



Lewis and Clark
National Historic Trail

2024 ANNUAL REPORT



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BUDGET 2024

ONPS BASE FUND \$2,463,120

FUNDS RECEIVED \$2,433,889
After regional and national assessments

ADDITIONAL
FUNDS RECEIVED \$68,791
Inflation Reduction Act

GRANTS RECEIVED \$235,000
PMIS, Volunteers in Parks

5-YEAR ONPS BASE TREND

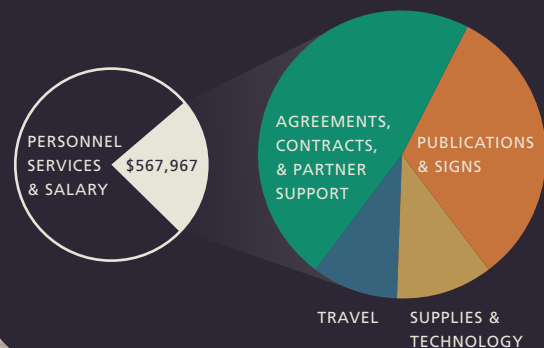
2019:	\$2,008,032
2020:	\$2,103,000
2021:	\$2,301,138
2022:	\$2,365,511
2023:	\$2,458,710

SPENDING 2024

AGREEMENTS, CONTRACTS, & PARTNER SUPPORT	\$269,500
PUBLICATIONS & SIGNS ...	\$183,136
SUPPLIES & TECHNOLOGY ..	\$61,354
TRAVEL	\$53,977

TOTAL \$567,967
**outside of personnel services and salary*

PERSONNEL SERVICES
& SALARY \$1,865,922



This publication is available online.

Visit the news tab on www.nps.gov/lecl.

Cover & Inside Photos: Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, MT.

NPS / © NEW Multimedia

from the Superintendent

Hello, Friends!

I really enjoy looking back at the previous year and recalling all the great work done by Lewis and Clark Trail staff and all the folks and organizations who combine their efforts. No one agency, organization or individual can claim the achievements that have taken place. It is always a team effort.

I am extremely proud and honored to work with the outstanding National Park Service employees and volunteers here at the Trail headquarters. The same is true of the many fine organizations and people we work with such as the Lewis and Clark Trust, Inc., The Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance, Western National Parks Association, the National Park Foundation, AIANTA, Terrain360 and many others.

The story of the Lewis and Clark Expedition is ultimately a story of people working together. People putting aside selfishness and working to support something greater than just themselves. The success of Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail is a result of the contributions from similar folks. It is the community of people and organizations who make up a team. Together we are so much more than our individual parts.

There have been many challenges this year, but we have proceeded on once again so that a great deal was achieved. Please take a few minutes to really look at this report and recognize that the accomplishments highlighted here represent only a small slice of what has been done by the

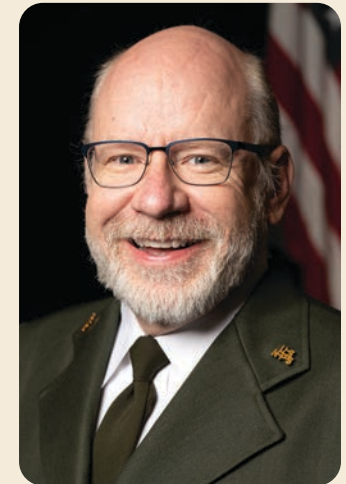
many people and organizations who have contributed so much to Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and the story that underlies it.

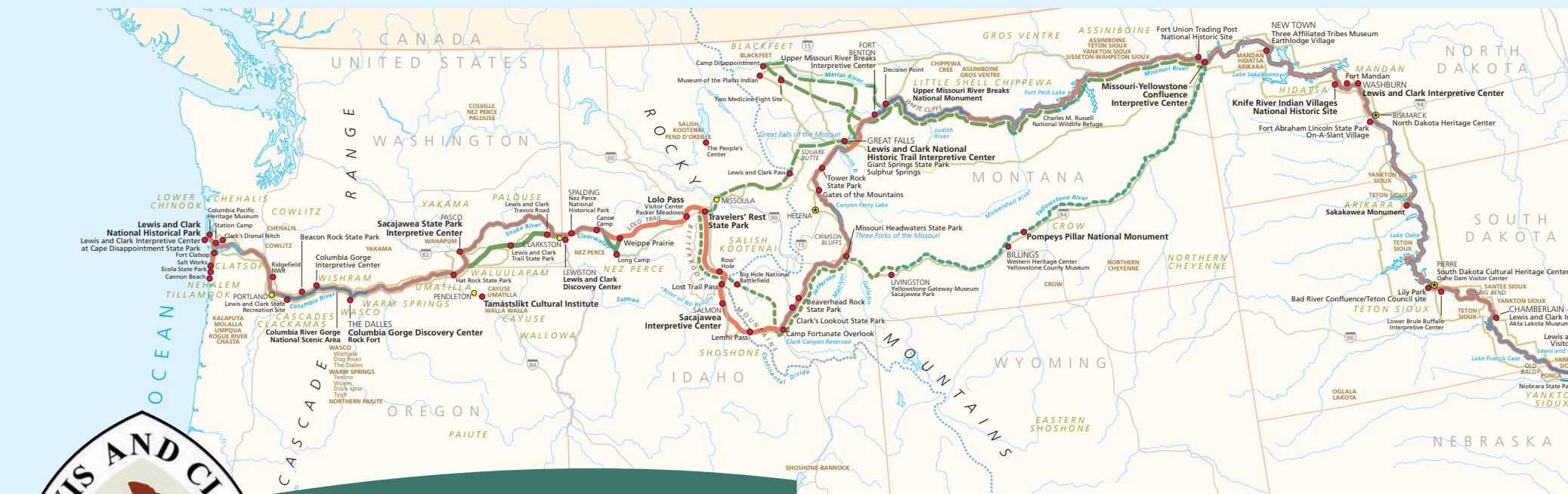
Please remember to assume good intent, and share kindness with all you meet. Do not forget to take a little time for yourself with friends and family to get outside and enjoy the many parks and trails in this amazing country.

Mark Weekley

Mark Weekley
Superintendent,

Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail





ACROSS THE TRAIL

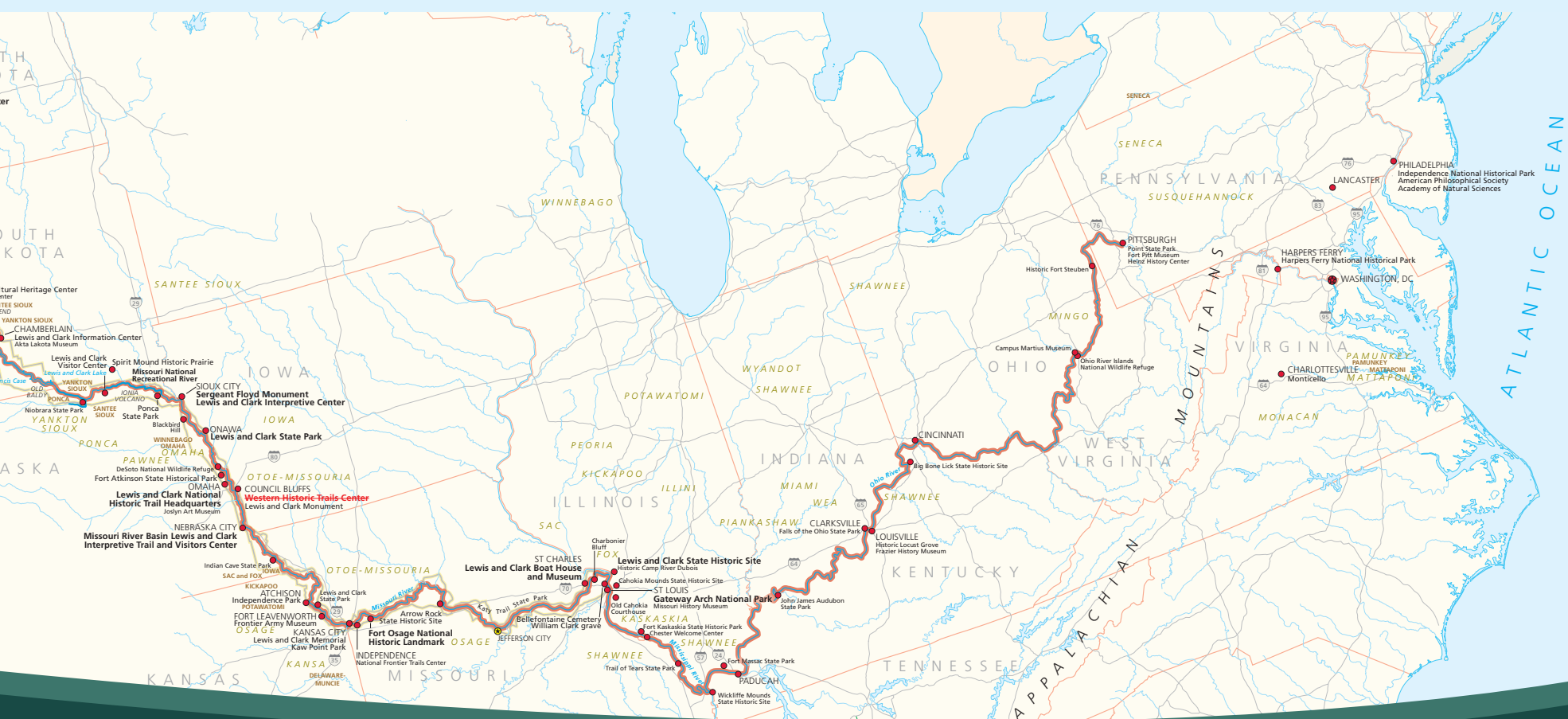
Columbia River Gorge, OR. Social media collaboration with Pacific Crest Trail Association to promote intersecting areas of recreation and history along national trails.

Great Falls, MT. Trail Education Technician David Bulin and Park Guide Audra Pflug visit the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center on a trip to attend a Traditional Games Certification Course.

Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, MT. Educators and environmental stewards from across the country participate in the *Big Medicine: York Outdoors* expedition.

Knife River Indian Villages Site, ND. Trail Interpretive Specialist Bird, Sr. offers programming at the 200th Anniversary celebration.





Villages National Historic
 Interpretive Specialist Loren Yellow
 programming at the park's 50th
 anniversary.



Omaha, NE. Trail Cultural Resources Program
 Manager Nate Hess demonstrates the use of 19th
 century medical instruments to an eager young
 crowd at the Lewis and Clark Expo.

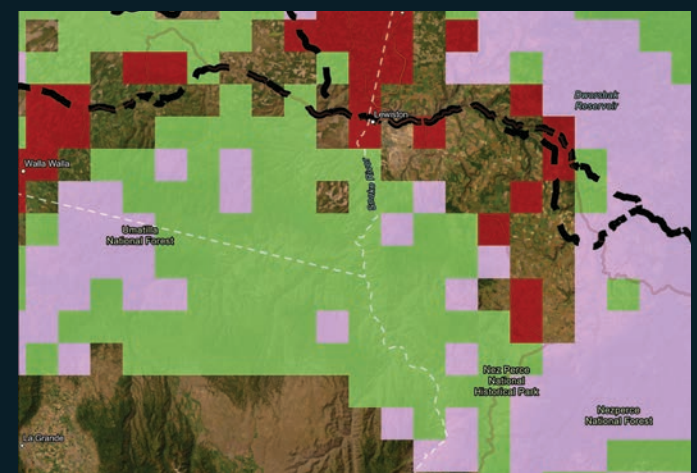
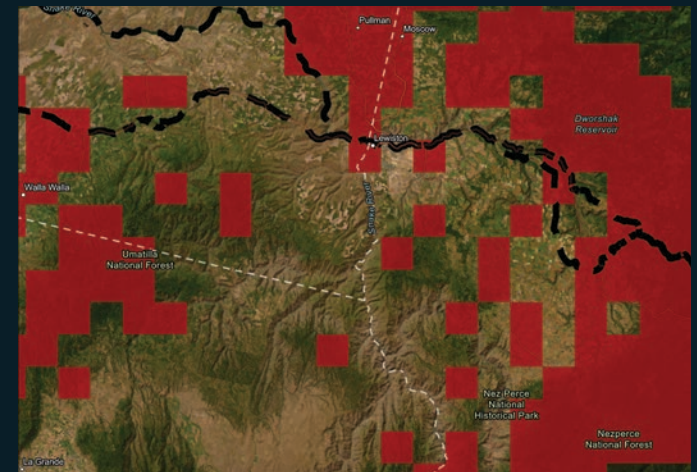
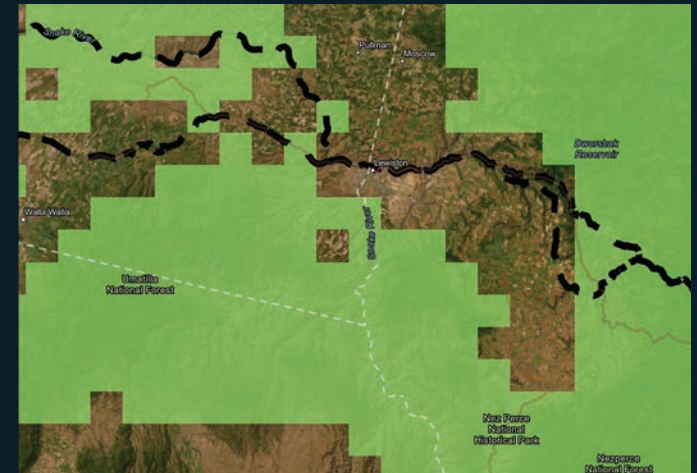


Fort Leavenworth, KS. Museum Specialist Kary
 Goetz displays braille-formatted interpretive media
 at the Frontier Army Museum. Lewis and Clark Trail
 distributed accessible materials to sites trailwide.



Charlottesville, VA. Trail Volunteer and
 Partnership Specialist Ashley Danielson presents
 on *Big Medicine: The York Project* at the Lewis
 and Clark Trail Alliance Annual Gathering.





The Weippe Prairie on the southern end of the Idaho panhandle is a High Potential Historic Site on Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.

Data-driven collaboration **A new approach to protecting the Trail's natural resources**

The National Park Service (NPS) faces unique challenges in administering the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, a 4,900-mile trail that passes through 16 states and is comprised of a mosaic of different landowners. Although NPS staff do not directly manage the land and resources along the Trail, we are able to positively impact land management through collaboration with partners and participation in planning efforts.

Recently, the Trail has endeavored to adopt a more proactive approach to natural resources stewardship, a change from the largely reactive approach related to compliance and environmental protection of the past. Staff from the Resources Stewardship team are developing a Natural Resources Strategy and conducting analysis of Trail resources using the most current geospatial data and resource information. These efforts will help identify the issues, stressors, and threats and provide staff with opportunities for outreach and collaboration on natural resources stewardship activities with our many partners trailwide.

◀ A series of geospatial maps identify key areas where environmental stressors and protected land boundaries overlap to focus conservation efforts in the Weippe Prairie.

RESOURCES

by the numbers

40

*Proposed actions evaluated in 2024
for potential impacts to the Trail's
resources and values*



On a bluff overlooking the Yellowstone River near Miles City, MT, Brye Lefler interviews former Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail superintendent Gerard Baker. The recording will serve as an introduction to the Tent of Many Voices video project to be released in 2025.

Tribal Outreach

A visit with the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska

This May, Brye Lefler, Trail Tribal Partnerships Specialist/Cultural Anthropologist, travelled to the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska's Ponca Community Grounds, near Niobrara, Nebraska. There, he met with several Tribal staff who generously provided a tour with highlights including the Tribal bison herd, interpretive Education Trail, and a bronze sculpture by Benjamin Victor of Chief Standing Bear, a significant civil rights figure in Ponca and U.S. History. Another casting of the statue is on permanent display inside the National Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol as one of two statues selected by the state of Nebraska.

Lefler met with Ricky Wright, Jr., Culture Director for the Tribe to discuss areas for future collaboration, including the panoramic mapping of key Ponca Community Grounds locations by Terrain360, a trail partner currently engaged in mapping areas along the entire Trail. Other areas of mutual interest include resource protection, interpretation and education, and language revitalization. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2025, the Ponca Tribe of Nebraska and Lewis and Clark Trail will begin collaborating on Indigenous place names research.



ABOVE: Trail Tribal Partnerships Specialist / Cultural Anthropologist Brye Lefler (left) and Culture Director for the Ponca Tribe Ricky Wright, Jr. (right) meet at Ponca Community Grounds near Niobrara, Nebraska.

Native Speaker Series

Our Voices Remain

This year, Indigenous perspectives of the Lewis and Clark Expedition were reawakened through *Our Voices Remain*, a Native speaker series organized in part between Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and Partnership for National Trails System (PNTS). Events were held in Omaha, Bismarck, and New Town.

Leading Native scholars for the series included Mr. Mark Charles and Mr. Walter Echo-Hawk. Both spoke on the impacts of the Expedition and the subsequent westward expansion of European Americans into Tribal lands throughout the 1800s, with a focus on the 100th commemoration of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924.

Charles gave an overview of how early contact related to the Doctrine of Discovery, and led to the Indian War period which lasted for several decades following the Expedition.

Echo-Hawk discussed U.S. policies enacted during western settlement and shared details of his Pawnee and Otoe background, including a family heirloom - a peace medal given by Lewis and Clark to the Otoe chiefs from whom he is descended.

Partnering with host sites for these events was critical to its success. Many thanks to the University of Nebraska Omaha Native American Studies Program, MHA Interpretive Center in New Town, and United Tribes Technical College's Tribal Leadership Summit for hosting. Partnership for National Trails System is seeking to expand this series to other partner trails.



▶ **RIGHT:** Keynote speaker Mark Charles is gifted a blanket from event emcee Lawrence Baker (left) at MHA Interpretive Center in New Town, ND.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Mark Charles is interviewed on KX News at the speaker event.

▼ **BOTTOM LEFT:** Walter Echo-Hawk (left) and Loren Yellow Bird, Sr. (right) co-present at the Tribal Leadership Summit in Bismarck, ND.



TRIBAL COLLABORATION *by the numbers*

3

Our Voices Remain speaker series events conducted

83

Tribal and Native-owned business postings on the Lewis and Clark Trail Experience sustainable tourism website, lewisandclark.travel

622

Recorded hours of Tent of Many Voices speeches and performances edited, transcribed, and made digitally compliant



Mark Charles speaks at Our Voices Remain: Indigenous Perspectives along the Lewis and Clark Trail

Video / Jul 2, 2024 / 06:41 PM CDT

Big Medicine: *The York Project*

Website user analytics indicate a growing interest in York, a member of the Corps of Discovery and enslaved by Captain William Clark, who may have been the first African American to journey across the continent. Despite his well-documented contributions to the expedition's success, York's legacy remains underrecognized and underexplored.

More than 200 years after the Expedition, Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, in partnership with NEW Multimedia, is embarking on a collaborative initiative to bring York's story to the forefront.

Big Medicine: The York Project and its associated content will support the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail's network of over 150 partner sites spanning 4,900 miles across 16 states and the territories of more than 65 tribes.



PROJECT TIMELINE

Multi-stage efforts that will culminate in February of 2026, to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.

- **My Name is York**
as told by Hasan Davis
APRIL 2023
- **Conversations on York**
Community dialogues at The Union for Contemporary Art in Omaha, NE
DECEMBER 2024
- **York Outdoors**
25-minute documentary that explores the connections between York's legacy and outdoor recreation
JUNE 2025
- **Tribal Perspectives on York**
Video documentation of Indigenous oral histories related to York
PRODUCTION TO BEGIN IN 2025
- **Interpretive Guide and Toolkit**
Comprehensive online and print resources for interpreters at partner sites to accurately, effectively, and courageously interpret York
FEBRUARY 2026
- **York Documentary**
FUTURE PROJECT

Big Medicine: *Conversations on York*

In December, Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail in partnership with The Union for Contemporary Art hosted a facilitated dialogue with community leaders in the City of Omaha. The panel discussed York’s legacy and his connection to civil rights today.

▼ From left: Panelists Hasan Davis, Sarah Rowe, Eric Ewing, and Clarice Dombeck discuss York in the context of their work in the community.

The audience at the *Conversations on York* event watches Hasan Davis’s 45-minute performance as York.



▼ *Big Medicine: The York Project* information panels on display at the reception.





A collection of candid reflections from expedition participants posted on personal social media accounts.



Expedition participants get out on the water at Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, MT. Many thanks to our outfitters, Upper Missouri River Guides for supporting the team!

ABOVE RIGHT: Expedition participants at a Lewis and Clark Trail marker, from left to right: James Edward Mills, Hasan Davis, Zachary Stocks, CJ Goulding, Malcolm Davis, Kassey Trahanas, Amber Wendler, and Carolyn Finney.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Hasan Davis portrays York.



*Honoring York's legacy
and finding nature's
restorative power.*

Big Medicine: York Outdoors

In July 2024, a group of Black educators and environmental stewards from across the country set out on a four-day river journey along the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument to paddle, hike, and camp along the same river where the Lewis and Clark Expedition traveled 200 years ago.

The trip was filmed by our partners at NEW Multimedia and is being developed into a 25-minute documentary that will be released in the summer of 2025.



Watch the trailer for
Big Medicine: York Outdoors

To learn more about the project,
visit: go.nps.gov/York

All photos this page: NPS / © NEW Multimedia



◀ **Lewis and Clark Interpretive Trail, Omaha, NE and Council Bluffs, IA.** Mouth of the Platte Chapter member Keith Bystrom assesses condition of sculptures and wayside panels to prioritize replacement and repair efforts along a 40-mile stretch of the Missouri River.



◀ **28th Annual Buffalo Feast at Northwest College in Powell, WY.** Organized by Native Ways Student Club, this sold-out event featured Tribal performances and a traditional feast, with Lewis and Clark Trail Native Names stickers serving as part of an ornate table setting arrangement.

Photo courtesy of Northwest College.



◀ **Terrain360 crew and Brye Lefler in Miles City, MT.** Beyond their monumental efforts to create a 360° virtual map of the entire Lewis and Clark Trail, Terrain360 filmed an interview with Gerard Baker as part of the release of the Tent of Many Voices tapes, which will be available to the public in 2025.



◀ **Lewis and Clark Trust, Inc. at the York statue in Louisville, KY.**

Trust members pay respects by placing wreaths at gravesites and memorials of expedition members. Left to right: Jim Holmberg, York statue sculptor Ed Hamilton, Hasan Davis, Linda Robertson, Jerry Robertson, and Paula Mallory.

Photo courtesy of Lewis and Clark Trust, Inc.
Learn more at lewisandclarktrust.org.

◀ **Lewis and Clark Trail Alliance's Annual Gathering in Charlottesville, VA.** The Trail's interpretive team visits York's roadside plaque on a bus tour of significant historic sites in Virginia. Left to right: Kent Schlavin, Karla Sigala, Ashley Danielson, Kevin McCarthy, David Bulin, Loren Yellow Bird, Sr.

◀ **The U.S. Capitol Christmas Tree stops in Omaha, NE.** On a 4,000-mile journey from Wrangell, AK, to the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol building, the Forest Service's 80-foot Sitka Spruce - dubbed "Spruce Wayne," spreads holiday cheer to Omaha with an evening event at the Gene Leahy Mall. Left to right: Sasha Salmon, USFS Interpretation & Conservation Education Program Manager Annette Heckart, and Trail Interpretation Manager Karla Sigala.

Working with our Partners

We thank all our partners for their work in 2024 to commemorate and protect the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. The organizations featured below represent merely a snapshot of the many groups Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail is proud to work with.

LEWIS AND CLARK TRUST, INC.



Western
National Parks
Association



TERRAIN360



The RiverFront



Expanding Programming at Headquarters

This year marked significant growth for the Omaha Lewis and Clark Visitor Center, with interpretive programming expanding through many valuable partnerships.

Notable was the enhanced partnership with The RiverFront and MECA. Park Rangers gave programs such as B.A.R.K. Ranger, National Fossil Day, and the highly anticipated Lewis and Clark Expo. These programs showcased the diverse offerings available to engage visitors.

Aside from facilitating daily guided walking and native garden tours at the Visitor Center, rangers also ventured out into the surrounding community at sites like the Missouri River Basin Lewis & Clark Visitor Center in Nebraska City, NE, and Fort Atkinson State Historical Park in Fort Calhoun, NE. Locally, rangers participated in the Durham Museum's teacher night and the 2024 Heartland Pride Parade in downtown Omaha, among many other events.

We proudly welcomed over 32,000 people to the Visitor Center in 2024 – providing an exceptional opportunity to share the Lewis and Clark story and the mission of the National Park Service with both local and out-of-town visitors.

It has been a fun and impactful year for our Visitor Center!

RIGHT: Park Guides represent the Trail out in the community, from our interpretive booth at the Women's History Month celebration (top), walking in the 2024 Heartland Pride Parade (middle), and issuing B.A.R.K. Ranger certificates to pups and owners (bottom).



VISITOR CENTER

by the numbers

32K+

2024 visitation to Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Visitor Center in Omaha, Nebraska

12.2K

Total number of Junior Ranger badges, booklets, and coloring books distributed to visitors and host sites across the trail

963

Junior Rangers sworn in at the Visitor Center



Young onlookers watch the raising of the flag aboard the Discovery Expedition of St. Charles' replica keelboat. The ceremony kicked off the first-ever Lewis and Clark Expo on Omaha's Riverfront, a two-day event bringing together visitors, living historians, and exhibitors from across the region.

The Trail's VIP content creator **Kent Schlawin**

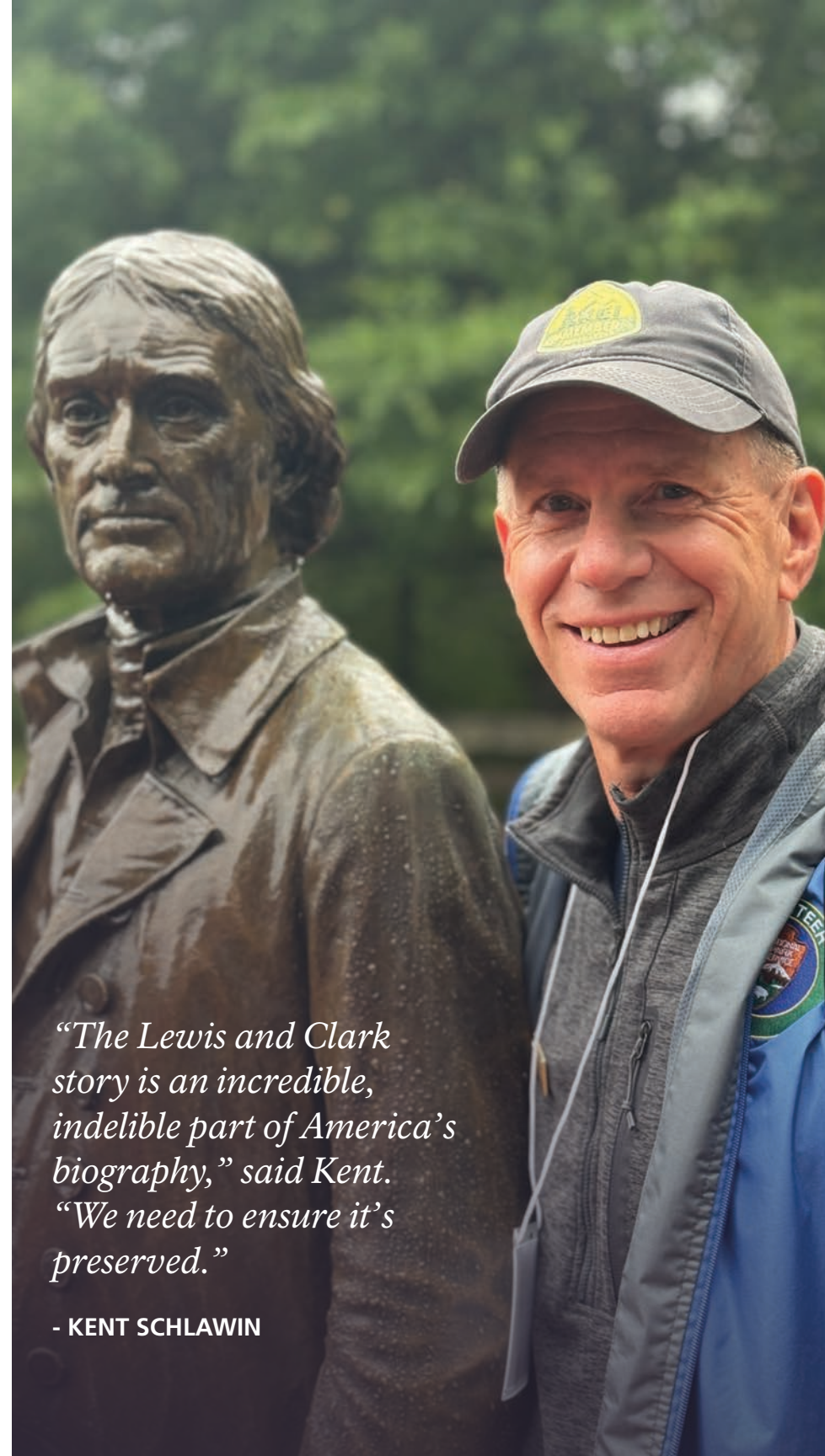
Throughout the National Park Service, volunteers, known as VIPs (Volunteers-In-Parks), serve in many capacities, even filling virtual positions, working from home.

Ten years ago, Kent Schlawin retired from his career in advertising/marketing and joined the staff to help with the Trail's social media effort. He lives in central Iowa, where he does nearly all his research and content writing.

"I average about 240 articles per year, giving our wide spectrum of followers small daily doses of the multi-faceted, sometimes complex story of the Corps of Discovery," said Kent. "We have people who are new to Lewis and Clark's adventure and remember just a few facts from a high school history class. On the other hand, we have followers who are Lewis and Clark scholars and have studied the story for decades. It's always fun when a follower comments about how they look forward to the daily posts and learning unique aspects of the Trail's story. And it's encouraging to know we're appealing to a new generation, too, as there are several elementary school classes around the country who read each day and discuss the information."

"We try to cover a lot of topics – from biographies to key events, flora and fauna to modern-day recreational activities, and Native topics to significant sites. After 10 years and over 2,300 articles, I've written about most everything. The goal is to get people to think about all aspects of this important chapter in our country's history and how it impacted American and Native life during the 19th century and what that means for us today."

Many times, the social media posts are added to our website, creating a catalog of nearly 940 articles, the second most of all NPS sites.



"The Lewis and Clark story is an incredible, indelible part of America's biography," said Kent. "We need to ensure it's preserved."

- KENT SCHLAWIN

DIGITAL COMMUNITY

WEB OUTREACH

by the numbers

1M+

Number of page views on nps.gov/lecl

50K

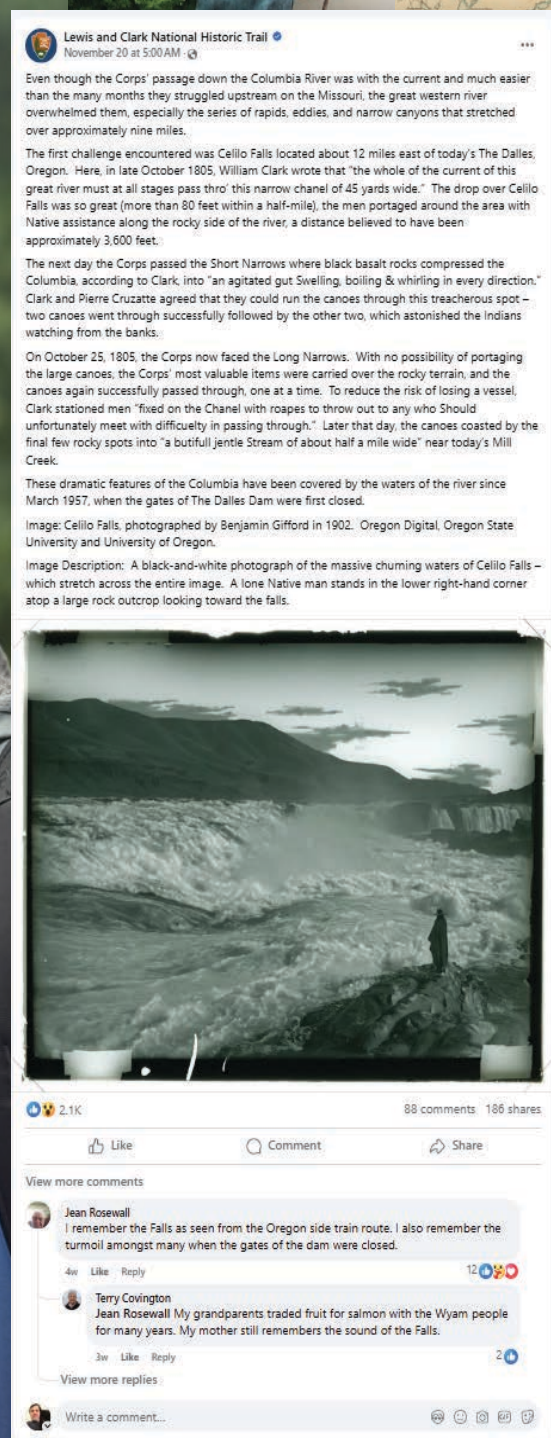
Social media followers in the U.S., Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, India, Italy, Netherlands, Brazil, Sweden, and Germany.

511

Posts on Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail social media accounts in 2024.

212.3K

Post reactions, likes, comments, and replies on Facebook and Instagram



ABOVE: Sample images from social media posts, creating a unique tapestry of engaging, passionately researched stories available to the public on a regular basis.

LEFT: The comments often reveal personal connections to the content.



Mammalian Society meeting

Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail hosted the annual meeting of the Central Plains Society of Mammalogists on October 14, 2024. Academics disseminated their mammal-focused research to their fellow peers.

Presentations and posters comprised research on small organisms like mice, voles, and bats, and on larger mammals including elk, pronghorn, and black bear. The NPS Midwest Regional Director, Bert Frost, attended the meeting and shared about mammal-centered projects within the region.



American Solar Challenge

The Trail participated in the American Solar Challenge in July following collegiate solar car teams from the U.S. and Canada on a two-week rally beginning in Nashville, TN, and ending in Casper, WY.

The bi-annual event in years past had chosen one historic trail to follow, however this year's theme was "See America By National Historic Trail." Other trails included Trail of Tears, Santa Fe, Pony Express, Mormon Pioneer, California, and Oregon Trails as well as historic Route 66. It was a great experience seeing how we interpret and educate people on our historic trails system.



Pivotal Places

We are excited to announce a new web article series called Pivotal Places. Each article describes a location to visit that was consequential to historical events as described in the Lewis and Clark journals and through tribal histories. Search Pivotal Places by region, state, or theme and enjoy this new way to explore the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail online.

Learn more about Pivotal Places:

go.nps.gov/pivotalplaces



Seeking Sacagawea ▲

Working with a contractor, Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail's Sacagawea project will work to gather, assess, and synthesize current relevant scholarship and oral histories related to the life of Sacagawea. Equal weight will be given to oral histories as western historical documents, including new scholarship recently published by the MHA Nation.

The NPS acknowledges that there are many competing views related to her life and these issues will be treated with sensitivity. The goal of this project is to help the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and partners to interpret a more complete story of Sacagawea's life.



Earth to Sky ▲

In November 2024, Ashley Danielson served as a coach for the NASA Earth to Sky workshop that was held at Goddard's Spaceflight Center in Maryland.

As a coach, Ashley helped her team from the Adirondacks work through the Earth to Sky methodology and plan their own climate change communications workshop.

Ashley has been part of the Earth to Sky community of practice since 2009.

Learn more about Earth to Sky:
earthtosky.org



Visual Resources Inventory Fieldwork ▲

An interdisciplinary team of Lewis and Clark Trail employees (From left: Ryan Cooper, Karla Sigala, Nathaniel Hess, Ashley Danielson, and Mitchell Meyer) visited Fontenelle Forest along the Missouri River to test out their new skills in Visual Resources Inventory.

The 1916 National Park Service Organic Act specifies scenery as one of our most significant values to protect thus a national Visual Resources Inventory was developed to improve understanding of scenery and how it is being impacted today.

Virtual Student Federal Service

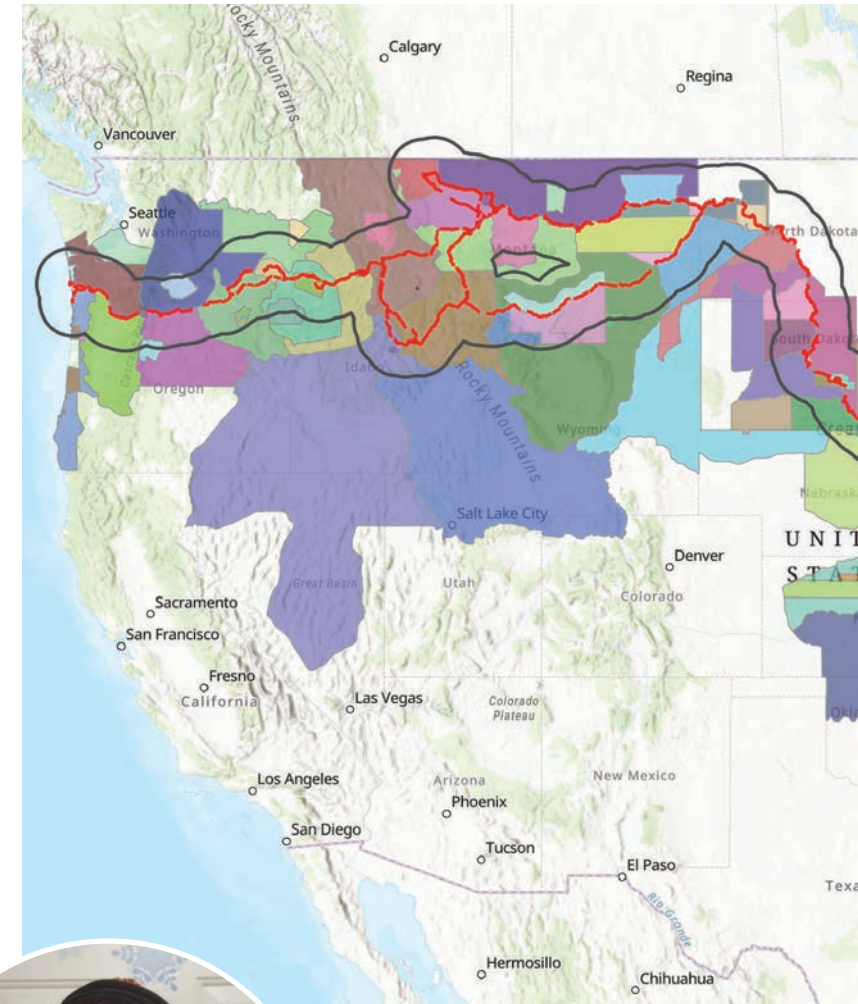
Tribal traditional associations geospatial research

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Trail Tribal Partnerships Specialist/Cultural Anthropologist and Trail Geographer led geospatial research conducted by Virtual Student Federal Service intern, Joe Johnson, then a senior at the University of Oregon. Joe joined a group of interns who also collaborated with Trail partner organization AIANTA (American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association) to co-create and share work products. The research consisted of locating and analyzing different geospatial data sets to help the Trail improve its understanding of traditionally associated Tribal Nations.

To further this understanding, Joe analyzed the Trail corridor in relation to data sets related to treaty land cessions, ancestral lands identified by Indigenous communities, Tribal counties of interest reported to federal agencies, and locations of current Tribal and Canadian First Nation communities, among others. Importantly, this information will continue to be updated through direct conversations with Tribal Nations, to improve the NPS's understanding of Indigenous connections to the Lewis and Clark Expedition and to significant areas and resources along the Trail.

Many thanks to our amazing 2024 interns

Number of interns: 49 | Hours worked: 18,720 | Total cost benefit = \$ 560,664



ABOVE: Virtual Student Federal Service Intern Joe Johnson (left) mapped Tribal land cessions traditionally associated with Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Over 150 Tribal land cessions are represented on this map. The Trail is shown in red, with a 50-mile buffer indicated in black.

Intern Cohort of the Year Winners **Maria Camarota and Shea O'Connor**

Congratulations to Maria Camarota and Shea O'Connor, our Virtual Student Federal Service (VSFS) interns for the 2023-2024 academic year, for their VSFS Intern Cohort of the Year accolade!

Maria, an environmental policy master's student, and Shea, an undergraduate in conservation and minor in geospatial analysis, successfully executed a collaborative project - "Land Management Research of the Lewis and Clark NHT." Maria and Shea researched land management policy and identified areas for partner collaboration across the 4,900-mile corridor. This project will connect us with new partners and provide resources staff with a foundation for informed decision making while co-stewarding sites. Additionally, their project provides a framework through which staff can continue to document, understand, and strengthen or positively influence protection of Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.

Maria completed her master's program in June 2024 with a thesis focused on shark conservation. Her current work involves researching ordinances and regulations related to renewable energy.

Shea is currently working on her masters, which she plans to focus on black bear-human conflict using geospatial data.



Thank you VSFS interns! Maria Camarota (left) and Shea O'Connor (right).

staff directory



ADMINISTRATION



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Dan Wiley
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Dan retired after 18 years
at Lewis and Clark NHT.
Congratulations!

INTERPRETATION



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Kassey Trahanas
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Kassey accepted a
promotion at Land and
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Happy trails!

INTEGRATED RESOURCES STEWARDSHIP



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WNPA

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David Evans
Volunteer

VOLUNTEERS



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