First and most importantly, Idahoans discovered that tourism had become a major factor in the state's economy. A 1960 tourist survey revealed that in the previous year tourists had spent approximately \$120 million in the state, making tourism Idaho's third largest industry after agriculture and timber. Governor Robert E. Smylie requested the legislature to create a state parks department. The legislation failed in 1961 and 1963, but passed in 1965. Meanwhile, the Commissioners of the State Land Board concluded that outdoor recreation was "fast assuming a prominent role in the economy of Idaho," and pressed for more development of Idaho's scenic and historical resources.¹³

A second factor in the changing orientation of the movement for a historical park was the expectation of increased tourist traffic along the Clearwater River corridor stemming from new federal highway development. In 1962, the federal government completed U.S. Highway 12 between Lewiston and Lolo, Montana. Called the Lewis and Clark Highway because it roughly followed the same route taken by the explorers, the road pierced a large stretch of wild country and was extraordinarily scenic. The Lewis and Clark Highway joined U.S. 95 across the Clearwater River from Spalding, making Spalding a logical center for tourist information.

Perhaps a third factor contributed to the movement's higher profile in the early 1960s. Dams were under construction or being planned at several points above and below Lewiston on the Snake and Clearwater rivers. Many of Idaho's river canyons still looked essentially the same as they had in the time of Lewis and Clark. Although Idahoans have generally shown little support for the creation of national parks in their state, the spate of dam building at this time appears to have made many area residents poignantly aware of Idaho's recreational and historical resources and more sympathetic to preservation.¹⁴

¹² "The Impetus of the Alice Whitman Chapter on the Projected Visitor Center at Spalding Park," NEPE, Library Vertical Files, Spalding Museum Foundation; Articles of Association of Spalding Museum Foundation, Inc., November 1953, WSU, Ted Little Papers, Box 2, Folder 20.

¹³ Wilma M. Woods, "The Role of Federal Dollars and the Economics of Recreation in the Development of Idaho's State Parks, 1908-1965," *Idaho Yesterdays*, vol.34, no.4 (Winter 1991), pp. 15-21; quote on p. 19.

¹⁴ For example, see Governor Robert E. Smylie's remarks in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, 88th Cong., 2d sess., August 18 and October 9, 1964, pp. 30-31.

During this period, the Spalding Museum Foundation provided continuity and assumed several important tasks in the coalescing movement for a national historical park. It took over the DAR's role of lobbying for a congressional appropriation with which to establish a museum, promoted the museum idea locally and raised funds from private donors, acquired property (a small parcel of land adjoining the southwest corner of Spalding State Park) with the intent of donating it to the park, and coordinated the effort of collecting and storing artifacts for future display in a museum. The Spalding Museum Foundation remained active even after it was largely subsumed by the campaign to establish a national historical park. In 1963, it paid for an appraisal of the Evans property, a key parcel of land in Spalding on which stood the Sacajawea Museum with its eclectic assortment of historical artifacts.¹⁵ Even after the park was established, the Spalding Museum Foundation continued to lobby senators and congressmen for the necessary funds to build the park's visitor center.

By the early 1960s, booster organizations like Advance Idaho and the Lewiston Chamber of Commerce had developed a keen interest in the area's historical resources. It began to appear that Idaho's historical and recreational resources could be developed together. The idea arose that Idaho's overall character — scenic, rustic, and pristine — could be preserved and marketed in a single package. This called for a wider conception, something like "Nez Perce country" or "Nez Perce historic country." Beginning about 1961, some of these individuals began to work with Nez Perce tribal representatives on a plan to establish a national historical park.

The Nez Perce Tribe

There were about 2,100 Nez Percés on the tribal roll in 1960, with some three-fourths of all tribal members residing on the reservation. The dominant tribal concern then, as now, was how to improve economic conditions on the reservation. While some Nez Percés found employment in the lumber mills and others worked in the woods or farmed their own land, many others faced a critical lack of employment opportunities on the reservation. Only about thirty percent of adult male tribal members who lived on the reservation had full-time employment. Another twenty-five percent of this group had seasonal employment. Considering that the average Nez Perce family income was approximately \$950 per year, and considering further the reluctance shown by most Nez Percés to move off the reservation, it followed that the foremost tribal concern was to foster job growth on the reservation.¹⁶

¹⁵ Appraisal of "Evans Property" at Spalding, Idaho, for Spalding Historical Assn. as of May 15, 1963, by Glenn W. Hall, WSU, Ted Little Papers, Box 2, Folder 20. Theodore H. Little, a Lewiston attorney who represented the Nez Perce Tribe, joined the foundation and became one of the key individuals in the movement for a national historical park.

¹⁶ Joseph H. Fraser, *A Survey of the Recreation and Tourism Resources in the Nez Perce Country*, vol. I, report prepared by Armour Research Foundation for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Portland, Oregon, June 14, 1963, p. 1.

The Nez Perce Tribe also took a keen interest in reservation land issues. The majority of the reservation was checkerboarded by allotments, some of which were owned by individual Nez Perces and some by non-Indians. The majority of the reservation acreage was leased to non-Indians for agricultural purposes. The tribe held only a remnant of the reservation lands. The Nez Perce Tribe was seeking to bring reservation lands back into tribal ownership, and was accomplishing this by purchasing one parcel at a time. Although the tribe's land acquisition program aimed at improving the tribe's contemporary economic base, it had underpinnings in the Nez Perces' cultural tradition too. As tribal leader Richard A. Halfmoon explained in 1970, the Nez Perces traditionally regarded the area as their homeland; no person "owned the earth," but members of a group enjoyed the privilege of living on a portion of the earth, and there the earth provided them with resources they needed to live.¹⁷

A third tribal concern, more strongly felt among the elders than the young people, was how to preserve Nez Perce culture. To some Nez Perces it seemed that the medicine dance, the root feast, and other traditional customs were in danger of extinction. The Nez Perce people were approaching a time when full-bloods would constitute a minority of the tribe. Some Nez Perces began to have discussions about what the tribal government might do to preserve the Nez Perce cultural heritage.¹⁸

The Nez Perce Tribe had a constitution and bylaws (adopted in 1948 and revised in 1961) and a nine-member governing body, the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee (NPTEC). NPTEC was charged with administering tribal economic development, managing human and natural resource programs, and monitoring investment of tribal income and assets.¹⁹ This last function became especially important in the late 1950s and early 1960s after the Nez Perce Tribe received judgment awards for three cases before the Indian Claims Commission. The first award — for \$2.8 million — stemmed from the tribe's loss of its accustomed fishing place at Celilo Falls on the Columbia River. The second award — for \$4.2 million — compensated the tribe for the unfairly low price paid for Nez Perce lands in 1863 during Idaho's gold rush. The third award — for \$3 million — was to compensate the Nez Perce for gold taken from the reservation illegally before the reservation had been reduced in size. In the words of tribal attorney Theodore H. Little, the judgments created an "upsurge of hope among the Nez Perce, and a desire to build for the future."²⁰

¹⁷ Sue Whalen, "The Nez Perces' Relationship to Their Land," *Indian Historian*, vol.4, no.3 (1971), p. 31.

¹⁸ Allen Slickpoo, Sr., interview by author, July 21, 1995.

¹⁹ Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest*, rev. ed. (Norman, 1992), p. 147.

²⁰ Theodore H. Little, untitled speech delivered in Clarkston, Washington, July 6, 1962, WSU, Ted Little Papers, Box 4, Folder 6.

Nez Perces disagreed on how the judgment funds could best be used. Some wanted to apportion the money among all tribal members on a per capita basis, while others wanted NPTEC to make discretionary use of the funds for long term economic development on the reservation. The conflict over proper use of tribal funds was often sharp, and tribal elections for NPTEC positions would often focus on this issue.²¹ At first those Nez Perces in favor of per capita payments had their way. The Celilo Falls judgment award was dispensed in \$1,400 cash allotments to all tribal members with recommendations that it be used for the purchase of home improvements, farm machinery, and the like.²² Federal officials later maintained, with tacit concurrence from some tribal leaders, that the economic benefits from those expenditures had been short-lived and disappointing.²³ They recommended that a portion of the money should be held in trust while the tribe developed a long term economic development plan for the reservation. Some tribal members were receptive to the idea of working with the federal government to invest the tribal judgement funds wisely. As will be seen, the judgment funds would play a crucial role in the campaign for establishing Nez Perce National Historical Park. Perhaps fittingly, a portion of the money received by the Nez Perce Tribe for its loss of lands a century earlier would now be used to invoke the idea of “Nez Perce country” in a new incarnation — as a historical artifact and unifying theme for the Nez Perce National Historical Park.

The spirit of cooperation between NPTEC, the NPS, and the BIA reflected a broad change in federal Indian policy taking place in Washington, D.C. following the presidential election of 1960. During the previous decade, the Eisenhower Administration and a Republican-led Congress had sought to implement a policy of “termination” through which federal trust responsibility to Indian tribes would be reduced. Ostensibly aimed at “freeing” Indians from the BIA bureaucracy, termination threatened to eliminate the tribes’ special relationship to the federal government and abrogate the Indians’ treaty rights. Although only a handful of federally-recognized Indian tribes were actually “terminated,” the policy cast a pall over all Indian tribes. Tribal governments balked at taking over services provided by the BIA for fear of appearing “advanced” and ready for termination.²⁴

²¹ For example, see Daniel H. Olney to R.D. Holtz, September 18, 1962, NAPNWR, RG 75, Portland Area Office, Tribal Operations Branch, Box 1536, Nez Perce Tribal Affairs 1962.

²² Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest* rev.ed. (Norman, Oklahoma, 1992), p. 149.

²³ Daniel H. Olney to R.D. Holtz, September 18, 1962, NAPNWR, RG 75, Portland Area Office, Tribal Operations Branch, Box 1536, Nez Perce Tribal Affairs 1962; *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, June 11, 1961; Minutes of the Advisory Committee held at the Hotel Lewis Clark, Lewiston, Idaho, June 4, 1964, NAPNWR, RG 75, Portland Area Office, Tribal Operations Branch, Box 1567, Nez Perce Minutes 1964, p. 3.

²⁴ Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, vol. II (Lincoln, 1984), pp. 1058-1059.

Idaho's Senator Frank Church, Montana's Senator Lee Metcalf, and other prominent western senators and congressmen began to oppose the termination policy by the end of the decade. John F. Kennedy denounced the termination policy during the presidential election campaign of 1960. He promised Indians that there would be no change in treaty relationships without the consent of the tribes concerned. Kennedy further declared that "there would be protection of the Indian land base, credit assistance, and encouragement of tribal planning for economic development." The government would take "no steps to impair the cultural heritage of any group." Kennedy chose Stewart L. Udall, a congressman from Arizona with a deep interest in Indian affairs, to be his Secretary of the Interior. Udall immediately appointed a task force on Indian affairs, whose report became the blueprint for the administration's Indian policy. One member of the task force, anthropologist and former Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin Philleo Nash, was appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs.²⁵

Both Udall and Nash believed that Indian tourism held great promise as a way to improve economic conditions on many Indian reservations. Indian tourism — the marketing of Indian villages, ceremonies, and arts and crafts to non-Indian tourists — already had a long history in the Southwest where the Pueblo Indians, for example, had begun to derive significant income from tourists as early as the 1920s.²⁶ Another precedent could be found among the Eastern Cherokees, who established a tourist industry in the decade and a half after World War II which revolved around a Cherokee pageant, a reconstructed Cherokee village, and a Museum of the Cherokee Indian.²⁷ Udall thought that Indian groups could learn from the experience of the Southwest Indians, and he recommended to a group of Nez Perces that the tribe might send a delegation, at federal expense, to study an Apache-owned recreation center in his state of Arizona.²⁸ Commissioner Nash, for his part, was familiar with recent initiatives to develop a tourist trade around the Menominee Indian Reservation's attractive lakes and forests in northern Wisconsin, and from his new position he promptly pushed a proposal to develop recreational facilities on other Indian reservations throughout the United States.

Nez Perces by and large welcomed the Democratic Party's electoral victory in 1960 and the change of federal Indian policy that it promised. Democrats not only opposed termination, they were staunch allies of many tribes, including the Nez Perce. Idaho Senator Frank Church, Idaho Congresswoman Gracie Bowers Pfof, Washington Senators Henry M. Jackson and Warren G. Magnuson, and Montana Senator Lee Metcalf were such Democratic Party politicians. The Nez

²⁵ Ibid, pp. 1087-1091.

²⁶ Jill D. Sweet, "Let 'em Loose": Pueblo Indian Management of Tourism," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, vol.15, no.4 (1991), pp. 59-74.

²⁷ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, 88th Cong., 2d sess., August 18 and October 9, 1964, p. 38; Larry French, "Tourism and Indian Exploitation: A Social Indictment," *The Indian Historian*, vol.10, no.4 (Fall 1977), pp. 19-27.

²⁸ *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, June 11, 1961.

Perce Tribe's legal counsel in Washington, D.C., Richard Schifter, was a partner in the prestigious law firm of Strasser, Spiegelberg, Fried, Frank & Kampelman, and a former student of the preeminent Indian rights lawyer of the New Deal era, Felix S. Cohen.²⁹ Since the Nez Perce Tribe had strong ties to the Democratic Party, the election of John F. Kennedy held promise for the tribe.

In March 1961, NPTEC Chairman Richard A. Halfmoon inquired about obtaining technical assistance from the National Park Service on a proposal to develop some tourist attractions on the reservation. Schifter, NPTEC's liaison in Washington, contacted Assistant Secretary of the Interior John A. Carver, Jr. and drafted a letter for Senator Frank Church to send to the Department of the Interior in support of NPTEC's proposal.³⁰ Carver directed the NPS to consult with the Nez Perce Tribe on its tourist development proposal. The NPS assigned Daniel F. Burroughs, chief of the Columbia River Recreation Survey Branch of the NPS located in Portland, Oregon, to the task. In May 1961, Burroughs met with Halfmoon, four other NPTEC members, and William E. Ensor, Jr., the BIA's superintendent of Northern Idaho Indian Agency, and accompanied the group on a field survey. This appears to have been the first instance of direct cooperation between the Nez Perce Tribe and the NPS.³¹

Burroughs listed six different projects which the tribe had taken under consideration. These included a museum; a reconstructed Nez Perce village; a western fort that would include stores for the sale of Nez Perce arts and crafts; an amphitheater in which tribal members could perform dances, ceremonies, and other tribal customs; a community hall for the transaction of tribal business, as well as for use by non-Indian organizations such as the Boy Scouts; and tourist accommodations, including motels, restaurants, service stations, automobile campgrounds. Burroughs concluded that the scenic attractions of the region, together with the traffic on U.S. 95 between Lewiston and Boise and State Route 9 up the Clearwater Valley, would justify some kind of well-planned development.³²

²⁹ Allen Slickpoo, Sr., interview by author, July 21, 1995.

³⁰ Richard Schifter to Richard A. Halfmoon, March 17, 1961, enclosing Frank Church to John A. Carver, Jr., March 13, 1961, NEPE, Richard Halfmoon Papers.

³¹ Daniel F. Burroughs, "Preliminary Report on the Proposed Plan of Recreation Development, Nez Perce Indian Tribe of Idaho," June 1961, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 4, April 1963. Richard Halfmoon recalls these events differently. Halfmoon relates that Burroughs' made a sudden appearance in Spalding, and expressed concern that Halfmoon and Sam Watters were prepared to burn down an old building next to Watters' home, and made a surprising announcement that the National Park Service was planning a park at the site. Halfmoon characterizes the NPS preliminary study as a "hush hush plan," and maintains that "nobody told the Nez Perce people what was going on." Richard Halfmoon, interview by author, July 27, 1995; Richard A. Halfmoon, comments on draft, May 9, 1996; Susan Buchel, comments on draft, March 20, 1996.

³² Daniel F. Burroughs, "Preliminary Report on the Proposed Plan of Recreation Development, Nez Perce Indian Tribe of Idaho," June 1961, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 4, April 1963.

Less than a month after Burroughs's quick survey, Secretary Udall met with NPTEC at Spalding State Park. NPTEC members Allen Slickpoo and Harrison Lott, tribal attorney Theodore H. Little, and Irving Faling, a member of the tourism promotion organization called "Advance Idaho", briefed Udall on the proposed tribal enterprises. The development could include an Indian village, a handicraft store, a horse racing track, and rodeo grounds, Udall was told. "Jobs would be provided for hundreds of Indians in the area, as this program gradually developed," Faling said, "and the entire Lewiston area would derive great benefits from the tourists attracted to the region." Udall expressed strong support for the proposal, drawing comparisons between what the Nez Perce Tribe could offer and what some Indian groups in the Southwest had achieved by way of tourism development. He encouraged the non-Indian community to work closely with the Nez Perce Tribe and noted approvingly the emphasis on promoting tribal income. "When Indians are the magnets to attract these tourists, as they often are," Udall said, "they certainly should share in the economic benefits."³³

Udall opposed short term fixes, stressing the importance of using tribal judgment funds for the development of long-range programs to promote job growth and educational opportunities for tribal members. Per capita payments were invariably spent on consumer commodities, Udall remarked, "and in a few months or years there is nothing to show for it."³⁴ Congress had appropriated judgment funds for the Nez Perce Tribe only two weeks prior to Udall's visit. His concern over how the money would be used certainly must have been an important factor behind his visit. Indeed, uncomfortable with leaving the fate of those funds to tribal politics, Udall decreed on September 11, 1961, that no more per capita payments could be made out of Nez Perce trust funds until the tribe had an approved economic development plan. The Secretary's directive placed NPTEC members in an awkward position as they stood for reelection. In the long run, however, it probably bolstered the position of those Nez Perces who wanted NPTEC to seize the initiative for economic development planning.³⁵

On July 26, 1961, NPTEC adopted resolution 61-143, providing for the establishment of a Nez Perce Tribal Development Advisory Committee. The purpose of the committee was to investigate various economic opportunities that would create jobs and improve the standard of living of tribal members. The committee's specific charge was to develop an overall economic development program to guide use of the Nez Perce judgment award funds. The committee was to report to NPTEC on an advisory basis.³⁶

³³ *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, June 11, 1961.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, March 11, 1962; Daniel H. Olney to R.D. Holtz, September 18, 1962, NAPNWR, RG 75, Portland Area Office, Tribal Operations Branch, Box 1536, Nez Perce Tribal Affairs 1962.

³⁶ R.D. Holtz to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, July 25, 1961, NAPNWR, RG 75, Portland Area Office, Tribal Operations Branch, Box 1536, Nez Perce Tribal Affairs 1962.

Non-Indians were invited to serve with tribal members on the committee. As the new entity described itself to the Nez Perce tribal membership in its initial report, the Development Advisory Committee represented a “cooperative community project” in keeping with the government’s broad new Indian policy of stimulating long term investment on Indian reservations.³⁷ Committee members included Allen Slickpoo, Angus A. Wilson, and Frank Penney of NPTEC, Marcus Ware and Theodore H. Little of the Spalding Museum Foundation, and William F. Johnston of the *Lewiston Morning Tribune*. Johnston chaired the tourism subcommittee. The formation of this committee joined together the older non-Indian preservationist movement for a historical park with the newer reservation-oriented movement for tourism development. Henceforth, the Development Advisory Committee would work with NPS and BIA officials and legislators to hone the Nez Perce National Historical Park proposal between 1961 and 1965. The fusion of these two interest groups was a crucial turning point in the origins of Nez Perce National Historical Park.³⁸

The Campaign for Nez Perce National Historical Park

National park campaigns often materialize out of the guiding vision of one individual or organization. No one entity or person can be singled out in the campaign for Nez Perce National Historical Park, although the Nez Perce Tribal Development Advisory Committee did play a central role as a consensus-builder. Rather, the campaign succeeded because local citizens, officials in the Department of the Interior, and Idaho’s congressional delegation all worked together without encountering any major opposition.

On April 20, NPTEC Chairman Angus A. Wilson wrote to the Area Redevelopment Administration with a request for technical assistance. The ARA notified NPS Director Conrad L. Wirth of the request and offered a grant of \$10,000. On May 2, Wirth requested that the NPS Western Region send a team to the area. Their task was to prepare a reliable cost estimate for a feasibility study to determine if the \$10,000 grant was sufficient. The team, headed by Assistant

³⁷ Development Advisory Committee to Nez Perce Tribal Membership, no date, NAPNWR, RG 75, Portland Area Office, Tribal Operations Branch, Box 1536, Nez Perce Tribal Affairs 1962.

³⁸ Another initiative by the Kennedy Administration encouraged the two groups to work together. As part of Kennedy’s legislative program for stimulating the national economy, Congress passed the Area Redevelopment Act (ARA) on May 1, 1961. The ARA sought to provide low interest loans for business development in designated areas of the nation with substantial and persistent unemployment and underemployment. Further signalling the federal government’s new direction in Indian policy, the act specifically targeted Indian reservations for redevelopment and authorized Indian tribes to apply for loans. Several counties in north central Idaho, including the Nez Perce Indian Reservation, were designated as a redevelopment area under the act. ARA funds, procured by NPTEC, helped to pay the cost of feasibility studies undertaken on behalf of the Nez Perce Tribe in 1962-1963. See Larry Burt, “Western Tribes and Balance Sheets: Business Development Programs in the 1960s and 1970s,” *Western Historical Quarterly*, vol.23, no.4 (November 1992), p. 480; Angus A. Wilson to William L. Batt, Jr., June 13, 1962, enclosing Technical Assistance Project Proposal, NAPNWR, RG 75, Portland Area Office, Tribal Operations Branch, Box 1536, Nez Perce Tribal Affairs 1962.

Regional Director Leo J. Diederich, assembled in Lewiston on June 3. The NPS officials first convened with the Development Advisory Committee. Others who attended this meeting included representatives of the BIA and ARA, the director of the Idaho State Historical Society, the president of the Spalding Museum Foundation, and three anthropologists from Washington State University. The following day the NPS team toured the reservation with Superintendent William E. Ensor, Jr., and NPTEC Chairman Angus Wilson. The team found some serious obstacles to the proposed development. The Nez Perce Indian Reservation lacked a readily definable physical boundary to give tourists a strong sense of place; moreover, tribally-owned lands and Indian allotments were widely interspersed with lands within the reservation that were owned or leased by non-Indians. The area was scenic but did not have any outstandingly significant natural features. At the conclusion of the visit, the NPS team determined that the proposed \$10,000 ARA grant was insufficient. It recommended that the feasibility study should include both a survey of the recreational resources and an analysis of the reservation's and region's economies, for a total cost of \$50,000.³⁹

By August the ARA had approved a \$37,500 grant and the feasibility study was under way. The BIA contracted with Armour Research Foundation of Chicago. Joseph Fraser conducted field research for the economic component during the fall and completed Volume I in June 1963. Erwin Thompson, historian at Whitman Mission National Monument, was granted a leave of absence from the NPS to consult with Armour Research Foundation and prepare Volume II of the feasibility study, "A Survey of the Recreational and Tourism Resources in the Nez Perce Country." The latter volume was completed in September 1963.⁴⁰

Fraser's report suggested that the increase in tourist traffic following completion of the Lewis and Clark Highway would justify tribal investment in a "tourist and historical facilities program." The report identified a joint commission of Indian and non-Indian area residents as the best way to manage such a venture. Fraser broke the program into three components: (1) a museum or visitor center; (2) an amphitheater and Indian village; and (3) a tourist services complex. The construction, operation, and maintenance costs of a museum or visitor center might be secured through a federal appropriation, Fraser stated. The amphitheater and Indian village, on the other hand, would probably have to be a tribal enterprise. Fraser noted that such facilities had proven profitable for some tribes and had failed for others. Finally, Fraser recommended that the tourist services complex include a motel, restaurant, service station, arts and crafts shop, trailer park, and campground. This complex would also have to be a tribal enterprise, requiring a larger

³⁹ Acting Assistant Regional Director to Assistant Regional Director, June 19, 1962, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 4, April 1963.

⁴⁰ *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, August 30, 1962; Joseph H. Fraser, *A Survey of the Recreational and Tourism Resources in the Nez Perce Country, Vol. II, The Nez Perce Country*, prepared for Armour Research Foundation for Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, June 1963; Erwin N. Thompson, *A Survey of the Recreational and Tourism Resources in the Nez Perce Country, Vol. II, The Nez Perce Country*, prepared for Armour Research Foundation for Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, September 1963.

investment than the amphitheater and Indian village, but the complex offered greater chances of returning a profit.⁴¹

Thompson's report emphasized that the history of the people and the land posed a "complex challenge to interpreters."

The history of the Nez Perce Indians offers a continuous thread that must be woven throughout the length and breadth of the tapestry. The history of the whites, who now dominate the country, must also receive emphasis. And the contacts and conflicts of the two provide a story by itself. Explorations, the fur trade, the missionaries, gold mining (both white and Chinese), the growth of towns and cities, the agriculture and forest industries, the great dams that are to come — all these and many more aspects make up the whole story.⁴²

The key to success, in Thompson's estimation, was an ample visitor center. For Thompson, the visitor center would serve not only as a museum for interpreting the story of Nez Perce Country, but would also direct the visitor to numerous outlying historical sites. The facility would also provide a safe home for historical and ethnographic objects that were now scattered throughout the area and at risk of being lost or destroyed. The visitor center administrator would be in charge of running the facility and coordinating the management of scattered sites with many landowners and government agencies.⁴³

Thompson invited Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., to contribute a foreword to his report. Josephy, a distinguished historian and editor with *American Heritage Magazine*, was then working on his book, *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest* (1965). Enlisting Josephy in the park campaign proved to be a wise move. He had numerous contacts among the Nez Percés, as well as with politicians in Washington, D.C. Indeed, his brief foreword to Thompson's report would be quoted more often than any other testament on behalf of the park.⁴⁴

Josephy had first discovered Nez Perce country while on an assignment for *Time Magazine* some years before. His "immediate, grand impression," Josephy wrote in the foreword, "was of having come on one of the most spectacularly rugged and beautiful parts of the United States." And yet this was also one of the least known and developed regions of the country. After sketching the history of the area, Josephy concluded,

Nowhere else in this country, in fact, am I aware of a large region whose over-all story can be interpreted so compactly in a setting that has so little changed under the advance of civilization. The

⁴¹ Joseph H. Fraser, "A Survey of the Recreation and Tourism Resources in the Nez Perce Country," vol. 1, prepared by Armour Research Foundation for Bureau of Indian Affairs, June 14, 1963, pp. 5-10.

⁴² Erwin Thompson, *A Survey of the Recreational and Tourism Resources in the Nez Perce Country*, vol. 2, prepared by Armour Research Foundation for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, September 1963, p. 2.

⁴³ Ibid, pp. 3-5.

⁴⁴ For example, see Senator Len Jordan's testimony in U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, 88th Cong., 2d sess., August 18 and October 9, 1964, p. 12.

opening of the new Lewis and Clark Highway across the Bitterroot Mountains now makes this area easily accessible as it has never been before to large numbers of vacationing American families. Without the knowledge of the background of the country through which they are driving, awareness of the great heritage of this region might easily evade them. This report, with its conclusions, shows the way to a truly imaginative interpretive program whose establishment cannot but help inspire Americans to a greater regard for this beautiful portion of the United States and its noble past.⁴⁵

During the spring of 1963, when the Armour Research Foundation's reports were in draft, officials in the Department of the Interior began conceptualizing how the Nez Perce country might be brought into the national park system. Assistant Secretary of the Interior John A. Carver, Jr., a native of Boise, took the lead. Carver represented one of Idaho's prominent political families; prior to his appointment as assistant secretary, he had managed Frank Church's Senate office. Since joining the Interior Department, Carver had overseen several national park proposals, and he recognized at the outset that they were now "dealing with a concept which is new and different." The basic premise of a national historical park in Nez Perce country was that the region around the confluence of the Clearwater and Snake rivers offered a unique opportunity to interpret a number of distinct yet intertwining stories of the nation's heritage. The three main themes, in Carver's view, were the Lewis and Clark expedition, the mining frontier, and the War of 1877. "What we have here is not a land area to be brought under Federal ownership, but rather a series of sites," Carver observed. What would hold the park together was the interpretive effort emanating from the visitor center.⁴⁶

From his position as Assistant Secretary, Carver made the crucial call that the project should serve the national park system first, and the Nez Perce Tribe incidentally. "I am thinking of a park equivalent to our National Historical Parks in the East," Carver wrote:

The project must stand on its own feet as a historical park type development. One incident is greatly enhanced economic opportunities for the Nez Perce Indians, but we still must remember that this is an incident, not justification for the kind of development I have outlined. This project can stand on its own feet, and it is better to emphasize its intrinsic worth rather than its contribution to Indian economic advancement.⁴⁷

As Carver prepared to visit the Nez Perce Indian Reservation in May, NPS Acting Director George B. Hartzog, Jr., provided additional thoughts on the proposed park. Hartzog agreed that a visitor center would be an essential component of the "broad scale or regional approach in planning and promotion" that was now under discussion. Hartzog suggested that the visitor center could be located on the reservation in the Spalding-Lapwai area. There might be a satellite visitor center in the Kamiah area. Other sites might be interpreted through small on-site exhibits.

⁴⁵ Erwin Thompson, *A Survey of the Recreational and Tourism Resources in the Nez Perce Country*, vol.2, prepared by Armour Research Foundation for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, September 1963, pp. i-ii.

⁴⁶ John A. Carver, Jr., to William Johnston, April 1, 1963, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 4, April 1963; Merle Wells, comments on draft, February 19, 1996.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Hartzog agreed with Carver that the cooperation of various landowners and agencies would be vital to the success of the program.⁴⁸

NPS Director Conrad L. Wirth conceptualized the proposed park along similar lines but with a greater emphasis on the land base. He thought there might be a ghost town in the region that the Park Service could acquire and preserve. "It shouldn't take too much land, but we should have enough land for a proper setting to get the true feeling of the story we are trying to tell," Wirth advised. In addition, Wirth wanted the park to have land for camping and other recreational uses. "This might be worked out jointly with other land agencies but still be part of the over-all package." Finally, Wirth suggested that the park's interpretive thrust could be coordinated with similar types of units elsewhere in the nation where the story was more expansive than the actual site under NPS jurisdiction.

It might be considered as a general outpost of the interpretive story we hope to tell of the western expansion at St. Louis....In our visitor center at St. Louis we are proposing to tell the general story of the western expansion brought about by general exploration and, of course, the Louisiana Purchase. In the Nez Perce country the story would be about one of the great trails of exploration in the North, especially the Lewis and Clark Trail, and the prehistory and history of man that dates back to 9,000 B.C. It could include other historic sites, perhaps not of national importance in themselves but their combination with the over-all picture would aid in telling the complete story.⁴⁹

Touring the Nez Perce country in mid-May, Carver and Wirth were impressed by what they saw. Idaho's Governor Robert E. Smylie joined Carver and Wirth in support of the park idea. Carver came to two important conclusions. First, the history of the area was the outstanding resource. Second, the park should be decentralized but limited to Idaho.⁵⁰

By now it was quite clear that the Park Service, not the BIA, was guiding the park proposal along. Park planning overshadowed the development of tourist facilities, although local newspaper coverage of these developments still noted that the Nez Perce tribe was an important part of a "cooperative effort" and had offered to use some of its judgment funds to provide accommodations for park visitors. Before leaving Lewiston, Wirth asked Burroughs and several members of the Nez Perce Advisory Development Committee to draft a bill for authorizing the national historical park. A legislative assistant in the Park Service's Washington office massaged the draft bill and sent it back to the Nez Perce Advisory Development Committee. William F. Johnston, managing editor of the *Lewiston Morning Tribune* and chairman of the tourism

⁴⁸ Acting Director to Assistant Secretary, April 5, 1963, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 4, April 1963.

⁴⁹ Director to Assistant Secretary, April 26, 1963, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 4, April 1963.

⁵⁰ U.S. Forest Service, *Northern Region News* (Missoula, Montana), No. 28, July 12, 1963, *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, May 15, May 16, and May 18, 1963. Carver did not explain his decision to limit the park to Idaho. Presumably, a single-state park appeared more feasible politically. Park proposals traditionally needed the unanimous support of the state's whole congressional delegation in order to receive consideration by Congress.

subcommittee of the Nez Perce Advisory Development Committee, then submitted the draft bill with supporting documents to all four members of Idaho's congressional delegation.⁵¹

The whole congressional delegation responded favorably to the legislative proposal. "I wish every legislative proposal could come to me in such good shape as yours for the Nez Perce National Historical Park," Senator Frank Church wrote to Johnston. Representatives Compton I. White and Ralph Harding supported the proposal, as did the one Republican member of the delegation, Senator Len B. Jordan. It was perhaps significant that the Nez Perce country had personal associations for Jordan: the senator came from Grangeville, near the White Bird battlefield, and had operated a ranch near Pittsburg Landing in the Snake River Canyon for a number of years.⁵²

William F. Johnston of the Nez Perce Tribal Development Advisory Committee nevertheless thought that two points in the bill needed strengthening. The first and easier point was the name. Initially the Park Service favored the name "Nez Perce Country National Historic Sites." Alvin Josephy thought it needed the greater prestige of the national historical park designation. John Carver agreed to change "Sites" to "Park" and let Congress amend the title back to "Sites" if Congress deemed it necessary. But William Johnston still thought the handle was too long. He could appreciate the meaning attached to each word, but the end result was "pretty cumbersome to promote nationally — or even to put on a map."⁵³ Eventually Senator Church shortened the title to Nez Perce National Historical Park.

The second point of the bill that Johnston sought to strengthen concerned the park's land base. As the bill was originally drafted, Section 3 provided that the government could purchase no more than 500 acres for the park. It is unclear who suggested the limitation, but its aim was clearly to deflate any charges that this was a "land grab." Johnston preferred no limitation, or at least a higher ceiling. Harold T. Fabian, chairman of the National Parks Advisory Board, agreed that the limitation could be too restrictive and might "prove embarrassing" to the Park Service. Apparently, Senator Church was willing to consider eliminating this provision, but Representatives White and Harding insisted on it. Still, with backing from the National Parks Advisory Board, Johnston persuaded the Idaho delegation to accept a higher limitation of 1,500 acres.⁵⁴

⁵¹ Newton Edwards to William F. Johnston, June 3, 1963, and William F. Johnston to Newton Edwards, July 15, 1963, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folders 6 and 10, June and October 1963; William F. Johnston to Senator Frank Church, September 15, 1963, BSU, Frank Church Papers, Series 1.1, Box 92, File 11; *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, May 26, 1963.

⁵² Merle Wells, comments on draft, February 19, 1996.

⁵³ William F. Johnston to Newton Edwards, July 15, 1963, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 10, October 1963.

⁵⁴ William F. Johnston to Frank Church, September 15, 1963, Harold P. Fabian to William F. Johnston, September 10, 1963, and Port to Senator, September 10, 1963, BSU, Frank Church Papers, Series 1.1, Box 92, Folder 11.

The National Parks Advisory Board provided additional leverage in getting the bill introduced. Alvin Josephy presented the concept of the Nez Perce National Historical Park to the board at its 49th annual meeting in Big Bend National Park, Texas, in November 1963. The board adopted a resolution endorsing the concept on November 6. This action strengthened the position of the Idaho delegation; two weeks later Senator Church introduced the bill with Senator Jordan co-sponsoring it.⁵⁵

Senator Jordan's support was especially valuable. He had refused in the previous month to co-sponsor Church's bill to establish a Sawtooth Wilderness National Park. In Jordan's view, the Sawtooth proposal was too restrictive and would hinder Idaho's economic development. The Nez Perce National Historical Park's unusual concept of land ownership, on the other hand, seemed to pose no such threat. As preservationists' hopes for a national park in Idaho's Sawtooth Range dimmed, the prospects for the Nez Perce National Historical Park looked comparatively brighter.⁵⁶

Once Idaho's congressional delegation was unified behind the bill, its progress through Congress was relatively straightforward. Most importantly, Congress chose not to debate or prescribe the actual sites that would be included in the park; this was left to the discretion of the Secretary of the Interior. Instead, Congressional debate focused on the amount of acreage that the Secretary of the Interior would be authorized to acquire in fee and in scenic easements, the amount of the limitation on land acquisition and development costs, and the limits on the secretary's authority in administering cooperative sites.⁵⁷ The Senate Subcommittee on Public Lands held hearings on the bill in Washington, D.C., and Lewiston in August and October 1964.⁵⁸ Following the election of the 89th Congress in 1964, Representative White re-introduced the bill in the House on January 4, 1965, and Church and Jordan re-introduced an identical bill in the Senate on January 6. The Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs reported the bill with an amendment on February 9, and the Senate amended and passed the bill the next day, and referred it to the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. The House committee reported on the bill with an amendment on April 14, and the House amended and passed the bill on May 3.

⁵⁵ Edward B. Danson, Jr., Resolution Proposed Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho, November 6, 1963, and Office of Senator Church to *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, November 21, 1963, BSU, Frank Church Papers, Series 1.1, Box 92, Folder 11.

⁵⁶ *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, October 4, 1963.

⁵⁷ U.S. Congress, Senate, *Providing for the Nez Perce National Historical Park in the State of Idaho*, 89th Cong., 1st sess., S. Rept. 63, February 1965; U.S. Congress, House, *Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, 89th Cong., 1st sess., H. Rept. 238, April 1965.

⁵⁸ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, 88th Cong., 2d sess., August 18 and October 9, 1964.

The question then arose whether the Senate and House needed to go to conference to reconcile the difference between the two bills. The Senate's amendment to the bill stipulated that no more than \$630,000 would be authorized for land acquisition. The House version carried this same provision, but added a limitation of \$1,337,000 for development. Senators Church and Jordan recommended that the Senate agree to the amendment by the House and dispense with a joint conference.⁵⁹ The bill, Public Law 89-19, was finally approved on May 15, 1965.

Interpretation of the Act

It was evident to all that the Nez Perce National Historical Park was an unusual addition to the national park system. The act authorized the Secretary of the Interior to designate a number of recommended sites throughout an area that measured 60 miles from north to south and 110 miles from east to west (Figure 1). Some sites would be acquired by the NPS, some would remain in the Clearwater National Forest, and some would remain under non-federal ownership and would be managed under cooperative agreements. The NPS would be responsible for relating all the sites to one another through a park-wide interpretive plan. No one connected with the establishment of Nez Perce National Historical Park would have argued with the statement of the National Parks Advisory Board that the park idea represented "an imaginative new concept of historic preservation." Beyond that general point of consensus, however, those individuals and groups involved in creating the park had different ideas about how the park would develop.

Probably the most nebulous aspect of the park concept had to do with the resources that were to be preserved. At a certain point in the planning process, the so-called scenic-recreational-historical values that made Nez Perce country an attractive region had to be redefined as primarily of historical value; this was, after all, to be a national historical park. Yet the scenic values remained implicit in the legislation. Senator Church argued that the area contained "scenic magnificence" as well as historical resources, and that the natural setting gave Nez Perce country "a high degree of historical integrity."⁶⁰

This was a complicated formulation. The relatively undeveloped condition of the land gave the historical resources integrity in a dual sense. In the narrow sense of the term, there were few visual intrusions of modern life to distract the viewer; one could still see, for example, the White Bird Battlefield in much the same condition as it existed on the eve of the battle. In a broader sense, the natural setting contributed to the feeling of these historical sites because the historical themes that they reflected — exploration, gold mining, Indian-white conflict, logging — were strongly associated with nineteenth-century white Americans' experience of the wilderness. The scenic magnificence alluded to the area's wilderness values: not official wilderness as defined by

⁵⁹ Ed Woozley to Len B. Jordan, May 4, 1965, BSU, Len B. Jordan Papers, MSS 6, Box 144, Folder 8.

⁶⁰ Frank Church, Senate Speech, September 2, 1964, BSU, Frank Church Papers, Series 1.1, Box 92, Folder 11.

the Wilderness Act of 1964, but the wilderness of western history and myth. Desiring to build support for the park proposal, Senator Church deliberately eschewed the term “wilderness” to avoid any confusion with official wilderness. But he implied, nevertheless, that “scenic magnificence” had a historical and mythic dimension in this case, for without the wilderness setting the historic resources did not have the same impact. That was why local preservationists began with the premise that Nez Perce country was rich in scenic-recreational-historical resources.

Erwin Thompson described the correlation between scenic and historical values in Nez Perce country in his 1963 feasibility study:

Despite extensive farming in the uplands, intensive logging on the mountain slopes and canyon walls, and the growth of towns and cities, the overall effect as one drives through the former lands of the Nez Percés is the impression, “This is how it was.” The prairies are still open; vast armies of pines and firs still climb the hills; the grass-covered slopes still rise above basalt cliffs; the rivers and streams largely run clear and free. The country is so vast, so magnificent, and so lightly settled that the eye tends to glance over such recent developments as roads, railroads, mills, fences, towns, and spreading residential sections. This is still, in essence, the Nez Perce country.⁶¹

Scenic grandeur, in other words, would assist the park visitor in conjuring up the images of western history and myth.

The relationship of the park resources to the surrounding scenery was vague. The House report on the measure, for example, stated that the park concept departed from the usual type of park in which a single, compact area was placed in federal ownership; instead the park would comprise a number of widely scattered sites not necessarily under federal ownership. The historical values of Nez Perce country were too varied and diffuse to make a compact area under federal ownership feasible; therefore, “it is believed that the approach...will give maximum coverage at minimum expense.”⁶² This begged the question of what was meant by “coverage.” Indeed, most of the sites would be designated without any defined or protective boundaries whatsoever.

Another important aspect of the park concept which still awaited definition concerned the park story. The park’s creators agreed that the story was relatively complex, involving multiple events, eras, and points of view. They also agreed that the story must be presented skillfully to tie the various sites together. To the extent that the park’s creators could foresee that the story would be contentious, they deliberately postponed discussion of that problem until the park bill had been enacted. In retrospect, one can find the seeds of contention in the park campaign.

⁶¹ Quoted by Church in *ibid.*

⁶² U.S. Congress, House, *Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, 89th Cong., 1st sess., H. Rept. 238, April 1965, p. 2.

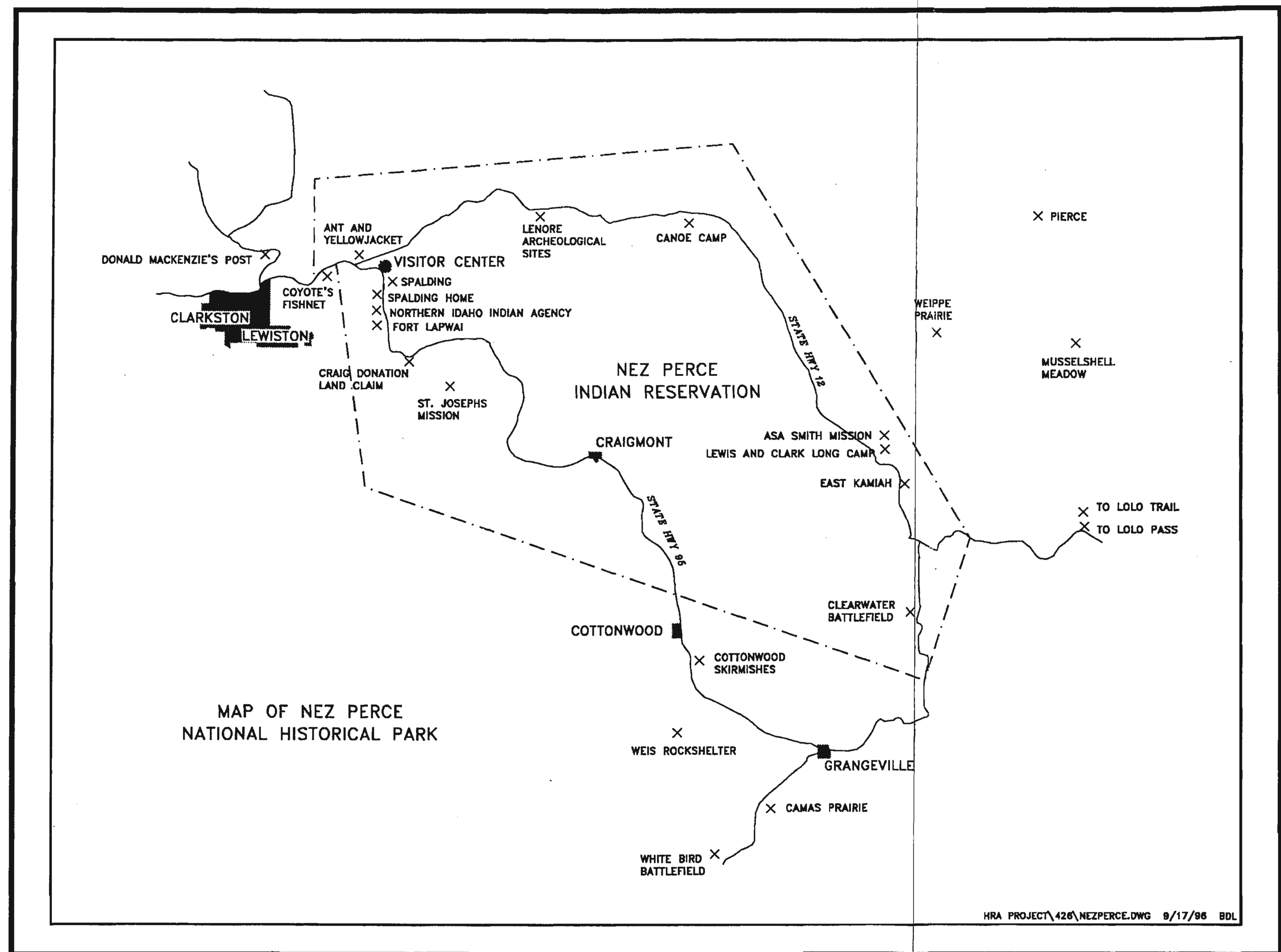


Figure 1.
Map of Nez Perce National Historical Park
(NPS map).

Local non-Indians, Nez Perce, and Idaho's senators and representatives all had different ideas about what precisely constituted the park story. Local, non-Indian interest in the project had started with the Spalding mission site and the missionary story. Indeed, the Daughters of the American Revolution regarded the missionary experience as symbolic of a larger story of "civilizing" or "Americanizing" the Nez Perce country. Exemplifying its somewhat narrow vision of a Spalding museum, the DAR sponsored an "Idaho school childrens' historical drive for dimes" on May 13, 1954, to commemorate the coming of the first printing press to Idaho on that date in 1839.⁶³ As will be seen, a story that cast the Spaldings as heroic torch-bearers and the Nez Perce as benighted heathens did not sit well with the Nez Perce Tribe on whose land the museum would be built.

NPTEC approached the park idea with different expectations about the park story. It was assumed that the Nez Perce people would be at the center of the story. The NPS-administered visitor center would complement tribally-administered developments such as an amphitheater for pageants, a reconstructed Indian village, or an outlet store for Nez Perce arts and crafts. Anthropologists in nearby universities assumed that preserving Nez Perce cultural traditions and artifacts would be a major thrust of the new park.⁶⁴

Idaho's congressional delegation took a more expansive view of the park story. Senator Church suggested that there were three principal stories to be told in Nez Perce country: the story of Lewis and Clark, the story of the mining frontier, and the story of the Nez Perce's flight from the U.S. Army in 1877. Representative White was even more inclusive. "The historic background of the State is an epic story of pioneer adventure, missionary zeal, Indian wars, and the advance of civilization," he testified. "In the north-central area of the State there is an area well adapted to the preservation of historical sites and the development of the cultural lore of the Nez Perce Indian Tribe."⁶⁵ The expansiveness of these statements were calculated to satisfy all of the park's proponents, not necessarily to provide guidance to the Park Service as it set about developing an interpretive program. Idaho's congressional delegation succeeded admirably in selling the park idea to Congress, but it left the NPS with a formidable challenge in making the park story coherent for visitors and at the same time palatable to local constituents.

The park campaign also highlighted the fact that tribal and non-Indian groups had potentially conflicting ideas about who the park would benefit. Tribal leaders anticipated that Nez Perces would find jobs on the park staff and that the park would stimulate arts and crafts sales.⁶⁶ NPTEC

⁶³ Mimeograph titled SLIP TO BE SENT INTO THE HOME OF EACH SCHOOL CHILD, WSU, Ted Little Papers, Box 2, Folder 20.

⁶⁴ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, 88th Cong., 2d sess., August 18 and October 9, 1964, p. 77.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 11.

⁶⁶ Allen Slickpoo, Sr., interview by author, July 21, 1995.

Chairman Angus A. Wilson told the Senate subcommittee that he thought the park would benefit the tribe. NPTEC intended to cooperate closely with the Park Service and to invest tribal funds in tourist services near the park. "Maybe the Government, at a later date, would have to invoke laws regulating this sort of thing," Wilson said. (NPTEC later considered a motel development at Orofino, but eventually dropped the plan.)⁶⁷

NPS officials, for their part, stressed that the national historical park would be developed in accordance with accepted National Park Service standards and policies. There was nothing in the legislation specifically mandating that special consideration be given to tribal economic development. One official noted that the Armour Research Foundation's feasibility study wrongly implied that the NPS should build a visitor center at Spalding in order to relieve the tribe of this financial undertaking. The reason that the NPS supported the project was "to assure the proper preservation of cultural and historical values of the Nez Perce Country and to permit the Nez Perce story to be cohesively told."⁶⁸

Governor Smylie added another wrinkle when he noted in his testimony before the Senate subcommittee that the Spalding State Park served admirably as a picnic area for thousands of local residents.⁶⁹ The governor promised to convey the state park to the National Park Service once the Nez Perce National Historical Park was established, but with the caveat that this traditional recreational use would continue to be permitted.

⁶⁷ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, 88th Cong., 2d sess., August 18 and October 9, 1964, p. 68.

⁶⁸ Assistant Regional Director to Director, January 21, 1964, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 14, February 1964.

⁶⁹ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, 88th Cong., 2d sess., August 18 and October 9, 1964, p. 32.

CHAPTER TWO

ADMINISTRATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Viewed from the perspective of the superintendency, management of the park has presented two fundamental and persistent challenges. One might be termed a pattern of neglect, originating both inside and outside the National Park Service. Superintendents have sought to overcome, or at least ameliorate, this neglect by securing funds and staff positions that were essential for implementing the park's basic development plans. Superintendents have had to contend with the reality that Nez Perce National Historical Park has, since its establishment, been treated as a second-class site within the national park system.

The other fundamental challenge for superintendents of Nez Perce National Historical Park has been to develop and maintain collaborative relationships with the Nez Perce Tribe. These two challenges are connected, for the Nez Perce people recognize the pattern of neglect and believe that the park has not yet lived up to its promise. Some superintendents have been able to work effectively with tribal leaders, emphasizing common goals and converting the Nez Percés' frustration into political support for their budget requests. Other superintendents have had less success working with the tribe, discovering too late that cool relations with the tribe ultimately undermined the park. As one senior NPS official observed, "The Park is pointless without the full involvement of the Nez Perce Tribe. It's their story, and any attempt to tell it without their full participation would be pointless and, needless to say, a complete failure."⁷⁰

This chapter provides a narrative of the park's administrative development from 1965 to the present, focusing on these two main themes of neglect and relations with the tribe. Six superintendents have administered Nez Perce National Historical Park since the park was authorized in 1965. These six individuals have enjoyed varying success. Superintendents are remembered by the tribal leadership and the staff at Nez Perce largely on the basis of their effectiveness or ineffectiveness in advancing the park's development plans and working constructively with the tribe. Therefore, these two themes are traced chronologically through the six superintendencies. It must be pointed out, however, that one superintendent's initiatives commonly unfolded during the next superintendent's tour of duty. Moreover, when relations between the tribe and the park broke down at Nez Perce National Historical Park, bad luck and surrounding circumstances were often as much the cause as the personalities involved.

⁷⁰ John A. Rutter to Richard Halfmoon, August 14, 1975, NEPE, Richard Halfmoon Papers.

The Superintendency of Robert L. Burns, 1965-1968

On August 22, 1965, more than three months after Nez Perce National Historical Park was authorized, the Secretary of the Interior announced that Robert L. Burns had been appointed the park's first superintendent. Burns was selected for the job for a couple of reasons. As the first superintendent of Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial from 1963 to 1965, he had already been through the experience of setting up a new unit in the national park system. Before going east in 1960, Burns had spent thirteen years as a ranger in various national parks in the Rocky Mountain West, concluding with three years at Big Hole Battlefield National Monument in 1957-1960. Big Hole was the site of a sharp engagement between the Nez Perce and the U.S. Army in 1877, and while serving at that site Burns learned about the story of the Nez Perce War of 1877.⁷¹ When he was appointed superintendent of Nez Perce National Historical Park, Burns decided with hindsight that the Park Service's experience at Big Hole in the late 1950s and early 1960s — establishing an administrative presence, receiving visitors, and preparing development plans under Mission 66 — helped to generate enthusiasm within the Park Service for the Nez Perce National Historical Park proposal.⁷²

Burns arrived in Nez Perce country with an open mind as to where he would establish temporary headquarters. Spalding, Lapwai, and Lewiston all seemed like possibilities. He inquired about office space in the BIA's administrative building in Lapwai, but was offered nothing better than a cramped room in the basement bisected at chest height by a water pipe. Richard Halfmoon then suggested that he establish his quarters in Watson's Store, an old general store on the edge of the Spalding State Park which the tribe had recently purchased with the expectation that it would be incorporated into the national historical park.⁷³ Burns accepted the offer, and Watson's Store became the park's administrative headquarters and temporary visitor center for the next three years.

One of Burns' initial tasks was to establish official contact with numerous political entities throughout the region. His objectives were to advertise the park, to make the Park Service administrative presence known, and to develop partnerships with landowners of those sites that would be cooperatively managed. Thus he delivered lectures and slide programs at the University of Idaho and Washington State University, gave talks to schools and service clubs in the Lewiston-Clarkston area, agreed to be interviewed by the Lewiston and Spokane newspapers and Lewiston's TV and radio stations, corresponded with key U.S. senators and congressmen, consulted with members of the Spalding Museum Foundation, the Nez Perce National Historical

⁷¹Press Release, August 22, 1965, BSU, Frank Church Papers, Series 1.1, Box 92, Folder 12; *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, August 25, 1965.

⁷² Robert L. Burns, interview with author, July 22, 1995.

⁷³ Robert L. Burns, interview with author, July 22, 1995.

Park Association, and tribal leaders, contacted state officials in Boise, and met with Forest Service officials of the Clearwater National Forest.⁷⁴

Another preliminary administrative concern was to get the land acquisition program moving. Burns worked with specialists in the Park Service's Western Service Center in San Francisco, making recommendations on site as to which land owners would likely negotiate a fair price and which would not. The latter residents were threatened with proceedings to condemn their property by right of eminent domain, as authorized under Section 3 of the Nez Perce National Historical Park Act.⁷⁵ The process of land acquisition was most contentious at Spalding, where the Park Service wanted to add several privately owned tracts to the core area covered by the Spalding State Park. Ultimately, twelve households were removed in order to restore the historical character of Spalding. Burns took pride in the fact that the people who were dispossessed received an equitable settlement under his watchful eye.⁷⁶ As a result, the Park Service reached its \$630,000 limit before it had acquired all the private land that it desired.

Burns also ran into a sharp encounter in East Kamiah. There the Park Service wanted to acquire the First Presbyterian Church of Kamiah and the neighboring house that had once been the home of the missionary-teacher McBeth sisters. The church's Nez Perce parishioners and the Reverend Henry L. Sugden turned out to be unwilling sellers. Sugden informed Burns in the fall of 1967 that his parishioners were adamantly opposed to the purchase and resented the recent visit by an appraiser. He hinted that they might consider a long-term lease of the former McBeth house, however. After serious consideration, Burns recommended that the Park Service drop the two buildings from the list of properties that were being sought as park sites. He argued that the missionary story in East Kamiah was not of prime importance to the park for it overlapped the missionary story at Spalding and Lapwai.⁷⁷

Burns wanted to be sensitive to opposition to the park from Nez Perce tribal members in East Kamiah in order to preserve the feeling of goodwill toward the park among the tribe as a whole. When he spoke to the parishioners at East Kamiah, he could not dislodge their idea that the park was a "white man's scheme to make the white man rich." Burns noted that the attitude might stem from the fact that the Nez Perce at Kamiah and Lapwai still harbored bad feelings toward

⁷⁴ Superintendent to Regional Director, December 8, 1966, NEPE, chrono files.

⁷⁵ Senator Church averred that this was the intent of Congress in Frank Church to William J. Jones, June 5, 1967, BSU, Frank Church Papers, Series 3.3.7, Box 132, Folder 14.

⁷⁶ Robert L. Burns, interview with author, July 22, 1995.

⁷⁷ Superintendent to Regional Director, November 14, 1967, NEPE, chrono files. Since then, the owners of the McBeth house have requested consultation by the Park Service on how to handle structural problems with the house. There may still be a possibility that the property will be added to the park. (Stephanie Toothman, comments on draft, March 18, 1996.

each other based on their respective loyalties shown in the War of 1877.⁷⁸ The superintendent did not want the park to cause friction between tribal factions. If it did, he reasoned, the Park Service would find itself in the position of favoring one faction over another.

The land acquisition program remained tightly focused on a few core sites. Initially the Park Service planned to acquire fee title to just three sites: Spalding, East Kamiah, and White Bird Battlefield. Sometime after Burns' arrival, acquisition of the state's seven-acre Lewis and Clark Canoe Camp site entered into the program. In February 1966, Regional Director Edward A. Hummel inquired with state officials about the possibility of including this area with the anticipated transfer of Spalding State Park. The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation welcomed this suggestion. Director Wilhelm M. Beckert stated that both sites would achieve a "better national image and national recognition under the National Park Service," and expected that the people of Idaho would "greatly benefit" if these sites were placed "under the National Park designation."⁷⁹

Burns began preparing for the transfer of the Spalding State Park to the Park Service as soon as he heard that the state legislature had passed the authorizing legislation. The ceremony was scheduled for the earliest possible date, July 24, 1966. This allowed three months to clear the title to the land, verify boundaries, hire two maintenance men (one for the Spalding site and one for the Canoe Camp site), oversee dismantling of the existing concession stand and cleanup of the area, and invite the appropriate dignitaries to the ceremony. On the appointed day, Governor Smylie transferred the Spalding State Park together with the Canoe Camp site to the Park Service.⁸⁰

After establishing a Park Service presence and getting the land acquisition program moving, assembling a staff became the new superintendent's next concern. This was no routine task, as Burns had to reconcile civil service procedures with the expectation on the part of many Nez Perces that tribal members would find jobs in the new park. The first staff position that Burns needed to fill was that of administrative clerk. Thinking of the importance of precedence he very much wanted a Nez Perce tribal member for that position. He coordinated a search with the chairman of NPTEC and the BIA office in Lapwai, but failed to locate an interested, qualified

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Edward A. Hummel to William M. Frome, February 17, 1966, and Wilhelm M. Beckert to William M. Frome, February 17, 1966, FRC-Seattle, RG 79, Accession 74A598, Box 19936, File L7019.

⁸⁰ Burns also obtained plats of the original 1936 tree plantings in the arboretum from W.S. Thornber, a landscape engineer with the Idaho State Highway Department. Thornber was then retired and living in Lewiston. Robert L. Burns to W.S. Thornber, March 23, 1966, Superintendent to Regional Director, April 20, 1966, and Burns to Alden Stevens, July 25, 1966, NEPE, chrono files.

tribal member.⁸¹ After keeping the search going months longer than he had anticipated, he hired Carol M. Gamet, an employee of the BIA office in Lapwai and a non-Indian.

Meanwhile, Burns received several inquiries from tribal members about other employment opportunities in the park. Two Nez Perce women, Ida Blackeagle and Viola Morris, were hired to perform their beadwork and other crafts in the presence of park visitors. These women became the first “cultural demonstrators” in the National Park Service.⁸² Some Nez Perces were interested in seasonal ranger positions. One individual wanted to serve as a guide, but Burns informed him that there would be no such position for at least three years. With the transfer of the Spalding State Park, the NPS hired two laborers (one Nez Perce and one non-Indian) who worked for the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation. Burns employed two other non-Indians to fill seasonal ranger positions during the summer of 1966. The following winter another non-Indian, Milo E. Anderson, joined the staff as maintenance foreman.⁸³

Burns also brought a park historian on staff. He wanted an individual who could bring expertise to the tasks of curating artifacts and setting up an interpretive program, as well as serve as acting superintendent when Burns was absent. In March 1966, Burns informed Allen Slickpoo that the candidate for this job would have to have about fifteen years of Park Service experience. Six months later, in a letter to the regional director, Burns lowered his standards to ten years experience and stressed that he wanted to “push this through as soon as I can.” Without recommending a specific federal grade level, Burns suggested that “perhaps after the development and construction phase of the Park has been completed the grade of the Historian may want to be dropped one or two grades.”⁸⁴ In February 1967, Earl R. Harris was hired as park historian. He had worked for the NPS since 1950. He transferred to Nez Perce from Scotts Bluff National Monument, Nebraska.⁸⁵

If the composition of the new staff seemed disappointingly non-Indian to the Nez Perce Tribe in 1967, tribal leaders by and large accepted it graciously. They remained confident that the park would be a good thing for their people and that Burns had their interests at heart. The superintendent worked hard to develop a personal rapport with the Nez Perce and genuinely enjoyed that

⁸¹ Superintendent to Acting Regional Director, May 6, 1966, and Superintendent to Regional Director, December 30, 1966, NEPE, chrono files.

⁸² Robert L. Burns, interview with author, July 22, 1995.

⁸³ Robert L. Burns to Allen P. Slickpoo, March 26, 1966, Superintendent to Acting Regional Director, May 6, 1966, Burns to James D. Speer, May 19, 1966, Burns to Interagency Board of U.S. Civil Service Examiners, December 13, 1966, NEPE, chrono files; *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, June 21, 1966; Carol Gamet, interview with author, July 26, 1995.

⁸⁴ Robert L. Burns to Allen P. Slickpoo, March 24, 1966, and Superintendent to Regional Director, September 15, 1966, NEPE, chrono files.

⁸⁵ *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, March 28, 1971.

aspect of his job. He took lessons in the Nez Perce language from a tribal elder and attempted, without great success, to learn Nez Perce beadwork. He often “made sweat” with the Indians, priding himself on the fact that he could take the heat in the sweat lodge longer than some of his Nez Perce companions. He learned all that he could about native foods, collected various plant specimens for display in the Watson’s Store, and cultivated his own patch of the medicinal root, kouse-kouse.⁸⁶ Burns and Halfmoon once traveled to Nespelem, Washington, to inspect the grave of the younger Chief Joseph. The two men were in agreement that the gravesite should one day become part of the Nez Perce National Historical Park. Regional Director John A. Rutter subsequently advised Burns that the matter of the grave was out of Burns’ jurisdiction.⁸⁷

Before Burns departed Nez Perce country for Philadelphia in 1968, his good friends Richard Halfmoon and Sam Watters took him into the backcountry. There they insisted that he go out alone on a vision quest. Considerably moved, Burns complied.⁸⁸ This farewell gesture not only revealed something of the tribal leaders’ relationship to the superintendent; it also indicated their untarnished hopes for the park’s future.

The Superintendency of Jack R. Williams, 1968-1975

Jack R. Williams was appointed superintendent of Nez Perce National Historical Park in the fall of 1968. Prior to this appointment, Williams had served as superintendent of Aztec Ruins National Monument, New Mexico (1963-1965), and Navajo National Monument, Arizona (1965-1968). He was no stranger to Indian country, having worked with Pueblos and Navajos. Like Burns, he sweat with the Nez Perce and took a keen interest in their culture, becoming an expert on their famous Appaloosa horses. Nevertheless, Williams did not share his predecessor’s success in getting along well with the Nez Perce. He established a law enforcement presence at Spalding that many tribal members found repugnant. Some thought he wore his uniform too ostentatiously. He also made a mistake in where he lived, first occupying a double-wide trailer on the premises, and later moving into the former Indian agent’s house after it had been refurbished.⁸⁹ It was not long before NPTEC members began to grumble that they wanted a different superintendent.

But the superintendent was more of a target for Nez Perce ire than a cause of it. It seemed to the Nez Perce Tribe that the park’s development program had sputtered and stalled. Although the NPS completed its master plan for Nez Perce National Historical Park in June 1968, another

⁸⁶ Robert L. Burns to J.V.K. Wagar, March 6, 1968, NEPE, chrono files.

⁸⁷ Superintendent, Nez Perce NHP to Superintendent, Coulee Dam NRA, November 6, 1967, NEPE, chrono files.

⁸⁸ Robert L. Burns, interview with author, July 22, 1995.

⁸⁹ Carol Gamet, interview with author, July 26, 1995.

dozen years would pass before it had a permanent visitor center. Williams knew that it was not unusual for Congress to delay fifteen to twenty years before appropriating funds for the development of a new area of the national park system.⁹⁰ He admitted that the park was in something of a “holding pattern,” but the Nez Perce Tribe had a hard time accepting that.⁹¹

Congressional procrastination was merely the shorthand explanation for the park’s slow beginnings. In the early 1970s the Nixon administration repeatedly eliminated requests for construction funds from the National Park Service’s budgets, and refused to use such funds when Congress appropriated them.⁹² The Park Service had more success in obtaining funds for the stabilization of historic buildings. During Williams’ superintendency, nearly a third of all funding for development in Nez Perce National Historical Park was used for building renovation. A modest \$300,000 was programmed for the Spalding visitor center and headquarters development, all of which went to planning.⁹³ Meanwhile, the high rate of inflation in the late 1960s and early 1970s made it evident that Congress would have to raise the ceilings on development and land acquisition funding for the park.

A gulf in NPTEC and NPS thinking first became evident in the winter of 1969-70. Disappointed with the park’s makeshift visitor center in Spalding, NPTEC tried to obtain NPS support for a tribal tourist development on the outskirts of Orofino, Idaho. The proposed facility would have featured overnight camping and “suitable sales outlets for Nez Perce Indian arts and craft work or Nez Perce souvenir items.” The plan envisioned a cluster of five or six tepees for nightly rental in addition to tent and trailer sites. It would be coordinated with the development of a marina concession by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the development of a visitor center by the Park Service (even though there were no park sites nearby). The tribe had the encouragement of the Clearwater Economic Development Association, Inc., and contracted with an engineering and planning firm to prepare a feasibility study.⁹⁴

While Superintendent Williams had been aware of the proposal for some time, Pacific Northwest Regional Director John A. Rutter felt he had been ambushed. On January 29, 1970, NPTEC member Irvin Watters, accompanied by Executive Director E.L. Williams of the

⁹⁰ Jack Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995.

⁹¹ Richard A. Halfmoon to Walter J. Hickel, October 6, 1970, and Glen T. Bean to Halfmoon, October 8, 1970, NEPE, Administrative Files, L1425 Nez Perce Tribe.

⁹² Frank Church to A.L. Lyons, November 28, 1973, BSU, Frank Church Papers, Series 3.3.7, Box 133, Folder 8.

⁹³ Legislative Counsel to Frank Church, January 23, 1976, NEPE, Administrative Files, D18 Planning and Development Programs Spalding Visitor Center.

⁹⁴ Allen P. Slickpoo and Irwin C. Watters, Tourist Development Project, February 26, 1969, Slickpoo to Jack Williams, March 14, 1969, Resolution NP 69-163, March 11, 1969, Slickpoo to Robert J. Giesen, December 16, 1969, Giesen to Slickpoo, January 8, 1970, and Regional Director to Director, February 17, 1970, NEPE, Administrative Files, A3815, Public Relations--Nez Perce Tribe.

Clearwater Economic Development Association, and Roy M. Howard of the consulting firm Cornell, Howland, Hayes, and Merryfield, stopped by the Pacific Northwest Regional Office in Seattle to present their proposal. Rutter listened but declined to comment, saying that he needed time to examine it. He pointed out that the proposal represented a considerable departure from the master plan, but that the NPS wanted to cooperate as much as possible with the tribe. He offered to discuss it further with them on a planned visit to Spalding. When Rutter arrived in Spalding a few days later, he was surprised to learn that the tribal council would vote the next morning on whether to apply for a loan for the tourist enterprise, even though the feasibility study indicated that a Park Service visitor center at the Orofino site would be vital to its success. Rutter suggested that NPS planners review the proposal first. One member of NPTEC asked the consultants to explain how the tribe might go forward without the Park Service's help. After some discussion of this NPTEC decided to adopt a resolution asking for a loan of \$750,000.⁹⁵ Although the plan was later abandoned, it signaled the divergent expectations of the park by the tribe and the NPS.

Meanwhile, Williams proceeded with his own plan for a temporary visitor center. The Watson's Store was far too small to hold the park's growing staff. The area of the building that had been set up for visitors was cold and dark. He moved the administrative offices and museum exhibits into the Blue Lantern Motel. This building stood between the former Spalding State Park and the railroad on land acquired from the James Albright family. By painting the long structure dark brown and posting some appropriate NPS signage, Williams made the building serve as a combination administration building, ranger quarters, and visitor center.⁹⁶

Williams worked with NPS officials in the regional office to obtain congressional action on amending the park's enabling act practically from the start of his superintendency. For a while it appeared that increased budgets would be achieved through a park additions bill, as Oregon's Senator Bob Packwood expressed keen interest in getting the Nez Perce sites near Wallowa Lake included in the park. This led to a study of potential park additions in 1969 (see Chapter 8.) By the early 1970s, however, NPS officials regarded the master plan for Nez Perce National Historical Park as overly ambitious.

In 1973, Regional Director Rutter scaled back the park's development plans in order to increase the likelihood of early congressional appropriations for the park. Development of Nez Perce National Historical Park, together with numerous other relatively new areas in the national park system, received lesser priority behind those units associated with the American Revolution

⁹⁵ Regional Director to Director, February 17, 1970, NEPE, Administrative Files, A3815, Public Relations--Nez Perce Tribe; Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995; Allen P. Slickpoo, Sr., interview with author, July 21, 1995.

⁹⁶ Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995.

Bicentennial celebration scheduled for 1976.⁹⁷ Instead of three visitor centers at Spalding, East Kamiah, and White Bird Battlefield, there would be one main visitor center at Spalding and relatively inexpensive interpretive shelters at the other two sites. The Denver Service Center's final development concept plan of 1976 presented this new concept.⁹⁸

Williams made some changes in the permanent park staff. Park Historian Earl R. Harris transferred out in 1971, and rangers Glenn L. Hinsdale and Steven T. Kernes transferred in. Williams appointed Hinsdale as his chief of interpretation and resource management. Thus, Hinsdale assumed Harris' duties. In two years Hinsdale transferred to the Pacific Northwest Regional Office, and Douglas J. Riley transferred in from Glacier Bay National Monument. Riley then became the new chief of interpretation and resource management.⁹⁹

Nez Perces continued to find employment opportunities at the park to be limited to relatively low-paying seasonal positions. The superintendent recruited seasonal employees through the Idaho Employment Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs rather than NPTEC.¹⁰⁰ A few Nez Perces worked at the park summer after summer as cultural demonstrators. Williams obtained a \$45,000 grant for this purpose two summers in a row. A number of Nez Perce women regularly came to the park to learn cornhusk weaving, beadworking, and leatherworking from the cultural demonstrators.¹⁰¹

Williams formed close personal relationships with the two longtime cultural demonstrators, Ida Blackeagle and Viola Morris. He was also close to Angus Wilson and Wilson's mother, a tribal elder and matriarch whom Williams knew as "one of the last of the buffalo people."¹⁰² Nevertheless, other tribal members came to dislike the superintendent and began to demand his replacement. Richard Halfmoon complained to Regional Director John Rutter, who agreed to transfer Williams to another park. Some of Rutter's correspondence with Halfmoon took place without the superintendent's knowledge. The transfer took place within six months. Williams was reassigned to Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, Colorado, and Nez Perce National

⁹⁷ Stanley W. Hulett to James A. McClure, December 11, 1973, and John A. Rutter to James A. McClure, January 25, 1974, NEPE, H1417 Administrative History; Rutter to Frank Church, February 15, 1973, BSU, Frank Church Papers, Series 3.3.7, Box 133, Folder 6.

⁹⁸ National Park Service, *Final Development Concept Plan, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, August 1976. Consultants for this project included NPTEC, Richard Halfmoon (chairman), and Wilfred Scott (secretary).

⁹⁹ Superintendent's Annual Reports, 1972, 1973, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 67.

¹⁰⁰ Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995.

¹⁰¹ Superintendent to Regional Director, September 18, 1974, NEPE, chrono files.

¹⁰² Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995.

Historical Park got a new superintendent — another man whose experience working in Indian country in the Southwest seemed to recommend him for the job.¹⁰³

The Superintendency of Robert L. Morris, 1975-1981

Robert L. Morris had worked at several units in the Southwest, beginning with a ranger job at Canyon de Chelly National Monument in 1948 and ending with a tour as Superintendent of El Morro National Monument in the 1970s.¹⁰⁴ It was no secret in Park Service circles that the new superintendent of Nez Perce would be walking into a difficult situation, and Morris accepted the job with an important guarantee: Regional Director Russell E. Dickenson promised to put all his influence behind getting a new visitor center built at Spalding as soon as Congress raised the budget ceiling for park development.¹⁰⁵

This promise strengthened Morris' position as he met with various interested parties upon his arrival. Not only were tribal leaders anxious for the NPS to initiate park development, but a number of other park supporters voiced similar sentiments immediately. These included Ted Little, Marcus Ware, faculty members of the University of Idaho, and Idaho Senators Church and McClure as well as Warren G. Magnuson and Henry M. Jackson of Washington.¹⁰⁶ To the local groups Morris tried to convey one important message: do not argue with each other about where the visitor center will be or whose history it will present until after Congress has approved the funding increase. These issues could be finalized after funding had been approved.¹⁰⁷ In October 1976, exactly one year into Morris' superintendency, Congress amended the Nez Perce National Historical Park Act by raising the development ceiling from \$1,337,000 to \$4,100,000.¹⁰⁸ Regional Director Russell E. Dickenson's pledge of support for the visitor center, Morris' efforts at consensus-building, and the 1976 act of Congress all seemed to place the park on a new and more advantageous footing.

During 1976, park staff worked closely with Nez Perce tribal representatives in planning new interpretive exhibits for East Kamiah and White Bird Battlefield. The East Kamiah interpretive

¹⁰³ John A. Rutter to Richard Halfmoon, February 18, 1975, May 12, 1975, and August 14, 1975, NEPE, Richard Halfmoon Papers; Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995; Robert Morris, interview with author, August 30, 1995.

¹⁰⁴ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, News Release, September 8, 1975, BSU, Frank Church Papers, Series 3.3.7, Box 16, Folder 16.

¹⁰⁵ Robert L. Morris, interview with author, August 30, 1995.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Robert L. Morris, interview with author, August 30, 1995.

¹⁰⁸ 90 Stat. 2732.

shelter was built in August 1977, and interpretive exhibits were installed the following spring. The development also included a new 3,000-foot pole fence along the highway frontage, replacing some 2,000 feet of barbed wire fence that the Nez Perce Tribe had built under contract two years earlier. Other planned improvements, including additional interpretive displays and public restrooms with flush toilets, remained to be done. The White Bird Battlefield interpretive shelter was completed in July 1977.¹⁰⁹

Meanwhile the NPS proceeded to develop plans for the much-anticipated visitor center at Spalding. Park planners suggested a bold exterior design that would emphasize the park's Nez Perce theme. At first they proposed a tall, conical building resembling a tepee. Then they agreed upon a simple triangle motif, a design element common in Nez Perce beadwork. Worked into the exterior design of the visitor center in the form of a gently pitching triangular slab roof, the triangle looked vaguely like an arrowhead.¹¹⁰ The building would stand on the bluff above the river with the raised point of the roof directing the visitor's gaze up the Clearwater Canyon. The sloping triangular roof design was repeated at the East Kamiah and White Bird Battlefield interpretive shelters. A second motif, also repeated at these two sites, consisted of three slanting poles placed in the ground beside each highway entrance. The latter symbolized the traditional Nez Perce eagle staff.¹¹¹ The effect of the two motifs together was striking. These visual design features marked a significant step in bringing the park's wide interpretive orbit closer and closer to the central story of the Nez Perce Tribe.¹¹²

The decision to locate the visitor center on the bluff was also important. The two previous administrative headquarters and visitor centers — the Watson's Store and the former Blue Lantern Motel — were both situated below the bluff, inside the historic area. Park planners decided that the new, larger visitor center would intrude on the historic setting and negatively impact the historic resources if it were built in that area. Moreover, U.S. 12 had been rerouted along the top of the bluff shortly after the park was authorized in 1965, and park planners wanted the visitor center to be clearly visible to passing motorists. Locating the visitor center on the bluff had one rather ironic consequence, however. Most park visitors, after spending twenty to thirty minutes in the visitor center, would get back on the highway without going down to the historic area.¹¹³

The location of the visitor center had one very bitter consequence. On September 11, 1979, while putting in the access road for this development site, a construction crew inadvertently

¹⁰⁹Superintendent's Annual Reports, 1974, 1976, 1977, NEPE, chrono file.

¹¹⁰ Art Hathaway, interview with author, July 26, 1995.

¹¹¹ Frank Walker, comments on draft, February 26, 1996.

¹¹² The park symbol is two crossed eagle feathers. Superintendent Williams designed the park symbol.

¹¹³ Art Hathaway, interview with author, July 26, 1995.

bulldozed through a tribal cemetery. Remains of a number of individuals were disturbed. The incident brought about a nadir in NPS-Nez Perce relations. Even after the remains were sorted out, identified, and reinterred a little more than three years later, the incident still cast a pall over Nez Perce feelings about the park and Park Service representatives. The decision to build the road dated from 1976, when planners saw a need to construct a direct road between the visitor center parking area and the historic area below. The road would traverse down the side of the bluff. Sam Watters, a tribal member, objected that the proposed road cut would intersect a tribal cemetery. Morris requested a consultation, and on March 18, 1976, Dr. Roderick Sprague, chairman of the Department of Sociology/Anthropology at the University of Idaho, inspected the site and the development plans with NPS officials and members of the Nez Perce Tribe. Even though there was a known Nez Perce cemetery at the top of the bluff, Sprague advised that the proposed road cut would not disturb any graves because graves would not extend down the slope. Nevertheless, he suggested that a trained archeologist should be present to monitor the initial phase of construction in case human remains were discovered.¹¹⁴ With that assessment, and some archeological testing accomplished during the summer and fall of 1978, plans to locate the visitor center on the top of the bluff proceeded with the tribe's approval.

It was in the fall of 1978 that the NPS broke ground for the visitor center. Contrary to Sprague's advice, no archeologist was assigned to monitor the construction work.¹¹⁵ The work on the road had barely begun when it was discovered that the bulldozer crew had unearthed a number of graves. According to Superintendent Morris, the burial remains were encountered about twenty-five feet outside the known cemetery.¹¹⁶ Archeologist David Chance maintains that the actual road cut went outside the area shown on project plans.¹¹⁷ The disturbance of the graves happened because the cemetery and the earthworks extended over a wider area than the park officials and archaeologists had anticipated. It caught both the archaeologists and park officials by surprise.

Morris contacted NPTEC the next day and sought to involve tribal representatives in the damage assessment. Despite this gesture, members of the tribe formed an impression that park officials underestimated the gravity of the situation. When NPTEC Secretary Silas Whitman arrived at park headquarters on September 13, he thought that the tone of the staff suggested that "seemingly the project was not of a significant problem other than a few graves being disrupted."

¹¹⁴ Roderick Sprague to Charles F. Bohannon, March 25, 1976, NEPE, Richard Halfmoon Papers.

¹¹⁵ Secretary NPTEC to NPTEC, September 19, 1979, NEPE, Richard Halfmoon Papers.

¹¹⁶ Robert L. Morris to Wilfred A. Scott, September 12, 1979, NEPE, Richard Halfmoon Papers.

¹¹⁷ David Chance, interview with author, October 2, 1995.

He and Richard Halfmoon discussed whether there was a need for NPTEC to request an injunction in order to halt construction “until some positive action could be taken.”¹¹⁸

Later that morning Halfmoon and Sam Watters, who had warned against the road in the first place, inspected the site with the superintendent, Park Curator Stephen Shawley, Cathy Spude from the Denver Service Center, Dr. Sprague, and some graduate assistants from the University of Idaho. Watters reported to NPTEC:

I observed three distinct piles of skulls and bones, some of which were in crushed condition, one with most of the larger bones intact. Cedar remnants and beads, with some remains of pottery and the remains of a headpiece were also in evidence. Mr. Shawley and myself then toured the area and observed other assumed grave sites which were either dug out by the machinery and crushed or covered by a considerable amount of dirt. There seemed to be another six or so probable grave sites that could be readily identified so.¹¹⁹

The following morning, Watters revisited the site with NPTEC Chairman Wilfred Scott, and found that the skeletal remains observed the day before had already been put in paper sacks and taken to the University of Idaho for study. Archaeologists were in the process of marking out additional sites for excavation. After briefing an afternoon session of the Reservation Development Subcommittee on the status of the graves, Watters, Scott, and three other tribal members returned to the site again “to obtain a firsthand look at the direction the Park Service and archaeologists were taking.” They were dismayed to find that the archaeologists had disinterred three additional cedar coffins on the assumption that they must be moved. “The shock of seeing the ancestors in their last resting place and the prospect of seeing them destroyed to move them in the name of progress became too much for tribal people in attendance,” Watters wrote. There was a meeting late that afternoon between tribal representatives, park officials, archaeologists, and Spude, followed by a conference call to the regional office.¹²⁰ After a further meeting on Saturday morning, it was decided to suspend all construction and post a security guard at the site until all the remains were reinterred in their original locations. The road alignment would be altered to avoid the cemetery, and the NPS would conduct archeological testing on the level ground to the west of the cemetery where the visitor center was to be located. Karl Gurcke of the University of Idaho assembled an all-Nez Perce archeological crew of thirteen and supervised the reinternment of the burial remains and the testing of the visitor center site during the next two weeks.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Secretary, NPTEC to NPTEC, September 19, 1979, NEPE, Richard Halfmoon Papers.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Ibid. Spude was highly critical of how the project had been managed; she was later reprimanded for insubordination. Stephanie Toothman comment on draft, March 18, 1996.

¹²¹ Karl Gurcke, *Nez Perce National Historical Park Archaeological Excavations, 1979-1980, Part I, Burial Recovery and Monitoring*, University of Idaho Anthropological Research Manuscript Series, No.70, Laboratory of Anthropology, University of Idaho, Moscow, 1981, p. 1.

In the weeks and months following this incident, NPTEC received letters from tribal members demanding the abolishment of Nez Perce National Historical Park. The disturbance and subsequent mistreatment of the graves seemed to confirm tribal members' suspicions that the park was a "white man's" idea. It acquired symbolic significance, unleashing other ill-feelings about the park. Tribal leader Jesse Greene, for example, objected strongly to the Park Service's display of a portrait of Henry Harmon Spalding in the temporary visitor center. For Greene and many other Nez Perces, Spalding was the man who had suppressed Nez Perce customs and whipped Nez Perce children. The Park Service removed the offending portrait, but Greene's displeasure ran so deep he wanted the Park Service removed from the area as well.¹²²

The superintendent and staff continued to occupy offices in the former Blue Lantern Motel while the new visitor center was under construction. Superintendent Morris brought three Nez Perces onto the park staff. Former NPTEC Chairman Angus Wilson was appointed park technician in October 1976 and retired in April 1977. Albert Barros, a student at Lewis and Clark College, took a position as a general student trainee under a Cooperative Education Agreement. Maynard Holt joined the maintenance staff. Other additions to the permanent park staff included Stephen Shawley as park curator and Harold White as maintenance worker. Shawley, a University of Idaho anthropology student and specialist in Nez Perce artifacts, first began cataloguing the park's collections under contract in 1976. He was appointed park curator in October 1977. White had worked at Spalding State Park for the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation before 1965, and had worked for the NPS as a seasonal maintenance worker since that date. In June 1978, Chief of Interpretation and Resource Management (I&RM) Douglas J. Riley transferred out and the new chief, I&RM, Kenneth L. Adkisson transferred in from Sitka National Historical Park.¹²³

Staff members spent most of their time at the Spalding unit, making infrequent trips to the other three NPS-owned sites and the numerous cooperatively managed sites. There was a growing concern with vandalism as interpretive signs were defaced at East Kamiah, White Bird Battlefield, and Weis Rockshelter in the mid to late 1970s, but the small staff primarily concerned itself with interpretation and visitor protection at the Spalding unit. Morris continued in his post until the visitor center was brought nearly to completion. In February 1981, shortly before Morris retired, park staff moved into the new building.¹²⁴

¹²² Richard Halfmoon, interview with author, July 27, 1995. Nez Perce tribal members expressed concern that the reinterred graves should be properly protected in the future. In the fall of 1982, the NPS contracted with Sprague to oversee that the artifacts associated with the burials were protected under a cement slab, and that the graves were given suitable markers. At a dedication ceremony on November 24, 1982, NPTEC Chairman Scott expressed sorrow over the incident but said that greater understanding and respect were the foundation for preservation. Wilfred Scott to Fahy Whittaker, August 12, 1982, Richard Halfmoon Papers; Superintendent to Regional Director, December 1, 1982, NEPE, Administrative Files, A3815 Public Relations--Nez Perce Tribe.

¹²³ Superintendent's Annual Reports, 1976, 1977, 1978, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 67.

¹²⁴ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1981, NEPE, chrono file.

The Superintendency of Fahy C. Whittaker, 1981-1987

Breaking with tradition, Regional Director Daniel J. Tobin selected someone without previous experience working with Indian peoples to be Nez Perce National Historical Park's next superintendent. He also decided to appoint the first woman to the position. Fahy C. Whittaker was schooled in history and trained in cultural resource management and interpretation. She had worked in various historical sites in the east before moving into park management, and was superintendent of the William Howard Taft National Historical Site in Cincinnati when Tobin hired her for the job in Idaho.¹²⁵

Whittaker started at Nez Perce on March 8, 1981, less than a month after the park staff had settled into its new offices. A main focus at the beginning of her superintendency was to get the visitor center ready for visitors. A tangle of problems had emerged in the final construction phase: the lighting inside the exhibit room was disappointing, the paint was the wrong color, the plate glass did not fit the exhibit mounts, and there were problems with the roof. In addition, storage vaults had been added to the design to accommodate artifact collections that were currently stored in Lapwai, necessitating changes in the building's heating and cooling systems.¹²⁶ All of these problems caused delays in opening the visitor center. It finally opened to the public on June 29, 1983.¹²⁷

With the new visitor center completed, Nez Perce National Historical Park experienced a surge in what park officials termed "non-recreational use." Non-recreational use referred to those park visitors who did not come primarily to use the picnic area. Park managers had consistently expressed discomfort over the large number of picnickers, or "recreational use" in the Spalding unit. Large crowds of picnickers could spoil the ambiance that was necessary to other visitors' enjoyment of the historic area. Whittaker acted forcefully to limit recreational use of the Spalding unit to certain well-defined areas.¹²⁸

Whittaker also faced persistent staff problems. An operations evaluation team visited the park in July 1982 and found a variety of problems in the administration. The team described "a leadership void which has established bad habits and a certain amount of cynicism among key staff members." It suggested that troubles with the visitor center exhibits had been "a serious

¹²⁵ Fahy C. Whittaker, interview with author, September 27, 1995.

¹²⁶ Kent Bush, interview with author, August 24, 1995; Art Hathaway, interview with author, July 26, 1995. For a thorough critique of the problems with exhibitry, see Superintendent to Regional Director, September 28, 1982, NEPE, chrono file.

¹²⁷ Fahy C. Whittaker, "Statement for Management, Nez Perce National Historical Park," September 28, 1983, CCSO, DSC Microfiche Reports, Nez Perce D-14A.

¹²⁸ Fahy C. Whittaker, interview with author, September 27, 1995; Fahy C. Whittaker, "Statement for Management, Nez Perce National Historical Park," September 28, 1983, CCSO, DSC Microfiche Reports, Nez Perce D-14A; Superintendent's Annual Report, 1982, NEPE, chrono file.

distraction from basic park operations.” The park appeared to be understaffed, particularly in maintenance. The team learned that the superintendent, chief of IRM, and chief of maintenance spent little time outside of the Spalding unit, and it recommended that one of these people should visit the other units at least once a week. Overall, the team found the East Kamiah, Canoe Camp, and Spalding units “very shabby in appearance.”¹²⁹

The staff situation was complicated by a growing mistrust between the superintendent and the park curator. In 1984, Whittaker requested a performance review of the park curator by the regional curator. This led to an inspector general’s audit of museum management at Nez Perce the following year, culminating in Shawley’s resignation under pressure (see Chapter 6). This necessary but arduous task of housecleaning took its toll; a second operations evaluation in 1985 pointed to a definite need for improvement in the management of staff and routine inspection of outlying sites.¹³⁰

Still another staff issue caused a breach between the superintendent and the tribe. Tribal members expressed dismay over the unrealized employment opportunities for Nez Perces in the national historical park. First, the tribe wanted a greater commitment by the NPS to hire Nez Perces for seasonal positions, pointing out that the tribe had agreements with the Clearwater, Payette, and Nez Perce national forests but it had no such agreement with the NPS. Second, the tribe wanted the park to maintain one or two permanent staff positions for Nez Perces and to provide career enhancement opportunities. Otherwise, there could be little hope for eventually filling the position of superintendent with a tribal member. Specifically, the tribe objected to the Park Service’s plan to upgrade a GS-9 ranger position which would exclude likely Nez Perce applicants from competition. Complicating the situation, several tribal leaders believed that the superintendent herself, rather than the agency, was accountable for these perceived shortcomings. In June 1986, tribal representatives addressed their concerns to NPS Director William Penn Mott, Jr.¹³¹

With yet another superintendent of Nez Perce National Historical Park under attack by the tribe, Acting Regional Director William J. Briggie tried to intercede for Whittaker. His solution was to establish a memorandum of understanding between the park administration and NPTEC. The agreement, signed by Whittaker and NPTEC Chairman J. Herman Reuben on August 27, 1986, pledged the NPS to improve tribal employment opportunities and committed the tribe to assist park officials in recruiting Nez Perce tribal members. The NPS made a significant conces-

¹²⁹ Operations Evaluation Team to Regional Director, August 13, 1982, NEPE, A5427 Operations Evaluation.

¹³⁰ Regional Director to Superintendent, May 29, 1985, NEPE, Administrative Files, A5427 Operations Evaluations.

¹³¹ The tribe itemized its concerns about the superintendent as follows: “poor public relations with the tribe and general community; poor supervisory skills; poor attendance; lack of communication with the tribe on employment, park improvement projects, and land use; poor attitude; failure to meet with the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee and General Council when scheduled, etc.” J. Herman Reuben to William Penn Mott, Jr., June 5, 1986, CCSO, Kent Bush files, File NPTEC.

sion by including knowledge of Nez Perce history and culture as a desirable hiring criterion for all park positions.¹³²

These peacemaking efforts notwithstanding, the tribe soon circumvented Briggie to get the superintendent removed. In late 1986, Deputy Director Denis Galvin initiated discussions with Whittaker and Roy W. Weaver, superintendent of Edison National Historical Site, New Jersey, about a potential job swap between the two of them. According to Weaver, Galvin was a personal friend who knew of Weaver's desire to get a transfer back to the west. After Weaver had agreed to the change, he met with Briggie in Washington, D.C., for a briefing on the park. Briggie told Weaver of the need to involve the Nez Perce Tribe more effectively in park management. The two-way transfer was accomplished in January 1987.¹³³

The Superintendency of Roy W. Weaver, 1987-1990

Weaver had worked in a variety of functions, including natural resource management, interpretation, and park management, during his tenure with the NPS. He was the first superintendent of Roger Williams National Memorial in Providence, Rhode Island. Although he had never before worked in a park unit with a close relationship to an Indian tribe, Weaver maintains that his experience working with various ethnic groups on the East Coast served him well at Nez Perce. Weaver brought to the superintendency a "healthy curiosity" about Nez Perce culture, as well as a professional commitment to listen to tribal concerns and to make the park a good neighbor. One of his first acts was to tour the park with NPTEC members.¹³⁴

From the tribe's standpoint, Weaver got the park administration moving in the right direction again with the appointment of two Nez Perces, Jesse Kipp and Kevin Peters, to permanent staff positions. In addition, the park still employed Nez Perces as cultural demonstrators and in other seasonal jobs, and Allen Slickpoo held a temporary position as a museum technician. Still, there were numerous frustrations. Weaver tried to get Slickpoo's position upgraded, but the regulations of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) barred the upgrade because Slickpoo, for all his expertise in Nez Perce culture, lacked the necessary formal educational credentials. Weaver also applied for "contiguous area" hiring authority — a special dispensation granted to some

¹³² William J. Briggie to Allen Slickpoo, April 29, 1986, Briggie to J. Herman Reuben, May 15, 1986, Briggie to Reuben, May 29, 1986, Fahy C. Whittaker to Reuben, June 5, 1986, Memorandum of Understanding between Nez Perce National Historical Park and Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee, August 27, 1986, CCSO, Kent Bush files, File NPTEC.

¹³³ Roy W. Weaver, interview with author, October 4, 1995.

¹³⁴ Roy W. Weaver, interview with author, October 4, 1995.

federal employers to circumvent standard OPM procedures and hire within local communities — but the OPM denied this request also.¹³⁵

Weaver's impact in other areas benefitted the park. For example, Weaver gave a new impetus to resource management. With his degree in forestry, Weaver had acquired a strong background in natural resource management. It was his philosophy that national park managers should make resource protection their number one priority, ahead of visitor use and interpretation, even in a historical park such as Nez Perce. Prior to 1987, natural resources in Nez Perce National Historical Park received scant attention. Weaver established new staff positions, a natural resource management program, and a collections management program, obtaining political and financial support from the NPS regional office and technical assistance from Biologist Gerry Wright of the Cooperative Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho.¹³⁶

After improving tribal relations and boosting the park's resource management program, Weaver's third major effort was to resurrect the old movement to bring other sites in Oregon, Washington, and Montana that related to the Nez Perce story into the park. Citizens' groups were already raising the issue in 1986, and park staffer Art Hathaway had attended a few meetings concerning park additions before Weaver's arrival. Weaver held meetings with citizens in Oregon's Wallowa country and with Joe Redthunder of the Chief Joseph band of Nez Perce on the Colville Indian Reservation in north central Washington. The regional office assembled a team to produce an "additions study" and the prospects for congressional approval looked promising until two property owners in Joseph, Oregon, objected. As a result, Oregon's Senator Mark Hatfield withdrew his support for the bill. The movement stalled temporarily just as Weaver was seeking a transfer to another park in a different region.¹³⁷

After Weaver's departure in July 1990, Museum Curator Susan Buchel served as acting superintendent for two months. During this interim, Buchel and other staff members developed a "yellow paper" which outlined recommendations for the new superintendent. These included improving the National Park Service image, working more closely with the Nez Perce Tribe, involving the staff more closely in park operations, and improving the quality of interpretation and resource management.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Roy W. Weaver, interview with author, October 4, 1995.

¹³⁶ Roy W. Weaver, interview with author, October 4, 1995.

¹³⁷ Roy W. Weaver, interview with author, October 4, 1995.

¹³⁸ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1990, CCSO, DSC reports on microfiche, NEPE D-34.

The Superintendency of Frank C. Walker, 1990 -

In September 1990, Frank C. Walker transferred to Nez Perce National Historical Park from Fort Clatsop National Memorial, where he had been superintendent since 1985. A second-generation Park Service employee, Walker had gone from Yellowstone to White Sands National Monument, Jefferson National Expansion Memorial, Gulf Islands National Seashore, and Carlsbad Caverns National Park. With a degree in biology, Walker also had a keen interest in history. By the time he came to Nez Perce country, his career path had already intersected the Lewis and Clark story twice before — first at the expedition's point of departure in St. Louis, then at Fort Clatsop near the mouth of the Columbia.¹³⁹

Walker had some prior exposure to Nez Perce National Historical Park while he was superintendent at Fort Clatsop. He had helped in the preparation of a development concept plan for the Spalding unit some five years earlier and had observed the conflict between the tribe and the superintendent. Upon learning of Weaver's departure, he applied for the job because the concept of the park interested him and the prospect of town living was attractive.¹⁴⁰

Walker and tribal leaders quickly moved to establish good communications. Within a week of his arrival, the new superintendent accepted an invitation from General Council Chairman J. Herman Reuben to attend the semi-annual meeting of the council that month. Following that meeting, Walker made it a practice to attend each General Council session and regularly report on developments in the park. This ongoing commitment was significant in establishing a relationship of trust and open communication with the tribe.¹⁴¹

The park additions bill consumed much of the superintendent's time and energy during the first two years of his tenure. President George Bush signed the park additions bill on October 30, 1992, authorizing fourteen new park sites in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana. (see Chapter 8). These additions mainly followed the pattern of the cooperatively managed sites rather than the NPS-owned sites among the original 24 sites. Implementation of the act required the negotiation of cooperative agreements with numerous individuals and agencies and the fostering of good relations with some 21 separate communities. As of July 1995 the park had 50 cooperative agreements in place.¹⁴²

With the park additions, it became increasingly evident that the park administration would need to be decentralized in order to manage so many far-flung sites effectively. Walker encouraged the park management staff in developing a new concept for administration based on units

¹³⁹ Frank C. Walker, interview with author, July 21, 1995.

¹⁴⁰ Frank C. Walker, interview with author, July 21, 1995.

¹⁴¹ Susan Buchel, comments on draft, March 20, 1996.

¹⁴² Frank C. Walker, interview with author, July 21, 1995; Superintendent's Annual Report, 1993, NEPE, chrono file.

rather than functions. The administration was restructured around four units (Spalding, Oregon/Washington, White Bird/Upper Clearwater, and Montana). Each unit had a unit manager whose primary responsibilities were to manage a local staff and develop community relations. Unit managers were based in Spalding, Idaho; Joseph, Oregon; Grangeville, Idaho; and Big Hole National Battlefield, Montana. In addition, the Bear Paw Battlefield in north central Montana had a site manager who reported to the Montana unit manager. A park-wide support unit was based in Spalding and included specialists in interpretation and resource management.

In many respects the staff reorganization at Nez Perce mirrored the reorganization of the entire National Park Service during 1994-95. The push to increase staff positions in the field benefitted from the agency-wide effort to trim support staffs in the regional offices. Nevertheless, the ambitious plan was not without risk. As the staff report on the unit organization concept pointed out,

One of the primary reasons for the decline in both government productivity and support is the continued use of top-down, centralized bureaucracies. They fail to adequately serve either the customers or the employees. Changing this environment will not be easy nor will it be painless, but if we are to truly better serve customers, protect park resources, save precious fiscal resources, and empower employees to be creative and productive; it must be changed. Early attempts at a unit concept in other NPS areas may well have been doomed from the start by changing only what would not threaten the status quo of a top-down, centralized bureaucracy. Truly empowering employees within a work unit can be very threatening to "command managers." At Nez Perce NHP we seek to implement a true "work team" approach to park management, based on managers serving as coaches and facilitators rather than controllers and commanders.¹⁴³

Walker's other major management efforts to date have included the development of a five-year plan for the park in 1994, and the rejuvenation of Nez Perce tribal involvement in the park's interpretive program. In this latter endeavor, Walker has enjoyed greater success than perhaps any of his predecessors. A high point was the contemporary Nez Perce art exhibition entitled "Sapatq'ayn: 20th Century Nez Perce Artists," the first of its kind, held as a National Park Service 75th Anniversary event in 1991. The park obtained growing tribal support in the annual Nez Perce Cultural Days event as well as in its Spring Lyceum Nez Perce speakers series. Three more Nez Perces were hired into permanent staff positions.¹⁴⁴ Working with tribal elders, Walker considered the formation of an Elders Board. When fully developed, the board would consult with the park staff on a regular basis to assist with the park's resource management and interpretive programs. Walker is credited by the Nez Perces with finally opening communication between the park and the tribe. In the fall of 1994, the Park Service honored Walker and the Nez Perce Tribe with the Vail Partnership Award.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Susan Buchel and Paul Henderson, "Unit Organization Concept," no date, NEPE, library.

¹⁴⁴ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1991, CCSO, Library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D-34.

¹⁴⁵ Richard Ellenwood, interview with author, October 3, 1995; Superintendent to Regional Director, September 30, 1994, NEPE, chrono file.

CHAPTER THREE

LAND ACQUISITION AND PROTECTION

Introduction

The conceptual plan for Nez Perce National Historical Park called for the protection of a number of scattered sites, a so-called “string of pearls,” most of which would not require National Park Service ownership. The original planning group for the park recommended that the NPS acquire fee title for just three key sites at Spalding, East Kamiah, and White Bird Battlefield.¹⁴⁶ (Canoe Camp, a fourth NPS-owned area, was donated to the NPS by the State of Idaho in July 1966.) To ensure that the Park Service would abide by this plan (and to satisfy Idahoans who might otherwise oppose the creation of the park) Public Law 89-19 limited the purchase of land in fee to 1,500 acres and the purchase of scenic easements for an additional 1,500 acres. The total cost for these lands could not exceed \$1,337,000 under the law. Other federal agencies could transfer ownership to the Park Service of another 1,500 acres. Whatever lands the Nez Perce Tribe donated to the park would not count against any of these limitations. Land acquisition would be funded by the newly created Land and Water Conservation Fund.¹⁴⁷

Most of the park’s original land base (that is, excluding the park additions authorized in 1994) was acquired between 1966 and 1969 (Figure 2). This chapter first summarizes the land acquisition program for the Spalding, East Kamiah, and White Bird Battlefield units. It then considers land protection issues associated with the cooperative sites. Finally, it traces the park’s involvement with two national historic trails. Discussion of the park additions after 1994 is reserved for Chapter 8.

Land Acquisition for the Spalding Site

Land acquisition officially began with the transfer of Spalding State Park to the Park Service in a public ceremony on July 24, 1966. This area, with its shady arboretum and picnic grounds, its memorial to Henry and Eliza Spalding, and its pleasant stretch of riverfront, formed the nucleus of the Spalding site. It adjoins a cemetery and church used by Nez Perce tribal members.

¹⁴⁶ Chief, Office of Resource Planning to Assistant Director, October 25, 1968, FRC-Seattle, RG 79, Accession 74A207, Box 13183, File L1417.

¹⁴⁷ Land Protection Plan for Nez Perce National Historical Park, 1984, CCSO, Library, DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D-20, p. 4. The Land and Water Conservation Fund was established under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. As amended in 1968, the fund captured revenues from visitor fees, surplus property sales, motorboat fuel taxes, and offshore oil and gas leasing and set it aside for federal and state parkland acquisition. Under the terms of the act, the Park Service could not purchase lands from the state of Idaho.

After acquiring Spalding State Park, the Park Service still had an inadequate land base for protection of historic resources at Spalding. If the long-range goal was to restore the scene to its historical character, several dwellings of twentieth-century origin would have to be removed. Indeed more than a dozen houses and outbuildings extending along the county road from the Spalding post office west as far as the present-day maintenance building would have to be acquired and torn down. Thus, the most complicated, costly, and politically sensitive element of the whole land acquisition program involved the remaining lands that were to constitute the Spalding site.

Interior Department officials actually became involved in land acquisition at Spalding more than two years earlier, indeed before Congress enacted P.L. 89-19, by giving encouragement to a tribal proposal to acquire property in Spalding for later sale to the Park Service. The purpose of this informal arrangement was to prevent certain land owners from raising the price for their land once the park was authorized. In 1964, the tribe negotiated three land purchases in Spalding of the Watson, Evans, and Sampson brothers properties for a total investment of \$53,299. In 1967, the Park Service agreed to purchase these tracts from the tribe for \$66,000, allowing for seven percent per annum interest on the tribe's investment plus ten percent overhead and administrative costs.¹⁴⁸

At the same time that the Park Service negotiated a land sale with the tribe, it made preliminary inquiries among local residents. While the Park Service was able to find a handful of willing sellers, other residents protested vehemently to Senator Frank Church. The senator, always wary of backlash from his constituents for his stances on environmental issues, suggested to NPS Director George Hartzog, Jr., that the Park Service might be trying to include more land in the Spalding site than Congress had intended.¹⁴⁹ Church recommended that the negotiations between the Park Service and land owners should be handled locally by the superintendent. This prompted a visit to Spalding by Hartzog in May 1967. After Hartzog's visit, Burns discussed the problem directly with Church and reported to the director, "I came away with the distinct feeling that the Senator will be satisfied with anything we do there — even though he did not come out and say it."¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ NPTEC, Resolution 67-35, October 14, 1966, Superintendent Nez Perce National Historical Park to Superintendent Northern Idaho Agency, December 19, 1966, Superintendent Northern Idaho Agency to Superintendent Nez Perce National Historical Park, December 21, 1966, Bill Bryan to Richard A. Halfmoon, June 7, 1967, NEPE, Richard Halfmoon Papers.

¹⁴⁹ Frank Church to George Hartzog, Jr., April 27, 1967, BSU, Frank Church Papers, Series 3.3.7, Box 132, Folder 14.

¹⁵⁰ Superintendent to Director, May 26, 1967, NEPE, chrono file.

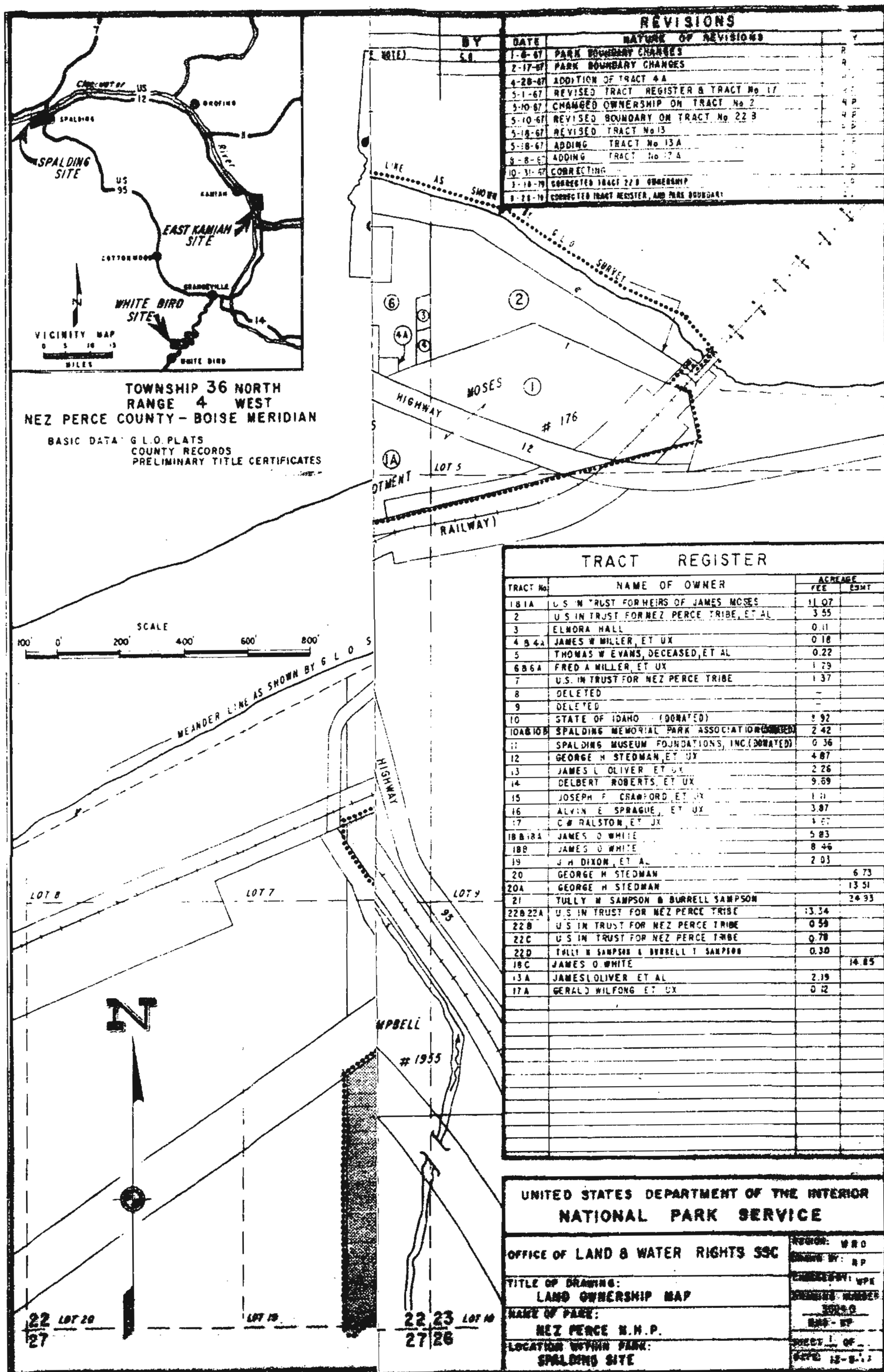


Figure 2.
Land Ownership at Nez Perce National
Historical Park (NPS map). ON MICROFILM

The Park Service determined to negotiate an acquisition package for the remaining landowners rather than purchase the tracts individually. Superintendent Burns, accompanying Inspector Clifford J. Harriman of the Park Service's central office in Washington, negotiated purchasing options with nine property owners as follows:

Tract No.	Owner	Appraisal	Purchase Price [#]
[#] Purchase price includes sellers' moving and relocation expenses. Since 1983, the NPS has not had authority to pay more than the appraised value for real property.			
4 & 4A	James Miller	\$8,500	\$14,950
6 & 6A	Fred Miller	9,000	13,000
13	James Oliver	9,500	11,750
13A	Oliver Albright	20,000	34,500
15	Joe Crawford	6,500	7,500
16	Alvin Sprague	9,600	11,200
17	Chub Ralstin	19,000	27,550
18A, B, & C	Jim White	38,000	42,900
12-20 & 20A	George Stedman	24,223	30,000
TOTALS		\$144,323	\$193,350

There were four other landowners who had already settled with the Park Service:

Tract No.	Owner	Appraisal	Purchase Price [#]
[#] Purchase price includes sellers' moving and relocation expenses. Since 1983, the NPS has not had authority to pay more than the appraised value for real property.			
3	Elnora Hall	\$4,000	\$5,000
17A	Gerald Wilfong	8,750	9,900
21	Tully Sampson	20,280	22,500
2,22,22A, B, C	Nez Perce Tribe	42,750	66,000
TOTALS		\$75,780	\$103,400

and three landowners who had made offers:

Tract No.	Owner	Appraisal	Purchase Price [#]
[#] Purchase price includes sellers' moving and relocation expenses. Since 1983, the NPS has not had authority to pay more than the appraised value for real property.			
5	Thomas Evans	\$3,000	\$6,000
14, 14A, 14B	Del Roberts	24,000	30,000
19	J.H. Dixon	11,500	15,000
TOTALS		\$38,500	\$51,000

In addition, the NPS prepared to bring condemnation proceedings against two other land owners for Tracts 1, 1A, and 22D unless they joined in the overall settlement. This brought the total cost of land acquisition for the Spalding unit to \$358,750. The total was higher than anticipated, but Harrison recommended that the Park Service accept the package because many of the property owners were elderly and were experiencing difficulty relocating and had already inspired local sympathy. The negotiations, Harrison further explained, had been long and difficult and the alternative of bringing condemnation proceedings would be costly. Assistant Director Ed Hummel authorized the chief of the Office of Land and Water Rights, Thomas Kornelis, to accept the options on all tracts in the Spalding area.¹⁵¹

By December 1968, the land acquisition program for the Spalding site was nearly complete. Three significant land issues remained which would present some difficulties for years to come. These were the Camas Prairie Railroad right-of-way, the Lapwai Mission Cemetery, and the Spalding viaduct. The Camas Prairie Railroad went right through the Spalding site, with the former state park being situated on one side and the old Presbyterian church on the other. Freight trains ran fairly regularly along this railroad; today they run daily, mostly carrying logs. The trains posed a safety hazard as well as a problem of aesthetics. A Lewiston-based group now and then raised the possibility of operating steam-powered excursion trains between Lewiston and the historical park, a prospect that the Park Service viewed with disfavor. Instead, the Park Service planned to seek a scenic easement over this railroad right-of-way to prevent commercial development. The plan, however, was never carried out.¹⁵²

The Lapwai Mission Cemetery had historic value. It contained the grave stones of Henry and Eliza Spalding and many mission Nez Perce parishioners. It abutted the arboretum in the former Spalding State Park. The Nez Perce Tribe owned the cemetery and still used it, while the Board of Trustees of the Spalding Presbyterian Church managed it. Prior to 1966, the state of Idaho had a verbal agreement with the Board of Trustees to maintain the cemetery along with the state park. After the transfer of the state park to the Park Service, Superintendent Burns provided for the cost of maintenance (mainly mowing and watering) from the park's budget. In 1971, Superintendent Williams formalized this arrangement in a memorandum of agreement between the NPS and the tribe. Thus, all land protection issues involving the cemetery — gating the road at night, discouraging inappropriate recreational use of the cemetery grounds, improving the sprinkler

¹⁵¹ Clifford J. Harrison to Director, December 18, 1967, and Assistant Director to Chief, Office of Land and Water Rights, December 20, 1967, NEPE, Administrative Files, L1425 Spalding Site General.

¹⁵² Superintendent to Regional Director, December 13, 1968, NEPE, chrono file; Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995; Superintendent to Regional Director, April 4, 1985, NEPE, chrono file.

system — required cooperation between the park administration and the Board of Trustees of the Spalding Presbyterian Church.¹⁵³

In 1979, Superintendent Morris proposed a land exchange with the tribe that would allow for expansion of the cemetery to the south and consolidate the park's holdings north of it (Figure 3). At that time the former Blue Lantern Motel, which extended onto the Park Service's 1.27-acre parcel, was still in use as park administrative headquarters. Under Superintendent Morris' proposal the former Blue Lantern would be vacated and the building razed prior to the land exchange. NPTEC approved the plan but the church's Board of Trustees claimed that the tribal land involved in the exchange actually belonged to the Spalding Presbyterian Church. This delayed the land exchange for several years until the tribe was able to obtain clear title to that tract. The transfer was finally accomplished in 1991.¹⁵⁴

The third unresolved land issue in Spalding involved the Spalding viaduct, or more broadly, the evolving commercial highway pattern in the area. As proponents of Nez Perce National Historical Park had emphasized all along, two interstate highways converged at Spalding, making that place a natural "gateway" for orienting tourists to Nez Perce country. Yet the highway junction also threatened to overwhelm Spalding's historical character.

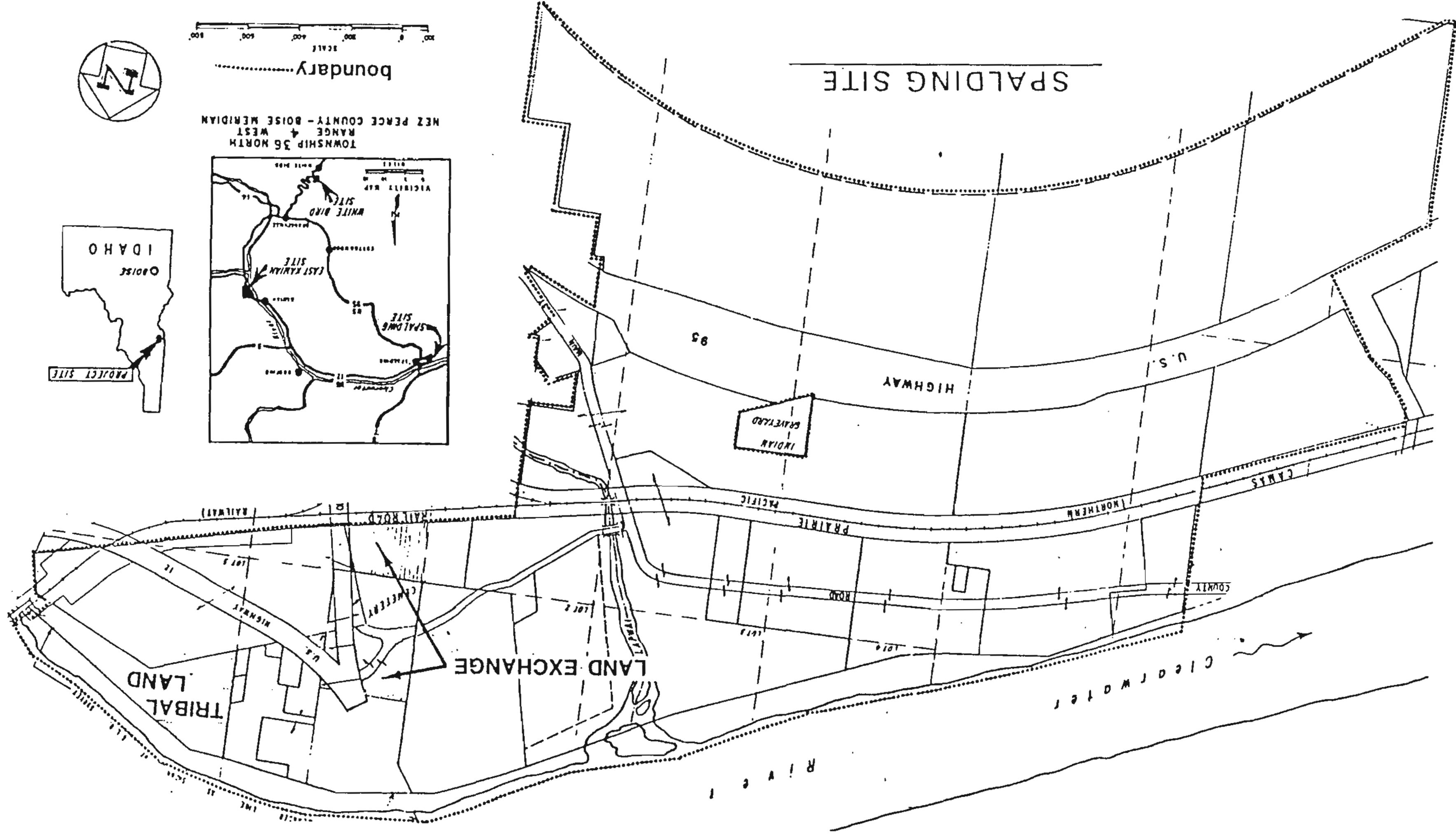
The highway traffic pattern around Spalding went through three major changes, each involving the construction or abandonment of a different bridge (Figure 4). When the park was first proposed, all traffic through the area used the Old Spalding Bridge across the Clearwater River. Dating from the 1920s, this highway bridge joined the south bank of the river less than one hundred yards from the historic mission site. The first change in this highway traffic pattern occurred with the completion of the New Spalding Bridge one and a half miles west of Spalding. Traffic between U.S. 95 and Lewiston now bypassed Spalding, whisking past the village on a broad 55 m.p.h. curve that rounded the hillside between Lapwai Creek and the Clearwater River. The new bridge opened shortly before Nez Perce National Historical Park was authorized.

The second change came in the 1970s with the completion of the Arrow Bridge, a little more than two miles east of Spalding, and the removal of the Old Spalding Bridge. Now all traffic on U.S. 12 bypassed Spalding on the opposite side of the Clearwater River. Even if traffic now moved past the site at greater speeds, these changes were probably good from the standpoint of

¹⁵³ Superintendent to Regional Director, November 24, 1970 and December 3, 1971, NEPE, chrono file; Memorandum of Agreement Between the National Park Service and the Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho Relating to the Maintenance of the Lapwai Mission Cemetery, Spalding, Idaho, April 10, 1971, NEPE, Richard Halfmoon Papers.

¹⁵⁴ Robert L. Morris to Wilfred A. Scott, November 21, 1979, Regional Director to Director, February 25, 1981, and Superintendent to Regional Director, October 11, 1984, NEPE, Administrative Files, L1425 Nez Perce Tribe; Superintendent to Regional Director, April 5, 1988, Superintendent to Deputy Regional Director, March 2, 1989, Office of the Regional Solicitor to Chief, Division of Lands, April 11, 1989, Chief, Division of Lands to Associate Regional Director, April 18, 1991, Superintendent to Chairman, NPTEC, April 22, 1991, NEPE, Administrative Files, L1425 Acquisition of Lands—Holdings, Land Exchange—Nez Perce Tribe.

Figure 3. Historical Map of Land Exchange, Spalding, 1991 (National Park Service map, no date).



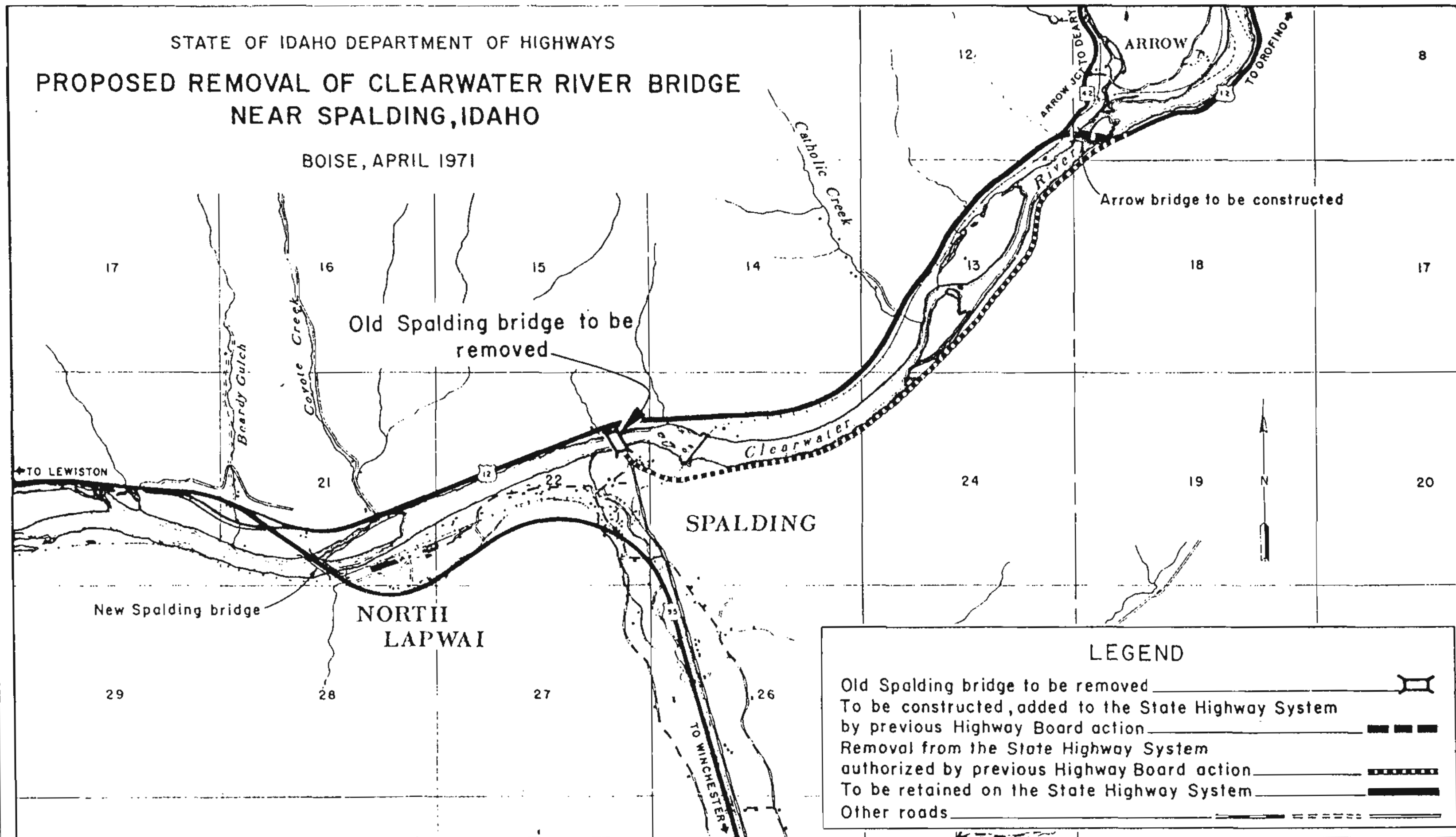


Figure 4. Historical Map of Highway System at Spalding, 1971 (State of Idaho Department of Highways Map).

protecting the historic resources and improving the park setting. But some traffic between U.S. 95 and points east still went through the site, because savvy motorists knew that they could shave about three miles off their trip by taking the old U.S. 12 from Spalding along the south side of the Clearwater River to Arrow Junction.

The third change in the highway traffic pattern came with the closure of the Spalding viaduct in 1986 when the state highway department declared it unsafe. The closure deflected all traffic that was using old U.S. 12 onto the short section of road past the picnic area. Superintendent Weaver was faced with the unacceptable situation of having semi-trucks and numerous other vehicles driving directly through the Spalding unit. Not only did it harm the park's ambiance, but the road itself was crumbling under this unprecedented usage. After considerable local public debate on the situation, Weaver decided to close the park road to through traffic in 1988. Signs were posted at Arrow Junction to warn motorists that old U.S. 12 now ended at the Spalding viaduct. Frustrated motorists who missed the signs kept breaking down the Park Service's barrier when they got to Spalding. Finally Weaver put up a heavy pipe gate. Frustration with the road closure gradually abated, leaving the highway traffic pattern around Spalding more favorable than it had been in seventy years from the standpoint of the historic resources and providing a parklike ambiance. The old, abandoned viaduct still stands, and continues to be a major visual intrusion on the historic scene.¹⁵⁵

Land Acquisition for the East Kamiah Site

Original plans for Nez Perce National Historical Park contemplated that three historic themes would be represented near the town of Kamiah: Nez Perce culture, the Lewis and Clark story, and the missionary story. An important element of Nez Perce culture, the tribal legend of how the people came to inhabit the Nez Perce country, would be presented at the site of a geologic formation known to the Nez Perce as the Heart of the Monster. A piece of the Lewis and Clark story would be told nearby with a roadside sign. This was the area of the "Long Camp," where the Lewis and Clark expedition waited for snow in the Bitterroot Mountains to melt before returning eastward over the range. The actual site of the Long Camp was now occupied by an operating sawmill so there would be no land acquisition involved in this site. Finally, the missionary story here would feature the First Presbyterian Church, built in 1874, and the McBeth house nearby, where the missionaries Susan and Kate McBeth resided. The McBeth sisters are buried in a cemetery behind the church.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁵ Roy W. Weaver, interview with author, October 4, 1995; Superintendent to Public Affairs Office, PNRO, September 12, 1988, NEPE, chrono file; assorted correspondence in NEPE, Administrative Files, A3815 Public Relations—Closure East Gate.

¹⁵⁶ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *A Master Plan for Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, June 1968, pp. 16-18.

By 1970 the Park Service had tailored this interpretive scheme to fit the realities of the park's land base in East Kamiah; it was decided to drop the missionary story in East Kamiah after the First Presbyterian Church refused to sell its land to the Park Service. Significantly, this change of plan preceded the decision to scale back the basic development plan for the park. According to the new development plan, the Park Service would forgo the development of three "entrances" into Nez Perce country at Spalding, East Kamiah, and White Bird in favor of a main hub at Spalding.

Various explanations were given for the First Presbyterian Church's refusal to sell. Burns thought the Presbyterian Nez Perces of Kamiah were acting out of spite toward the Nez Perces of Lapwai.¹⁵⁷ In the 1960s these devoutly Christian Nez Perces still looked askance at the way the Nez Perces in Lapwai were bringing back the root feast, holding pow-wows, and reviving other tribal customs that the church had discouraged earlier in the century.¹⁵⁸ Conversely, the Reverend Henry L. Sugden suggested that the church membership became intransigent on the sale of the church property (which included a number of rental homes) only after a Park Service appraiser rudely appeared unannounced and "thoroughly examined and measured all homes inside and out."¹⁵⁹ In the course of Burns' subsequent talks with the church congregation, some Nez Perces raised a significant point, as Burns reported:

One item they mentioned, which I think we should give careful consideration to, is the fact that for the past 100 years or so it has been the tradition of this Church that individual Indians were allowed to build close around them. I feel that this tradition should be maintained, since we are not trying to present the picture that close back into the old culture or the days of Lewis and Clark. Their point is well taken. They feel we should not buy their lands and then ignore their tradition in order to tailor the story to our ideas.¹⁶⁰

At Superintendent Burns' suggestion, the Park Service retreated from its original plan to acquire this site. Later, Superintendent Williams proposed an alternative in which the Park Service would buy the McBeth house and move it to the East Kamiah site. This plan never materialized.¹⁶¹

The Park Service acquired some privately-owned lands around the Heart of the Monster site. Once the lands were in Park Service ownership, the park administration removed a sawmill and

¹⁵⁷ Superintendent to Regional Director, November 14, 1967, NEPE, chrono files.

¹⁵⁸ Allen Slickpoo, Sr., interview with author, July 21, 1995.

¹⁵⁹ Henry L. Sugden to Robert Burns, October 9, 1967, NEPE, Administrative Files, L1425 Presbyterian Church.

¹⁶⁰ Superintendent to Regional Director, February 5, 1968, FRC-Seattle, RG 79, Accession 74A207, Box 13183, File L30.

¹⁶¹ The proposal had the support of Regional Historian John Hussey, Reed Jarvis, and Park Historian Earl Harris. Acting Assistant Regional Director to Director, July 11, 1968, FRC-Seattle, RG 79, Accession 74A598, Box 19936, File L7019; and Jack R. Williams to Rev. Henry L. Sugden, January 22, 1969, NEPE, chrono file.

junkyard to clean up the area. In addition, the Park Service dissuaded NPTEC from undertaking a variety of proposed developments on tribal lands nearby that would have adversely affected the site. Examples included a tribal housing project and a rodeo grounds.¹⁶² The NPS tried to acquire a parcel on the opposite side of the highway from the Heart of the Monster but was unsuccessful. This land was subsequently developed into a commercial campground for recreational vehicles.¹⁶³

Land Acquisition for the White Bird Battlefield

The site of the Battle of White Bird Hill contrasted with the Spalding and East Kamiah sites. The area had no habitations or other roadside development, but local ranchers grazed livestock. As the park's master plan indicated, "The site itself is attractive and its restoration to its historical condition would be a relatively minor undertaking." The authors recommended that the Park Service acquire about 1,250 acres in fee and an additional 725 acres in scenic easement.¹⁶⁴ In October 1969 the NPS acquired fee title to 1111.6 acres and an easement over 285 acres. The NPS purchased the land and easement from Harry M. Hagen of White Bird for \$71,000. The NPS purchased a scenic easement over an additional 100 acres belonging to local rancher Charles Bentz. These lands formed the core of the White Bird unit.¹⁶⁵

Within the White Bird Battlefield three tracts owned by the state of Idaho remained. These public school land tracts totaled 261.7 acres. As noted earlier, the law would not allow the NPS to purchase this type of land with Land and Water Conservation Funds. The NPS explored various alternatives for protecting these parcels. NPS officials asked the state of Idaho to donate a scenic easement on the three tracts, but state officials responded that the state was legally prohibited from donating fee title or any interest attached to public school lands. NPS officials then considered a proposal to have a local rancher purchase the state-owned tracts and then sell a scenic easement on the lands to the Park Service. The third and preferred alternative was to get the National Park Foundation to purchase the lands and donate a scenic easement to the park. It should be remembered that in no circumstances could the Park Service purchase the lands because

¹⁶² Regional Historian to Assistant Regional Director, October 10, 1966, and Superintendent to Regional Director, November 16, 1966, FRC-Seattle, RG 79, Accession 74A207, Box 13183, File L30; Superintendent to Regional Director, January 14, 1970, NEPE, Administrative Files, D18 Planning Program; Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995.

¹⁶³ Susan Buchel, comments on draft, March 20, 1996.

¹⁶⁴ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *A Master Plan for Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, June 1968, p. 25.

¹⁶⁵ Attorney General to Secretary of the Interior, March 10, 1970, NEPE, Administrative Files, L1425 Harry M. Hagen Tract 01-101; Jack R. Williams to Idaho Department of Public Lands, December 13, 1968, NEPE, chrono; Superintendent to Regional Director, November 17, 1971, NEPE, Administrative Files, Resource Management files, White Bird Battlefield Easements.

the acquisition would cause the park to exceed its maximum allotment of 1,500 acres in fee.¹⁶⁶ To date, the lands remain under state ownership.

NPS management tried to discover what kind of legal force was contained in a scenic easement. In November 1971, Superintendent Williams requested a solicitor's opinion on this issue. Specifically, he wanted to know if hunting was allowed on scenic easements or inholdings within the park boundaries, whether overgrazing was permissible on the state-owned inholdings at White Bird, and whether it was the stockowner's or the landowner's responsibility to prevent grazing trespass on scenic easements. Williams made repeated inquiries over the next two years but did not get a reply to these questions.¹⁶⁷

The superintendent had to make practical decisions as issues arose. In June 1971, Superintendent Williams authorized the rancher, Harry M. Hagen, to harvest the native grass hay from a 20-acre area inside the park boundary. The cutting of the hay that year, Williams was careful to explain, constituted the removal of a potential fire hazard.¹⁶⁸ On another occasion in 1974, Williams instructed Hagen to remove 100 head of sheep and three horses from NPS lands.¹⁶⁹ (Later, grazing would become the most controversial issue at White Bird, and is discussed in Chapter 7.) Years later, in 1991, Superintendent Walker sought restitution from White Bird resident Andrew Dahlquist for cutting trees on a portion of his property on which the federal government had purchased a scenic easement. Dahlquist's action was in clear violation of the easement, although he professed that he was not aware of the restriction against cutting trees.¹⁷⁰ This incident highlighted another problem with scenic easements: even when the easement was clear on its face, the precise terms of the easement could be forgotten over the course of time. Scenic easements required constant vigilance by the Park Service.

¹⁶⁶ Superintendent to District Director, March 28, 1969, Superintendent to Director, June 25, 1970, NEPE, chrono file; Superintendent to District Director, April 2, 1969, NEPE, Administrative Files, L1425 Development of Public Lands—Idaho.

¹⁶⁷ Superintendent to Regional Director, November 17, 1971, NEPE, Administrative Files, Resource Management files, White Bird Battlefield Easements.

¹⁶⁸ Jack R. Williams to Harry M. Hagen, June 17, 1971, NEPE, Administrative Files, L1425 Harry M. Hagen Tract 01-101.

¹⁶⁹ Jack R. Williams to Harry M. Hagen, NEPE, Administrative Files, L1425 Harry M. Hagen Tract 01-101.

¹⁷⁰ Franklin C. Walker to Andrew Dahlquist, June 10, 1991, Chief Ranger to Associate Regional Director, April 26, 1991, and Office of the Regional Solicitor to Superintendent, June 6, 1991, NEPE, L3019 Land Use (Special Use Permits) Dahlquist—Timber Cutting Incident.

Land Protection and the Cooperative Sites

The park's cooperative sites are those that are managed under cooperative agreement between the Park Service and a landowner. When Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel formally designated Nez Perce National Historical Park in 1970, he recognized 19 cooperative sites in addition to the Spalding, East Kamiah, White Bird, and Canoe Camp sites. Two more, the Lenore and Pierce Courthouse sites, were included in 1977. With the park additions in 1992, more than a dozen other cooperative sites were authorized. Each individual cooperative site received relatively little attention from the park administration, but collectively the cooperative sites are what make Nez Perce National Historical Park such an unusual unit of the national park system. Arguably, it is the cooperative sites that have shaped the park's management tone. As Superintendent Walker observed in 1991,

This park is based on its ability to get along well with a wide variety of communities, individual landowners, state and other federal agencies. If we are to survive, we must get along fairly well, but if we are to flourish, we must become good neighbors and friends and become involved in community activities and earn the respect and trust of those neighbors and friends.¹⁷¹

Management of the cooperative sites began with the task of identifying the landowners and establishing relations with them. The next step was to develop cooperative agreements with the landowners aimed at protecting the resources and providing for public access. The ultimate goal was to develop interpretive exhibits at each site that would make the park a unified whole. All of this had to be achieved in the absence of defined site boundaries.

The initial process of identifying land owners contained at least one surprise: Superintendent Burns learned in 1967 that the Clearwater National Forest did not own the Musselshell Meadows, but had been trying to acquire it through a land exchange with the Diamond National Match Company for the past four years. Forest Service officials agreed with Burns that the site had significance as a major camas digging area, perhaps the last of its kind.¹⁷² The Forest Service acquired the site in 1972 and retained ownership of it.¹⁷³

Other landowners included the Idaho Department of Highways for a large number of sites mostly consisting of roadside interpretive signs, the Keuterville Highway District of Idaho County for the Weis Rockshelter, the Lapwai School District for the Northern Idaho Agency and Fort Lapwai sites, the Forest Service for the Lolo Pass and Lolo Trail sites, Mr. and Mrs. John M. Pfeifer of Culdesac, Idaho, for the St. Joseph's Mission Church, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Cardiff of

¹⁷¹ Superintendent to Regional Director, March 6, 1991, NEPE, Administrative Files, A38 Public Relations.

¹⁷² Superintendent to Regional Director, January 8, 1967, NEPE, chrono file.

¹⁷³ Forest Supervisor to Chairman, NPTEC, June 19, 1972, NEPE, Administrative Files, L1425 Musselshell Meadow.

Pierce, Idaho for the Pierce Courthouse, and the First Presbyterian Church of Kamiah for both the historic church and the nearby McBeth house.¹⁷⁴

Private landowners represented the most challenging situations for cooperative management. As noted above, Superintendents Burns and Williams recommended that the First Presbyterian Church and McBeth house be dropped from consideration after they sensed that the park administration would not be able to obtain landowner cooperation. In July 1968, Burns suggested that the St. Joseph's Mission Church be dropped as a site for the same reason. Perhaps NPS officials would have followed his advice if it had not been for the fact that the park brochure had already been published and listed the Pfeifers' church building as part of the St. Joseph's Mission site. The Pfeifers claimed that the brochure had led to an increase in visitation. The Pfeifers demanded some kind of cooperative agreement with the Park Service.¹⁷⁵

The Pfeifers wanted financial assistance for the maintenance of the building and some modest compensation for their time in guiding visitors through the church. During the winter of 1968-69, Superintendent Williams negotiated a cooperative agreement with the Pfeifers covering these points. In addition, Williams notified the Pfeifers that the NPS would be affixing 18,000 stickers to the 18,000 park brochures it had printed explaining that the church was private property.¹⁷⁶ The final agreement, concluded on June 29, 1970, involved the Park Service and the newly formed St. Joseph's Mission Historical Society, of which the Pfeifers were controlling members.¹⁷⁷

The Pierce Courthouse presented another problem. The owners wanted to donate the property to the Park Service. Superintendent Williams discussed this possibility with regional officials, who rejected the idea on the grounds that the Park Service should not acquire more historic buildings in the park than it could maintain. The feasibility study of 1963 recommended that the state of Idaho acquire and administer this site; however, state officials proposed to move the building to the capitol lawn in Boise, an idea which the owners and other local citizens adamantly opposed. In 1969, Superintendent Williams proposed that the owner donate the property to the Clearwater Historical Society of Orofino, Idaho, as an "interim measure and until such time as the National Park Service might possibly become involved." Apparently Williams formed the impression that the owner, Leonard Cardiff, had agreed to this arrangement and that

¹⁷⁴ Superintendent to Regional Director, November 4, 1968, NEPE, chrono file.

¹⁷⁵ Director to Frank Church, October 13, 1967, Superintendent to Regional Director, July 2, 1968, Chief, Portland Field Office to Regional Director, September 28, 1968, NEPE, Administrative Files, L1425 St. Joseph's Mission Church.

¹⁷⁶ Superintendent to Regional Director, December 19, 1968, Jack R. Williams to Mr. and Mrs. John Pfeifer, November 26, 1968, NEPE, Administrative files, L1425 St. Joseph's Mission Church.

¹⁷⁷ Briefing Report, Cooperative Agreement between the National Park Service and the St. Joseph's Mission Historical Society, 1987, NEPE, Administrative Files, A4415 Cooperative Agreements, St. Joseph's Mission. The agreement was renegotiated in 1987. A major concern at this time was to ensure that the interpretive use of the church property would continue after the Pfeifers were deceased. See additional correspondence, same file.

the building had changed hands, but two years later he learned that local citizens had dissuaded Cardiff.¹⁷⁸ Finally, the Idaho State Historical Society accepted the offer of donation from Cardiff, and the Park Service entered a cooperative agreement with the Idaho State Historical Society in 1979. In that agreement the NPS agreed to provide guidance on how to preserve and interpret the structure. The NPS would provide actual maintenance assistance as funds allowed. In 1987, Superintendent Weaver initiated meetings with the Idaho State Historical Society on what should be done to stabilize the structure and make it available to the public.¹⁷⁹ The Pierce Courthouse was opened to the public for the first time in the summer of 1990.¹⁸⁰

One persistent management concern was how to keep the cooperative sites tidy. Many of these sites were quite remote from the park headquarters and could only be visited by park staff intermittently. Litter accumulated around the wayside signs. Vandalism was not uncommon, especially at secluded sites such as the Weis Rockshelter. As a matter of fiscal necessity, the NPS has tried to enlist the park's partners in controlling the litter problem, but the park administration has not always received the support it desires. For example, during the 1980s many cooperative sites with the Idaho Department of Highways sometimes became unacceptably trashy by national park standards. State highway department officials, however, did not want to give the problem high priority. In recent years, the Park Service has earmarked funds for litter control at many of these sites.¹⁸¹ Maintenance or interpretive personnel patrol the sites on a bi-weekly basis.

Another management concern has been the need to delineate boundaries for the protection of cooperative sites. In 1982, the Nez Perce Tribe proposed a housing project on the grounds of old Fort Lapwai. The project threatened to intrude on the historic scene. As the Park Service, the BIA, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the tribe all got involved in the issue, it became clear that the parties to the cooperative agreement covering the Fort Lapwai site had not agreed to any boundary definitions. Many cultural resources were lost during the initial phase of housing development. The site still lacks boundaries. Indeed, several other sites still lack boundaries, including Ant and Yellow Jacket, Coyote's Fishnet, Weis Rockshelter, Craig Donation Claim, Clearwater Battlefield, and the first Lapwai Mission.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁸ Superintendent to Director, November 17, 1971, NEPE, chrono file.

¹⁷⁹ Roy W. Weaver to Ms. Debbi Duffy, February 23, 1987, NEPE, Administrative Files, A4415 Cooperative Agreement, Idaho State Historical Society; CCSO, Resources Management Plan and EA for Nez Perce National Historical Park, 1981, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D-15.

¹⁸⁰ Pat Byron to Sue Buchel, February 17, 1990, NEPE, Administrative Files, D6215 Plan/Preparation/Maintenance/Preservation Pierce County Courthouse.

¹⁸¹ Roy W. Weaver, interview with author, October 4, 1995.

¹⁸² Superintendent's Annual Report, 1982, NEPE, chrono file; Susan Buchel, comments on draft, March 20, 1996.

National Historic Trails

Nez Perce National Historical Park has been associated with the development of two national historical trails: the Lewis and Clark Trail and the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail. Both trails intersect a number of sites within Nez Perce National Historical Park.

Efforts to establish a trail of commemorative markers along the route of the Lewis and Clark expedition began as early as the 1930s. A private organization called the Lewis-Clark Trail Commission led this effort, which focused initially on marking and developing sites along the expedition route between St. Louis and the mouth of the Columbia River. In 1948, the NPS recommended that a "Lewis and Clark Tourway" be established along the Missouri River from St. Louis to Three Forks, Montana. In the 1950s, conservationist J.N. "Ding" Darling led an effort to develop the historic route into a recreational trail. In 1962, Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall directed the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) to analyze the proposal and formulate a development plan. The BOR completed its report in 1965, and included its concept for a Lewis and Clark national scenic trail in its 1966 report to Congress, "Trails for America: Report on Nationwide Trails Study."¹⁸³

President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the National Trails System Act (P.L. 90-543) on October 2, 1968. The act listed the route of the Lewis and Clark expedition for study and possible designation as a National Scenic Trail. The BOR identified a 3,700-mile route and recommended that it be designated under a new category to be called National Historic Trails. The National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 (P.L. 65-625) amended the National Trails Act to include this designation, and named the Lewis and Clark Trail as one of four National Historic Trails.¹⁸⁴

Local efforts to commemorate the expedition route through northern Idaho received a large boost from the construction of U.S. Highway 12 over Lolo Pass and its designation as the "Lewis and Clark Scenic Highway" in the early 1960s. In 1966, Idaho citizens formed the Idaho Lewis-Clark Trail Committee and elected the retired forest supervisor of the Clearwater National Forest, Ralph Space, as its chairman. Like the Lewis and Clark Trail Commission which Congress had established two years earlier, the local organization assumed the role of stimulating government agencies to identify, mark, and preserve the trail. Governor Robert E. Smylie advised the committee that it must coordinate planning with the NPS since the commission's decisions might have an impact on the Nez Perce National Historical Park.¹⁸⁵

The National Trails System Act assigned administrative responsibility of the trail to the Secretary of the Interior, and delegated responsibility for long-term administration and prepara-

¹⁸³ National Park Service, *Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, Comprehensive Management Plan Status Report*, March 1981, p. 1.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, February 5, 1966.

tion of a comprehensive management plan to the Midwest Regional Office of the National Park Service. The act required the Secretary to submit the plan to Congress by September 30, 1981. The Midwest Regional Office sought input on the plan from Nez Perce National Historical Park in 1980. Specifically, the project team sought advice from park officials in identifying and evaluating historic and recreational resources where the Lewis and Clark Trail passed through Nez Perce country.¹⁸⁶

By that time, discussion was well underway for designation of a Nez Perce or Nee-Me-Poo National Historic Trail (Figure 5). The first milestone in this effort was reached in 1965 with the inclusion of the Lolo Trail as a site in Nez Perce National Historical Park, and its designation as a National Historic Landmark. The feasibility studies for the park recognized the historical significance of the Nez Perce Tribe's traditional trail across the Bitterroot Range which Lewis and Clark followed in 1805 and 1806. Like other sites in the park, the Lolo Trail site was not designated by boundaries; indeed, portions of it remained obscure. Park officials worked with U.S. Forest Service officials from the Clearwater National Forest to locate precisely where the trail existed. In any event, the Lolo Trail designation served to highlight the connection between the route followed by Lewis and Clark and the trail which the Nez Perce people had used historically.¹⁸⁷

As the centennial year of the Nez Perce War of 1877 approached, various entities expressed interest in having portions of the 1,200-mile route taken by the Nez Perce (including that portion which followed the Lolo Trail) designated as a Nez Perce National Historic Trail. The Appaloosa Horse Club, Inc., which organized a commemorative trail ride over a section of this route each summer, inquired about the project in 1975. Superintendent Jack Williams outlined for the club the criteria which were normally applied in evaluating a trail's suitability for designation as a national historic trail. Williams explained to the members that for a study to be initiated, "a request to the Secretary of the Interior by your Congressman recommending various outstanding segments of the Nez Perce War Trail is needed."¹⁸⁸ In 1976, Congress amended the National Trails System Act to authorize a study of the Nez Perce or Nee-Me-Poo Trail. The act called for a joint study by the Park Service and the Forest Service. The agencies submitted the joint report to the public review process after 1982, and Congress designated the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo)

¹⁸⁶ Regional Director to Superintendent, May 15, 1980, NEPE, Administrative Files, L6017 National Scenic/Historic Trails, Lewis-Clark Historic Trail.

¹⁸⁷ Superintendent to Regional Director, November 17, 1972, NEPE, chrono file.

¹⁸⁸ Jack R. Williams to Appaloosa Horse Club, Inc., February 25, 1975, NEPE, chrono file.

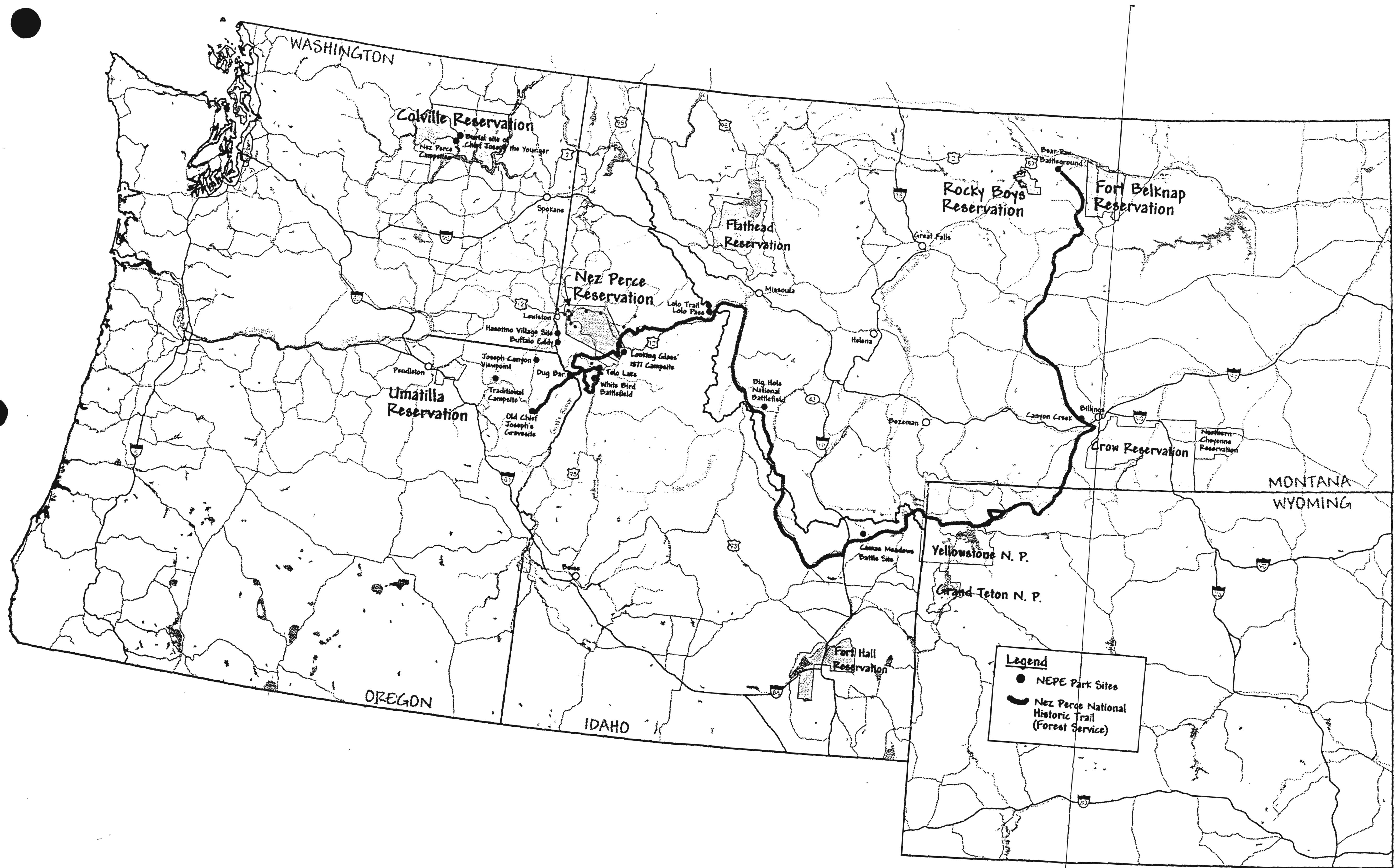


Figure 5.
Nez Perce National Historic Trail.

National Historic Trail in 1986 (P.L. 99-445). To the surprise of many in the Park Service, the law placed the trail under the administration of the Forest Service. It remains one of the few units in the National Trails System administered by that agency.¹⁸⁹

The Forest Service's first coordinator for the Nez Perce Trail, Jim Dolan of the Northern Regional Office in Missoula, Montana, asked Superintendent Roy Weaver to help him establish an advisory council for the trail. Weaver arranged for a representative of NPTEC as well as a representative of the Nez Perce at the Colville Indian Reservation to be on the council. The organizational meeting was held at the park on February 11, 1987.¹⁹⁰ Following formal designation of the trail on July 19, 1991, the Nez Perce National Historic Trail Foundation was created. Most of the foundation's members were formerly on the advisory council.¹⁹¹

Owing to the distance between the Nez Perce groups in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho and the Forest Service trail coordinator in Missoula, Montana, the park was often asked to assist with administrative details. NPS and Forest Service officials found that they had to work together to avoid duplication of effort. Some members of the Park Service wondered whether the administration of the trail would someday pass to their agency. Such a change would lessen confusion in the public's mind between the trail and the park, and would simplify management of overlapping sections of the Nez Perce and Lewis and Clark trails as the latter approached its bicentennial celebration.¹⁹²

Although the Park Service had not been designated the lead agency for the Nez Perce Trail, the establishment and administration of this new entity under the aegis of the U.S. Forest Service anticipated two major trends in the development of Nez Perce National Historical Park in the 1990s. First, the trail focused attention on the Nez Perce War of 1877. In this sense, the designation of the trail anticipated later park additions legislation which was to expand the number of park sites relating directly to the war. Together with the park additions, the Nez Perce Trail altered the interpretive thrust of the park story, increased the amount of emphasis on the conflict between Nez Perce and white and the story of the war itself. Second, the trail spanned four states (Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming), greatly expanding the number of congressional members and constituencies with whom the park administration needed to involve itself. Specifically, it underlined the fact that the Nez Perce are a divided people, with separate bands

¹⁸⁹ Forest Service, *The Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail Comprehensive Plan*, 1990, pp. 3-6; Mary Horstman, interview with author, October 23, 1995; Stephanie Toothman, comments on draft, March 18, 1996.

¹⁹⁰ Superintendent to Regional Director, February 5, 1987, NEPE, chrono file. Weaver suggested that the Redthunders could provide the desired input, and failed to remind the Forest Service to maintain relations with the Colville Business Council. Subsequently, the Colville Business Council criticized the Redthunders and the Forest Service for this informal arrangement. The Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce complained that it lacked proper representation in the management of the trail. (Susan Buchel, comments on draft, March 20, 1996.)

¹⁹¹ Superintendent to Regional Director, May 27, 1992, NEPE, chrono file.

¹⁹² Susan Buchel, comments on draft, March 20, 1996.

located in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Canada as a legacy of the War of 1877. Henceforth, the park administration would need to consult not only with NPTEC, but with representatives of Nez Perce groups in Washington and Oregon as well.

CHAPTER FOUR

VISITOR PROTECTION

Nez Perce National Historical Park's unusual pattern of land ownership has tended to shape its program of visitor protection. All but a handful of park sites are outside the Park Service's jurisdiction. Park visitors may travel hundreds of miles while touring the park, but with few exceptions they are not driving over park roads; consequently, traffic safety is a relatively minimal concern in this unit of the national park system. Once they are out of their cars, park visitors are exposed to relatively few safety hazards. The park administration has taken the precaution of closing the riverfront at the Spalding unit to public swimming (there are some dangerous currents, and one boy drowned after jumping off the Old Spalding bridge in the park's early years).¹⁹³ It keeps the grass mown around the Heart of the Monster in order to protect visitors from rattlesnakes.¹⁹⁴ Aside from managing these natural hazards, most of the park administration's visitor protection program consists of law enforcement.

In the park's early years the NPS had proprietary jurisdiction over two sites: Spalding and Canoe Camp. Both were donated to the NPS by the State of Idaho in July 1966. Proprietary jurisdiction meant that the NPS could normally expect assistance from the local sheriff and the state patrol, each based thirteen miles west of the Spalding unit in Lewiston. The Spalding unit included an established picnic area used extensively by local and out-of-state visitors. To Superintendent Burns, several prior incidents of misconduct in the picnic area seemed to justify "a vigorous policy of protection to both property and visitors." Burns maintained that on several occasions during the summer of 1966 members of a gang of 20 to 25 ex-convicts had invaded the picnic area and involved themselves in "numerous incidents of disorderly conduct, questionable nocturnal activities, drinking parties, fighting and various degrees of objectionable disturbance." In addition, many visitors had reported property stolen from their parked vehicles or from their

¹⁹³ Carol Gamet, interview with author, July 26, 1995. Superintendent Burns cited "two separate instances of drowning in the Clearwater River at the Park site in 1966, before the National Park Service had assumed jurisdiction." Superintendent to Regional Director, April 19, 1967, NEPE, chrono file.

¹⁹⁴ Superintendent to Regional Director, October 31, 1978, NEPE, chrono file.

picnic tables.¹⁹⁵ Burns used these reports to get authorization to purchase two .38 caliber revolvers for the park.¹⁹⁶ Park Historian Earl Harris was commissioned a deputy sheriff in 1967.¹⁹⁷

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, recreational use of the picnic area at Spalding continued to underpin the development of law enforcement in Nez Perce National Historical Park. The picnic area's popularity grew at a phenomenal rate for reasons that had little to do with the national historical park. Other recreational sites in the region were being inundated by new reservoirs created on the lower Snake River. Until the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers developed replacement recreational sites at the new water line on these reservoirs in the mid-1970s, the picnic grounds at Spalding remained the only green, shaded, public use area convenient to Lewiston. Indeed, it was claimed that the 15-acre picnic area was the largest such facility in northern Idaho.¹⁹⁸ As a result, official estimates of the number of visits at Spalding grew from a little under 33,000 in 1968 to more than 225,000 in 1972. Most of these people came to enjoy the shade and green grass rather than the historical resources or Park Service interpretive program.¹⁹⁹

Superintendent Williams was confronted with the frustrating and unpopular task of assigning his seasonal interpreters to duties that were more consistent with a national recreation area than a national historical park. His frustration was apparent in his annual report for 1972:

By far the most frustrating and energy-absorbing problems in 1972 have been traffic control and crowd management at the Spalding unit. To a large extent, these may be considered facets of the same problem. Visitation topped 210,000 this calendar year - up 144% from 1971 and up more than 400% from 1968.

The available organized parking will accommodate 350 vehicles at one time. Six hundred vehicles or more were present at any given instant between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. on a total of 11 weekend days in July and August. On three weekend days and two holidays the peak load was in excess of 700 vehicles; on Labor Day it exceeded 850 vehicles, creating hazardous conditions on more than a mile of Park and adjacent roadways.

A 200-car temporary parking area was opened in June 1972. This prevented a still more serious problem but minimum standards of traffic control and pedestrian safety were violated at least 30 days out of the May 15 through September 10 visitation period.

¹⁹⁵ Superintendent to Regional Director, April 19, 1967, NEPE, chrono file.

¹⁹⁶ Prior to that time, Burns purchased dog food at government expense to feed two old watch dogs who were longtime residents of the Watson's Store. Robert L. Burns to Katherine Swift, May 2, 1966, NEPE, chrono file.

¹⁹⁷ Superintendent to Regional Director, June 9, 1969, NEPE, chrono file.

¹⁹⁸ Fahy C. Whittaker, Statement for Management, Nez Perce National Historical Park, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D14A, p. 12.

¹⁹⁹ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1972, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 67.

In the Spalding picnic-recreation area visitor densities on at least five days reached concentrations approximating one visitor for each 85 square feet, roughly the space over an 8' x 12' rug!²⁰⁰

Such high visitor densities inevitably brought with it a tide of accidents, petty offenses, and misdemeanors — problems such as littering, fender benders, off-road use by trail vehicles, weight-limit violations by commercial vehicles, firearms violations, poaching, and abuse of controlled substances. To cope with this unforeseen situation, Williams took two actions. First, he had two rangers deputized by the county sheriff's department, obtained a law enforcement vehicle, and closed the park at night.²⁰¹ Second, he worked on implementing the U.S. Magistrate System for Nez Perce National Historical Park. This process took some five years to accomplish.

The Park Service had adopted the U.S. Magistrate System for the first time in 1968-69 in the Southeast Region (principally in eastern Virginia). The system operated on the basis of a "Uniform Fee Schedule" for law violations that would be agreed upon by all federal agencies in an area and approved by the senior judge in that judicial district. The system allowed law enforcement agents to issue fines without requiring court appearances by the violator, who in most cases would admit guilt and remit the fine required by the Uniform Fee Schedule by mail.²⁰² The plan met with some resistance from the U.S. attorney in Boise, but was finally implemented on July 1, 1974.²⁰³

In the meantime, the park staff was burdened with an increasing number of case/incident reports, citations, and follow-up court appearances. In 1972 alone there were 110 case records. The most notorious case involved an assault on two rangers, Glenn L. Hinsdale and Steven T. Kernes, by two brothers named Fry. Kernes tried to interpose himself in a drunken brawl and Hinsdale came to his aid. The rangers were outnumbered and surrounded, both received punches, while verbal threats made by the Fry brothers, their father, and others in the crowd brought about "near-riot conditions."²⁰⁴ The Fry case represented the most serious law enforcement incident in the park's history.

Use of the picnic area for large parties and social functions continued through the late 1970s, but concerns about visitor safety gradually diminished. A "Crime Prevention and Physical Security Plan," prepared for the park in 1979, stated that crime was not a major problem. The report characterized the situation as "a low level of minor, but annoying, vandalism incidents punctuated by infrequent but more serious incidents involving property damage or loss. Crime against persons are rare while crimes against property predominate." Between 1974 and 1979

²⁰⁰ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1972, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 67.

²⁰¹ Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995.

²⁰² Jack R. Williams to Eli B. Ponack, February 25, 1972, NEPE, chrono file.

²⁰³ Superintendent's Annual Reports, 1972, 1974, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 67.

²⁰⁴ The incident is described in detail in Glenn L. Hinsdale to Sydney Smith, June 21, 1972, NEPE, chrono file.

there were 282 case/incidents reported. Most consisted of minor traffic offenses and parking violations.²⁰⁵

In the early 1980s traffic congestion, together with the general effect of large crowds on the historic resources and character of the place, assumed greater importance. Protection of the visitor experience overtook protection of visitor safety as the major focus of the program. In 1982, Superintendent Whittaker closed a small parking area on the east side of the picnic area and removed the asphalt in order to eliminate a major source of traffic congestion. This reduced the amount of manpower devoted to traffic control.²⁰⁶ Whittaker also implemented a reservation system, a maximum load level, and land use zones that aimed to isolate the picnic area from the historic resources. Further, she tightened enforcement of the Code of Federal Regulations relating to pets within the park. In the superintendent's statement for management, Whittaker observed that recreational use of the picnic area in the middle of the historic site constituted a major conflicting use which ultimately must be addressed by relocating the picnic area elsewhere.²⁰⁷

In the past ten years, NPS officials have periodically reevaluated the law enforcement presence in Nez Perce National Historical Park in light of the park's minimal land base and proprietary jurisdiction. When the NPS adopted its new "Law Enforcement Guidelines" (NPS-9) in April 1984, it raised the standards for commissioned officers. Park Rangers Ken Adkisson and Albert Barros would need regular target practice on a firing range in order to maintain their commissions. At that time Superintendent Whittaker insisted that the park would meet these requirements, if necessary by sending Adkisson and Barros to another park for law enforcement training, because "the new Visitor Center and museum collections are too valuable to be without this kind of protection."²⁰⁸ The park prepared a new manual, "Law Enforcement Guidelines, Nez Perce National Historical Park," in response to NPS-9 in 1985.²⁰⁹

Superintendent Weaver was requested to review a further change of NPS policy with regard to ranger commissions in 1987. Weaver suggested that Nez Perce National Historical Park was not in need of a criminal investigator (GS-1811) position but neither could the park do without one commissioned ranger position, and he warned against too much specialization in the service's

²⁰⁵ Nez Perce National Historical Park, *Crime Prevention & Physical Security Plan* (draft), October 20, 1979, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D15.

²⁰⁶ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1982, NEPE, chrono file.

²⁰⁷ Fahy C. Whittaker, Statement for Management, Nez Perce National Historical Park, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D14A, pp. 6-12; Memorandum, "Pet Policy, Nez Perce National Historical Park," May 9, 1984, NEPE, Administrative Files, W4615 General Regulations, Pet Policy--Correspondence; Fahy C. Whittaker, interview with author, September 27, 1995.

²⁰⁸ Superintendent to Regional Director, April 14, 1983, NEPE, chrono file.

²⁰⁹ NEPE, Administrative Files, W4617 General Regulations, Law Enforcement Guidelines.

law enforcement function.²¹⁰ Again in 1990, Superintendent Walker was requested to reassess the park's law enforcement needs. Walker concluded that it was still desirable to have a law enforcement commissioned ranger on the park staff. Despite the small number of law enforcement incidents, "the threat to visitors and resources is real," Walker insisted. "Given our logistical situation with scattered, isolated sites containing significant cultural and historical resources, maintaining an NPS law enforcement presence offers us the only feasible way to ensure protection and integrity."²¹¹ This resulted in another file report, "Law Enforcement Needs Assessment, Nez Perce National Historical Park," prepared by Chief Ranger Jan R. Dick.²¹²

Walker augmented the park's visitor protection program with two significant staff appointments in 1991-1992. In 1991, Walker hired a seasonal park ranger, Teresa Seloske, for the White Bird Battlefield unit for the first time in the park's history. Seloske established a base of operations in the Forest Service building in Grangeville. Her presence in the area yielded new information about visitor use patterns, and discouraged vandalism of the interpretive shelter — a recurrent problem at the White Bird unit.²¹³ The second significant appointment, in April 1992, was Mark O'Neill as chief, natural resources management and visitor protection. O'Neill professionalized the park's law enforcement arm. He oversaw improvements in the level of medical emergency services that the park could provide, and helped the park acquire a Model 42 light-engine fire truck, which was equipped to respond to wildland fires and to provide limited support for fire suppression.²¹⁴

²¹⁰ Superintendent to Acting Regional Director, February 3, 1987, NEPE, chrono file.

²¹¹ Superintendent to Regional Director, October 17, 1990, NEPE, chrono file.

²¹² NEPE, Administrative Files, W2623 Reports--Situation, Law Enforcement Program Assessment.

²¹³ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1991, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D34.

²¹⁴ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1992, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, D34; Superintendent's Annual Report, 1993, NEPE, chrono file.

CHAPTER FIVE INTERPRETATION

Introduction

The interpretive program is a major aspect of Nez Perce National Historical Park. The park story is complex and challenging. Interpreting the story for visitors is vital to the success of the park, because most of the park's widely scattered sites relate to each other historically rather than visually or geographically. Indeed, the park's creators acknowledged that most of these sites and wayside signs did not possess intrinsic national significance. It was only when they were considered as a whole that the historical sites in Nez Perce country accrued national significance. Therefore, the interpretive program has been responsible for making each site achieve a level of national significance by virtue of its association with the other sites in the park. The park administration's interpretive function carries most of the responsibility for making the park's "string of pearls" cohere.

The conceptual framework for the park's interpretive program was developed through three key planning documents: the feasibility report of 1963, the master plan of 1968, and the interpretive prospectus of 1970. These documents outlined the goals of the program as well as the physical development of the park that the NPS would need to undertake in order to accomplish its goals. This chapter begins with a discussion of that conceptual framework. It then looks at the various components of the interpretive program as it actually developed. Finally, it considers some of the problems that are peculiar to interpretation in this partnership park.

Planning the Interpretive Program

Park planning began with an analysis of visitor use trends. Tourism in Idaho was increasing at a rapid rate in the 1960s. Armour Research Foundation's report projected that the number of tourists passing through Nez Perce country would grow from 593,000 in 1963 to 822,000 in 1970 on the way to 989,000 in 1975.²¹⁵ NPS planners were more cautious in their projections, pointing out that the major "tourist paths" between eastern population centers and destination parks in the Pacific Northwest crossed the state of Idaho via Interstate 80 and Interstate 90. These highways carried four times the volume of traffic on U.S. 95 and twelve times the volume on U.S. 12, the two traffic corridors that traverse the park. It seemed to NPS planners that the park would primarily attract local day-use. Therefore, the planners believed that consideration of the amount

²¹⁵ Joseph H. Fraser, *A Survey of the Recreation and Tourism Resources in the Nez Perce Country*, vol. 1, prepared by Armour Research Foundation for U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Portland, Oregon, June 1963, p. 6.

of population within a two-hour radius of Nez Perce mattered most. They noted that Idaho was one of the last remaining states still classified as rural by the U.S. Bureau of Census. Rather than suggesting ways to “capture” a certain percentage of out-of-state traffic so that these travelers would spend money in the local economy, NPS planning teams focused on the needs of the local day-user first, the weekend vacationer second, and the long distance traveler last.²¹⁶

The Park Service’s emphasis on the day-user had important implications for the interpretive program. Whereas the Armour Research Foundation envisioned a main visitor center that would present an overview of Nez Perce country and entice the visitor to spend an extra day or two exploring the various historical sites, the Park Service wanted to make each park site meaningful on its own merits and representative of the larger complex. Park planners were mindful that this would not be a destination park. “Since there are many other interesting day-use activities readily available in and around the Nez Perce county [sic],” the master plan stated, “the historical park will be placed in a position of competing for the visitor’s time.”²¹⁷

After identifying the probable visitor use pattern, the planners turned to the more difficult question of what the national historical park was about. The concept of Nez Perce country was central. The Nez Perce Development Advisory Committee, the Armour Research Foundation, the NPS feasibility study team, and finally Congress itself used this term to define the park’s scope and meaning. The term was deliberately vague, giving the Park Service some room for interpretation.²¹⁸

Historian Erwin Thompson suggested that Nez Perce country comprised “great and varied scenery” as well as “the story of two cultures in close contact.” He considered the history of the Nez Perce people to be “a continuous thread that must be woven throughout the length and breadth of the tapestry,” yet the history of white settlement, which had so altered the land and the native culture, “must also receive emphasis.”²¹⁹ Thompson allowed that the park story would be a

²¹⁶U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *A Master Plan for Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, June 1968, p. 9. The authors of the *Interpretive Prospectus* (1970) were even more blunt: “We cannot assume that most visitors will see all units of the park; in fact, probably very few will. The average visitor coming into the country is recreation-oriented. He is not after a million facts and this situation should guide our interpretive developments. If we can interest this visitor with a few provocative elements, he may wish to involve himself more deeply in the park story. We don’t want to offer him so much on initial contact that he is confused and bewildered by it all. The light touch is better than the sledge hammer approach” (p. 4).

²¹⁷ Ibid, p. 9.

²¹⁸ Multiple meanings of the term “Nez Perce country” are described in “Nez Perce National Historical Park,” *Incredible Idaho*, vol.1, no.1 (July 1969), pp. 20-22.

²¹⁹ Erwin N. Thompson, *A Survey of the Recreational and Tourism Resources in the Nez Perce Country*, vol.II, prepared by Armour Research Foundation for U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Washington, D.C., September 1963, p. 2.

complex and challenging one to interpret, and he envisioned a main visitor center with exhibits that would tie it together.

The study team for the master plan hewed closely to Congress's statement on the purpose of the park:

The Nez Perce National Historical Park protects and provides interpretation for various component sites relative to the early Nez Perce country of Idaho, the Lewis and Clark expedition through the area, the fur trade, missionaries, gold mining and logging, and the Nez Perce war of 1877, as they depict the role of the Nez Perce country in the westward expansion of the Nation.²²⁰

The master plan did, however, prioritize these various historical themes as of primary or secondary importance. The primary theme would embrace early Nez Perce culture; the tribe's first contact with the American explorers, Lewis and Clark; the Christian missionaries and their influence on the Nez Perce culture; and the War of 1877. The secondary theme would address the effects of American expansion on the native people and the land. Evident here was an effort to sharpen the focus, develop a central plot line with a consistent point of view, in order to make the park story comprehensible to the day-user.

The authors of the park's first *Interpretive Prospectus* (1970) took this further. "This is essentially the story of a people — a people and the land," they wrote. Wherever possible, the story elements should be presented from the Nez Perce point of view. The mining frontier, for example, should be considered primarily in terms of the pressure that it placed on the Nez Perce homeland and resources. Explorers, traders, miners, settlers, and soldiers would be kept in the wings while the Nez Perce were given center stage. These non-Indian groups would appear, "but only in relationship to the Nez Perce and their activities and life values on this land."²²¹

Finally, after identifying probable visitor use and defining the park story, the Park Service tied the interpretive program into the development plan for the park. Arguably, the unusual land ownership pattern of Nez Perce National Historical Park posed an even greater challenge to interpreters than its complex story. Without a contiguous land base to work with, the Park Service had virtually no influence over how visitors would circulate around the far-flung park. Ideally, the interpretive prospectus stated, the NPS would direct all visitors to a main visitor center at Spalding and expect them to "fan out from there" (essentially the same visitor circulation pattern that the Armour Research Foundation had envisioned). Realistically, however, the NPS had to prepare for receiving the visitor at each site or several sites in whatever order the visitor chose. The most it could do would be to develop three "major entry points" at Spalding, East

²²⁰ U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, *A Master Plan for Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, June 1968, p. 2.

²²¹ Nez Perce National Historical Park, *Interpretive Prospectus*, 1970, p. 2. Perhaps mindful of the Spalding Museum Foundation's particular interest in Henry Spalding, the authors of the interpretive prospectus did not explicitly consign missionaries to a supporting role, but in practical terms the missionary experience was undergoing the same process of marginalization.

Kamiah, and White Bird Battlefield.²²² Consequently, the interpretive prospectus called for visitor centers at these locations with each one orienting the visitor to the whole park as well as a particular theme. At White Bird the theme would be the War of 1877, at East Kamiah it would be Nez Perce traditions, and at Spalding the visitor center would introduce the over-arching theme of Nez Perce cultural change from prehistory to the present.

The park's land ownership pattern posed another challenge to interpretation. Although it was Congress's intent that the Park Service serve as the lead agency for interpreting the park story, this could not be accomplished without the cooperation of a multitude of landowners.²²³ On-site interpretation of the 19 cooperative sites required consent and in some cases a commitment of resources from the landowners. Most of the cooperative sites already had historical markers that had been developed by the State Highway Department. It would take many years to bring on-site interpretation of these sites up to national park standards. Signalling the fact that these sites would receive lesser priority, the *Interpretive Prospectus* commented simply, "It would be nice to be able to influence the design, placement, and texts of the State markers."²²⁴

Eventually it became apparent that the cooperative sites would provide the greatest challenge for park interpretation. At each site interpretation had to accomplish two things: reveal the historical significance that was intrinsic in the site, and provoke the visitor to think about how that site related to the broader park story. In many cases, nothing was left of a site but the memory as recorded in a state historical marker. As the park's creators freely admitted, many of the sites did not possess national significance on their own merits; it was only by bringing them into association with one another (through interpretation) that they acquired national significance. In other words, the creators of Nez Perce National Historical Park intended this unique park to be more than the sum of its parts. It was about historical ideas and the character of a region as much as it was about physical objects and specific geographical locations. In order to be a success, the park had to reveal each site's significance in relation to the whole park. Failing that, the Park Service would then be in the errant position of guiding visitors to 21 separate sites that did not have national significance.

²²² Ibid, pp. 6-10.

²²³ U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, 88th Cong., 2d sess., August 18 and October 9, 1964, p. 18.

²²⁴ Ibid, p. 20.

Implementation of the Interpretive Program

One yardstick that the NPS uses for measuring the success of its interpretive programs is to count “visitor contacts.” Visitor contacts are defined as face-to-face encounters between visitors and NPS personnel. These range from guided walks to casual contacts made by roving interpreters to over-the-counter greetings inside visitor centers. NPS officials believe that a high ratio of visitor contacts to total visitation generally indicates a high level of visitor interest in the park story, or an especially active interpretive program, or both. In its early years, Nez Perce National Historical Park exhibited a relatively low ratio of visitor contacts to total visitation. Park managers believed this reflected a low level of visitor interest in the park story as some eighty percent of visitors came to the park merely to enjoy the picnic area.²²⁵

To stimulate more interest in the park’s historical resources, park managers sought to put their interpreters where visitor use was most concentrated. Superintendent Robert Burns established a makeshift visitor center in the Watson’s Store at Spalding as well as “contact stations” in the Spalding picnic area and the Canoe Camp site. He assigned his two seasonal rangers to the Spalding and Canoe Camp units. When Superintendent Jack Williams replaced Burns, he apparently discontinued the contact station at Canoe Camp, assigning a roving interpreter to the picnic area during June, July, and August instead. In the summer of 1971, Williams closed the contact station and walk-through exhibit inside the Watson’s Store when the number of visitors dwindled to less than 200 in four weeks. He concluded that the building required signing in order to make its status as an exhibit clear to the public.²²⁶

Williams’ most significant innovation was the development of a temporary visitor center in the former Blue Lantern Motel. The eight-unit motel building became government property on January 1, 1969. In its first year of operation as park headquarters, the structure provided administrative office space for four permanent employees as well as a public information-orientation room where visitors could inspect wall maps and obtain the free park brochure. In 1971, the Park Service renovated the building by removing several interior walls and expanding

²²⁵ Superintendent’s Annual Report, 1972, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 67. Superintendent Williams reported the following statistics for the years 1968-1972:

Year	Total Vis.	Vis. Contacts	Percentage
1968	32,849	1,184	4
1969	67,126	4,286	6
1970	53,736	8,710	16
1971	140,863	20,728	14
1972	225,026	20,298	9

²²⁶ Superintendent to Director, January 13, 1972, NEPE, chrono file.

the visitor center area into two former offices. When completed, the interim visitor center featured six exhibits, a four-minute audio-visual program, and an information counter.²²⁷

In the absence of a permanent visitor center, park interpreters spent much time outside and afield. During the 1970s, one member of the interpretive staff provided “living history” demonstrations on the fur trapping era by dressing in the garb of a mountain man and occupying a mock camp near the boom grounds. Interpreters also gave guided history walks around the Spalding unit and offered history and environmental education presentations to area schools.²²⁸ With the completion of the visitor center, interpreters frequently provided guided tours of the exhibits.²²⁹

The addition of the modern Spalding Visitor Center in June 1983 probably constitutes the most important turning point in the development of the park interpretive program. After many months of frustration that attended the final preparation of the exhibits (rearranging the exhibit cases, rewriting many of the display captions, improving the glass fittings and track lighting), park staff were pleased to get the visitor center opened. For the first time the park was able to display many intriguing artifacts that had been in storage. The public response to the visitor center was generally very favorable. The character of visitation began to change, with fewer people using the picnic area and more people contemplating the Nez Perce heritage. Many long distance travelers now stopped at the visitor center on their way through the region. Even if they stayed an average of only twenty minutes, it was evident to park staff that the visitor center exhibits tended to captivate them.²³⁰

While contact stations, roving interpreters, and the temporary visitor center at the former Blue Lantern Motel yielded a significant number of visitor contacts in the park’s early years, undoubtedly the most successful aspect of the interpretive program, prior to the opening of the permanent visitor center, consisted of “cultural demonstrations” by members of the Nez Perce Tribe.²³¹ In 1967, Superintendent Burns proposed that the NPS employ Nez Percés to demonstrate their cultural arts. The Park Service developed the idea in part to satisfy the desire to create park jobs for members of the Nez Perce Tribe. Burns worked with Education Specialist Joseph T. Williams of the BIA to implement a cooperative program between the NPS and the BIA’s Northern Idaho

²²⁷ Superintendent to Director, January 9, 1970, and January 13, 1972, NEPE, chrono file.

²²⁸ Superintendent to Regional Director, October 24, 1974, NEPE, chrono file.

²²⁹ Art Hathaway, interview with author, July 26, 1995.

²³⁰ Art Hathaway, interview with author, July 26, 1995.

²³¹ Freeman Tilden, in his influential book *Interpreting our Heritage*, cited demonstration as one of the key ingredients in park interpretation. Instead of putting a historical object on display, park interpreters would demonstrate how the object was used. Tilden, *Interpreting our Heritage: Principles and Practices for Visitor Services in Parks, Museums, and Historic Places*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1957, pp. 70-72.

Agency.²³² Specifically, Burns proposed to employ Mrs. Ida Blackeagle and Mrs. Viola Morris of Lapwai, Idaho as “cultural demonstrators,” the first such position in the civil service.²³³ Blackeagle was one of a few Nez Perce women who had revived the art of cornhusk weaving. Morris was one of the only Nez Perces left who still tanned buckskin the traditional way.

Blackeagle and Morris began demonstrating their arts in 1967, attracting some 1,500 to 2,000 onlookers each summer season. In the summer of 1969, the two women accompanied Park Historian Earl Harris to the Idaho State Fair in Boise, where some 12,000 people paused at their booth to watch them practice their arts.²³⁴

Superintendent Williams was as enthusiastic as his predecessor about the cultural demonstrations. While Blackeagle and Morris became the mainstays of the program, Williams recruited other Nez Perce tribal members to participate in traditional costumed dances, audience participation dances, drumming, singing, artifact and handicraft displays, food preparation exhibits, gaming exhibitions, and tepee raising. Williams obtained two \$45,000 grants in the summers of 1971 and 1972 from the Clearwater Economic Development Association with which to pay the cultural demonstrators’ wages. In the first summer, the cultural demonstrators performed on ten consecutive Sunday afternoons in July and August. Williams contracted with the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee (NPTEC) to hire the participants and coordinate the program.²³⁵ NPTEC member Richard Ellenwood was the principal organizer.

The Sunday afternoon programs received such excellent publicity by local newspapers and television stations that they began to draw crowds of up to 4,000 people in a day. For the superintendent, enthusiasm about the success of the venture began to yield to concern about the effects of such concentrated use on the resources in this historic area. As paved parking lots became jammed, visitors parked their cars on the adjoining fields of dry grass where there was a high risk of soil compaction and brushfire.²³⁶

Nevertheless, the cultural demonstrations were good for public relations. For the first time, large numbers of non-Indian visitors were perceiving the validity of the park’s interpretive theme. Nez Perce tribal members, for their part, could see that the Park Service was accomplishing something even if it did not yet have a permanent visitor center. Perhaps most importantly, many

²³² Superintendent to Director, February 23, 1967, NEPE, chrono file.

²³³ Robert Burns, interview with author, July 22, 1995. The position description for the cultural demonstrator stated that the incumbent would “demonstrate for public enjoyment, education, and inspiration, the creation of and production by hand of Nez Perce cultural articles.” See Job Description for Cultural Demonstrator, [1967], NEPE, chrono file.

²³⁴ Superintendent to Director, January 9, 1970, NEPE, chrono file.

²³⁵ Superintendent to Director, January 13, 1972, NEPE, chrono file; Jack R. Williams to Richard A. Halfmoon, July 10, 1972, NEPE, chrono file; Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995.

²³⁶ Ibid.

tribal members were inspired to learn in their adult years some of the cultural arts that their parents and grandparents had been taught in their youth. In this way, the national historical park actually assisted in the preservation of Nez Perce culture.²³⁷

The large cultural demonstrations grew sporadic in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Nez Perce performers began to find an alternative outlet for their cultural arts in Indian powwows, which became increasingly common throughout the region. Some followed the “powwow circuit” during the summer and were unavailable to perform in the park. What events there were drew fewer visitors, as many Lewiston-area residents began to take the cultural demonstrations for granted or showed declining interest. Some park officials even construed the decline in non-Indian attendance as a sign of white backlash against the tribe for its numerous court claims relating to tribal fishing and hunting rights.²³⁸

In 1984, Superintendent Whittaker sought to revive interest in the cultural demonstrations by consolidating them into one six-hour affair called Cultural Day. The first annual Cultural Day was held Saturday, August 25, 1984, and drew more than 800 visitors, many of whom came to see the new visitor center.²³⁹ The second annual event, held on Saturday, August 24, 1985, featured approximately 35 demonstrators who demonstrated or discussed various cultural arts from beadwork, leatherwork, and cornhusk weaving to language, food preservation, children’s games, singing, dancing, and tepee raising. Co-sponsored by the Nez Perce Tribe, the event attracted more than 1,000 visitors. Pleased with its success, Whittaker explained to the regional director, “The day accomplishes many things. It enhances the visitor experience, assists in preserving the culture, improves Park knowledge of the history, culture, and traditions of the Nez Perce People, and encourages community involvement.”²⁴⁰ Thus, the Cultural Day became a regular feature of the park’s interpretive program.

Another interpretive program that invited cooperation between the park staff and the Nez Perce Tribe was the “Nez Perce Lyceum.” Harkening back to the nineteenth century lyceum movement, which aimed to bring expert speakers on the arts and sciences to town and village audiences, the Nez Perce Lyceum consisted of a series of presentations on Nez Perce history and culture. The presentations were held in the visitor center auditorium over a period of weeks in the spring or fall. Presentations included tribal member Ron Pinkham speaking on “Oral Traditions of the Nez Perce Tribe,” tribal member Jesse Greene speaking on “Nez Perce Fishing and Fishing Rights,” traditional story-telling by Herman Reuben and Allen Moody, and talks by non-Nez Perce historians, archaeologists, and geologists. In recent years the Lyceum has reached

²³⁷ Ibid; Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995.

²³⁸ Carol Gamet, interview with author, July 26, 1995.

²³⁹ *Lewiston Morning Tribune*, August 26, 1984.

²⁴⁰ Superintendent to Regional Director, November 5, 1985, Administrative Files, NEPE, L58 Proposed Areas.

farther afield to include presentations on the Makah Cultural and Research Center on the Washington coast and traditional tribal fishing on the Columbia by a member of the Yakima Nation.²⁴¹

The park hosted a unique event, the twentieth-century Nez Perce artists exhibition, in 1991. Titled "Sapatq'ayn," the artists exhibition featured works of art and a guest lecture series by four nationally-known Native American artists. The Nez Perce Longhouse Society contributed a blessing for the opening and a seven drum ceremony for the closing. The park administration secured more than \$20,000 in private donations to help with the cost of the program, and many people, including park staff, contributed volunteer time to the effort. Superintendent Frank Walker justified the exhibition in his annual report, "While this may seem like an unusual thing for a park to do, Nez Perce is a unique cultural park and this type of activity was very appropriate." Sapatq'ayn was worthwhile, Walker stated, because it encouraged preservation of Nez Perce art and tradition, developed new partnerships, and improved the Park Service's image. Many Nez Perces expressed pride in the exhibition and commented that the park was "coming out of the closet."²⁴²

Beginning in 1991, the park received funds from the Parks as Classrooms Program with which to develop a packet of educational materials on the Nez Perce people to supplement the social studies curriculum in area schools. As interest in the program burgeoned, the park also sponsored workshops for teachers for college credit at Lewis-Clark State College.²⁴³

The park administration also established some self-guided interpretive programs. The first such program was the auto tour of the park, based on the booklet "Your Guide to Nez Perce National Historical Park."²⁴⁴ Visitors could also take a self-guided walk around the Spalding unit and learn about the park from the interpretive signs. In 1977 the NPS added a self-guided auto tour of the White Bird Battlefield. Motorists could start at the top of White Bird Hill and take old U.S. 95 down to the town of White Bird, making numbered stops that correlated with numbered passages in a guide booklet. Finally, the interpretive exhibit at Heart of the Monster included an audio display featuring the voice of tribal member Angus Wilson, who described the Nez Perce legend relating to the monster and the coyote.

The park administration helped launch the Nez Perce Park Cooperative Association at the end of 1968. Founding officers included Jack Williams, Earl Harris, Richard Halfmoon, Marcus

²⁴¹ Program notes, 1988-1991, NEPE, Administrative Files, K18 Interpretive Activities, Nez Perce Lyceum.

²⁴² Superintendent to Regional Director, December 19, 1990, NEPE, chrono file; Superintendent's Annual Report, 1991, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D34.

²⁴³ National Park Education Program and Parks as Classrooms, [1991], NEPE, Administrative Files, K1817 Interpretive Activities, Education Program.

²⁴⁴ Superintendent to Regional Director, January 27, 1971, NEPE, chrono file.

Ware, and Ted Little. Like other national park cooperative associations, the purpose of this organization was to publish and distribute park-related literature and raise funds through sales of books, pamphlets, postcards, and souvenirs. It obtained tax-exempt status in September 1969 and gradually increased its revenue to the point of being able to make yearly financial contributions to the park, mostly for library acquisitions.²⁴⁵ Later, the Nez Perce Park Cooperative Association merged with the Northwest Interpretive Association (NWIA), whose interpretive and visitor service programs covered all the national park areas together with various Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sites in the Pacific Northwest. The NWIA offered a variety of publications pertaining to Nez Perce National Historical Park.²⁴⁶

The cooperative association's sales department soon began featuring Nez Perce arts and crafts. Beaded coin purses, hand bags, key chain holders, and moccasins, as well as various items of jewelry, sold well to park visitors. Sales of Nez Perce arts and crafts grew to almost \$3,000 in 1981, more than \$9,000 in 1986, and more than \$15,000 in 1995.²⁴⁷ This was of some importance to the Nez Perce Tribe, whose original proposals for tourism development in the early 1960s had emphasized the need to promote sales of these items for the benefit of tribal members.

Problems in the Interpretive Program

With the interpretive program carrying much of the burden of making the Nez Perce National Historical Park idea a success, it was not surprising that park interpreters often found themselves making difficult philosophical choices. They were interpreting the culture of a people whose living members still practiced many of the cultural arts being interpreted and whose own sense of the past still bore many traces of an oral rather than a written tradition. They were interpreting a war which still burned in the hearts of the defeated side's descendants. For all these reasons, park staff members found it unusually difficult to trust their own authority to interpret the park. Superintendent Walker observed in 1992,

The interpretive staff at Nez Perce realizes almost daily that we are dealing with some complex, emotionally charged issues here, with very real people involved. We often question what we're doing — does anybody really care, how *much* should we care, and just what *should* we be doing? There is a certain intangible toll that it takes — but there are also some very real rewards.

Park interpreters also had to cope with preconceptions about their racial and tribal identity. Non-Indian members of the interpretive staff had to deal with the local sentiment that they were holding jobs which ideally belonged to the Nez Percés. Would not park visitors prefer to learn

²⁴⁵ Executive Secretary, NPPCA, to Regional Director, February 25, 1970, NEPE, chrono file.

²⁴⁶ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1993, NEPE, chrono file.

²⁴⁷ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1981, 1986, NEPE, chrono file; Frank Walker, comments on draft, February 26, 1995.

about Nez Perce history and culture from Nez Perce Indians? As one tribal leader bluntly expressed it, no one wants to find Mexican cooks at a Chinese restaurant. In this respect Nez Perce members of the interpretive staff had an advantage over their non-Nez Perce fellow employees. But they too felt humbled, bound as they were by tribal custom to defer to the elders of the tribe on matters of Nez Perce history and culture.²⁴⁸

Park staff also contended, at least initially, with a dearth of information. Early planning documents for Nez Perce National Historical Park stressed that much historical research needed to be done before many of the park sites could be interpreted judiciously. Scholarly books on the Nez Perce people and the War of 1877 were fairly scarce when the park was established. Alvin Josephy's *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest* was published in 1965. The standard work on Nez Perce culture was still Francis Haines' *The Nez Percés: Tribesmen of the Columbia Plateau* (1955). The Park Service began to address the need for a good military history of the War of 1877 by contributing funds to a study by Merrill D. Beale resulting in the book, *"I Will Fight No More Forever": Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce War* (1963). Yet many of the park sites still lacked reliable historical data. Even Beale's military history contained only sketchy details on the Battle of White Bird, for example. The NPS addressed this gap when it assigned John Dishon McDermott of the Park Service's Division of History, Washington, D.C., to produce a history of the Battle of White Bird.²⁴⁹

Even with this exhaustive study completed, it became evident in the course of preparing exhibits for the White Bird Battlefield interpretive shelter that no history of the battle could be definitive. NPTEC objected to the Park Service's interpretation of how the battle started, and adopted a resolution advancing its own interpretation of events. The NPS's Division of Exhibits at Harpers Ferry Center reviewed the tribal resolution and found NPTEC's interpretation to be at variance with historical sources (specifically McDermott's *Forlorn Hope* and L.V. McWhorter's *Yellow Wolf, His Own Story* [1948]). By way of compromise, it devised a new panel with the label "How Did it Begin? Two Historical Views." The final texts, jointly approved by NPTEC and the NPS, read as follows:

²⁴⁸ Futures Workshop, Nez Perce National Historical Park General Management Plan, authors notes, May 15-18, 1995.

²⁴⁹ John Dishon McDermott, *Forlorn Hope: A Study of the Battle of White Bird Canyon Idaho and the Beginning of the Nez Perce Indian War*, National Park Service, Division of History, June 1968.

View 1

Some Nez Perce say that the Battle of White Bird Canyon was an ambush — skillfully planned and executed by the warriors. The Indians concealed themselves behind the two small hills visible in the valley below you. When the horse soldiers reached the hills, the Nez Perce launched a deadly attack from both sides.

View 2

According to many written histories, the Nez Perce chiefs sent out a peace party to meet the soldiers under a flag of truce. But the peace offer was refused when a volunteer militiaman who was accompanying the Army fired two quick shots at the Indian delegation. From that moment, both sides were committed to a fight.²⁵⁰

It could be argued that by offering clashing historical interpretations, the NPS provided the park visitor with a richer park experience. Superintendent Whittaker, for example, took guidance from the idea that interpretation should never avoid controversial issues nor expect to please all park visitors, but should tell the whole story from multiple points of view if necessary.²⁵¹ Yet there were countervailing pressures to focus the story and to emphasize, perhaps even exaggerate, the Nez Perce perspective.²⁵² “In order to achieve [the park] goals, it seems appropriate, wherever possible, to deal with the story elements from the Nez Perce point of view,” the *Interpretive Prospectus* directed.²⁵³ However, Whittaker objected when an early draft of the script for the park’s film, written by a Native American, struck her as unduly harsh toward white Americans. She rejected the script.²⁵⁴

Interpreters also questioned the Park Service’s role in displaying Nez Perce material culture and cultural arts. They did not want to overstep the bounds of preservation by meddling with the process of acculturation. The specter of Indians performing traditional ceremonies for tourist dollars rather than for their own sense of self was troubling. The park’s interpretive specialist, Mardi Butt, cautioned that the NPS must guard against “creating culture.”²⁵⁵ As a result of frequent staff discussions on the subject, the park continually made adjustments in its interpretive program. Cultural demonstrators, for example, who were once requested to wear traditional

²⁵⁰ Chief, Division of Exhibits to Regional Director, November 17, 1976, Superintendent to Regional Director, November 22, 1976, Acting Superintendent to Regional Director, December 20, 1976, Hank Warren to Superintendent Morris, December 20, 1976, Labels - White Bird Battlefield Exhibit (quoted), NEPE, Administrative Files, D18 Planning Program.

²⁵¹ Fahy C. Whittaker, interview with author, September 27, 1995.

²⁵² Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995.

²⁵³ National Park Service, *Nez Perce National Historical Park Interpretive Prospectus*, 1970, p. 2.

²⁵⁴ Fahy C. Whittaker, interview with author, September 27, 1995.

²⁵⁵ Futures Workshop, Nez Perce National Historical Park General Management Plan, author’s notes, May 15-18, 1995.

dress and produce certain items were later encouraged to dress as they pleased and work on whatever items they desired.²⁵⁶

On the other hand, park staff agreed that the park's existence was now a part of Nez Perce history and acculturation. Indeed, the tribe's partnership with the NPS had been agreed to by the Nez Perce Tribe, and who was to say that the idea of Nez Perce National Historical Park was not a part of their own cultural evolution? The issue was to what extent the NPS should curtail its preservationist mandate in order to avoid intruding on Nez Perce culture. This was a delicate issue.

Some NPS officials envisioned the park taking a strong lead in cultural preservation. Superintendent Williams encouraged the park's cultural demonstrators, Ida Blackeagle and Viola Morris, to teach their arts to other tribal members. He was pleased, on visiting Nez Perce country many years later, to observe the high quality of Nez Perce beadwork and leatherwork for sale in the area and he believed, proudly, that the park had had something to do with it.²⁵⁷ Similarly, the interpretive prospectus of 1970 suggested that Nez Perce children might come to the visitor center on school-sponsored field trips to learn from cultural demonstrators, practice making traditional arts and crafts, and listen to Nez Perce storytellers. This became a popular activity, and NPS staff (both Indian and non-Indian) were often requested to present tribal educational programs. A Nez Perce children's "Story Time" at the visitor center would heighten the children's appreciation of their heritage, the interpretive prospectus stated.²⁵⁸

In short, the preservationist goals of the park presented the staff with a conundrum. The concept of bringing a variety of tribal arts and oral traditions partially under the Park Service's aegis for preservation seemed to some park staff like an appropriate outgrowth of the partnership idea, while others found it disturbing. This aspect of the relationship between the Park Service and the Nez Perce people is not unique within the National Park System, but it is unusual and complex. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of an administrative history to give this relationship the intensive study that it deserves.

²⁵⁶ Susan Buchel, telephone interview, May 2, 1996.

²⁵⁷ Jack R. Williams, interview with author, September 28, 1995.

²⁵⁸ National Park Service, *Nez Perce National Historical Park Interpretive Prospectus*, 1970, p. 18.

CHAPTER SIX

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

The Nez Perce National Historical Park Act charges the Park Service with protecting those sites that have exceptional value in commemorating the history of the nation. Park Service policy and planning documents for this park consistently emphasized the need to treat Nez Perce history as a continuum from prehistory to the present.²⁵⁹ Cultural resources management in Nez Perce National Historical Park has embraced a combination of archeological sites, historic structures, geological formations of mythological significance to the Nez Perce people, and material artifacts of Nez Perce culture from the prehistoric era to the present.

Park staff who are involved with collections management face many of the same philosophical issues that staff members who work in interpretation find so perplexing. Park staff want to document Nez Perce acculturation without unduly influencing it. This raises questions about the proper procedure for acquiring contemporary cultural artifacts and indeed what constitutes a contemporary cultural artifact. After experimenting with a program which sought to preserve the Nez Perce language, for example, the park staff decided that language was beyond the scope of the park's cultural resources management program. On the other hand, park staff view the collecting of oral traditions as being within the purview of their mission.

NPS officials have been cognizant of the relationship between the park and the Nez Perce people as they have managed the park's archeological and historical resources. The archeological surveys at Spalding, in particular, have been circumscribed by the known abundance of unmarked burial sites in the area. The Nez Perce do not want these sites to be disturbed. Archeologists have occupied a difficult role in the park's development, facilitating interpretation of the cultural resources on the one hand, while trying to protect burial remains from disturbance on the other.

This chapter traces the history of cultural resources management in Nez Perce National Historical Park. The first section discusses the acquisition, storage, and cataloguing of the park's collections of prehistoric and historic artifacts. The second section provides an overview of the inventory, study, and restoration of the park's historic structures and landscapes. The third section describes the archeological investigations that have taken place in the park to date.

²⁵⁹ *Nez Perce National Historical Park Interpretive Prospectus*, National Park Service, 1970, p. 2; *Nez Perce National Historical Park Collection Management Plan*, National Park Service, 1994, p. 9.

Collections

The Nez Perce Tribe purchased two historic collections in 1964 when the park bill was still under consideration in Congress, entrusting them to the Park Service's care once the park had been authorized. One collection consisted of the inventory left in the Watson's Store when the tribe purchased the property. Since this building had served as a general store for the local Nez Perce Indians since 1911, it still contained numerous interesting items that would be of use in a historic furnishings plan. The other collection was that belonging to Joe Evans' Sacajawea Museum, located near the Watson's Store. The Evans family had been augmenting their museum collection since 1931. Most of the artifacts were unauthenticated. They included a buckskin dress alleged to have belonged to Sacajawea, and a dugout canoe supposedly used by the Lewis and Clark expedition. Much of the collection had been damaged or destroyed in the flood of 1963. The Evans family sold other items along with their house lot in 1964. These two collections were stored in various locations at Lapwai and Spalding, including the basement of the tribal headquarters, Watson's Store, and Fort Lapwai Officers' Quarters, and received little curatorial care before the mid 1970s.²⁶⁰

In 1967, Washington State University loaned the L.V. McWhorter collection to Nez Perce National Historical Park. McWhorter was a Washington rancher with an interest in documents and cultural materials pertaining to the Nez Perce and Yakima tribes. Park officials stored the McWhorter collection in a locked vault located in one of the offices in the former Blue Lantern Motel. After selecting certain items for exhibit in the new visitor center, the park returned the McWhorter collection to Washington State University in 1983.²⁶¹ In 1971, the NPS purchased the Vera I. Rydryck collection, which added about 200 important artifacts to the park's inventory. The park received other collections by donation, including the Chapman family collection of artifacts collected in the 1920s and 1930s in the Snake and Clearwater river drainages, and the Spalding Museum Foundation's collection (see Chapter 1).²⁶²

Collections management did not go beyond storage of the materials until the mid-1970s, when the park administration gradually added that function to its scope of operations. In 1974, the NPS contracted with Joel Bernstein, an instructor at the University of Montana, to catalog records and artifacts stored in Lapwai. Bernstein found his working conditions in the Officers' Quarters building so primitive that he eventually moved his cataloguing operation to an office in

²⁶⁰ The canoe was pictured in a juvenile history book, *To the Pacific with Lewis and Clark*, an entry in the American Heritage Junior Library Series. Park historian Earl Harris investigated the canoe's history and determined that it had most likely been built by a non-Indian for use on the Clearwater River some time prior to World War I. Lewiston Morning Tribune, February 7, 1963; Earl R. Harris to H.P. Howard, May 14, 1968, NEPE, chrono file; National Park Service, *Nez Perce National Historical Park Collection Management Plan*, Seattle, 1994, p. 3.

²⁶¹ National Park Service, *Nez Perce National Historical Park Collection Management Plan*, Seattle, 1994, p. 3; Superintendent to Regional Director, July 31, 1969, NEPE, chrono file.

²⁶² National Park Service, *Nez Perce National Historical Park Collection Management Plan*, Seattle, 1994, p. 5.

the park headquarters building in Spalding. In any case, the NPS found Bernstein's work to be of such poor quality that it had to be redone.²⁶³ In 1976, the NPS contracted for this work with Stephen D. Shawley, a local expert on Nez Perce material culture with a bachelor's degree in anthropology from the University of Idaho. In 1977, Shawley secured a staff position as the park's first museum curator.

Like Bernstein, Shawley worked under adverse conditions. The collections were still exposed to vermin and the storage facilities lacked proper standards of heating, ventilating, and air conditioning (HVAC). Among Shawley's first recommendations was the need for a new museum storage facility. The NPS began renting the Rose building in Lapwai for collections storage. Formerly an auto service garage, the Rose building was a windowless, masonry structure without insulation. The NPS retrofitted the facility with fire and burglar alarms, heaters, and humidifiers. Despite the exorbitant cost of maintaining the proper temperature and humidity levels for the collections through the winter, the Rose building served as the park's museum storage facility until the collections could be moved to the new visitor center in 1981.²⁶⁴

Under Shawley's guidance, the Park Service sought to acquire more items of Nez Perce traditional material culture to improve its exhibits in the visitor center. Out of a total of some 30,000 items held by the park, approximately 85 percent were of relatively recent vintage and would be of little use outside the Watson's Store exhibit. Shawley noted many categories of traditional material culture were inadequately represented: toys and recreation devices, hunting and fishing implements, ceremonial objects, women's dress, horse technology and accoutrements, native medicines, and household tools. Superintendent Morris requested \$10,000 for the purpose of purchasing such artifacts.²⁶⁵

That same year the NPS arranged with the Ohio Historical Society (OHS) for the loan of the Dudley Allen-Henry Spalding collection. Henry Spalding, like other nineteenth-century missionaries, used the trade in native artifacts to help finance the operation of their missions. This remarkable collection, which included clothing and horse gear used by the Nez Perce Indians in the 1830s and 1840s, had been assembled by Henry Spalding and shipped by riverboat down the Snake and Columbia rivers to Fort Vancouver, thence by ship via the Hawaiian Islands and Cape Horn to Boston, and finally overland to Dr. Dudley Allen in Kinsmen, Ohio. In 1893, Dr. Allen's son donated this collection to Oberlin College, and in 1942, the Allen-Spalding collection was loaned to the OHS. In the late 1970s, the curator of Northwest Indian Art at the Burke Museum in Seattle, Bill Holm, learned of the existence of this collection and brought it to the attention of park officials. The park obtained the Allen-Spalding collection on the basis of a one-year

²⁶³ Kent Bush, comments on draft, March 29, 1996.

²⁶⁴ Superintendent to Regional Director, June 14, 1977, NEPE, chrono file.

²⁶⁵ Superintendent to Regional Director, December 20, 1979, NEPE, chrono file.

renewable loan in 1980, and a generous selection of items from the collection became the focus of the visual interpretation of Nez Perce material culture in the new visitor center in 1983.²⁶⁶

While Shawley showed considerable acumen as a collector, he had little experience in designing museum exhibits. He was resourceful in expanding the exhibits in the temporary visitor center and in refurnishing the Watson's Store. However, when it came to planning the permanent exhibit in the new visitor center, Shawley encountered difficulties. Despite two years of collaborative effort between the park, the regional office, and Harpers Ferry Center, many problems developed in getting the permanent exhibits in place inside the new facility. The problems stemmed from a combination of inadequate planning and poor workmanship by the contractor. In September 1982, Harpers Ferry Center contracted with Promotion Products, Inc., to fix the myriad problems in the museum area. Regional Curator Kent Bush worked with a professional crew to plan the modifications, while Shawley was relieved of that duty.²⁶⁷

Shawley got into serious trouble as he resumed the task of cataloguing. During the period that the visitor center was under development, he had neglected his cataloguing duties and had allowed some of the collections to become mixed together. Other collections lacked adequate documentation to show whether the Park Service had acquired them by purchase or loan. By the end of 1981, Shawley had catalogued 700 objects and had properly completed 500 museum cards, while consigning numerous other items to museum clearinghouse lists. This headway notwithstanding, Superintendent Whitaker could only describe the park's museum records as a "quagmire."²⁶⁸

Whitaker was increasingly concerned about Shawley's job performance. Indeed, as the large backlog of curatorial work festered, Whitaker's trust in Shawley's professional integrity eroded. When one notable item disappeared and then reappeared, it raised suspicions. Shawley's former professor, Dr. Roderick Sprague, confided to Whitaker that he had concerns about Shawley occupying such an official position. In Sprague's estimation, Shawley had approached the study of anthropology at the University of Idaho from the perspective of a dealer, specializing too early in his hobby interest of Nez Perce material culture. The son of missionaries, Shawley had grown up with Nez Perce Indians and had a firsthand knowledge of their traditional material culture. As park curator, he had maintained his contacts with dealers of Indian artifacts. He was secretive and

²⁶⁶ Nez Perce National Historical Park, *The Spalding-Allen Museum Collection* (brochure), [1995]; Roy W. Weaver to Dr. Gary C. Ness, June 10, 1988, CCSO, Kent Bush files.

²⁶⁷ Superintendent to Regional Director, September 28, 1982, NEPE, chrono file; Kent Bush, interview with author, August 24, 1995.

²⁶⁸ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1981, NEPE, chrono file; Superintendent to Deputy Regional Director, February 18, 1983, NEPE, chrono file.

tended to treat the park collection as his own.²⁶⁹ This raised the issue of whether Shawley possessed proper credentials to be a park museum curator. Professional standards for museum curation in the national park system changed significantly during the 1970s and 1980s; what had once been a field dominated by collectors was becoming more and more a field for the specialist with formal training in museology.²⁷⁰ Shawley's background was no longer a good fit with the Park Service.

It took an additional two years for Whitaker to resolve this personnel problem. In 1983, Whitaker put Shawley under the supervision of Art Hathaway. The next year, she asked for a performance review of the park curator by the regional curator. Finally, in 1985, she requested an audit of museum management in the park by the Office of Inspector General (OIG). Both the performance review and the inspector general's report found major weaknesses in the park's internal control system for museum property. The OIG report presented nine separate actions for correcting these deficiencies. Under threat of indictment for theft of missing items, Shawley resigned in 1985.²⁷¹

The two succeeding park curators, Susan Kopczynski (1986-1987) and Susan Buchel (1988-1994) implemented the OIG report's recommendations and began re-cataloguing all of the park museum holdings according to National Catalog standards. The latter was accomplished mainly through contracts with the University of Idaho Anthropology Laboratory. The regional curator wrote and administered the contracts while the park curator monitored the cataloguing operation on-site. By 1994, all objects had been adequately documented in the National Catalog, but accession records from 1965 to 1986 still contained many gaps in documentation.²⁷²

As the park's collection management program emerged from the morass in which the OIG found it in the mid-1980s, one of the outstanding problems concerned the future of the Allen-Spalding collection. This collection, with an appraised value of approximately \$583,100, accounted for nearly a third of the total value of the park's museum holdings. More importantly, it formed the core of the park's collection of Nez Perce artifacts. As Superintendent Weaver explained to the Director of the Ohio Historical Society in 1988,

²⁶⁹ Art Hathaway, interview with author, July 26, 1995; Kent Bush, interview with author, August 24, 1995.

²⁷⁰ Laurin Huffman, personal communication, April 10, 1996.

²⁷¹ Art Hathaway, interview with author, July 26, 1995; Deputy Regional Director to Regional Curator, August 1, 1984, and Regional Curator to Deputy Regional Director, August 31, 1984, Kent Bush files; U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of Inspector General Audit Report, "Review of Museum Management at the Nez Perce National Historical Park, National Park Service," March 1985, pp. 17-19.

²⁷² National Park Service, *Nez Perce National Historical Park Collection Management Plan*, Seattle, 1994, p. 7.

These early nineteenth-century objects serve not only as the focus of the visual interpretation at our park museum, but form the heart of our research collection. They represent the oldest known examples of historical Nez Perce material culture aside from the articles acquired by Lewis and Clark and exhibit cultural style, and decorative techniques long since lost.²⁷³

Weaver suggested that the OHS and the NPS negotiate new terms for this important accession, such as a long-term loan, donation, exchange, or purchase. The OHS did not respond to Weaver's letter, but simply renewed the yearly loan agreement.

In the spring of 1993, the park received a letter from the OHS requesting that the collection be returned to Ohio within three weeks. The OHS offered no prior warning nor any explanation. Park officials protested that they needed more time to package the materials and arrange for new exhibits in the visitor center; OHS representatives misunderstood and thought the park was refusing to cooperate.²⁷⁴ From the ensuing discussions, it gradually became evident that the OHS was willing to sell the collection as long as it could recover something close to the collection's appraised value. The NPS, for its part, wanted to work with the Nez Perce Tribe as the most appropriate and desirable purchaser of the collection.

In September 1993, the General Council of the Nez Perce Tribe voted in favor of forming a committee on the Allen-Spalding collection comprising four tribal members, one member of NPTEC, and one NPS official. According to committee member Richard Ellenwood, the Park Service backed the tribe's efforts "110 percent." Negotiations proved rather delicate. The OHS's negotiating position appeared to change according to the internal politics of its board of directors. The Nez Perce Tribe, for its part, appealed to public opinion in support of its claim that the articles properly belonged in Nez Perce country, pointing out that Henry Spalding obtained the items for a tiny fraction of their present value. The tribe did not limit its appeal to Idaho citizens, but obtained radio air time in Ohio and contacted the Ohio governor to press its case.²⁷⁵ By November 1995, negotiations had deadlocked. The Park Service removed the items from display in the visitor center and announced that it would soon begin packing the collection for shipment to Ohio.²⁷⁶ In December the NPS, the tribe, and the OHS reached an agreement: the tribe would have until June 1996, to raise \$608,100 with which to purchase the collection. The final price was based on the earlier appraisal and the addition of a cradle board which was part of the collection but had not been loaned to the NPS.

After six months and a national effort the tribe raised the necessary funds. On May 28 Tribal Chairman Samuel Penney and NPS Curator Robert Chenoweth went to Columbus, Ohio to deliver a check and receive the cradle board. The collection was welcomed back to Nez Perce

²⁷³ Roy W. Weaver to Dr. Gary C. Ness, June 10, 1988, CCSO, Kent Bush files.

²⁷⁴ Susan Buchel, comments on draft, March 20, 1996.

²⁷⁵ Richard Ellenwood, interview with author, October 3, 1995.

²⁷⁶ *The Missoulian*, November 29, 1995.

country at ceremonies during the Chief Joseph and Warriors Memorial, at a special service at Spalding Presbyterian Church, and at the Park Headquarters. The collection was returned to display in June. It is owned by the Nez Perce Tribe and cared for and displayed by the NPS under a joint agreement.

Another collection that began to receive more staff attention in the late 1980s was the park's historic photograph collection. The collection was in disarray, with original and copy negatives and prints and snapshots attached to cards that usually had no identifying information. Hundreds of negatives located in the park files had never before been catalogued. The photograph collection provided an unusually intimate view of the Nez Perce people and received a growing amount of use from researchers outside the Park Service. Museum Curator Susan Buchel initiated an organization of this material in 1988. Tribal elder Allen Slickpoo, Sr., employed as a museum aid, identified many of the previously unknown people, events, and locations featured in the photographs. Slickpoo took some of the photographic images to knowledgeable sources in the community and to senior citizen centers in Lapwai and Kamiah. Two other Nez Perces on the park staff, Kevin Peters and Calvin Shillal, also assisted with the project. Elders of the Chief Joseph Band in Nespelem identified photographic images in 1990. After they were identified, all photographic subjects were cross-referenced and entered into a computer database, and the personal name index came to include more than 1,000 entries. The photographs continue to be one of the most heavily used resources among the park's collections.²⁷⁷

Surprisingly, problems relating to museum storage space were not entirely alleviated with the completion of the new visitor center. The building contained three large rooms in the basement for museum storage, but these filled up quickly. Several large furnishing items that had been stored in the Watson's Store were moved to the new building along with all the other collections that had been held in scattered locations. Moreover, the building's heating, ventilating, and air conditioning system were housed in the same space as museum storage. Indeed, one of the rooms, Vault B-3, was flooded in December 1983, and about 250 objects came in contact with water. Regional Curator Kent Bush recommended \$18,000 in improvements to the ceiling, walls, and floors of these storage rooms to bring them closer to museum standards. The park staff was provided with guidelines for preventive maintenance to safeguard against future problems with the HVAC system.²⁷⁸ Flooding problems in Vault B-3 have persisted.

Adequate storage, not just for the museum collection but for various supplies associated with all phases of park operations, became more acute over time. As a result, the park administration built a new storage building in 1995. Measuring 90 x 40 feet and located by the maintenance shop, the building would provide storage area for supplies and equipment related to interpreta-

²⁷⁷ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1989, NEPE, chrono file; Susan Buchel, comments on draft, March 20, 1996.

²⁷⁸ Curator to Chief, I&RM, December 28, 1983; Development/Study Package Proposal, July 29, 1982, CCSO, Kent Bush files. Particular concerns with the condition of the storage vaults included potential contamination of collections by oil and dust from the heat pump/air filtration unit and lighting deficiencies.

tion, maintenance, visitor protection, and administration, together with a few large objects from the museum collection. It would also house the park's fire truck, heavy maintenance equipment, and riding mowers. This new structure alleviated storage problems in the basement of the visitor center.²⁷⁹

In recent years, two staff reorganizations have had a significant effect on the collections management program. In 1988, Superintendent Weaver sought to increase the level of resource protection in the park with the establishment of two new divisions for natural and cultural resources. The position of park curator was reclassified to include management of the Cultural Resources Division. In 1991, responsibility for the park library was transferred from the Interpretive to the Cultural Resources Division. While the staff reorganization increased the level of protection for cultural resources as a whole, it reduced the amount of staff time available for collections management. To correct this deficiency, the park gained a full-time Museum Technician position and a part-time Librarian position. Under the new organization, the library grew from an interpretive staff resource into a public-service research facility. The library received additional funding through the regional office and donations from the Northwest Interpretive Association for the collection of dissertations, theses, rare books, and other items.²⁸⁰

In 1994, Superintendent Walker introduced the unit organization concept in Nez Perce National Historical Park and obtained approval of a revised organizational structure/position management plan (Chapter 8). That plan called for a Cultural Resource Management Specialist, Museum Curator, Museum Technician, and Library Technician to staff the Cultural Resources Division within the Park Support Unit based at Spalding. In March 1996, the Cultural Resource Management Specialist position remained to be filled.²⁸¹

Historic Structures and Landscapes

Nez Perce National Historical Park's limited number of historic buildings received strong emphasis in the park's early years. One year after the park was authorized, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 led to new guidelines for preservation of historic structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places. All national historical parks (including all Nez Perce sites) were automatically entered in the National Register even though documentation of the historic

²⁷⁹ Environmental Assessment, Proposed Spalding Consolidated Storage Facility, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Spalding, Idaho, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D38.

²⁸⁰ The park's Collection Management Plan, completed in 1994, recommended a further staff increase of one permanent full-time Curator of Collections position plus a four-year term appointment for a technician to clear up the remaining problems with accessions, cataloguing, and internal control monitoring. National Park Service, *Nez Perce National Historical Park Collection Management Plan*, Seattle, 1994, pp. 89-91; Susan Buchel, interview with author, October 23, 1995; Susan Buchel, comments on draft, March 20, 1996.

²⁸¹ Nez Perce National Historical Park, Unit Organization Concept, no date, NEPE, library.

resources to National Register standards would be delayed for many years. More recently, the emphasis in Nez Perce National Historical Park has shifted from historic structures to historic landscapes.

Ideally, preservation of historic buildings begins with historical research on the buildings. Yet the Park Service inherited a number of historic structures in Nez Perce National Historical Park which required “emergency stabilization” before any historical research had occurred or even been programmed. The Agency Residence and Watson’s Store at Spalding and the Officers Quarters at Fort Lapwai required fairly immediate attention to prevent further deterioration. In the case of the Officers Quarters, the NPS contracted with Royal Roofing Company of Lewiston to reshingle the roof, replace broken windows, and repair the chimneys before the building’s history had been documented. While the building was being stabilized in 1971-1972, park officials learned that the rear of the building had been constructed first, and that the building’s horizontal wood siding covered its original board and batten finish. Learning about a building’s history as it was undergoing repair was not the ideal method of documentation, but it was preferable to letting the building deteriorate to an irreparable condition.²⁸²

These emergency repairs pointed to the urgent need for historical research. In the early 1970s, NPS historian Erwin Thompson produced three solid historic structure reports for Nez Perce National Historical Park in quick succession: *Historic Resource Study: Spalding* (1972), *Historic Resource Study: Lapwai* (1973), and *Historic Structure Report: St. Joseph’s Mission* (1973).²⁸³ Thompson based his reports on research in federal records repositories, church records held at Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington, and secondary literature. Historical Architect David G. Henderson provided architectural data for the buildings at Spalding and the St. Joseph’s Mission in two companion reports in 1974.²⁸⁴ These reports provided resource managers with a guide to the historical significance of various structures as well as preliminary recommendations on how the structures might be restored, relocated, or removed.

Following these studies, the Park Service worked on nearly all of the historic buildings in the park. At Spalding, the NPS restored the whole exterior and a portion of the interior of the Watson’s Store, stabilized the Agency Cabin and moved it back to its original location, and undertook extensive rehabilitation of the agency’s residence. Historical Architect Laurin C. Huffman of the regional office prepared a historic structure preservation guide for the latter building in 1977.²⁸⁵ The NPS included funds for yearly maintenance of the St. Joseph’s Mission in

²⁸² Superintendent to Director, Western Service Center, January 20, 1971, NEPE, chrono file.

²⁸³ CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D4, NEPE D6, NEPE D7.

²⁸⁴ CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D717 and NEPE D724.

²⁸⁵ This was an adaptive restoration. The exterior was restored as closely as possible to its original appearance when built in 1894. On the interior, the NPS preserved the original stairway but installed modern kitchen and bathroom

(continued...)

its cooperative agreement with the St. Joseph's Mission Historical Society. The NPS did not provide funds for restoration of the Pierce Courthouse, because the building was still privately owned.

The Park Service used these studies in determining which buildings to eliminate from specific sites to enhance the "historic scene." A number of residences and barns in the Spalding unit were demolished. The Park Service allowed two other buildings, a log cabin known as Poor Coyote's Cabin and a residence built during the Agency Period known as the Crawford House, to deteriorate until they were finally removed.²⁸⁶ The Park Service tried to eliminate the Spalding postmaster's residence but met sharp local opposition. Petitioners argued that the building had local historical significance. Moreover, the building's elderly residents had no inclination to move to another house or abandon the Spalding Post Office. After unintentionally arousing local opposition, the Park Service decided instead to issue the residents, George and Clara Glasby, a special use permit to occupy the house on Park Service land.²⁸⁷

The emphasis on the Spalding unit's historic buildings in the 1970s revealed some of the limitations of this unusual national historical park. Not surprisingly, the Park Service channeled its limited resources into those sites and buildings that it actually owned. Resource management plans did not even address the cooperative sites prior to 1987, but focused exclusively on the four NPS-owned sites of Spalding, East Kamiah, White Bird Battlefield, and Canoe Camp. The emphasis on historic buildings also tended to accentuate the park's rather eclectic character. The Park Service demolished old residences and barns in its effort to recreate the historic scene around the mission site at Spalding, yet it preserved the Agency Cabin, Agency Residence, and Watson's Store because each of those buildings possessed historical significance. According to the Resource Management Plan for 1995, "Resources of different periods are often found in close proximity and create special management problems in trying to maintain one without affecting the integrity of another."²⁸⁸

²⁸⁵(...continued)
plumbing. (Laurin Huffman, comments on draft, March 12, 1996.)

²⁸⁶ Poor Coyote's cabin had been disassembled and moved to the site, reassembled incorrectly, and parked under the viaduct on skids. At first the Idaho State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) maintained that the cabin was significant, perhaps as a transitional Nez Perce house. The documentation on the house and its physical condition were poor, however, and in the late 1980s the NPS persuaded the Idaho SHPO to accept documentation and removal of the structure. The Crawford House was removed in the early 1980s, to the Idaho SHPO's subsequent regret. (Stephanie Toothman, comments on draft, March 18, 1996.)

²⁸⁷ Extensive correspondence on this issue, spanning the years 1973-1989, may be found in NEPE, Administrative Files, D3423 Spalding Post Office.

²⁸⁸ National Park Service, *Resources Management Plan, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington*, 1995, p. 30.

During the 1980s, the Park Service began to develop cultural landscape studies for various Nez Perce sites. These studies sought to bring the park's assemblage of historic resources into a more unified whole and to clarify the constantly recurring questions about how to proceed when historic resources, representing different historical periods, overlapped and complemented one another.

The process started with a brief report in 1985 by Jim Romo of Oregon State University titled *Landscape Overview and Vegetation Survey: Spalding Mission and East Kamiah*. In 1987, the Regional Office initiated a more ambitious historic landscape study focusing on the Spalding unit. The study team's report, completed in 1990, offered an alternative way to preserve and interpret the park's cultural features that would be more consistent with the central concept of the park as a depiction of a process of cultural and environmental change. The authors stated:

The Spalding unit of Nez Perce National Historical Park is a complex landscape that portrays evidence of human use and occupation spanning more than 10,000 years. Previous historical studies at Spalding have identified only two significant historic periods: a missionary era from 1838-1847; and an era associated with the occupation and administration of the area by the Indian Agency from 1860-1902. While current interpretation focuses on these two periods, the landscape itself suggests that other events and cultural activities have shaped the site. This has led to considerable confusion in regard to managing the "appropriate" historic scene and cultural context. One major thrust of this study is, therefore, to explore the potential significance of other historic periods, and to develop a landscape context for interpreting the full range of significant cultural resources at the site.²⁸⁹

Among the report's contributions, it brought further attention to the arboretum planted in 1936 in commemoration of Henry Spalding, arguing persuasively that the arboretum should be considered a significant cultural resource. The state park era, which lasted from 1936 to 1966, was another significant episode that should be recognized by the park's resource managers and interpreted for the public. The early monuments to Spalding told an interesting story of how commemorative efforts and park design had changed in the past seventy years. The report provided perspective and background information for park managers but it was not a detailed, prescriptive management plan. That still remained to be done.²⁹⁰

Archeology

Many sites in Nez Perce National Historical Park contain archeological resources; a few, such as Weis Rockshelter, Lenore, and Hasotino Village, feature them. These sites form part of a larger matrix of archeological sites in Nez Perce country extending along the Snake and Clearwater rivers and into some upland areas. The history of archeological investigations in Nez

²⁸⁹ Cathy A. Gilbert, Gretchen A. Luxenberg, and Marsha R. Tolon, *Historic Landscape Report: Spalding Unit, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, Seattle, 1990, p. 4.

²⁹⁰ Sue Buchel, interview with author, October 23, 1995.

Perce country is reviewed in a 1987 report prepared for the NPS by David H. Chance and Jennifer V. Chance with Elmer Paul, and this section draws upon that report.²⁹¹

In a few locations archeological investigations predated the creation of Nez Perce National Historical Park, or at least the addition of that site to the park. The Weis Rockshelter site was discovered in 1960. B. Robert Butler of Idaho State College investigated the site during 1961-1962. Located about four miles up Rocky Canyon on the northern edge of the Clearwater Plateau, the Weis Rockshelter site led to other discoveries at the mouth of Rocky Canyon (Cooper's Ferry) and on nearby Rock Creek (Double-House site) which Butler investigated during 1963-1964. Together, these sites provide a record of occupation from 8,000 years to 2,000 years before present.²⁹² The Lenore site on the Clearwater River was discovered during archeological surveys conducted for the Idaho State Highway Department in the mid-1960s. The site contained evidence of occupation as early as 10,000 years before present, as well as a number of pit houses from a more recent phase of prehistory. Earl H. Swanson, Jr., also of Idaho State College, taught summer field schools at the Lenore site from 1967 to 1971. He described the site as one of the most significant archeological sites in the Pacific Northwest. In 1972, Governor Cecil Andrus recommended that the Lenore site be included in Nez Perce National Historical Park. In 1974, it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and in 1977 it was designated as a cooperative site within the Nez Perce National Historical Park.²⁹³ Both the Weis Rockshelter and Lenore sites were included in the park because of what had already been revealed by archeological investigations.

The Park Service initiated its own archeological investigation in Nez Perce National Historical Park at the Spalding site in 1973. The project followed one year after the historic resource study by Erwin Thompson and was principally directed at learning more about the mission site through test excavations. Dr. Roderick Sprague of the University of Idaho headed the project and David Chance led the field crew of ten, all members of the Nez Perce Tribe. The excavations were made during April through June and focused on the mission house and its adjacent buildings, the grist mill, and the saw mill. Perhaps the most significant finding was that the mission site was more complex and extensive than had been supposed, containing evidence of an unusually large number of improvements compared to most other mission sites of the same period. The investigators also concluded that Spalding was an innovator, trying new techniques in each subsequent structure,

²⁹¹ David H. Chance and Jennifer V. Chance with Elmer Paul, *A Review of the Archaeology of the Nez Perce Country*, prepared for the National Park Service, Alfred W. Bowers Laboratory of Anthropology, University of Idaho, November 1987. Hereafter cited as Chance et al., *Archaeology of the Nez Perce Country*.

²⁹² Ibid, pp. 2-3; National Park Service, Resources Management Plan, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, March 1995, p. 22.

²⁹³ Chance et al., *Archaeology of the Nez Perce Country*, p. 9; Superintendent to Regional Director, October 16, 1972, November 9, 1972, April 10, 1973, February 25, 1977, and May 2, 1977, NEPE, chrono file.

and that he had not constructed the buildings with a view toward permanently settling in the area.²⁹⁴

The 1973 study also suggested that the Agency Cabin, though intact, had been moved from its original foundation. In 1975, the Park Service contracted with the University of Idaho to investigate this hypothesis further. The resulting report by Thomas M. Iverson confirmed that the structure was part of the Agency complex that occupied the site beginning in 1861, and that the building had been moved a short distance from its original location.²⁹⁵

The Park Service sponsored a second phase of archeological work at the Spalding unit in 1978-1979 as part of a mitigation plan for the development of the visitor center and access road. Test excavations during the summer of 1978 confirmed the locations of an agency office, Sutler's store, and other buildings documented in Thompson's 1972 report. They also revealed the existence of prehistoric resources. On the basis of these findings, the Park Service authorized more extensive excavations in the fall of 1978 and again in the spring of 1979. While the historic building sites yielded disappointingly little data, the investigators found evidence of occupation from about 10,500 years ago and parts of two pit houses dating from a later period. The earlier prehistoric remains, called the Lapwai Component, included animal bones and unusual stone tools.²⁹⁶

The archeological resources proved to be considerably more extensive than anticipated. Before they could be properly investigated, the University of Idaho exceeded its budget and the building contractor proceeded with road excavations that resulted in the destruction of a third and fourth pit house as well as the disturbance of several Nez Perce burials (see Chapter Two). Archeologist David Chance, who was in charge of the field work, pondered this project with the benefit of hindsight in 1984:

One lesson to be drawn from all of this is that an archaeologist in a "mitigation" program such as this should never make compromises on behalf of a sponsoring agency, but should let the agency take the entire burden of declaring the cut-off point. The second lesson is that project boundaries need to be viewed with extreme skepticism. The excavating contractor in this case went well outside the boundary, by as much as 50 ft. Third, one should not budget below cost simply because an agency finds itself faced with a far larger archaeological resource than it planned on. We fielded three seasons of excavation for above \$60,000. This error made it quite impossible to meet deadlines,

²⁹⁴ David H. Chance and Jennifer V. Chance, *Exploratory Excavations at Spalding Mission, 1973*, Laboratory of Anthropology, University of Idaho, Moscow, 1974.

²⁹⁵ Thomas M. Iverson, *A Preliminary Report of Archaeological Investigations of the Agency Cabin, Nez Perce National Historical Park*, Laboratory of Anthropology, University of Idaho, Moscow, 1975.

²⁹⁶ Chance et al., *Archeology of the Nez Perce Country*, p. 12 (quote); David H. Chance and Jennifer V. Chance, *Archeology at Spalding, 1978-1979*, University of Idaho Anthropological Research Manuscript Series, Laboratory of Anthropology, University of Idaho, Moscow, 1984, pp. 1, 6.

made it necessary to use funds from other sources to carry on with the project, and resulted in recrimination until the agency was presented with an analysis of the facts.²⁹⁷

The disturbance of the Nez Perce burials, a painful episode in itself, led to two more archeology projects. The first consisted of recovery of the burial remains and monitoring of further road excavation in the area, while the second consisted of mitigative excavation of a further section of a water line trench associated with the mission site. Finally, Chance did a small amount of further archeological testing of the grist mill site in 1986.²⁹⁸

In 1987, the Pacific Northwest Regional Office contracted with the University of Idaho to produce an overview of archeology in Nez Perce country and make recommendations for NPS management. The study, conducted primarily by David Chance, involved a literature search of known sites and walk-over surveys of the White Bird Battlefield, Weippe Prairie, and Musselshell Prairie sites. He was accompanied on the field surveys by tribal elder Elmer Paul. The three-day survey of the White Bird Battlefield revealed some interesting preliminary findings including what Chance interpreted to be breastworks and temporary soldier graves.²⁹⁹ At the Weippe Prairie and Musselshell Prairie sites, Chance determined that there was potential to learn something about changing patterns of camas root harvesting in the historical period.³⁰⁰

Chance's survey of the White Bird Battlefield also revealed the fact that several Nez Perce burials had been vandalized. Chance notified Superintendent Weaver about the vandalism in 1987, and the two men concurred that the best alternative was to leave the disturbed burial sites alone since they were already partially revegetated. However, it was Elmer Paul's understanding that the burial remains were to be reinterred. In October 1989, Paul revisited the site and was dismayed to see no change. During the next several months, the park consulted with NPTEC, the tribe's Cultural Resource Program, and Regional Archeologist Jim Thomson to develop a preferred action. In May 1990, a party of NPS employees and Nez Perce tribal members spent two days reintering the burial remains and then reseeding the area with native fescue. Afterwards, Museum Curator Sue Buchel traced the vandalism to a 1974 case incident record involving the "desecration of an Indian grave." Approximately 24 holes had been dug with a post

²⁹⁷ David H. Chance and Jennifer V. Chance, *Archaeology at Spalding, 1978-1979*, University of Idaho Anthropological Research Manuscript Series, Laboratory of Anthropology, University of Idaho, Moscow, 1984, p. 12.

²⁹⁸ Chance, et al., *Archaeology of the Nez Perce Country*, p. 12; Karl Gurcke, et al., *Nez Perce National Historical Park Archaeological Excavations, 1979-1980*, University of Idaho Anthropological Research Manuscript Series No. 70, Laboratory of Anthropology, University of Idaho, Moscow, 1981.

²⁹⁹ David H. Chance to Jim Thomson, April 21, 1987, NEPE, H30 Historic Sites and Structures.

³⁰⁰ Chance et al., *Archaeology of the Nez Perce Country*, p. 61.

hole digger.³⁰¹ Unfortunately this was not an isolated incident, but represented one of the primary threats to the archeological resources in Nez Perce National Historical Park.

Battlefield sites and the Spalding site were particularly susceptible to vandalism. Occasionally park officials apprehended people with metal detectors. Increasingly, the park worked with the tribe to improve the level of protection of these sites. Cooperation was especially important for all those sites that were not owned by the Park Service.

With the park additions in 1992, three battlefield sites in Montana came into Nez Perce National Historical Park, each with a history of archeological exploration. In the case of Big Hole Battlefield, archeological investigations were conducted as early as the 1950s and continued through the 1970s. NPS employees Don Rickey, Aubrey Haines, and Kermit Edmonds made careful collections of battlefield artifacts. In 1991, the Park Service received a grant from country-western singer Hank Williams, Jr., to conduct a more systematic archeological survey. Directed by Dr. Douglas D. Scott of the Midwest Archeological Center, this effort involved a thorough re-examination of the unit's collections as well as a metal-detecting survey of the entire battlefield. The survey drew some significant conclusions for management, including the location of tepees and events during the battle that indicated a need to acquire additional acreage at the site. It also provided valuable information for interpretation, confirming the disposition and movements of troops and warriors during the battle and the fact that Shoshones had mutilated the bodies of fallen Nez Perce.³⁰²

In 1994, the Rocky Mountain Region provided funding for Dr. Scott and the Midwest Archeological Center to prepare an Archeological Overview and Assessment for the Montana Nez Perce War Sites. Scott focused on the historical archeology, primarily associated with the Nez Perce War of 1877, and subcontracted with Ethos Consultants, Inc., of Havre, Montana, to conduct literature searches and assess the potential for the sites to contain prehistoric resources.³⁰³

Other sites had already received archeological investigation prior to being authorized as additions to the park in 1994. These included Hasotino Village and Buffalo Eddy. During the late summer of 1995, Ranger Teresa Soleski monitored a paleontological dig near Tolo Lake

³⁰¹ Susan Bushel, "Report on Rehabilitation of Vandalized Burials, White Bird Battlefield," December 3, 1991, (case incident records attached), NEPE, Administrative files, L1425 White Bird Site General.

³⁰² National Park Service, Resources Management Plan, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington, March 1995, p. 19; Douglas D. Scott, *A Sharp Little Affair: The Archeology of the Big Hole Battlefield*. Reprints in Anthropology, vol.45. Lincoln, Nebraska: J&L Reprint Company, 1994.

³⁰³ Susan Buchel, comments on draft, March 20, 1996; Patrick J. Rennie and John H. Brumley, "Prehistoric Archaeological Overview and Assessment of the Canyon Creek Battlefield Area: Yellowstone County, Montana," draft report prepared for National Park Service, July 1994; Rennie and Brumley, "Prehistoric Archaeological Overview and Assessment of the Bear's Paw Battlefield State Park: Blaine County, Montana," draft report prepared for National Park Service, June 1994.

involving an undetermined number of prehistoric mammoths. At the end of the field season the significance of the site remained unclear.

In summary, the amount of investigation of archeological resources varies widely throughout Nez Perce National Historical Park. So far, the NPS has limited its own archeological investigations primarily to the Spalding and Montana battlefield sites. Although the NPS is in the process of documenting and assessing all past archeological investigations, much remains to be done.

CHAPTER SEVEN

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Most of Nez Perce National Historical Park's natural resource issues have involved vegetation management. Early efforts focused on maintaining a "park-like quality" and prohibiting land uses that would detract from each site's historical appearance. Gradually the park administration adopted a variety of management tools and assumed the more ambitious goal of restoring the vegetation to its historic appearance. These tools included noxious weed control, prescribed burning, reseeding of native grasses, and selective use of grazing and farming. Even as this program gained momentum at the end of the 1980s it continued to be circumscribed by a number of factors. Budget constraints, limited staff, the need to preserve good community relations with neighboring farmers and ranchers, the difficulties of managing small land areas that were surrounded by altered biotic communities, and questions about which historical era should guide each site's vegetation management plan all posed challenges to effective natural resource management.

In the park's early years, natural resource management did not receive high priority. Park managers followed the guidelines set out in the park's master plan of 1968 as well as the NPS manual, *Administrative Policies for Historical Areas of the National Park System*. These statements of policy allowed for continued use of NPS-owned land for grazing and farming in conformity with good husbandry practices. The Park Service issued special use permits to a number of agriculturalists and ranchers for use of some lands at the Spalding, East Kamiah, and White Bird Battlefield. Other portions of these same sites were allowed to return to a natural state.³⁰⁴

At first the curtailment of agricultural and ranching uses seemed to improve the historical appearance of these sites, but soon the Park Service found that noxious weeds invaded rapidly and grasses grew high enough to create a fire hazard where grazing and farming had been abruptly discontinued. During the early 1970s, the park began using the herbicides Roundup and 2, 4-D to suppress weeds. The NPS generally favored the use of Roundup because of its low toxicity and its tendency to break down when it came in contact with soil. The park resorted to 2, 4-D to combat poison hemlock. Although effective against weeds, this management tool had the

³⁰⁴ National Park Service, *A Master Plan for Nez Perce National Historical Park, Idaho*, June 1968, p. 30; Superintendent to Regional Director, October 19, 1973, NEPE, chrono file.

disadvantage that it was causing a buildup of the herbicide in the soil and could adversely affect other plants and wildlife.³⁰⁵

In 1973, Superintendent Williams recommended to Regional Director John Rutter that the time had come to reevaluate this situation. Williams proposed specific changes in management for the Spalding, East Kamiah, and White Bird Battlefield. At Spalding, the land behind and north of the Agent's Residence would be planted with alfalfa and used to pasture horses. Williams recommended alfalfa because it remained green throughout the area's long, hot summers while other crops turned brown, and it did not pose as great a fire hazard as native grasses. As for the horses, Williams suggested that if appaloosa horses were grazed they would serve the interpretive program, too. The Nez Perces had selectively bred these brown and white spotted horses and the breed was named for the Palouse River in Washington. Williams had developed a keen interest in the appaloosa and owned a number of these animals; indeed, it would be his own stock grazing near the Agent's Residence in Spalding. At East Kamiah, Williams proposed to erect a protective barricade around the Heart of the Monster and permit the rest of the acreage to be grazed by horses (again, using appaloosas if possible). At White Bird, grazing would continue but it would be monitored by the Soil Conservation Service in order to determine what type of grazing the area could best sustain.³⁰⁶

Rutter responded by sending NPS Historian Vernon Tancil to the park to evaluate the superintendent's suggestions. Tancil concurred that grazing at White Bird would be in keeping with the historical scene, but he questioned the use of alfalfa at Spalding as it was not clear whether it had been planted in that area in the nineteenth century. On the other hand, cultivation of gardens, orchards, potato patches, wheat and other grains, and the grazing of cattle, horses, and sheep would all be in keeping with historical farming activities. Rutter emphasized to Williams that the fire-resistant quality of alfalfa could not take precedence over the Park Service's mission to restore the historic scene. As for the grazing of horses at East Kamiah, Rutter cautioned that the NPS "should be very sensitive to the Nez Perces' views concerning the pasturing of horses so near one of their sacred cultural sites."³⁰⁷

Superintendent Williams' initiative led to a study by Entomologist Roland W. Portman on the condition of the arboretum at Spalding. The trees, now nearly forty years old, showed signs of overcrowding, including abnormal limb growth and an overly dense overstory. The removal of some trees had left unsightly gaps in the arboretum. A few trees were dead or overgrown,

³⁰⁵ Douglas J. Riley, Environmental Assessment, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Spalding Site, [1975], NEPE, Resource Management files, Fire; *Nez Perce National Historical Park Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment*, CSSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D-15B, p. 12.

³⁰⁶ Regional Director to Superintendent, May 7, 1974, NEPE, Resource Management files, RM - White Bird Battlefield Grazing Impact Studies; Laurin Huffman, personal communication, April 10, 1996. On the appaloosa, see Haines, *The Nez Perce: Tribesmen of the Columbia Plateau*, pp. 23-24.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

jeopardizing the health of the Colorado Blue Spruce and Sequoia trees respectively. Thirty-eight years of lawn-mowing, watering, and fertilizing, in addition to extensive trampling by the public, had compacted the surface soil and caused a buildup of grass thatch. To correct these myriad problems, Portman suggested that the park obtain the services of an arboriculturist. Unfortunately, fiscal constraints did not permit this and the arboretum experienced another nineteen years of relative neglect.³⁰⁸

Meanwhile, Superintendent Williams decided to attack the exotic weed problem with another management tool, prescribed burning. The superintendent directed his chief of interpretation and resource management, Douglas J. Riley, to develop a prescribed burn proposal and environmental assessment. Riley proposed a series of six burns in different areas of the Spalding site, prefacing the proposal with the comment that these weedy areas became “veritable tinderboxes” during the dry season and that the burns were necessary “to protect historical and managerial ‘exposures’.”³⁰⁹ Riley noted in his environmental assessment that while prescribed burning promised to be effective and to allow the park to reduce its use of herbicides, it did have drawbacks. The principal drawback was that prescribed burns made people nervous and did in fact carry the risk of burning out of control and destroying private property adjacent to the park.³¹⁰ Prescribed burns were conducted without mishap in 1975 and 1976.

Superintendent Robert Morris made a few changes in natural resource management. At East Kamiah, he took care of the fire hazard by having the ground between the parking area and the Heart of the Monster mown regularly. This controlled the thistle growth and virtually eliminated the danger to visitors from rattlesnakes as well as the fire hazard, and it presented an aesthetically pleasing appearance. In the superintendent’s judgment, these factors outweighed the negative effect that a manicured lawn had on the site’s historical integrity.³¹¹

During the unusually dry summer of 1977 the park did not conduct any prescribed burns because they were deemed too difficult to control. In that context, Morris had his staff review the effectiveness of prescribed burns and develop a new fire management plan for the park. The plan

³⁰⁸ Ronald W. Portman, Tree Survey Report, September 17-18, 1974, NEPE, Resource Management files, Spalding - Arboretum.

³⁰⁹ Douglas J. Riley, *Nez Perce National Historical Park, Spalding Site, Prescribed Burn Proposal*, NEPE, Resource Management files, Fire.

³¹⁰ Douglas J. Riley, Environmental Assessment, Nez Perce National Historical Park, Spalding Site, [1975], NEPE, Resource Management files, Fire.

³¹¹ Robert Morris, interview with author, August 30, 1995.

renounced the use of prescribed burning and committed the park to the suppression of all wildfires.³¹²

Morris also reconsidered the grazing policy at White Bird. The range had been overgrazed in the past and cattle grazing had been terminated, but now the range had mostly recovered. Morris decided to permit a limited amount of sheep grazing in order to “knock down the tall grass and help control spring seed growth.” The sheep were pastured so that no area was grazed for more than 30 to sixty days. In addition, Morris began an experiment by having one 80-acre tract seeded with natural grass. This was accomplished with the help of a local rancher, Richard Anderson, who agreed to plant the seed in return for being permitted to harvest a hay crop on the same tract. Experts from the Soil Conservation Service investigated the site and determined that the hay crop would be a help in getting the native grass started.³¹³

The 1980s might be considered a decade of transition in the park’s natural resource program. Conceptually, park officials moved toward a more ambitious program of ecosystem restoration. Practically, however, there was little change until the end of the decade. In terms of funding and personnel activity, there was more continuity than change as the decade began, with weed control at all three NPS-owned sites and monitoring of grazing use at the White Bird site continuing to be the park’s first and second natural resource management priorities.³¹⁴

Park staff developed the park’s first resource management plan in 1981. The plan called for continued use of herbicides as the most effective means of controlling exotic weeds at the Spalding site. Concurrently, the park would work with researchers from the University of Idaho’s Cooperative Park Studies Unit (CPSU) to obtain base line data and a vegetation inventory. Concerning sheep grazing at the White Bird Battlefield, the authors of the plan took the position that the presence of sheep degraded the historic scene, impacted the vegetation, and might be causing erosion and damage to archeological resources. Under optimal conditions, the grazing would be ended in four or five years. The plan articulated five other natural resource management concerns: erosion of the slope at the Spalding site, control of vegetative overgrowth of the two basalt mounds (the heart and liver of the legendary monster) at the East Kamiah site, vegetation management in the mowed portion of the East Kamiah site, removal or replacement of the above-ground utility line at White Bird, and relocation of the picnic area at the Spalding site.³¹⁵

³¹² Superintendent’s Annual Report, 1977, NEPE, Administrative History 33873, Folder 67; Fire Management Plan, 1980, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D15.

³¹³ Superintendent to Regional Director, January 26, 1977, NEPE, Resource Management files, White Bird Battlefield Revegetation Projects General Information; Robert Morris, interview with author, August 30, 1995.

³¹⁴ Acting Superintendent to Regional Director, February 17, 1983, NEPE, Administrative Files, N1617 Revegetation Management - White Bird Site.

³¹⁵ Nez Perce National Historical Park, *Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment for Nez Perce National Historical Park*, 1981, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D15.

More than a year after Regional Director Daniel J. Tobin, Jr., had approved the plan, very little of the plan had been implemented. Evidently disappointed, Superintendent Whitaker explained the reasons for the delay:

Cultural resources problems have generally been perceived to be more critical; the natural resources problems are more complex, data is harder to acquire, and expended efforts have yielded smaller payback than in cultural resource management; limited staffing and higher priority uses of Park staff...[in] competition with resources management has meant less time devoted to natural resources and fewer visible and effective results.³¹⁶

In 1983, the park administration requested and obtained special funding to address the two major problems of noxious weed control and grazing at White Bird. According to Acting Superintendent Art Hathaway,

Special funding in FY 83 and FY 84 would provide the necessary foundation for natural resource management programs at Nez Perce National Historical Park so that once the data is gathered, maps developed, inventories completed, and a management program developed and implemented, the Park staff should be able to carry on necessary management activities without requiring any significant degree of funding beyond normal base.³¹⁷

In an updated version of the resource management plan in 1984, park staff created a schedule for noxious weed control at Spalding involving an expenditure of \$30,000 from park operating funds over the next five years. In the course of this control program, the park would develop a detailed plant inventory and longterm vegetative management plan, targeting certain exotic species for intensive pest management in the future.³¹⁸

The 1984 update of the resource management plan also contained one additional issue. As base line biological research by the University of Idaho's CPSU finally got underway in the summer of 1983, CPSU researchers thought they discovered three small plots of remnant stands of native bunchgrass. These relict grasslands, totaling no more than three acres, had potential significance both as interpretive exhibits and as a genetic source for vegetative restoration programs that the park might undertake. The park committed modest funds for additional research on these plots during the next five years. In about 1988 visiting botanists identified these grasses as an alpine variety not native to the valley after all. They had been planted by the State Highway Department. A strip of native grasses was planted behind the Visitor Center and maintained in 1990 and 1991. It has since been overtaken by weeds.³¹⁹

³¹⁶ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1982, NEPE, chrono file.

³¹⁷ Acting Superintendent to Regional Director, February 17, 1983, NEPE, Administrative Files, N1617 Revegetation Management - White Bird Site.

³¹⁸ Nez Perce National Historical Park, Five-year Program Sheet and Overview-needs Update, April 10, 1984, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D15.

³¹⁹ Ibid; Ken L. Adkisson, Preservation of Native Grasslands, April 27, 1984, NEPE, chrono file.

While biological research by the CPSU progressed, Superintendent Whitaker ran into difficulties over sheep grazing at White Bird. The grazing permittee, Andrew Dahlquist, decided to resist what appeared to him as Park Service plans to phase out this land use. Instead of a year to year grazing permit, Dahlquist wanted a lease "in perpetuity." Dahlquist claimed that he had purchased the surrounding land from the Hagen estate with the express understanding that he would be able to graze his sheep on park land. Dahlquist alleged that the Hagen family had sold 1111.6 acres of their estate to the Park Service in 1969 with the understanding that grazing was a historical use and would be permitted to continue. It seemed to Superintendent Whitaker that Dahlquist was gathering documentation with the object of garnering community support for his stand.³²⁰

Dahlquist succeeded in creating a flap that could have served as a reminder, if one were needed, of the conservative political forces that had shaped this Idaho national historical park in the first place. In the winter of 1983-1984, Dahlquist sought help from Idaho Senators James McClure and Steve Symms. McClure inspected the site in June 1984 and satisfied himself that "there was not an overgrazing problem." He and Symms met with NPS Director Russ Dickenson and obtained a statement by the director that grazing was a historical use of the area and need not be terminated. With the director in full retreat, Whitaker disavowed any intention of phasing out sheep grazing at the expiration of Dahlquist's permit.³²¹ Three years later, an in-depth study of the effects of grazing at White Bird was yet to be started.³²²

When Roy Weaver was appointed superintendent in January 1987, one of his top priorities was to invigorate the park's natural resources management program and bring resource specialists into the park staff. He found a willing assistant in Chief Ranger Jan Dick. It was Weaver's and Dick's philosophy that preservation of resources, even natural resources in a historical park, must come first in the Park Service's overall mission. Dick made this position clear in the park's expanded natural resources management plan:

³²⁰ Superintendent to Regional Director, December 12, 1983, and February 14, 1984, NEPE, chrono file; Questions Submitted to the Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies by Senator James A. McClure on April 2, 1985 for Hearings on the National Park Service, April 10, 1985, NEPE, Administrative files, L3019 Land Use - Grazing General.

³²¹ Superintendent to Regional Director, February 14, 1984, NEPE, chrono file; Questions Submitted to the Subcommittee on Interior and Related Agencies by Senator James A. McClure on April 2, 1985 for Hearings on the National Park Service, April 10, 1985, NEPE, L3019 Land Use - Grazing General.

³²² Nez Perce National Historical Park, Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, 1987, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D15B.

Management direction should concentrate on ecosystem restoration of the historic scene on the sites rather than just controlling or eliminating noxious weeds. However, an Historic Landscape Plan and a Vegetation Management Plan are necessary before the controlling of noxious weeds can be expanded to ecosystem or historic scene restoration.³²³

The park needed more research with which to develop management plans. These plans would in turn guide resource managers in the use of such tools as prescribed fire, the replanting of native grasses, and eradication of exotics. It was indicative of Weaver's grander outlook on resource management that the updated resources management plan of 1987 lumped previous project statements for East Kamiah, Spalding, and White Bird under the single goal of developing a vegetation management plan. In addition, Weaver wanted to reassess grazing again, give greater protection to resources by stepping up law enforcement, and mark the park boundaries more clearly.³²⁴

In 1988, the park contracted with the University of Idaho CPSU to conduct base line research and an investigation of grazing effects at the White Bird Battlefield. The CPSU's Gerry Wright took the lead role in designing biological research at Nez Perce National Historical Park. The research team began by inventorying well over 100 species of flora present at the site. It then established nine test plots of 100 square-meter grids each. These test plots would give a measurement of change in species density over time. Each test plot included an enclosure so that the effects of grazing on biomass could be monitored. In addition, the CPSU scientists secured assistance from the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) for field monitoring, and help from the Nez Perce National Forest with aerial photo monitoring. The latter would help determine erosional trends. Both agencies had offices in Grangeville.³²⁵

Another part of the plan was to increase the Park Service presence in the area and obtain better cooperation from the rancher, Andrew Dahlquist. In 1988, Dahlquist had 1,200 head of sheep grazing in the area and his permit allowed him to graze 400 Animal Unit Months on park land. He was supposed to move the herd frequently. Weaver directed Chief Ranger Jan Dick to visit the site often, make himself conspicuous, and see how much Dahlquist was moving his sheep, or indeed whether he was committing livestock trespass.³²⁶

By the winter of 1989-1990 the NPS was actively working with the SCS and Dahlquist to develop a revegetation plan for White Bird. The plan involved two stages. In the first stage, a

³²³ Nez Perce National Historical Park, Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment, 1987, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D15B, p. 5.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Jan Dick to Roy Weaver, June 15, 1988, NEPE, N1617 Revegetation Management - White Bird Site. See also Mack Barrington and R. Gerald Wright, "An Inventory of Plant Communities and Methods to Monitor Vegetation Change at White Bird Battlefield, Nez Perce NHS," July 1989, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D31.

³²⁶ Superintendent to Regional Director, June 17, 1988, NEPE, Administrative Files, N1617 Revegetation Management - White Bird Site.

380-acre central portion of the site would be closed to grazing except in spring and fall when the preferred perennial plants were dormant; thus, only the noxious weeds would be cropped. Also during this phase, Dahlquist would cultivate the 380-acre area with oat or barley hay and harvest the crop at the end of the summer. In the second phase, the area would be planted with native grass seed and fenced off for two years to allow the native grass to become established. Native grass seed would be purchased from the local seed distributor using credit from Dahlquist's grazing fees. The hope was that once native grasses were firmly established in the central portion of the site they could be encouraged to expand to the remaining two-thirds of the site.³²⁷

Meanwhile, the park administration started to revamp its approach to vegetation management at the Spalding and East Kamiah units. The park developed a new grazing management plan for East Kamiah that sought to bring grazing use into proper adjustment. The plan included eleven schedules and measures for determining proper grazing levels. According to the authors of the plan, "grazing will be managed and regulated to provide for improvement and maintenance of native grass species to the greatest extent possible."³²⁸ At the Spalding site, some eleven separate weed infestations were identified, labeled alphabetically, and treated with various herbicides or removed by different mechanical means.³²⁹

But in one important respect the park was frustrated before it could fully implement its new revegetation plans. The park's new fire management strategy, approved March 1988, announced that beginning that year the park would once again experiment with prescribed burns to assess (1) the natural role of fire within the various plant communities, and (2) whether prescribed burns could be used as a supplement to mechanical and chemical controls of exotic and noxious weeds.³³⁰ However, due to the unusually severe fire season throughout the West that year, all prescribed burns were deferred. Following the public outcry over the dramatic wildfires in Yellowstone National Park in 1988, the NPS implemented a new system-wide fire management policy. One feature of the new policy was a requirement that qualified burn bosses supervise all prescription fires. Under the new policy, the staff at Nez Perce lacked qualified personnel. As a result, natural resource managers had to improvise a great deal. Essentially they reverted back to mowing, hand-pulling, and spraying weeds with chemical treatments.

³²⁷ Superintendent to Regional Director, January 10, 1990, NEPE, Administrative Files, N1617 Revegetation Management - White Bird Site.

³²⁸ Nez Perce National Historical Park, "Grazing Management Plan, East Kamiah," no date, NEPE, Resource Management files, Vegetation Management Plan.

³²⁹ Spalding Revegetation Accomplishments 1988, NEPE, Resource Management files, Vegetation Management Plan.

³³⁰ Nez Perce National Historical Park, *Fire Management Plan, Nez Perce National Historical Park*, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D24.

In 1993, Mark O'Neill and Susan Buchel began a major revision of the park's resource management plan. With input from the natural and cultural resources staff at the regional office, the authors more than quadrupled the number of projects for both natural and cultural resources management. Complicating the process was the uncertainty about which sites would be authorized and included under the pending park additions legislation. Renee Beymer, appointed to the newly created position of Natural Resources Management Specialist in 1994, brought the plan to completion. The plan was approved in 1995.³³¹

³³¹ Susan Buchel, comments on draft, March 20, 1996.

CHAPTER EIGHT

NEW ADDITIONS

Introduction

In 1992, fourteen sites in Oregon, Washington, Montana, and Idaho were added to Nez Perce National Historical Park, making it the most geographically diffuse unit in the national park system. The additions were consistent with the original conception of the park as a series of sites, or “string of pearls,” whose significance derived from their historical association with Nez Perce country. Nevertheless, with so many sites spread across such a wide area, it remained to be seen whether the park additions would ultimately strengthen this imaginative park idea or stretch it to the breaking point.

It seems probable that the Nez Perce National Historical Park Additions Act of 1991, signed into law in October 1992, constitutes a watershed in the park’s history. While the administrative adjustments to the park additions are only now unfolding, the campaign for the additions, the NPS feasibility studies on the proposed additions, and the legislative history of the 1992 act are now a closed chapter in the administrative history of Nez Perce National Historical Park.

The proposal to amend the original park act by adding sites outside of Idaho first surfaced in the 1960s, practically went dormant during the 1970s, and reawakened in the mid-1980s. It culminated with a legislative campaign during 1990-1992. The first section of this chapter traces the early development of this proposal through 1972. The next section examines what was virtually a second round of local initiatives and NPS studies in the 1980s. The third section summarizes the legislative history of the Nez Perce National Historical Park Additions Act of 1991. The fourth section considers some of the administrative dilemmas that this uniquely expansive park posed, with particular reference to the pre-existing NPS site of Big Hole National Battlefield, now embraced within the park. The last section of the chapter notes some recent administrative initiatives that have stemmed directly from the park additions. These seem to indicate dramatic new directions for the park’s future.

The 1969 Park Additions Study

Conceptually, Nez Perce National Historical Park embraced a distinct region of the West that the park’s creators defined as “Nez Perce country.” Statutorily, the park was confined to the “Nez Perce country of Idaho.” Apparently Assistant Secretary of the Interior John Carver, a Boise native, favored this limitation as a practical matter, assuming that a national historical park which crossed state lines would be harder to sell in Congress. But the act’s inconsistency in this respect was evident because the aboriginal homeland of the Nez Perce people obviously predated

state lines and extended into what is now northeastern Oregon and southeastern Washington. Moreover, the War of 1877 had taken the non-treaty portion of the tribe on a 1,300-mile journey into western Montana, Yellowstone National Park, and finally north central Montana. Survivors of the war eventually became scattered between Canada, the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Oregon, the Colville Indian Reservation in Washington, and the Nez Perce Indian Reservation in Idaho. The Nez Perce Trail, battlefield sites in Montana, and sites reflecting the Joseph band's exile on the Colville Indian Reservation all comprised important parts of the Nez Perce story and actually lay beyond the bounds of the aboriginal Nez Perce homeland. The main concept of the park additions was to correct the inconsistency between the park idea and its authorizing legislation and allow the Nez Perce story to unfold over a broader canvas.

The impetus for park additions originally came from citizens of the Wallowa country of northeastern Oregon. In the fall of 1967, Dean B. Erwin of Enterprise, Oregon, and Harold H. Haller of LaGrande, Oregon, wrote their congressional representatives and state governor protesting that the Nez Perce National Historical Park should not have been limited to Idaho. In December 1967, Northeast Oregon Vacationland, Inc., of which Haller was president, passed a resolution requesting that certain sites in Wallowa County be considered for inclusion in the park. Oregon Senators Mark O. Hatfield and Wayne L. Morse and Representative Al Ullman sent three separate inquiries to the Interior Department based on these requests.³³²

The Park Service responded to the congressional inquiries by fielding a study team in the fall of 1968. The team inspected seven sites in Oregon and Washington: the gravesite of Chief Joseph the Older near the town of Joseph, Oregon, on the shore of Wallowa Lake; the site of Chief Joseph the Younger's first encounter with settlers; the homesite of the first American settler in the Wallowa Valley; Joseph Canyon viewpoint on Oregon State Highway 3, a cave site on Joseph Creek, Asotin County, Washington, that was reputedly the birthplace of Chief Joseph the Younger; the last campsite of Chief Joseph the Younger; and the gravesite of Chief Joseph the Younger. The study team also gave consideration to sites along the route taken by non-treaty Nez Perce in the War of 1877 although it did not visit them in the field. These included Camas Meadows, Idaho; Fort Fizzle, Montana; Big Hole National Battlefield, Montana; Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming; and Bear Paw Battlefield, Montana (Figure 6).³³³

The team concluded that two of the Oregon sites — the gravesite of Chief Joseph the Older and the Joseph Canyon viewpoint — were significant and suitable additions to the park, while the other two Oregon sites together with the cave site in Asotin County, Washington, did not have national significance. The last campsite and gravesite of Chief Joseph the Younger, both situated on the Colville Indian Reservation, deserved recognition but were not suitable additions because

³³² National Park Service, *Nez Perce Alternative Study Report: Oregon and Washington*, 1969, p. 3.

³³³ *Ibid*, pp. 4-5.

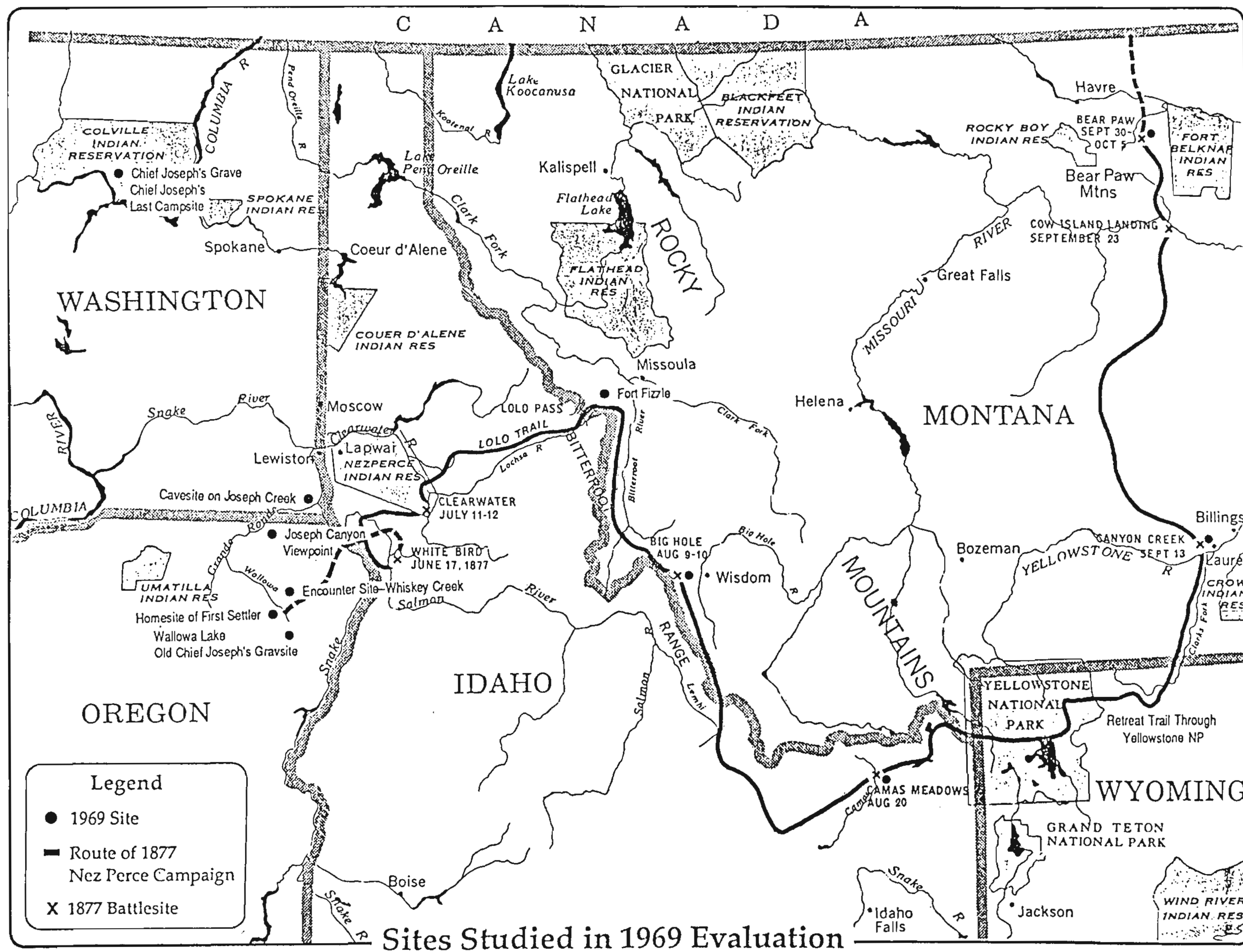


Figure 6. Sites Studied in 1969 Evaluation (NPS map).

they were too far from the rest of the park. The sites in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming associated with the war were more or less significant but also seemed too distant to be added to the park.³³⁴ In effect, the team was suggesting that the park could cross state lines but it should still stay within the area of the Nez Perce homeland; “Nez Perce country” should not be redefined to include the trail of the Nez Perce in 1877 nor the scenes of the non-treaty Nez Percés’ exile following their defeat.

The team closed its 37-page report by proposing two alternatives for bringing the two significant Oregon sites into the park. One alternative would involve government purchase of 5.1 acres of fee land and 100 acres of scenic easement surrounding the elder Chief Joseph gravesite at Wallowa Lake. The other alternative would accept this site under current ownership and the Park Service would administer it through a cooperative agreement. In other words, the question of federal acquisition of this small parcel of land was critical. Regardless of whether the federal government acquired the site or not, the addition of the two Oregon sites would require Congress to amend the original park act by removing the stipulation that the park would be confined to Idaho.³³⁵

Congressman Ullman introduced H.R. 1189, a bill to amend the Nez Perce National Historical Park Act, on January 22, 1971. The House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs requested more information from the Park Service in support of Ullman’s bill. Specifically the committee needed data on the current land status of the two sites, the kind of resources the sites contained, and the Park Service’s land requirements in order to protect them adequately, and details on how the Park Service would develop the two sites as well as cost estimates for each. The Park Service did not commit the necessary staff time to compile this information, and so the bill languished in committee. A frustrated Alvin Josephy complained that “something seems to have gone awry in the Washington office.”³³⁶ But Superintendent Jack Williams attributed the Park Service’s neglect of the House committee’s request to lower echelons in the agency.³³⁷

The newly operational Pacific Northwest Regional Office produced an environmental impact statement on the proposed Oregon park additions in the fall of 1972, and the Washington office

³³⁴ Ibid, pp. 17-30.

³³⁵ Ibid, pp. 36-37.

³³⁶ Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., to Jack Williams, September 7, 1971, NEPE, Administrative Files, L58 Proposed Areas - New Additions, Wallowa 1970-1973.

³³⁷ The NPS Western Region was in the process of reorganization and the design office in San Francisco was getting split up between Seattle and Denver. Jack Williams to Don Swart, February 26, 1973, NEPE, Administrative files, L58 Proposed Areas - New Additions, Wallowa 1970-1973.

completed a legislative support package in December 1972, but the Ullman bill was never reintroduced.³³⁸

Despite the disappointing outcome, this early effort to make the park more nearly encompass all of “Nez Perce country” had lasting repercussions. The most important result was to spur Nez Perce tribal interest in the Oregon, Washington, and Montana sites. As early as November 1967, Superintendent Burns and NPTEC Chairman Richard Halfmoon travelled to the gravesite of Chief Joseph the Younger near Nespelem, Washington, with the idea that the park might some day encompass this site. In 1969, the additions study team made initial contact with Joe Redthunder of Nespelem, the oldest living descendent of Chief Joseph.³³⁹ With the creation of Nez Perce National Historical Park, Nez Perces began to take an interest in the battlefield sites in Montana as well. Josiah Red Wolf, the last Nez Perce survivor of the War of 1877, had lost his mother and sister in the Battle of the Big Hole when he was five years old. Now in his nineties, he went to Big Hole National Battlefield and broke ground for the new visitor center, marking the first time he had been back to this tragic scene of his youth.³⁴⁰ In the centennial year of the war, several hundred Nez Perces traveled to the Bear Paw Battlefield to take part in ceremonies. There they found the state’s historical markers inaccurately placed and in some cases defaced. That fall, NPTEC passed a resolution urging that the state of Montana transfer this state park to the federal government for inclusion in the Nez Perce National Historical Park. The NPS responded that the War of 1877 was already adequately represented in the national park system by Big Hole National Battlefield and the White Bird Battlefield.³⁴¹

A second important result of the early effort to expand Nez Perce National Historical Park was the attention it brought to the Old Chief Joseph gravesite. Not only did local citizens of Wallowa County become interested in better preserving the site, but Nez Perces of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in Oregon and the Nez Perce Indian Reservation in Idaho also became better apprised of the situation. In 1972, NPS officials negotiated with the owner of the surrounding land, the Associated Ditch Company. The Associated Ditch Company expressed strong opposition to the initial proposal of a 100-acre scenic easement. Following those negotiations, the NPS revised its proposal to involve acquisition of the existing 5.1-acre parcel (owned by the Bureau of

³³⁸ National Park Service, *Draft Environmental Statement, Proposed Oregon Additions, Nez Perce National Historical Park*, 1972, Acting Regional Director to Director, December 6, 1972, NEPE, L58 Proposed Areas - New Additions, Wallowa 1970-1973.

³³⁹ Stephanie Toothman, interview with author, August 24, 1995.

³⁴⁰ Robert Burns, interview with author, July 22, 1995.

³⁴¹ Mark Stevens, “Chief Joseph’s Revenge,” *The New Yorker*, August 8, 1994, p. 32; Wilfred A. Scott to Cecil B. Andrus, October 11, 1977, Edward J. Kurtz to Scott, December 13, 1977, Director to Scott, December 16, 1977, and Russell Dickenson to Scott, January 13, 1978, NEPE, Administrative Files, A3815 Public Relations - Nez Perce Tribe.

Indian Affairs) plus acquisition of a maximum of 8 acres in fee.³⁴² This proposal formed the basis for renewed discussion in the 1980s.

The Park Additions Study Redux

A proposed condominium development near the site of the Old Chief Joseph grave reignited the park additions proposal in the mid-1980s. In August 1985, NPTEC passed a resolution affirming the significance of the Old Chief Joseph gravesite in Wallowa County, Oregon, and expressing opposition to any commercial or residential development of the surrounding land.³⁴³ In December 1986, Stanlynn Daugherty, chairperson of the Historical Park Committee of Enterprise, Oregon, wrote to Oregon Senator Bob Packwood requesting that the NPS conduct a feasibility study and support a legislative amendment of the park's enabling act.³⁴⁴ Senator Mark Hatfield and Representative Robert F. Smith received other inquiries by constituents who supported acquisition of the site. This correspondence, coupled with a public meeting in Enterprise on November 7, 1986, attended by park officials, representatives from the Nez Perce and Umatilla Tribes, local state park officials, and area citizens, led to an initiative by the NPS's Pacific Northwest Regional Office in 1987. Acting without any official request from Congress for a feasibility-suitability study, the regional office formed a task force with the object of reviewing and updating the 1969 additions study. Specifically, NPS officials perceived an opportunity to reopen the issue of a multi-state park, and to lift the ceilings on land acquisition, easements, and development.³⁴⁵

Regional Historian Stephanie Toothman, serving as team leader, obtained a minimal \$5,000 for the project from the regional director, the most that could be afforded without a congressional request. The team adopted a two-pronged strategy for determining the suitability and feasibility of park additions: NPS Chief Historian Ed Bearss and former Idaho State Historic Preservation Officer Merle Wells would develop National Landmark recommendations for key sites, buttressing the case for the suitability of park additions; Toothman, the superintendent, and other team members, meanwhile, would reopen the question of enlarging the park beyond the state of Idaho,

³⁴² Department of the Interior, *Draft Environmental Statement, Proposed Oregon Additions, Nez Perce National Historical Park*, [1971]; Superintendent to Regional Director, March 3, 1972, NEPE, chrono file; Regional Director to Associate Director, May 22, 1973, NEPE, L58 Proposed Areas - New Additions, Wallowa 1970-1973.

³⁴³ Task Directive, Nez Perce Additions Study: 1987, NEPE, Additions Study files.

³⁴⁴ Stanlynn Daugherty to Robert Packwood, December 1, 1986, NEPE, Additions Study files.

³⁴⁵ Acting Superintendent to Regional Director, November 13, 1986, NEPE, chrono files; Task Directive, Nez Perce Additions Study: 1987, NEPE, Additions Study files. Regional Historian Stephanie Toothman served as team leader. Other team members included Superintendent Roy Weaver, Regional Chief of Natural Resource Management Reed Jarvis, Regional Archeologist Jim Thomson, and Glenn Hinsdale of the regional office's Interpretation Division. The task force also included representatives from the BIA, Forest Service, and Idaho State Historical Society.

focusing on the feasibility of park additions. The team re-established contact with Joe Redthunder and other members of the Joseph Band of Nez Perce as well as tribal representatives of the Umatilla and Nez Perce Tribes, and made a whirlwind tour of proposed sites in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho. As project funding was exhausted after this tour, Toothman was left to write the report primarily on her own, with some help from Superintendent Weaver.³⁴⁶

The report exceeded the parameters of the 1969 study and evaluated the Montana and Wyoming sites on the same basis with the Washington, Oregon, and Idaho sites. The study team considered a number of new sites and accepted the idea of expanding the park into a five-state area. Altogether, seventeen sites were evaluated and fourteen were determined to be suitable and feasible for addition to the park. The fourteen sites considered suitable and feasible for addition were Tolo Lake, Looking Glass's 1877 Campsite, and Camas Meadows Battle Sites in Idaho; Buffalo Eddy and Dug Bar on the Idaho-Washington boundary; Joseph Canyon Viewpoint, Old Chief Joseph's Gravesite and Cemetery, and Traditional Campsite at the Fork of the Lostine and Wallowa rivers in Oregon; Hasotino Village, Burial Site of Chief Joseph the Younger, and Nez Perce Campsites in Washington; and Big Hole National Battlefield, Bear Paw Battlefield, and Canyon Creek in Montana. The three sites that the team rejected were Ahsahka Village Archeological Site on the Clearwater River, Swallows Nest Rock, and Fort Fizzle (Figure 7).³⁴⁷

One of the keystones of the additions proposal was Old Chief Joseph's Gravesite and Cemetery. Superintendent Weaver contended that the site offered a vital opportunity to interpret the story of the non-treaty Nez Perces who had lived in the Wallowa Valley and had constituted about one third of the tribe in the 1870s. Their story was not well-interpreted elsewhere. The beautiful setting of the Wallowa Valley would help provide an understanding of the "sorrow and difficulty which plagued those Nez Perces who were forced out of their homeland," Weaver argued. Moreover, the site would provide a suitable west entrance to the park. He added candidly, "this is an unusual Park and it is almost impossible to properly orient visitors to the Park before they have passed through much of it."³⁴⁸

Since the report had not been requested by Congress and was not an officially funded suitability-feasibility study, NPS planners and the legislative liaison staff in the Washington office did not know what to do with it.³⁴⁹ Various sections containing support data on funding, staffing,

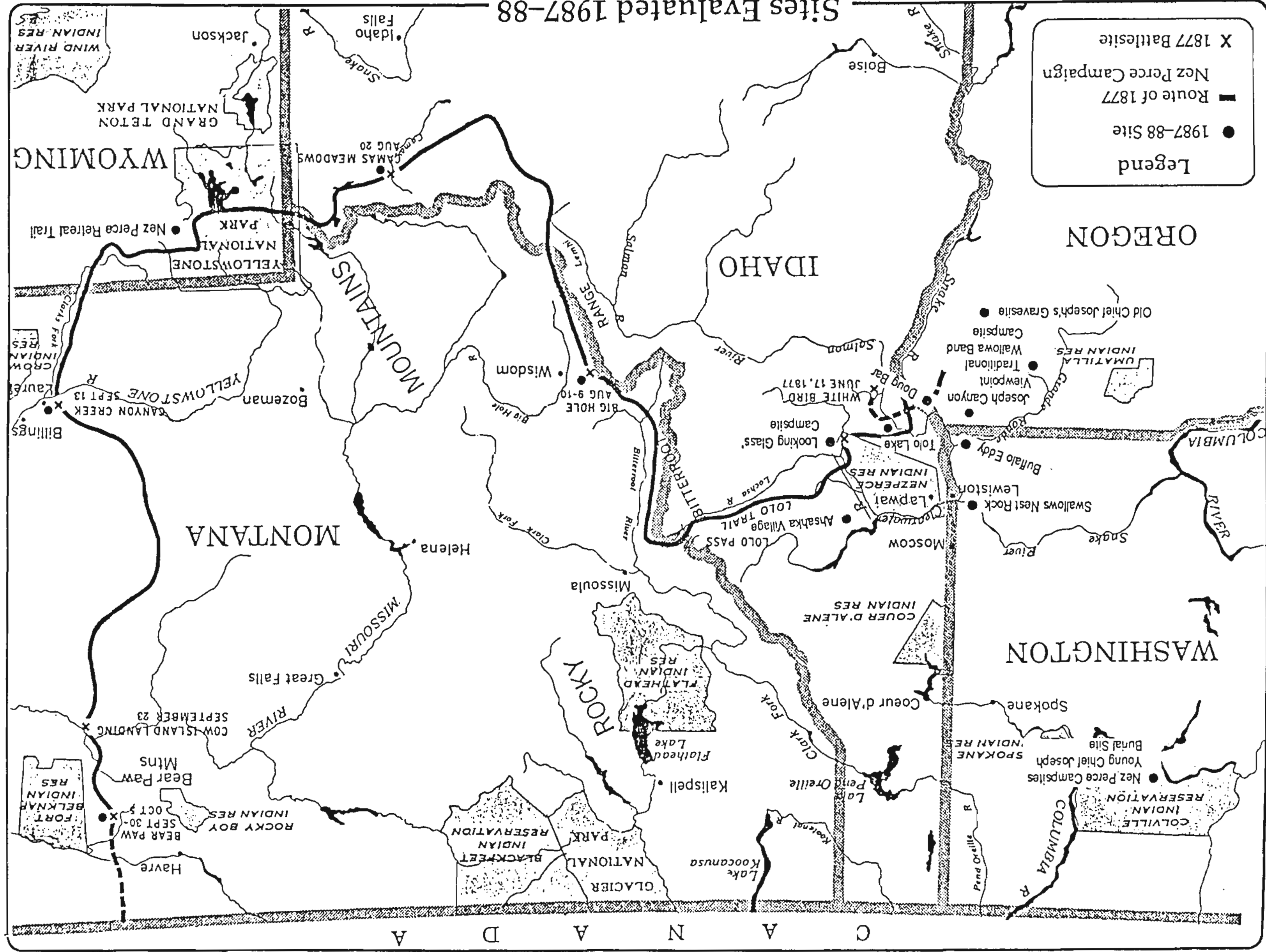
³⁴⁶ Stephanie Toothman, interview with author, August 24, 1995; Stephanie Toothman, comments on draft, March 18, 1996.

³⁴⁷ National Park Service, Nez Perce National Historical Park Additions Study (Draft Report), 1989, NEPE, Additions Study files. The team rejected Fort Fizzle because the earlier studies had rejected it; the team did not visit the site. The team rejected Swallows Nest because, contrary to earlier reports, tribal representatives did not indicate that it had any significance to the Nez Perce people. (Stephanie Toothman, comments on draft, March 18, 1996.)

³⁴⁸ Superintendent to Regional Director, February 22, 1990, NEPE, chrono files.

³⁴⁹ Stephanie Toothman, interview with author, August 24, 1995.

Sites Evaluated 1987-88



and socio-economic conditions were alternately included and deleted. In May 1990, Regional Director Charles H. Odegaard finally forwarded the report to Director James M. Ridenour, noting that it lacked “the full array of legislative support data.” The report did not contain estimates for land acquisition costs, nor a detailed development schedule, nor data sheets to indicate estimated increased operational costs. Perhaps most importantly, the report did not propose site boundaries nor detail land ownership status of the sites. These shortcomings, stemming from the report’s unusual genesis, tended to disguise problems that would trouble both the legislative effort and management. The report projected a need for some modest visitor contact facilities, landscaping and site stabilization, signing, fencing, and parking development, for a total cost of approximately \$175,000. Odegaard stated that the additions had the support of Oregon’s Senators Packwood and Hatfield, and Montana’s Governor Stan Stephens and Senator Max Baucus.³⁵⁰ With the circulation of the additions study, the stage was set for the campaign to have the Nez Perce National Historical Park Act amended.

The Nez Perce National Historical Park Act of 1991

The legislative campaign for additions to the Nez Perce National Historical Park demanded an unprecedented level of cooperation between the different groups of Nez Percés on the Umatilla, Colville, and Nez Perce Indian Reservations. Leaders of the separate Nez Perce bands had to overcome their historical mistrust and animosity toward one another dating back to the missionary period, the Treaty of 1863, and the War of 1877. The situation was complicated by the fact that the Nez Perce groups in Washington and Oregon belonged to “confederated tribes,” and NPTEC did not want to involve these other tribes in the park. Fortunately, the Nez Perce people had already made a start toward improved relations in discussions pertaining to the designation of Nez Perce National Historic Trail in the mid-1980s.

Representatives of the Nez Perce band on the Umatilla Indian Reservation worked closely with NPTEC representatives concerning the proposed sites in Wallowa County in 1986-1988. Contacts between NPTEC and members of the Joseph band of Nez Percés who lived on the Colville Indian Reservation were more sensitive. The mostly Christian Nez Percés of the Nez Perce Indian Reservation, many of whose ancestors had refused to aid Chief Joseph and his followers in the War of 1877, now wanted to embrace that historical figure as part of a shared past. NPTEC Chairman Charles Hayes explained in a press release in June 1990, “Our people want to heal the wounds of the past and share our history. The rich culture and history of the Nez Perce can teach us lessons today. Chief Joseph was a statesman and a true American hero.”³⁵¹ The Nez Percés of the Colville Indian Reservation, however, were inclined to guard their

³⁵⁰ Regional Director to Director, May 31, 1990, NEPE, Additions Study files.

³⁵¹ Press Release, “Nez Perce Tribe Applauds Bill to Save Historical Sites,” June 28, 1990, NEPE, Additions Study files.

traditional ways and history jealously. Nez Perces of the Colville Indian Reservation insisted that they were the only “true descendants of Chief Joseph,” and should therefore have greater influence than NPTEC on all sites relating to the War of 1877.³⁵² NPTEC found this claim to be politically unacceptable and historically unfounded.³⁵³ Many Nez Perce combatants in the War of 1877 belonged to other bands. There were descendants of Ollokot, for example, at Lapwai, Idaho and Pendleton, Oregon.³⁵⁴ To complicate matters further, some Nez Perces on the Colville Indian Reservation objected to Joe Redthunder discussing the additions with NPS officials as if he represented the band.³⁵⁵ Official representation of the Chief Joseph Band would remain a problem until the final hours of the legislative campaign.

These problems notwithstanding, the Nez Perce Tribe asked the congressional delegations of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana to consider sponsoring a bill as soon as the NPS released the 1989 draft report on park additions.³⁵⁶ Senator James A. McClure and Representative Larry Craig of Idaho took the lead and introduced companion bills in the Senate and House on June 28, 1990. Senators Max Baucus and Conrad Burns of Montana, Brock Adams of Washington, and Steve Symms of Idaho cosponsored the Senate bill 2804, and Representatives Jim McDermott of Washington and John Rhodes of Arizona cosponsored the House version. This was a strong showing of regional, bipartisan support. The Senate Subcommittee on Energy and Natural Resources held a hearing on S.2804 on July 27, 1990, and reported favorably on the bill, with amendments, on September 19.³⁵⁷ The Senate passed S.2804 on October 18, but the House failed to vote on the measure before Congress adjourned.

In the long run this appears to have been fortunate, for S.2804 as amended had some peculiar provisions that were subsequently deleted in the Nez Perce National Historical Park Additions Act of 1991. First, it amended the Act of May 15, 1965 to include potential sites in Oregon, Washington, Montana, Wyoming, and Oklahoma. Although the Park Service’s additions study did not consider any sites in Oklahoma, the Senate bill included this state in the event that the Secretary of the Interior would later identify sites associated with the exile of Nez Perce tribal members to Oklahoma Territory for addition to the park. Second, the Senate bill went beyond the

³⁵² Resolution 1994-344, no date, NEPE, Resource Management files, Nez Perce Tribe.

³⁵³ Charles H. Hayes to Eddie Palmanteer, Jr., August 11, 1994, NEPE, Resource Management files, Nez Perce Tribe.

³⁵⁴ W. Otis Halfmoon, comments on draft, July 18, 1996.

³⁵⁵ Sue Buchel, Record of Telephone Conversation with Patty Wren of the *Wenatchee World*, October 8, 1991, NEPE, Administrative Files, L58 Proposed Areas - New Additions, Wallowa.

³⁵⁶ Charles H. Hayes to Les Aucoin, May 8, 1990, NEPE, Administrative files, L58 Proposed Areas - New Additions, Wallowa.

³⁵⁷ U.S. Congress, Senate, *Nez Perce National Historical Park*, 101st Cong., 2d sess., Report 101-494, October 3, 1990, p. 3.

Park Service additions study with respect to sites in Montana. "Additional sites to be designated," the bill stated, "shall include but not be limited to Virginia City, Montana; Lolo Pass, Montana; St. Mary's Mission, Montana, Bannack State Park, Montana; and Pompeys Pillar, Montana."³⁵⁸ Most of these sites do not relate to Nez Perce country, and their inclusion in the park would have created formidable problems for interpretation. Third, for reasons that remain unclear the Senate subcommittee found it advisable to amend the bill by stipulating that the individual components of the park would be administered by the respective regional division of the National Park Service in which the component was located. This would have made it even more difficult for the park to function as a single administrative unit of the national park system.

The Pacific Northwest Regional Office completed a final draft of the additions study and formally transmitted it through NPS Director James Ridenour to Congress in 1990. Senator Larry Craig, formerly a member of the House, introduced new legislation, Senate Bill 550, in the 102nd Congress. Representative Pat Williams of Montana introduced a similar measure, House Resolution 2032, in the House. Again, members of the Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana delegations cosponsored both bills. Absent from these bills were the awkward provisions contained in the previous Senate version. The Senate passed S.550 with amendments in August 1991, and the House passed HR.2032 with amendments two months later. The Senate then added several amendments to the House bill and passed it on November 27, 1991.

It now remained for the House to repass the bill as amended by the Senate. The chief difference between the House and Senate versions of the bill concerned limits on the power of the federal government to acquire land from private property owners, and it was on this point that congressional debate focused in the following year.³⁵⁹

The Old Chief Joseph Gravesite in Wallowa Country, Oregon, the site that had initially stirred interest in the park additions, now became the most controversial issue. Congress had already appropriated \$300,000 for the acquisition of eight acres around this site. The funds had been allocated to the U.S. Forest Service for F.Y. 1991 on the assumption that the government was negotiating with a willing seller. Subsequently, the landowner had become interested in subdividing the land for residential development and no longer wanted to sell. This raised the controversial issue of whether any land involved in the bill could be taken by condemnation. The House amendments passed in 1991 significantly scaled back the power of eminent domain authorized by the bill by allowing it at only four specific sites. But this did not go far enough for the Senate, which eliminated the power of eminent domain altogether and left the Park Service with no ability to acquire and protect these sites.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁸ U.S. Congress, House, *S.2804, in the House of Representatives*, 101st Cong., 2d sess., October 18, 1990.

³⁵⁹ Nez Perce National Historical Parks Chronology, no date, BSU, Larry LaRocco Papers, MSS 139.

³⁶⁰ *Congressional Record*, House, June 29, 1992, p. H5354.

On June 29, 1992, Representative Bruce Vento of Minnesota introduced House Resolution 504 to dispose of the Senate's amendments to House Resolution 2032. Essentially this resolution called for an amendment of the Senate amendments that would allow condemnation authority under carefully prescribed circumstances. The Secretary of the Interior would not be able to acquire land for the park without the consent of the owner except within the four parcels previously designated by the House bill, including the eight-acre parcel around the Old Chief Joseph Gravesite. Moreover, the Secretary would have to find that the nature of the land use had changed or was about to change significantly, and that the acquisition of the land was essential for the purposes of the park. In short, Representative Vento maintained, condemnation authority was a necessary management tool but also a tool of last resort.³⁶¹

Intense negotiations followed. Superintendent Walker met with the mayor of Joseph, the landowner, local citizens, tribal representatives, and Forest Service officials. The meeting resulted in an agreement whereby the Forest Service would transfer the \$300,000 appropriation for land acquisition to the Park Service. Meanwhile, NPTEC Vice Chairman Charles Hayes and Joe Redthunder went to Washington to lobby Oregon's Senator Mark Hatfield, who now opposed the bill. Their pleas, together with the House resolution's stipulation that no more than eight acres could be acquired at the Old Chief Joseph Gravesite without the willing consent of the landowner, persuaded Hatfield to drop his opposition to the bill.³⁶²

There remained one final point of controversy which nearly doomed the bill. On October 5-6, the Chief Joseph Band met to discuss the legislation and then voted to oppose it. They contended that they had not been consulted and that they did not want the Younger Chief Joseph's gravesite developed, publicized, and subjected to vandalism.³⁶³ The attorney for the Confederated Colville Tribes notified Washington's Senator Slade Gorton, who promised to stop the bill. A mere two days remained before the bill was scheduled for a vote. Superintendent Walker and Allen Slickpoo initiated a meeting with the Colville Nez Perce at Nespelem and drove through the night to get there by 8:00 a.m. They assured the Chief Joseph Band that the Colville Confederated Tribes would retain ownership of the sites on the Colville Indian Reservation and that the sites would only be activated and developed at the tribe's initiative. At 10:30 a.m. the band voted 32 to 8 in favor of the bill; the tribal attorney faxed the news to Senator Gorton's office, and the Senator lifted his stop on the bill.³⁶⁴

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² Frank Walker, interview with author, July 21, 1995; *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, September 24, 1992. Hatfield's opposition to the bill stemmed from his longstanding policy of refusing to sponsor any legislation that was opposed by county commissioners in Oregon. The Wallowa County commissioners supported the condominium development as a needed source of revenue and were adamantly opposed to any additional federal land ownership within the county. (Stephanie Toothman, comments on draft, March 18, 1996.)

³⁶³ Eddie Palmanteer, Jr., to Brock Adams, October 6, 1992, NEPE, Additions Study files.

³⁶⁴ Frank Walker, interview with author, July 21, 1995.

Prior to the Senate's vote, Gorton asked for clarification of the Chief Joseph Band's prerogatives in the development and interpretation of the park additions. The following letter from NPTEC Chairman Sam Penney to Colville Confederated Tribes Chairman Eddie Palmanteer, Jr., was inserted in the *Congressional Record*:

Dear Chairman Palmeteer (sic): I am very concerned about the Nez Perce Park Additions Bill and its chances of passing this 102d Congress. The bill would authorize the National Park Service to designate specific sites significant to the history and culture of the Nez Perce people. The hold placed on the bill by Senator Gorton threatens to kill this bill. If this bill dies, it is highly unlikely we will be able to stop condominium development from encroaching upon the Old Joseph Monument site near Wallowa Lake. This has been our primary driving force in pushing this additions bill. I want to provide the following assurances to the Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce and to the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation:

1. Categorically and without exception, the Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce will have complete and total purview over any sites designated under the Nez Perce National Historical Park within the boundary of the Colville Reservation. If the Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce on the Colville Reservation chooses not to establish any recognition of the sites, then the sites would remain inactive.
2. The Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce on the Colville Reservation will be consulted and participate in the interpretation of all other sites of the park system, with the exception of those located within the boundary of the Nez Perce Reservation.
3. If the Chief Joseph Band of Nez Perce requests, the Nez Perce Tribe will support an amendment to the Nez Perce National Historical Park in the 103d Congress to remove the Washington State sites from the park system.

I hope this letter addresses your concerns.

Sincerely,
Sam Penney,
Chairman, Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee³⁶⁵

After this significant maneuver by Gorton on behalf of the Colville Confederated Tribes, the Senate passed the bill with unanimous consent.

Big Hole National Battlefield and the Unit System

Big Hole National Battlefield had a long association with Nez Perce National Historical Park that predated the Nez Perce National Historical Park Additions Act of 1991. In fact, the national battlefield predated the national historical park by many decades. The 1877 battlefield site was set aside as a military reserve in 1883 and designated a national monument in 1910. It was transferred from the War Department to the National Park Service in 1933 and placed under the

³⁶⁵ *Congressional Record*, October 8, 1992, p. S17860.

administration of the Yellowstone National Park superintendent. Expanded from 5 acres to 195 acres by executive order in 1939, Big Hole Battlefield remained virtually undeveloped until Mission 66. The Mission 66 program for Big Hole Battlefield provided for the construction of a visitor center and administration building, development of trails, landscaping, and interpretive signs, and marking of the monument boundary.³⁶⁶ Beginning in 1957, Yellowstone ranger Robert Burns was assigned to the area from June through September as the first on-site administrator of the unit.

Burns, who later served as first superintendent of Nez Perce National Historical Park from 1965 to 1968, thought that Mission 66 planning for Big Hole Battlefield was an important antecedent in the creation of the Idaho park because it awakened interest in the Nez Perce story.³⁶⁷ He and Idaho historian Samuel M. Beal were instrumental in getting the Mission 66 program approved by a skeptical regional director. Burns also relayed to his superiors his strong impression that a large percentage of visitors to the Big Hole Battlefield were sympathetic to the Nez Perce cause, and this too seemed to consolidate NPS support for the unit as well as the Nez Perce National Historical Park idea. A visitor center was built at the battlefield in 1968.³⁶⁸

Big Hole Battlefield National Monument was redesignated Big Hole National Battlefield by an act of Congress on May 17, 1963. As amended in 1972, this act appropriated \$42,500 for acquisition of approximately 466 acres of additional land (Figure 8). In 1987, certain administrative functions of Big Hole National Battlefield were transferred to Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site.³⁶⁹ The Nez Perce National Historical Park Additions Act of 1991 included Big Hole National Battlefield within the park additions.

The act placed Big Hole National Battlefield in a somewhat anomalous position within Nez Perce National Historical Park. For example, Section 2 of the act expressly added Big Hole National Battlefield to the park, but it did not change the national battlefield designation nor annul

³⁶⁶ National Park Service, *Mission 66 for Big Hole Battlefield National Monument*, [1957], Robert Burns papers.

³⁶⁷ Mission 66 was the National Park Service's answer to growing public use of the national park system in the first decade after World War II: proposed by the Eisenhower administration and approved by Congress in 1956, it constituted a ten-year program of development to conclude in 1966 on the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the National Park Service.

³⁶⁸ Robert L. Burns, interview with author, July 22, 1995; Burns to Howard Baker, [1968?], NEPE, chrono files.

³⁶⁹ National Park Service, *Big Hole National Battlefield Statement for Management*, November 1992, pp. 5, 10.

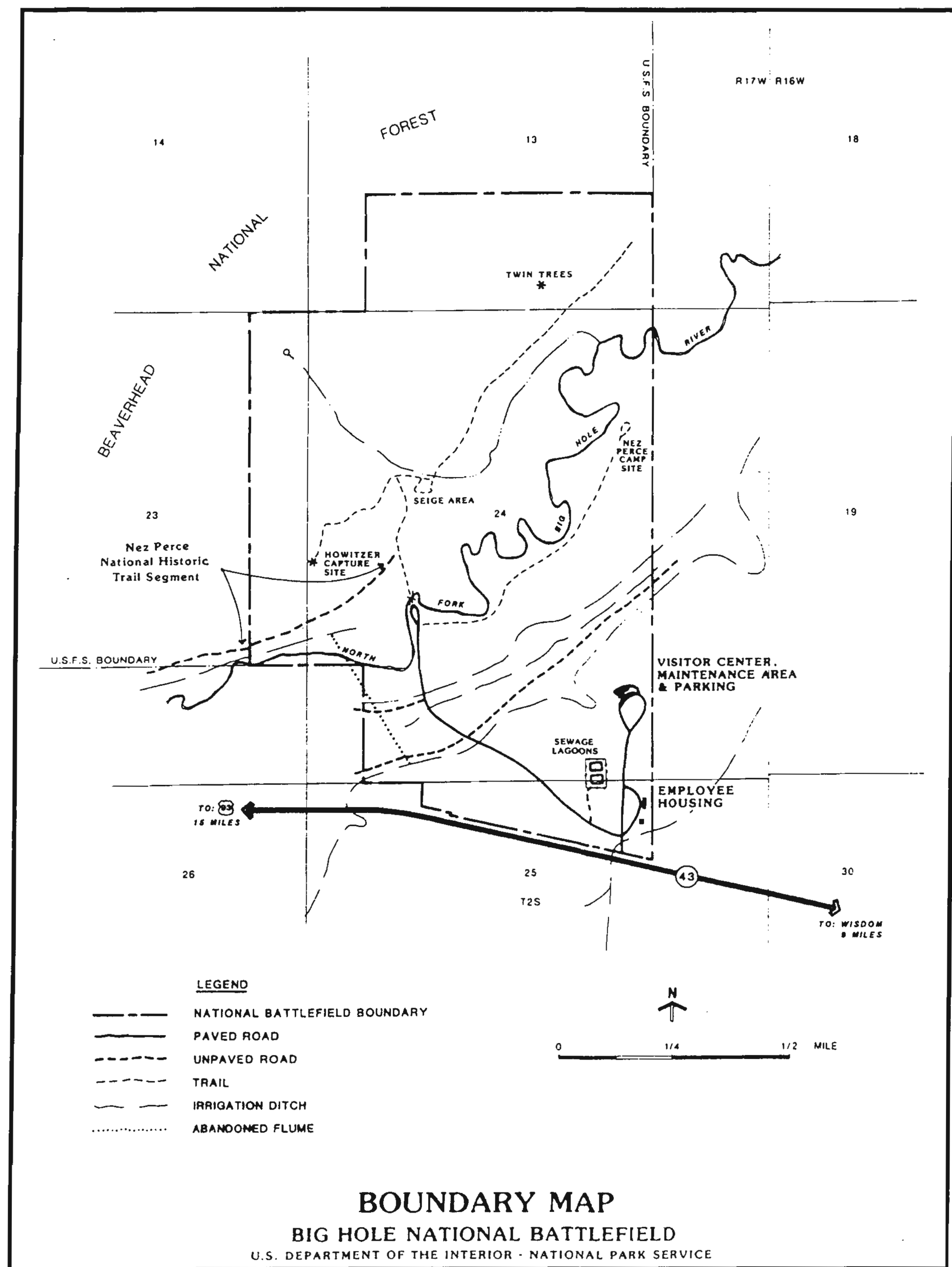


Figure 8. Map of Big Hole National Battlefield (NPS map).

this unit's own authorizing legislation. Indeed, the act directly acknowledged the site's dual status in its provision that "Lands added to the Big Hole National Battlefield, Montana, pursuant to paragraph (10) shall become part of and be placed under the administrative jurisdiction of, the Big Hole National Battlefield, but may be interpreted in accordance with the purposes of this Act." Moreover, the site retained its own base funding as a distinct unit within the national park system. The Big Hole National Battlefield superintendent and staff remained in place at the visitor center and administration building.³⁷⁰

It appears that Congress's intent was to allow the Park Service some latitude in formulating how this unit and the other Montana units would be administered. Indeed, NPS officials at the field level began conceptualizing how the expanded park could most effectively be administered several months before Congress finally enacted the legislation. Nez Perce National Historical Park Superintendent Frank Walker, Big Hole National Battlefield Superintendent Jock Whitworth, and Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historical Site Superintendent Eddie Lopez had been working together on the legislation since 1990. Walker believed that the most effective way to manage the Montana sites would be from Big Hole National Battlefield and the Rocky Mountain Regional Office. To avoid duplication of efforts between the Pacific Northwest and Rocky Mountain regions of the National Park Service, certain parkwide administrative matters such as general management planning, interpretive planning, and relations with the Nez Perce Tribe could be handled out of one region.

Pacific Northwest Regional Director Charles H. Odegaard supported this concept and broached the prospect of a cooperative agreement with the Rocky Mountain Region on October 19, 1992, three weeks after the Senate passed the bill. Odegaard suggested that the two regional directors decide between them which region would take the lead. The first task of the lead office would be to prepare a memorandum for activation of the new additions.³⁷¹

Even this arrangement proved to be unwieldy, however. In May 1993, Rocky Mountain Regional Director Bob Baker was helping conduct a Purpose and Significance Workshop for Big Hole National Battlefield when he realized that it was difficult to interpret Big Hole separately from the other sites in Nez Perce National Historical Park. In March 1994, Baker and Odegaard agreed to an exchange: the three Montana battle sites for the Oregon National Historic Trail. The exchange took place on June 10, 1994. Thus, the Montana sites were brought under the administration of the superintendent at Spalding.³⁷²

While Big Hole Battlefield and the farflung Montana sites posed the most immediate challenge to park administration, the sheer number of new sites in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington created

³⁷⁰ Sue Buchel, interview with author, October 23, 1995.

³⁷¹ Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region to Regional Director, Rocky Mountain Region, October 19, 1992, NEPE, Administrative files, L58 Proposed Areas - New Additions, Wallowa.

³⁷² Frank Walker, comments on draft, February 26, 1996.

more complexity too. Given the myriad number of land owners of the park's 38 sites, the NPS would need cooperative agreements with various state, local, and other federal agencies, four tribal governments, and several private organizations. For example, several sites were part of the Nez Perce National Historic Trail and would involve cooperative management with the Forest Service. It was approximately a five-hour drive from Spalding to Nespelem, Washington, and twice that from Spalding to the Bear Paw Battlefield in Montana. Such a complicated park could not be administered out of one or even two administrative locations.³⁷³

On January 13-14, 1994, the superintendents of Nez Perce National Historical Park, Big Hole National Battlefield, and Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site convened with staff from the Personnel Division of the Pacific Northwest Regional Office to revamp the park's organizational structure. In essence, the plan replaced traditional functional divisions with five management units based on logical clusters of sites. Each of these units would handle daily operations, cultivate local community support, and develop working relations with the park's partners in that area. Technical activities, planning, and overall coordination would be consolidated in a park-wide support unit based at Spalding.³⁷⁴

Superintendent Walker put this staff reorganization into effect in stages. The Oregon/Washington Unit was activated even before the unit organization concept was formally developed. Paul Henderson began work in August 1993 at Joseph, Oregon, as the park's first unit manager.³⁷⁵ The following year Curator Sue Buchel accepted reappointment as unit manager of the Montana Unit. In addition to managing a permanent staff of five at Big Hole National Battlefield, Buchel had line authority to the park ranger at Bear Paw Battlefield. Park Ranger Otis Halfmoon established an NPS presence at Chinook, Montana and at the site. Meanwhile, Walker established the remaining management units at Spalding and Grangeville. Art Hathaway served as the manager of the Spalding unit, with primary responsibility for the visitor center operation, while Mark O'Neill became the manager of the White Bird and Upper Clearwater Units, with offices and staff in Grangeville.³⁷⁶

The unit management concept more or less reflected the contemporary regional reorganization of the national park system in microcosm. It was hoped that each management unit would function as a small park, enjoying a reasonable amount of autonomy for carrying out daily operations while benefiting from centralized administrative support services at Spalding. Superintendent Walker decentralized the administrative organization of Nez Perce National Historical Park at the same time that Director Roger G. Kennedy decentralized the administrative

³⁷³ Nez Perce National Historical Park, Unit Organization Concept, no date, NEPE, library.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Superintendent's Annual Report, 1993, CCSO, library DSC microfiche reports, NEPE D34.

³⁷⁶ Staff organization charts, February 1995, NEPE, library.

organization of the National Park Service regions. Both efforts were aimed at empowering employees, putting employees closer to the resources and the Park Service's constituents, and ultimately reducing administrative costs. Both plans drew inspiration from the objectives outlined in the report of Vice President Al Gore's National Performance Review, *From Red Tape to Results - Creating a Government that Works Better and Costs Less*.

The plan held both opportunities and risks. In order for the plan to work, the superintendent or park manager would have to supervise the unit managers lightly or else the employees in the field would only feel the weight of still another layer of bureaucracy overseeing their decisions. Unit managers, meanwhile, would have to demonstrate abilities to manage staff and develop professional relationships with a multitude of park partners, or, in other words, mirror the skills and responsibilities of the superintendent at a local level. The success of the plan would rest to a large extent on finding and retaining the right people for the unit manager jobs.

Yet with so many communities bordering on or surrounding the 38 sites that composed Nez Perce National Historical Park, decentralization of the park administration seemed to be an imperative. The benefits of having park staff on the ground from Joseph, Oregon, to Chinook, Montana, became apparent as the NPS began seeking public input in its scoping meetings for the park's new General Management Plan in the spring of 1995. Park staff looked to a future in which local communities would be more closely involved, and partnerships between the Park Service and non-government entities would be increasingly emphasized.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁷ Sue Buchel, interview with author, October 23, 1995.

EPILOGUE

NEW DIRECTIONS

A number of administrative and political developments in recent years strongly suggest that Nez Perce National Historical Park is evolving in new directions. In general, the park's major constituents have responded to these new developments with enthusiasm, as the ambitious park additions appear to be a catalyst for growth rather than disintegration. But recent political discourse on the possibility of scaling back the national park system creates a measure of doubt.

The park additions have had a profound effect on park relations with the Nez Perce people. From 1965 to 1985, park officials had virtually no contact with Nez Perces on the Umatilla and Colville Indian Reservations. Nez Perce participation in cultural events consisted solely of Nez Perces who lived on or near the Nez Perce Indian Reservation, with the Nez Perce community of Lapwai being particularly close to park affairs. This started to change when condominium development threatened the Old Chief Joseph Monument site in Oregon and Nez Perces on the Umatilla Reservation became concerned. Superintendent Roy Weaver established new contacts with the Nez Perce groups in Oregon and Washington, and Superintendent Walker cultivated them further. This process also stemmed from interagency meetings with diverse Nez Perce groups who were concerned with the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail, established in 1986. In order to ensure closer cooperation between the park and the Nez Perce people, the Nez Perce National Park Additions Act of 1991 mandated that the NPS would consult Nez Perces on interpretation of the park sites.

Both the 1992 additions and the Nez Perce National Historic Trail focused greater attention on the War of 1877. For many years park officials and Lapwai area Nez Perces had tacitly agreed to minimize interpretation of this sorrowful event. Now, with so many park sites relating to the dispossession, flight, and exile of the non-treaty Nez Perces, the subject could no longer be muted. Increasingly, the public perceived the park and the trail as a single entity commemorating the war.

The 1992 additions and the trail have tended to bring Nez Perce groups together and foster a spirit of cooperation between them. There are differences of opinion about this. One reviewer commented that the NPS role in this process should not be overstated, and that the process has been occurring for some time. Another reviewer objected to the statement that the additions and the trail made the Chief Joseph Band more involved in the park. Following enactment of the Nez Perce National Park Additions Act of 1991, the Nez Perce Tribe organized a reception, hosted by the National Council of American Indians (NCAI) in Washington, D.C. This led to other ceremonies that year at Spalding, Joseph, Big Hole National Battlefield, and Bear Paw Battlefield. The Nez Perce held special pipe ceremonies at these gatherings, as well as at the Clearwater

Battlefield, White Bird Battlefield, and at Tonkawa in Oklahoma. These ceremonies have attracted Nez Perces from Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, and have become annual events.³⁷⁷

Three years after passage of the additions bill, the Park Service appeared to be playing a critical and fruitful role in bringing the different Nez Perce groups into closer agreement on the significance and future direction of the park. The Nez Perce National Historical Park Additions Act of 1991 provides that the Park Service will consult with the Nez Perce people in interpreting the park story. Representatives from the Chief Joseph Band began to participate with representatives of the Nez Perce Tribe in planning for the new sites. By then it was evident that the new shape of the park was tending to soften the jealousies and resentments that had long divided the Nez Perce people. More recently, enactment of the Tribal Self-Governance Act of 1994 added other incentives for cooperation between the NPS and the Nez Perce people, while raising the possibility of a tribally administered park some time in the future. Still, the Nez Perces did not speak with one voice, even on such a fundamental issue as this.

An Interagency Coordinated Strategy workshop in October 1993 also appeared to be pointing the park in a new direction. The workshop brought together representatives of seven federal agencies and the Nez Perce Tribe. Its goal was to develop a coordinated strategy for federal land managers in the Nez Perce country of Idaho that would allow agencies to pool their resources and minimize conflict. At first the Coordinated Strategy was modeled on the so-called "Four Corners Strategy" of resource management being developed in the four corners region of Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona. But as the program developed, the focus shifted to interpretation, documentation, and consultation relating to Nez Perce history and culture. The Park Service, Forest Service, and Nez Perce Tribe were the major partners in the Coordinated Strategy; the Bureau of Reclamation, Army Corps of Engineers, Fish and Wildlife Service, Soil Conservation Service, and Idaho SHPO were involved too. Following the workshop, designated participants took six months to prepare an action plan. Among the promised actions was a Nez Perce Trail symposium. The symposium took place in Lewiston in October 1995.³⁷⁸

Currently the park is embarked on its first general management planning process. The purpose of the General Management Plan (GMP) is to provide management philosophy and direction for the park during the next ten to fifteen years. During the GMP process, NPS officials, Nez Perce representatives, and interested citizens are refining the park's purpose and

³⁷⁷ Frank Walker, interview with author, July 21, 1995; Frank Walker, comments on draft, February 26, 1996.

³⁷⁸ Superintendent to Regional Director, Pacific Northwest Region, Regional Director, Rocky Mountain Region, Superintendent, Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, and Associate Regional Director, Rocky Mountain Region, September 1, 1993, NEPE, Administrative Files, A3815 Public Relations - Nez Perce Tribe; Sue Buchel, interview with author, October 23, 1995; Frank Walker, interview with author, July 21, 1995.

significance, interpretive themes, and management objectives.³⁷⁹ It is perhaps the most open forum for public debate on the meaning of the park since the creation of the Nez Perce Tribal Development Advisory Committee in 1961. Government officials and citizens are choosing among an array of desired futures. Whatever decisions are made concerning the need for site boundaries and land protection, interpretation of the Nez Perce story, and staffing of the various units or functions, it is likely that this unique park will evolve toward co-management by the Park Service and the Nez Perce people.

³⁷⁹ Nez Perce National Historical Park General Management Plan, NEPE, Administrative Files, A4021, Nez Perce NHP Meetings, Park Partners Annual Meetings.

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First Park Headquarters . . .

Robert Burns, first superintendent of Nez Perce National Historical Park, and his wife Vivian display the sign for the first park headquarters, located in Watson's Store, 1965.



Transferring the Deed . . .

Governor Robert E. Smylie signs the deed transferring Spalding State Park to the National Park Service, 1966.

Left to right: Superintendent Robert Burns, Regional Director Ed Hummel, state legislator, Governor Smylie, two state legislators.



St. Joseph's Mission ...

St. Joseph's Mission, Slickpoo, 1975. Founded by Father Joseph M. Cataldo in 1874, the church was the heart of the first Roman Catholic mission in Nez Perce country and was the foremost Catholic church for many years. The cooperative site is owned by the St. Joseph's Mission Historical Society. The NPS executed a cooperative agreement with the Society on June 29, 1970 providing for the preservation, protection, interpretation, renewal, and maintenance of the property.



White Bird Battlefield, 1965 ...

White Bird Canyon was the site of a Nez Perce camp and the first engagement in the War of 1877. Comprising 1,245 acres of fee owned land and 655 acres of scenic easement, it is the largest NPS-owned site in the park.



Officers' Quarters, Fort Lapwai, 1975 . . .

The building is a focal point for interpretation of the Fort Lapwai sites.



Old Chief Joseph's Gravesite Wallowa Lake, Oregon, 1963. . .

In 1926, the remains of Old Chief Joseph were moved to this site from his campsite where he died in 1871. The present grave site is a key for interpreting the history and culture of the Wallowa Nez Perce. Acquisition of the site was authorized by Congress in 1992.



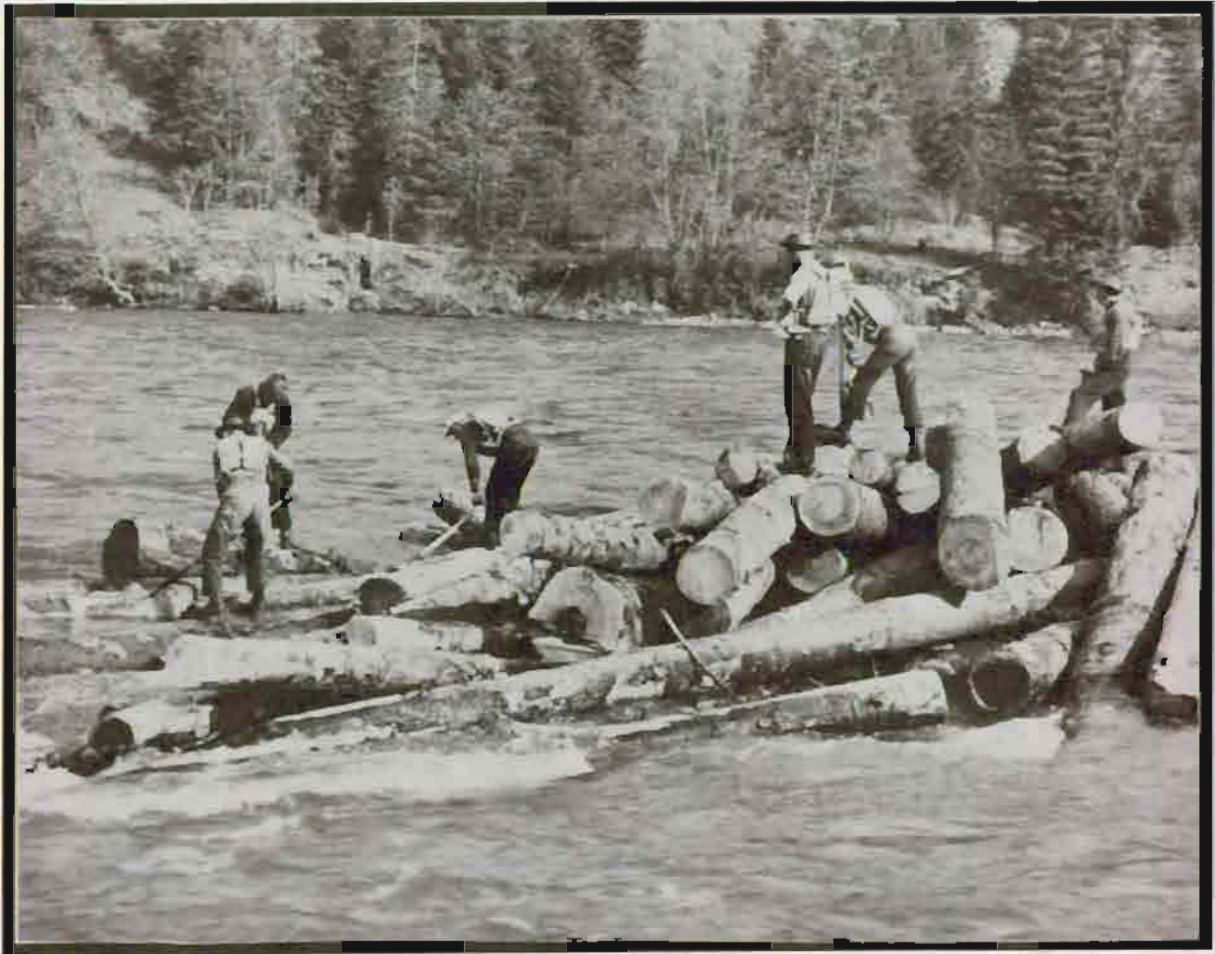
Pierce Courthouse, 1967. . .

The first courthouse in Idaho, located in Idaho's first gold rush town. This cooperative site now has interpretive exhibits inside which relate the building to the gold rush and explain how the gold rush affected the Nez Perce people.



Archeological investigation, Spalding Mission site, 1973. . .

The NPS sponsored an investigation of the Spalding mission complex, including the mission, Spalding home, and mill site. The arboretum can be seen in the background.



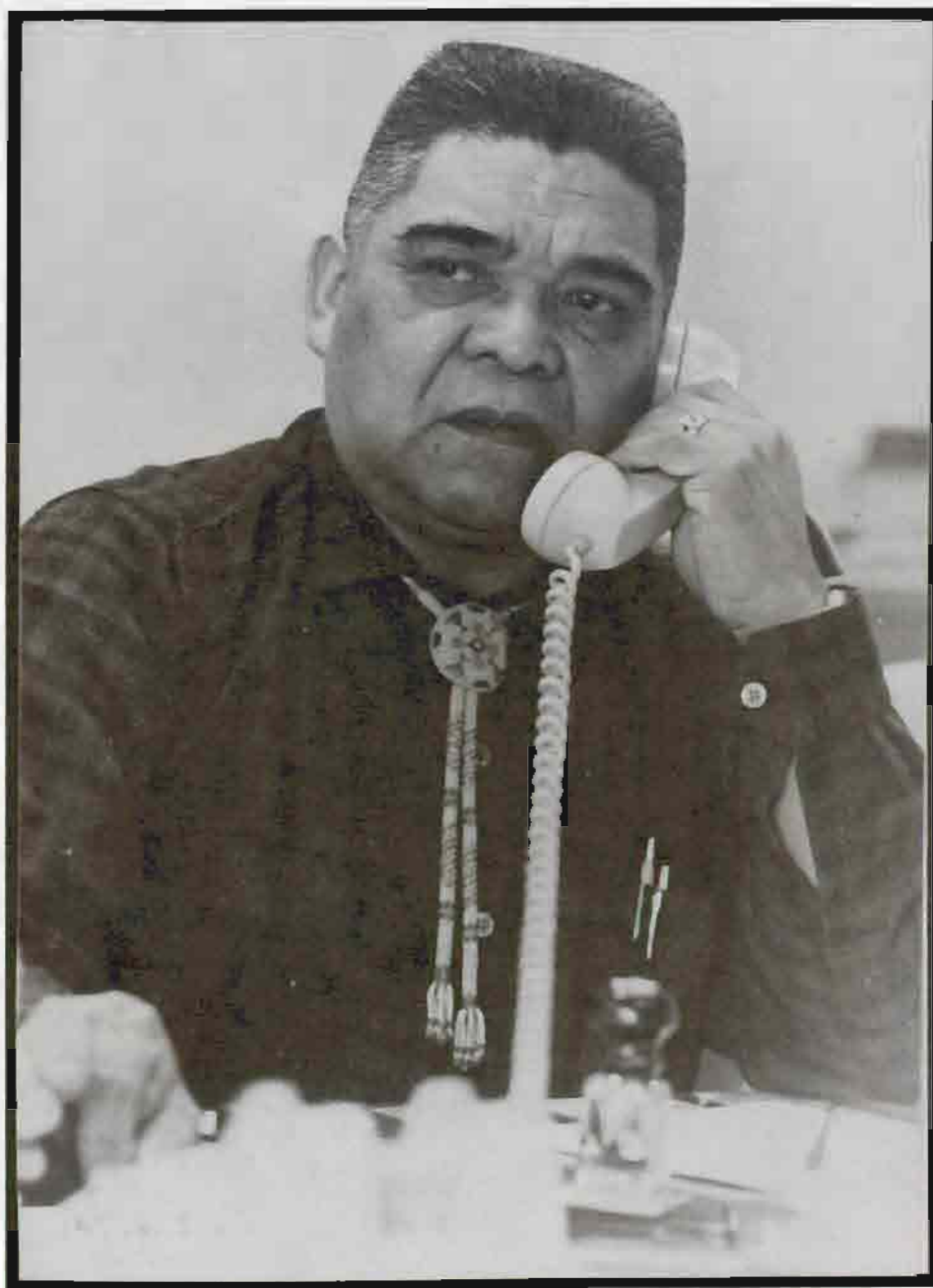
The last log drive on the Clearwater River, 1968. . .

Some of the park's founders hoped that the NPS might interpret this activity for the public as a vestige of the past, but the activity ceased after 1968.



Powwow dancing at Spalding, 1972. . .

Foreground: Randy Ellenwood. Background, left to right: Molly Ellenwood, unidentified male child, Charley Ellenwood.



Richard Halfmoon, 1970. . .

A Nez Perce leader and chairman of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee, Halfmoon has been a longtime supporter of the Nez Perce National Historical Park.



Josiah Red Wolf with NPS Director G. Hartzog, Jr. . . .

In July 1966, NPS Director George Hartzog, Jr., visited the newly authorized national historical park and met with Nez Perce, including Josiah Red Wolf, last survivor of the Nez Perce War. Left to right: Josiah Red Wolf, George Hartzog, Jr., Richard Halfmoon.



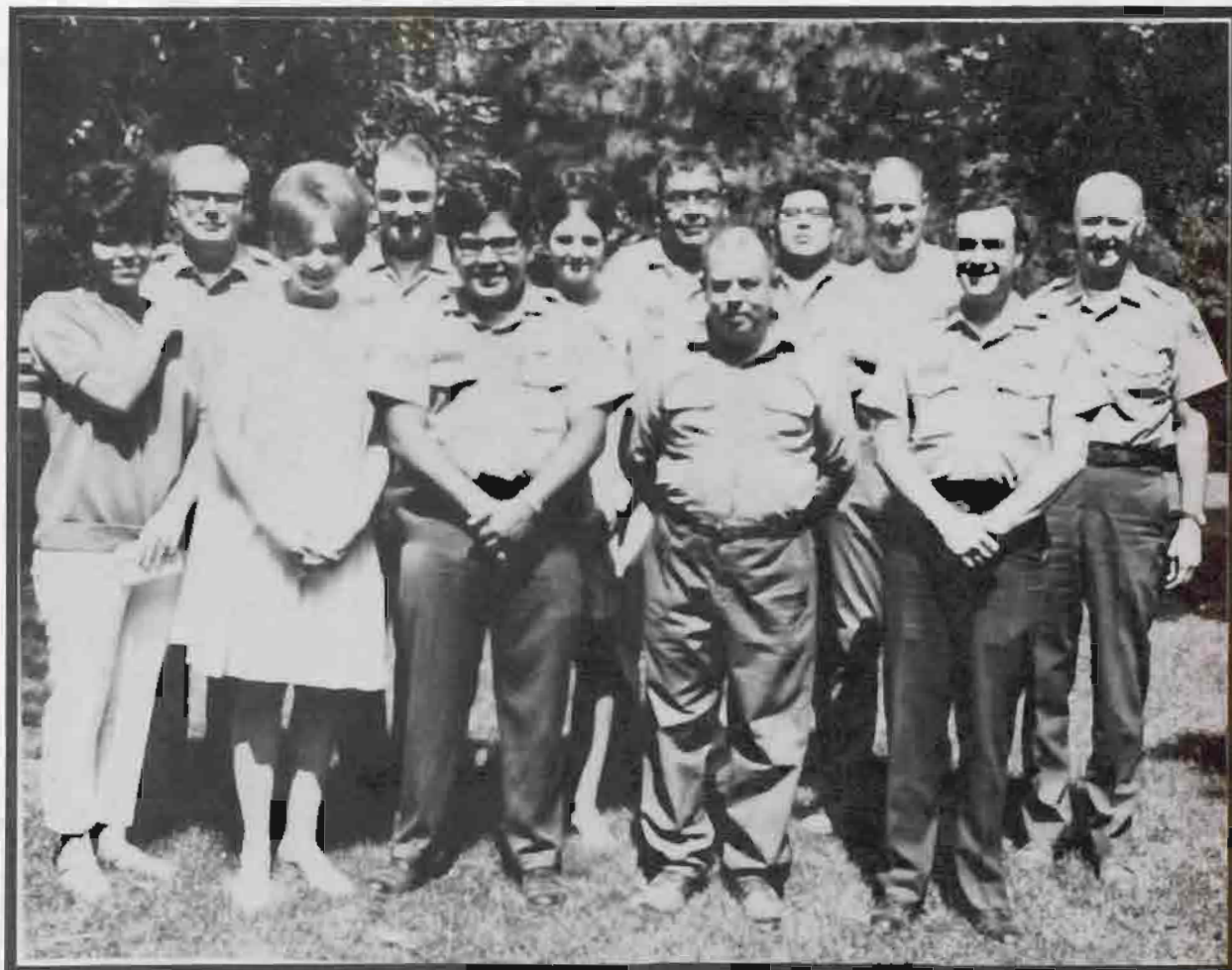
Ground-breaking ceremony, visitor center . . .

Josiah Red Wolf, five years old in 1877 and the last survivor of the War of 1877, speaks at the ground-breaking ceremony for the visitor center at Big Hole National Battlefield, 1968. Red Wolf lost his mother and sister in the battle. This marked his first return to the site of that tragedy.



Angus Wilson, 1975 . . .

Angus Wilson (left) in the temporary visitor center, 1975. Wilson served as chairman of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee and as a member of the park staff and was a strong supporter of the park idea. Also pictured: Viola Morris and Mark Kiegley.



The park staff, 1967...

Back row, left to right: Jim Haney, Jim Speer, Carol Gamet, Jim Reynolds, "Nubbs" Raboin, Milo Anderson, Robert Burns. Front row, left to right: Linda Paisano, Becky Baer, Emmett Carter, Harold White, Earl Harris.



The Spalding site . . .

The Spalding site is situated beside the confluence of Lapwai Creek and the Clearwater River, top left. The mission site is in the trees beyond the parked cars. The arboretum extends from the center to the right of the photo and the Presbyterian cemetery is behind the single row of trees in the center of the photo. The former Blue Lantern motel, converted into a visitor center and administration building, is on the left.

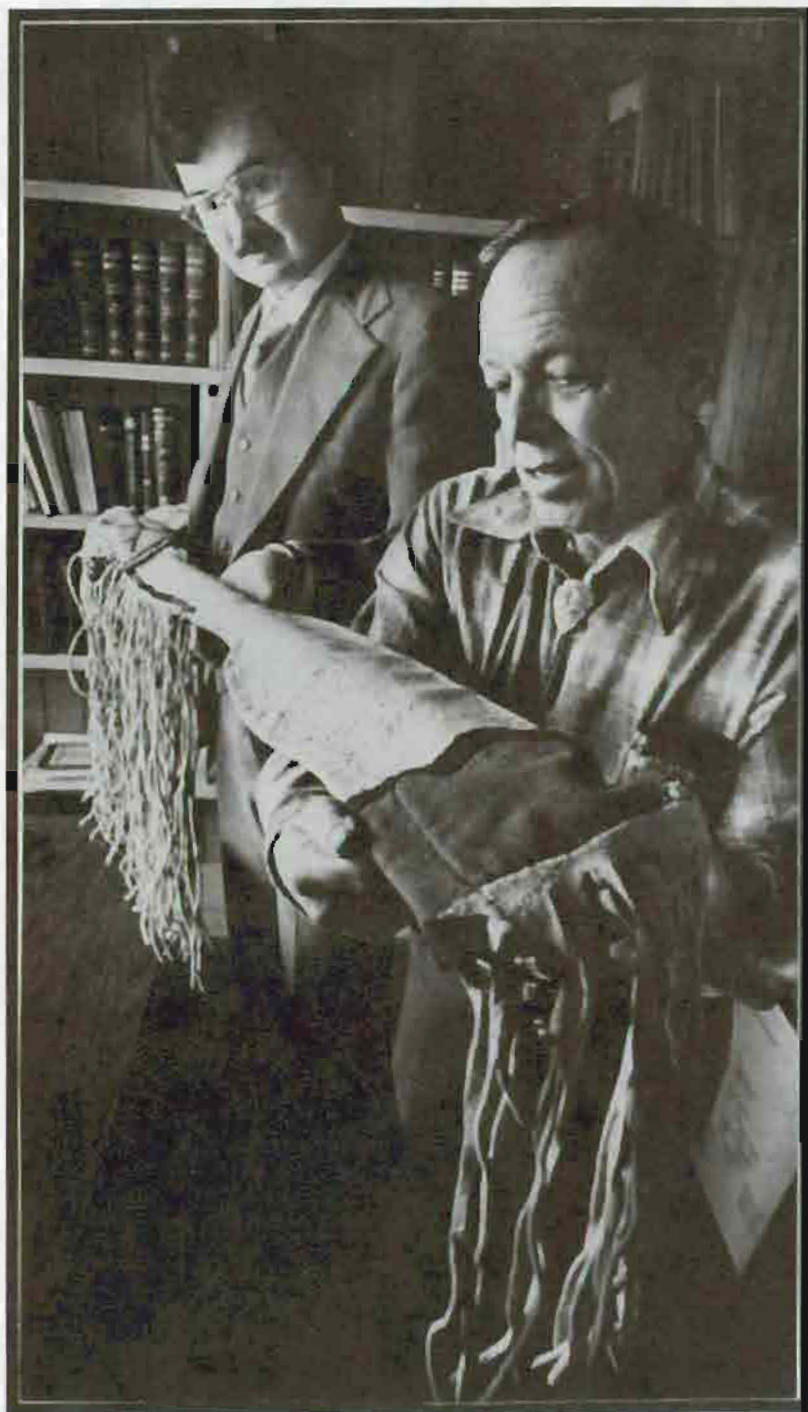


Park administration building . . .

Park administration building, located in the former Blue Lantern Motel, Spalding. The highway viaduct, now abandoned, is visible on the left.



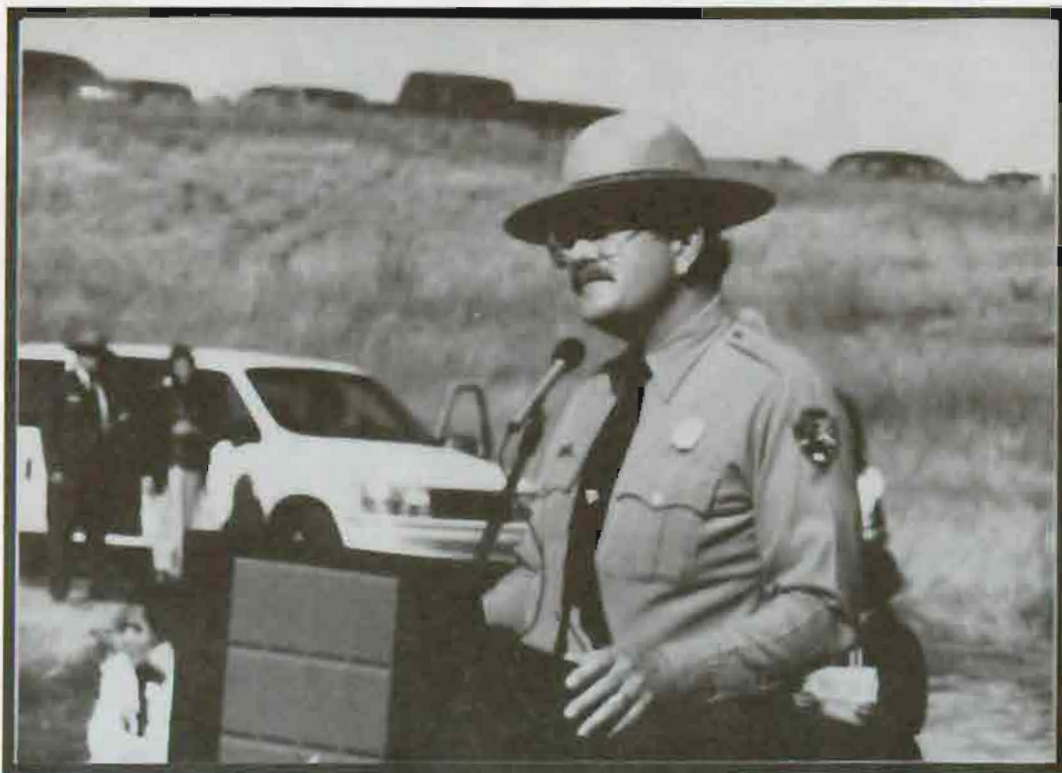
Big Hole National Battlefield museum, circa 1960.



Superintendent Robert Morris, at right, c. 1978.



Carol Gamet and Superintendent Jack L. Williams, 1975.



Superintendent Frank Walker at Bear Paw Battlefield commemoration, 1993.



Superintendent Fahy Whittaker (left) with Fred Jose, c. 1982.

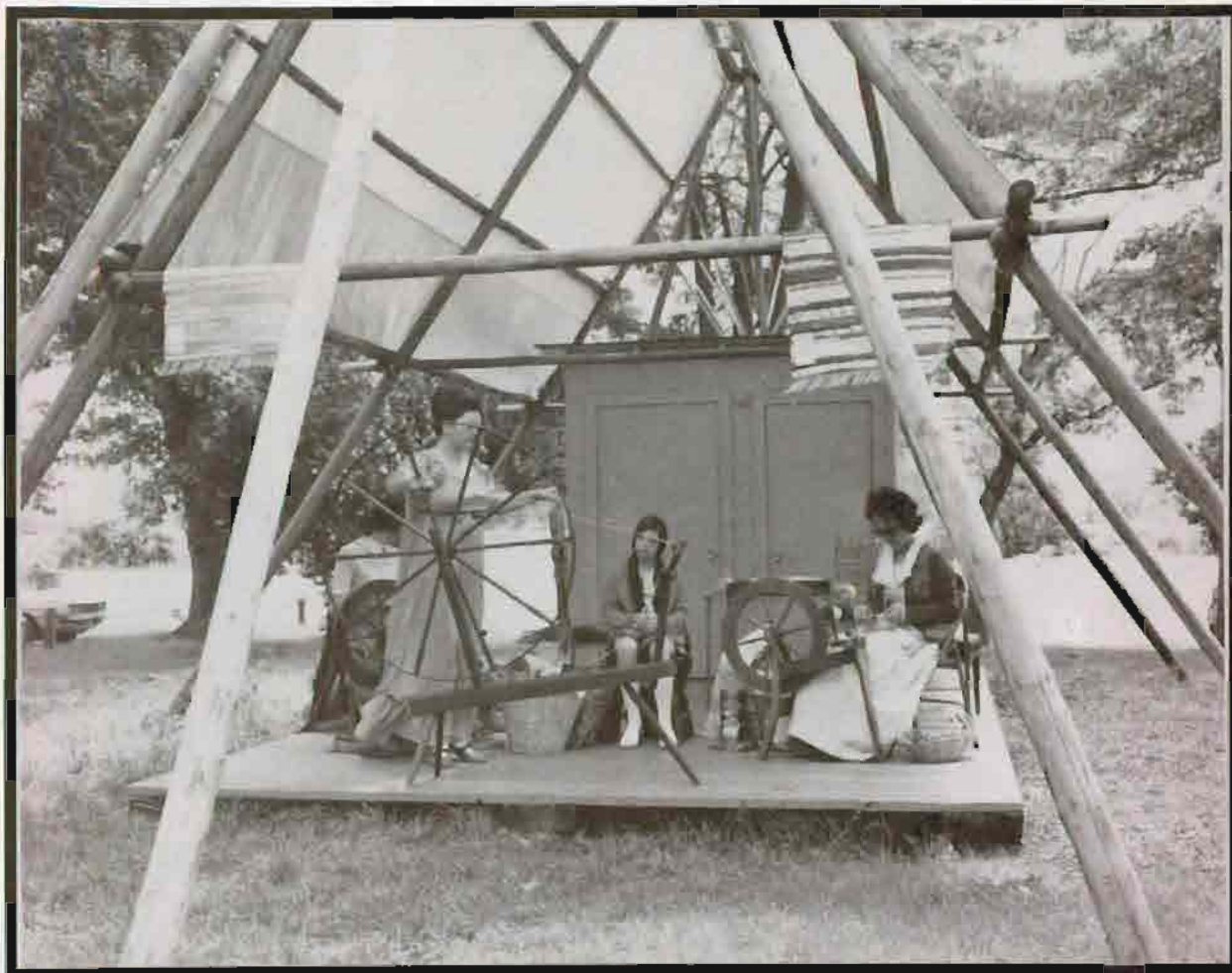


Superintendent
Roy Weaver, c. 1988.



Nez Perce cultural demonstrators . . .

Ida Blackeagle and Viola Morris demonstrate beading and cornhusk weaving in Spalding Park, 1967. Nez Perce cultural demonstrators have been an important part of the park's interpretive program.



"Living history" demonstration . . .

Demonstration of the spinning wheel, Spalding Park, 1974. NPS interpreters experimented with "living history" demonstrations in the 1970s. Left to right: Judy Hoffman, Annie Johnson, Gail Corsini, Bette Inthurn.



"Living history" demonstration . . .

Park visitors observe a living history demonstration of two mountain men in camp, 1974. The interpreters in costume are Steve Kernes (left) and Ed Steerman.



Sam Jackson singing and drumming during Cultural Days, Spalding Park, 1971.



Nez Perces hold a powwow in Spalding Park, 1972.



Otis Halfmoon dancing ...

Park visitors watch a Nez Perce dancer, 1972. The dancer, Otis Halfmoon, became a park ranger and was assigned to Bear Paw Battleground, Montana in 1994.

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