

Pompeys Pillar National Monument



Pompeys Pillar Interpretive Center

***National Landscape Conservation System
FY 2010 Manager's Report***



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October 1, 2009 - September 30, 2010



W.M. Clark's signature, July 25, 1806

Introduction

NAME: Pompeys Pillar National Monument
MANAGER: Irv Leach (Acting)
ADDRESS: Billings Field Office
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Billings, MT 59101
(406) 896-5235
http://www.blm.gov/mt/st/en/fo/billings_field_office/Pompeys_Pillar.html

Montana State Office
Billings Field Office

ESTABLISHED: Presidential Proclamation #7396, January 17, 2001
ACREAGE: 51 ACRES
STAFFING: 1 Park Ranger Career Seasonal
8 Park Rangers Seasonal

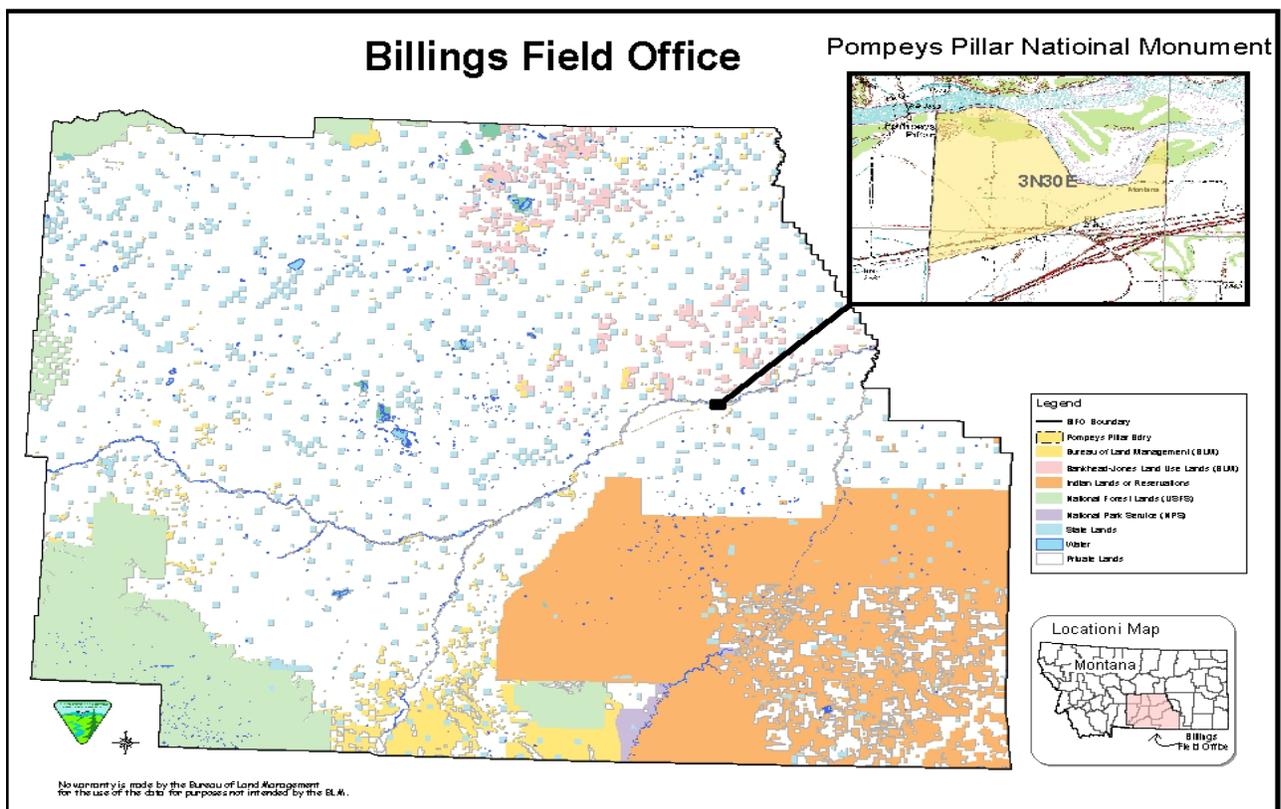
ANNUAL AVERAGE VISITATION: 35,000-45,000 people

Land Use Planning

Current

On January 17, 2001, Pompeys Pillar was designated a national monument under the authority of Section 2 of the Antiquities Act. Fifty-one acres of federally owned land were set apart and reserved as Pompeys Pillar National Monument for the purpose of protecting the ethnographic, historic and archaeological values associated with the massive sandstone outcrop known as Pompeys Pillar. Pompeys Pillar is located along the southern bank of the Yellowstone River approximately 30 miles east of Billings, Montana. Nearby communities include the towns of Pompeys Pillar, Huntley, Shepherd and the city of Billings in Yellowstone County. Pompeys Pillar lies in a tourism corridor, which provides easy access to Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area, Crow Indian Reservation, Little Bighorn National Battlefield, Beartooth Mountains and Yellowstone National Park. An interpretive center and related infrastructure was recently completed at the Monument with funding from the BLM and Pompeys Pillar Historical Association.

Prior to being designated a National Monument, Pompeys Pillar was officially designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL) in 1965. In 1991, the BLM acquired the NHL and adjacent land, totaling 366 acres. The total area currently being managed as Pompeys Pillar is 474 acres; the additional 107 acres being an adjacent island in the Yellowstone River that is also under BLM administration. In 1996, an RMP amendment was completed to develop the land use planning direction for Pompeys Pillar and consider its designation as an ACEC.



General area map showing location of Pompeys Pillar, within the Billings Field Office

Billings RMP Revision

The Billings Field Office (FO) and Pompeys Pillar National Monument (Monument) are currently undergoing a Resource Management Plan (RMP) revision. The Draft RMP is expected to be complete fall of 2011, with the final scheduled to be complete in the spring/summer of 2012. The Monument plan is being prepared in conjunction with the field office's RMP per previous approval with the Montana/Dakotas State Director and the Washington Office as for the small 51 acres of the Monument . This RMP will develop site-specific implementation actions and plans for Pompeys Pillar National Monument. The RMP will address the three management zones at the Monument by including (but not limited to) considerations for recreation, visual resource, fish and wildlife habitat, vegetation, fire, water, air, soil, wetlands/riparian and cultural resource management. As previously mentioned, the RMP is being developed in conjunction with the Billings RMP revision and one Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be used for both of the RMPs' analysis.

The Monument's Historic Zone is used primarily to provide visitor access to William Clark's signature in a historic setting. The entire area is to be restored to a setting characteristic of 1806. Modifications of the landscape would be the minimum necessary for visitor safety and protection of the signature and other rock art from further deterioration. The second zone, Historic Zone-Developed, provides an area where most facilities have been placed, including the interpretive center and day-use area. Other facilities (i.e., non-motorized boat launch, interpretive trails, etc.) may be provided at some point in the future. Farming is to be excluded and currently tilled ground restored to a setting characteristic of 1806. The General Management Zone would be managed to improve and/or maintain wildlife habitat condition, enhance recreation opportunities and utilize agriculture to facilitate general management at the Monument.

The proclamation designating the Monument identified an array of historic and archeological objects to be protected. There are various ways of achieving this goal and legal mandate, including maintaining acceptable existing conditions, educating visitors, restricting access, setting research priorities, and restoring degraded environmental conditions. In addition to Monument resources, there are valuable natural and cultural resources within the Billings FO in need of protection. Options for protecting both Monument and Billings FO resources will be identified and assessed in the new RMP.

Protecting America's Natural and Heritage Resources

Natural Resource Trends

The upland and riparian resources continue to remain in excellent health. Noxious and invasive species eradication efforts are ongoing within the monument and the surrounding Area of Critical Environmental Concern. During fiscal year 2010, a Russian Olive eradication program was implemented, with plans to continue this program in FY 11. Although the riparian community remains in Proper Functioning Condition, the fluvial evolution of the Yellowstone River is beginning to cause significant erosion concerns along the northwestern edge of the Monument. To date, several hundred square feet of the Monument's picnic area has been eroded, and an interpretive sidewalk is being threatened. Although the Monument lies within the floodplain of the Yellowstone River, and these occurrences are to be expected, it remains to be seen if this particular situation arises from anthropogenic sources. The root of the problem stems from lateral gravel bar development on the opposite bank of the river that has created hydraulic properties which direct the flow of the river directly into the river bank which protects Pompeys Pillar.



Buck and rail fence being installed to protect visitors. It is estimated that 20' to 30' of river bank is being eroded annually. The erosion started when a new bridge across the Yellowstone river was finished in 2001 (if you look carefully you can see the new bridge pillars behind the old bridge).

Understanding whether the lateral bar development is a naturally occurring phenomenon or if it originated with upstream flow obstructions, is the scientific key to developing a permanent solution. Funding has been requested in the FY12 budget for an engineering study which would identify the underlying causes of the lateral bar development and the most cost effective remedies. Aside from the ongoing property damage, the current situation is presenting a public safety hazard requiring the placement of barriers, particularly during the spring of the year.

Cultural Resource Trends

Weather related impacts continue to take a toll on prehistoric and historic artwork on the face of Pompeys Pillar. These impacts (rain, wind, atmospheric composition) are not readily observable and can only be measured by more technical means. Otherwise, cultural resources continue to be protected by the on-site physical presence of Park Rangers during the primary season of use, and year round by means of an electronic video surveillance system.

Restoration

In association with the Russian Olive program discussed above, a native riparian shrub restoration planting project is being implemented; as Russian Olive trees are removed, native riparian shrubs are planted in their wake to make the site more resilient to future infestations. Additionally, the former access road (along the western boundary of the property) and the associated graveled parking area have been removed, topsoil applied, and reseeded with a native prairie grass mix as part of an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) project. Immediately adjacent to the Pillar, farmland restoration

efforts are ongoing. As part of a partnership program with Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, as well as Pheasants Forever; former alfalfa fields and row crop areas are being transformed into a native grassland mix with interspersed food plots to support upland game. The ultimate goal is to transform the foreground of the view shed, to support the historic values for which the Monument was established.



Pompeys Pillar northerly view

Providing Recreation and Visitor Experiences

Overview

- General visitation at the Pompeys Pillar National Monument Interpretive Center for FY 2010 was about 43,140 visitors.
- Over 35 educational programs were conducted with 1440 students attending over the spring and fall seasons at the center. Evening interpretive programs are offered weekly and 43,140 individuals viewed William Clark's historic signature and interpretive talks presented by staff and volunteers.

Facilities, Construction, and Maintenance

- Existing recreation facilities, roads and trails have been maintained in good or excellent condition.
- A hazard abatement contract was completed to prune dangerous dead limbs from large trees.
- Interior finish work for the maintenance/storage building was completed.
- Developed secured storage for Pompeys Pillar Historical Association to house sales inventory.
- Toilet pumping, mosquito spraying and garbage collection occurred on an as-needed basis.

Construction

- Looking into a suitable synthetic material to replace the wooden handrails on the boardwalk. Deferred maintenance project.
- BLM engineers continually working on water treatment system problems with chlorine levels.
- Need to replace security camera at W.M. Clark's signature.
- BLM engineers continually working with contractors over Heating & Cooling system issues.
- Interpretive depiction of a Crow Indian encampment is 75% complete, project expected to be finished March 2011. Project made possible by a NPS grant to Pompeys Pillar Historical Association.
- Design complete for River Walk interpretation, project expected to be completed late April 2011. Project made possible by a Tourism Cares grant to Pompeys Pillar Historical Association.

Signs

- A sign plan has been completed and implemented.

Recreation Fee Program

- Pompeys Pillar National Monument is a standard amenity site providing interpretive programs, an interpretive center, picnic areas with restrooms, water and trash services, and security services.
- Revenue collected in FY 10 consisted of \$38,072 and site generated expenditures amounted to \$16,200.
- The fee money was expended in many programs including: reimbursing volunteers, interpretive program expenses, hiring seasonal park rangers, and maintenance expenses of landscaping and facility management. Carry over funds are planned to be spent on hiring seasonal park rangers, and various site improvements for FY 11.

Your Recovery Dollars at Work

- AARA Project – Reclamation of the old access road, parking area and asphalt sealing of the new access road and parking lot. \$135,000.
- AARA Project – Installed new boiler to support ground source heating system. \$50,000.

Engaging Youth in America's Great Outdoors

- Montana Conservation Corps in partnership with the Billings Field Office employed 21 youths between ages 15 and 25 who revegetated riparian areas, removed noxious shrubs (salt cedar and Russian Olive) and planted native species along the riparian corridor. Funding was provided by the National Monuments and National Conservation Areas (L17110000) subactivity.

Partnership and Volunteer Efforts

Volunteer Accomplishments

- Pompeys Pillar Historical Association provided 36 volunteers on a regular basis, each week throughout the summer.
- Association volunteers brought in needed funding for projects by submitting applications for grants.
- Another 27 volunteers contributed time and effort to the Clark Days event and other functions.
- Volunteers staffed the visitor information counter and gift store, provided interpretive and educational programming.

- Pompeys Pillar Historical Association provided 3,702 hours of volunteer service at the Monument.

Partnership Accomplishments

- Pompeys Pillar Historical Association (PPHA) contracted for design and construction work, with a grant that was awarded to depict a Crow Indian encampment at the Monument.
- BLM and the Association worked closely together on a number of efforts, including staffing, retail operations, volunteer recognition, and the Association has one paid employee, retail store manager.
- Billings Chamber of Commerce - visitor use, media and Montana history.
- Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks – wildlife habitat enhancement.
- Pheasants Forever – wildlife habitat enhancement.

Advisory Committees' Achievements

- The Resource Advisory Council addressed a change in standard amenity fees at Pompeys Pillar National Monument several years ago. The Council's recommendation of \$7 was accepted and implemented.

National Monument/National Conservation Area Fiscal Year 2010 Partnership Accomplishments				
Partner(s)	Project Name and Description	Accomplishments	Monetary and In-Kind Contributions	
			BLM	Partner
Pompeys Pillar Historical Association	Volunteer Program	3,702 hours	\$6,718	\$77,186 (value of work)
Pompeys Pillar Historical Association	Depict a Crow Indian encampment (Tepee)	Project 75% complete in FY-2010 (NPS Challenge Cost Share Grant)		\$100,000
Pompeys Pillar Historical Association	Yellowstone River Walk interpretation	Design completed (Tourism Cares Grant)	\$2,500	\$14,000
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Wildlife habitat	Restoration and enhancement	\$15,000	\$15,000
Pheasants Forever	Wildlife habitat	Restoration and enhancement		\$1,400
Totals (\$)			\$24,218	\$207,586

Science

- No science research projects were initiated or in progress during the past year.

Outreach, Environmental Education and Interpretation Efforts

Messages are consistent with the interpretive prospectus. This includes interpretive and educational programs related to Clark on the Yellowstone, the cultural and natural settings in 1806, the Lewis and Clark Expedition in larger context, and the changes to the Yellowstone Valley following Clark's visit.

Outreach

- A number of public contacts were made, utilizing television and radio interviews, printed media, press releases, personal contacts at the Monument, and the BLM and Historical Association web pages.

Visitor Center

- Pompeys Pillar provided full services from May through early October this past season.
- Hours of operation were 8 a.m.–8 p.m. daily, between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Hours were shortened from 9 a.m.–4 p.m. one month before and after these dates.
- Visitation was 43,500 in FY10.
- Visitor satisfaction, as determined through the latest GPRA survey, was 100%.

Interpretation

- The Park Ranger staff and several volunteers provided roving interpretive programs during the primary season.
- Visitors enjoyed and positively commented about the interpretive center, roving interpretive programs, the annual Clark Days weekend and interpretive programs throughout the summer.
- A wide range of topics were utilized in the interpretive programs including: cultural resources, geology, wildlife, flora and fauna, music, language, art, navigation, etc.
- A number of high quality interpretive programs were presented by subject matter expert presenters, during weekends throughout the summer.
- The annual Clark Days event was very successful. Deputy Director Marcilynn Burke and about 2500 other people participated in the event, which was one of the “signature” events for the NLCS anniversary.

Environmental Education

- Environmental education programs were extended to approximately 2,000 Kindergarten - College students this past season at the Monument. The environmental education program involved scheduling both schools and presenters for formal sessions. Students rotate from session to session. Program presenters include BLM staff and a large number of volunteers. Participating schools came from all over Montana and neighboring states.
- A local program developed by the College of Technology, which evolved from the 2006 Signature Event at the Monument, hosted an additional 1,000 students off-site, at the college.



Pompeys Pillar Historical Association volunteer teaching fourth grade students from a local Billings school about historical mapping processes.

Business Practices

Pompeys Pillar National Monument operates off a current Business Management plan that will be up for review in FY12.

Budget			
Base Allocations	L1711	project	
	\$127,699 est.	Labor, permanent (19 wms central labor)	
	\$96,000	Labor, seasonal	
	\$198,000	Operations dollars (includes fixed costs, end of FY coverages)	
Rec. Fee Site	L1232		
	FY-09 carry-over	FY-10 Collections	FY-10 Obligations
	\$72,105	\$38,072	\$14,882
Contributions	3,702 volunteer hours; value of work equates to \$77,186		

Manager's Corner

This was another successful year for Pompeys Pillar National Monument. The Monument continues to receive high reviews from visitors, and they're always satisfied with the park rangers' and volunteers' professional, courteous and knowledgeable interactions. The Monument also saw the retirement of long time Manager Dick Kodeski at the end of year.



Crow Indian village set up at Clark Days event at Pompeys Pillar National Monument