



Montana
Office of Public Instruction
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Indian Education for All
Montana State Parks Lesson Plan
Beaverhead Rock State Park
January 2010 (revised)

Title

In Her Own Lands: Sacagawea and the Lewis & Clark Expedition in Southwestern Montana

Grade Level

6th-8th (adaptable for 9th—12th)

Content Areas

Social Studies; History; Geography

Duration

Two 50 Minute Class Periods and one homework assignment.

Overview

Sacagawea is famous for her participation in the Lewis and Clark expedition, but what do we really know about her? Who was she and why was she with the expedition? What do we know about her tribe, the Shoshone, and their allies, such as the Salish, who occupied the Beaverhead valley and southwestern Montana for centuries or millennia before Euro-Americans displaced them?

In this lesson, students will be introduced to the tribes who once occupied the area now comprising Beaverhead County and the Big Hole Valley. In particular, students will learn about the important historical figure, Sacagawea, and some controversy that surrounds her in her role as guide/assistant to the Lewis and Clark expedition. Students will learn that from a tribal point-of-view, Lewis and Clark were not discoverers of a new land, but travelers through a well-known land that belonged to other people who had/have their own perspectives on the expedition and its purpose and that there were intercultural difficulties from the start. Additionally, students will learn that there are different ways of keeping and transmitting histories, and that tribal histories sometimes conflict with American non-Native histories.

Suggested Complimentary Curricula

This lesson is compatible with the FWP unit on **Clark's Lookout State Park**, which is located southwest of Beaverhead Rock State Park. The lesson on Clark's Lookout focuses on the Salish tribe and their experience of the Lewis and Clark expedition's travels through that area.

Montana, Stories of the Land (textbook), Chapter 4. Online version includes worksheets, extension activities, assessment materials and teacher's materials, in addition to chapter matter.

<http://www.mhs.mt.gov/education/textbook/Chapter4/Chapter4.asp>

Montana Education Standards and Objectives

Indian Education for All

Essential Understanding 3, part 2: Each tribe has their own oral history, beginning with their origin that is as valid as written histories. These histories pre-date the “discovery” of North America.

Essential Understanding 6: History is a story and most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. Histories are being rediscovered and revised. History told from an Indian perspective conflicts with what most of mainstream history tells us.

Montana Content Standards

Social Studies Content Standard 1: Students access, synthesizes, and evaluates information to communicate and apply social studies knowledge to real world situations. *Rationale: Every discipline has a process by which knowledge is gained or inquiry is made. In the social studies, the information inquiry process is applied to locate and evaluate and variety of primary and secondary sources of information [which is] then used to draw conclusions in order to make decisions, solve problems and negotiate conflicts.*

Benchmark 1.2: Students will assess the quality of information (e.g. primary or secondary sources, point of view and embedded values of the author).

Social Studies Content Standard 3: Students apply geographic knowledge and skills (e.g., location, place, human/environment interactions, movement and regions. *Rationale: Students gain geographical perspectives on Montana and the world by studying the Earth and how people interact with places. Knowledge of geography helps students address cultural, economic, social and civic implications of living in various environments.*

Benchmark 3.2 Students will locate on a map or globe physical features, natural features, and human features and explain their relationships within the ecosystem.

Social Studies Content Standard 4: Students demonstrate an understanding of the effects of time, continuity, and change on historical and future perspectives and relationships. *Rationale: Students need to understand their historical roots and how events shape the past, present and future of the world. In developing these insights, students must know what life was like in the past and how things change and develop over time. Students gain historical understanding through inquiry of history by researching and interpreting historical events affecting personal, local, tribal, Montana, United States, and world history.*

Benchmark 4.1: Students will interpret the past using a variety of sources and evaluate the credibility of the sources used.

Benchmark 4.4: Students will identify events and people...in the major eras or civilizations of Montana, American Indian and United States history.

Benchmark 4.6: Students will explain how and why events may be interpreted differently according to the points of view of participants, witnesses, reporters and historians (etc.).

Social Studies Content Standard 6: Students demonstrate an understanding of the impact of human interaction and cultural diversity on societies. *Rationale: Culture helps us to understand ourselves as both individuals and members of various groups. In a multicultural society, students need to understand multiple perspectives that derive from different cultural vantage points. As citizens, students need to know how institutions are maintained or changed and how they influence individuals, cultures and societies. This understanding allows students to relate to people in Montana, tribes, the United States and the world.*

Benchmark 6.2: Students will explain and give examples of how various forms human expression (e.g., language, literature, arts, architecture, traditions, believes spirituality [and in this case oral histories]) contribute to the development and transmission of culture.

Benchmark 6.4: Students will compare and illustrate the unique characteristics of American Indian tribes and other cultural groups in Montana.

Benchmark 6.5: Students will explain the cultural contributions of, and tensions between, racial and ethnic groups in Montana, the United States, and the world.

Materials and Resources Needed

Montana state map to plot locate Beaverhead Rock state park and to plot the approximate route in this lesson. At state highway map is fine for this lesson (See Teacher’s Guide.) An excellent “zoomable” map is available at the Montana Department of Transportation website, http://www.mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/maps/montana_map.shtml

Map entitled “Early Trade Networks” from *Montana, Stories of the Land*, first edition, page 52, or on the web at <http://mhs.mt.gov/education/textbook/chapter3/Chapter3.pdf> (Scroll down to page 52.) This textbook website also has many more links to maps.

Map of Lewis and Clark routes through Montana, <http://www.nps.gov/lecl/planyourvisit/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=76427> Zoom in to see more detail of any specific area.

Internet access or print these materials on Sacagawea and the Shoshone from Trailtribes.org:

Essay: “Agaidika Perspective on Sacagawea” by Rozina George, <http://www.trailtribes.org/lemhi/agaidika-perspective-on-sacajawea.htm>

Essay: “Intertribal Relations” about the Shoshone and Salish alliance, <http://www.trailtribes.org/lemhi/intertribal-relations.htm>

Map: “Homelands” of the Shoshone in petroglyphs, <http://www.trailtribes.org/lemhi/homelands.htm>

Attachments A-C included with this lesson plan.

Introduction

Sacagawea recognized this huge landmark, resembling the head of a swimming beaver, while traveling with the Lewis and Clark Expedition in 1805.

Beaverhead Rock State Park website

The Indian woman recognized the point of a high plain to our right which she informed us was not very distant from the summer retreat of her nation on a river beyond the mountains which runs to the west. This hill she says her nation calls the beaver's head from a conceived resemblance of its figure to the head of that animal. She assures us that we shall either find her people on this river or on the river immediately west of its source; which from its present size cannot be very distant. As it is now all important with us to meet with those people as soon as possible, I determined to leave the charge of the party, and the care of the lunar observations to Capt. Clark; and to proceed tomorrow with a small party to the source of the principal stream of this river and pass the mountains to the Columbia; and down that river until I found the Indians; in short it is my resolution to find them or some others, who have horses if it should cause me a trip of one month. For without horses we shall be obliged to leave a great part of our stores, of which, it appears to me that we have a stock already sufficiently small for the length of the voyage before us [Meriwether Lewis].

From *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*
August 8, 1805, online at the Center for Great Plains
Studies

Beaverhead Rock is located on the Beaverhead River near the east end of the Big Hole Basin. It was a landmark for the Lewis and Clark expedition signifying that in the summer of 1805, the party was in or near Shoshone lands and hopefully horses that would enable the party to continue over the mountains to the Pacific. The expedition did not meet the Shoshone at the Rock, but three days later at Lemhi Pass. The Shoshones and some of their friends, Nez Perce and Salish, were on their way east to the plains for their seasonal round of buffalo hunting. The Indians gave the expedition some horses. The expedition preceded west, the Shoshone and their friends, east.

The Beaverhead Valley and all the river valleys in the region were much-traveled routes of an important road complex that led in and out of the mountains of present-day southwest Montana to and from the plains in the east. These routes were thoroughfares of tribal travel, connecting the Columbia River Plateau, the Great Basin and the Northern Plains regions and used by numerous tribes to travel to and from inter-tribal trade centers, hunting, and moving camps. Several of these roads are mentioned throughout the journals of Lewis and Clark as they travel through what is now present-day southwest Montana (Nell and Taylor, 1996). This road begins near the headwaters of the Missouri and the buffalo jump near present-day Logan. This area formed a major cultural complex occupied by the Salish and Pend d'Oreille for thousands of years prior to the Lewis and Clark expedition. (See pages 21, 27, 49, 76, and 83 of *The Salish People and the Lewis and Clark Expedition*.) From these sites, the road lead west past the caverns (now called Lewis and Clark Caverns), through the Jefferson River Valley and on to the Big Hole Valley and the Beaverhead River. From there the trail continued west, splitting into a southwestern arm often used by the Nez Perce and Shoshone and a northwestern branch utilized by the tribes of the Columbia River basin.

The Shoshones are identified with the Lewis and Clark expedition through Sacagawea and her remembrance of Beaverhead Rock. Two other tribes—the Salish and Pend d’Oreille (who later met the expedition at what is now called Ross Hole, near Sula, Montana)—are, of all contemporary (present day) Montana tribes, the tribes most closely associated with the Beaverhead Valley and the Big Hole Basin. There is evidence in their ancient Salish place- names for important geographical locations, the archaeological record, and recorded history these related tribes occupied what is now southwestern Montana for over 10,000 years! Nonetheless, in the mid-19th century, the United States government deemed the entire region “the territory of Blackfoot [sic],” per the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 and the Blackfeet (or Lame Bull) Treaty of 1855(S-PCC, 2005, pp. 48,49,76,83,115,138; Kappler, 1904a and b).

Activities and Procedures

Teacher Preparation: Teacher, please read the introduction “Tribal Voices and Tribal History” in the book *The Salish People and the Lewis and Clark Expedition* on pages *xi* through *xviii*. This material will provide you with a factual and conceptual foundation for proceeding with this lesson. (Reading time approximately 15-30 minutes.)

Class Period 1: *For this period you will need:*

- ✓ **Internet access** and a way to display maps in front of class (**or paper copies** of each map).
- ✓ **Map of Lewis and Clark routes** through Montana,
<http://www.nps.gov/lecl/planyourvisit/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&PageID=76427>
Zoom in to see more detail of any specific area.
- ✓ **Map called “Early Trade Networks”** on page 52 of *Montana, Stories of the Land* or internet access to it and a way to display this map for your students, or copies to distribute to each student. Accessible online at the following website (scroll down to page 52):
<http://mhs.mt.gov/education/textbook/chapter3/Chapter3.pdf> Also print or look at the map on page 124 (Chapter 7)
- ✓ **A Montana state highway map.** Every student needs a paper copy. The best online map is the zoomable map on the Travel Montana website at
http://mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/maps/montana_map.shtml. The southwestern corner of this map can be zoomed in on and printed if you do not have other MT maps available.
- ✓ **Printed copies of Attachment C** to assign as homework.

- 1) Introduce the topic to your class and read the Introduction above. (5-10 minutes)
- 2) Have the students read Attachment A on Beaverhead Rock State Park. (5 minutes)
- 3) Pass out copies of maps to each student (MT highway maps) and/or have all maps accessible online for classroom viewing. (5 minutes to distribute maps or set up)
- 4) Students do this mapping activity in class. (approx. 15 minutes) Instructions for students: Locate the route Sacagawea and the expedition traveled on a state map. Begin at the Missouri Headwaters State Park just north of the Madison Buffalo Jump and follow the Jefferson River through Three Forks, west through the Jefferson Valley proceed west to the Beaverhead Valley. Continue southwest along the Beaverhead River to Beaverhead Rock state park. Continue up the Beaverhead River until you are at the present day location of the Clark Canyon Dam. From there, the trail runs nearly due west over Lemhi Pass into Idaho. You will notice that there is a “Sacagawea Historical Area” located at the pass. (On

their return route, Lewis and Clark followed the Big Hole River, just to the north of the Beaverhead River route, and met up again with their first route at or near Beaverhead Rock.)

- 5) Compare your map with the map on pages 52 and 124 of *Montana, Stories of the Land* and have the students take note of the many tribes who used or occupied southwestern Montana and the trails located there. Although the map on page 124 shows tribal locations in the 1850s, the area marked “Common Hunting Ground” is important to note for this lesson, because it is the area where the Shoshone (and their allies, the Salish) were located. Other tribes, including the Bannock, Nez Perce, Crow, Blackfeet, and White Clay also utilized this area and raided the Shoshone and Salish camps here.
- 6) Assign the reading for homework (Attachment C) Have the students begin in class if there is time.

Class Period 2: *For this period, you will need:*

- ✓ **The three articles from Trailtribes.org** listed in the materials section,
- ✓ **The selection from Rhonda (Attachment C)** that students will have read already.
- ✓ **Attachment A, definitions of history.**

- 1) Read aloud or have a student read aloud the definitions of history from Attachment A.
- 2) Briefly discuss the Rhonda reading assignment with the students.(5 minutes)
- 3) Have students read the three short articles from Trailtribes.org (10-15 minutes, total)

Essay: “Agaidika Perspective on Sacagawea” by Rozina George,

<http://www.trailtribes.org/lemhi/agaidika-perspective-on-sacajawea.htm>

Essay: “Intertribal Relations” about the Shoshone and Salish alliance,

<http://www.trailtribes.org/lemhi/intertribal-relations.htm>

Map: “Homelands” of the Shoshone in petroglyphs,

<http://www.trailtribes.org/lemhi/homelands.htm>

- 4) Writing assignment (25-30 minutes). Have the students respond in short paragraphs to the following questions:
 - a. Describe southwestern Montana and its indigenous peoples at the time of the Lewis and Clark expedition.
 - b. Given the extensive trail and travel system of the tribes of this larger region and the fact that Sacagawea was returning from Hidatsa territory in what is now North Dakota, what do you now know about the mobility and extent of geographic familiarity that tribes from Montana and neighboring states had prior to 1805? How does this knowledge change your thinking about the indigenous inhabitants of this region and their millennia (thousands of years) of occupation here?
 - c. Why did the Shoshone befriend the expedition? Why were allegiances important for tribes? Who were the allies of the Shoshone and which tribes were not their allies in 1805?
 - d. How are oral histories of American Indian tribes important to the understanding of historic events such as the Lewis and Clark expedition? What information would a tribe’s perspective contain that the members of the expedition would not have been able to know or understand?
 - e. What does “homeland” mean to you? What did it mean to tribes in 1805 and what is still true about this meaning today, even though their reservations are only on tiny fractions of their original territories?

(If you are adapting for high school classes, assign the writing for homework and have students write a full 4-5 page descriptive essay on the indigenous inhabitants of southwestern Montana at the time of the Lewis and Clark expedition—peoples, geography, alliances, travel, and perceptions of Lewis and Clark, as well as what the expedition meant from a tribal perspective.)

Assessment

In class discussion, mapping activities, writing assignment.

Extensions (Online Materials and Teaching Ads) and Bibliography

Beaverhead Rock State Park website: <http://stateparks.mt.gov/beaverhead-rock/>

Kappler, Charles J., 1904a. Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties, Vol. II, Treaties, Treaty Of Fort Laramie with Sioux, Etc., 1851. Washington: Government Printing Office. URL: <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/sio0594.htm>

Kappler, Charles J., 1904b. "Treaty with the Blackfeet, 1855," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties, Vol. II, Treaties. Washington: Government Printing Office. URL: <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/bla0736.htm>

S-PCC (Salish-Pend d'Oreille Culture Committee), 2005. *The Salish People and the Lewis and Clark Expedition*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Attachments

Attachment A: Definitions of History

Attachment B: Introduction to Beaverhead State Park from the National Park Service website

Attachment C: selected reading from James P. Rhonda's *Lewis and Clark among the Indians*

Attachment A

Definitions of History

What is history? This definition comes from Yahoo's online dictionary, at: <http://education.yahoo.com/reference/dictionary/entry/history>.

NOUN: His-to-ry; pl. his-to-ries

1. A narrative of events; a story.
 - a. A chronological record of events, as of the life or development of a people or institution, often including an explanation of, or commentary on, those events: *a history of the Vikings*.
 - b. A formal written account of related natural phenomena: *a history of volcanoes*.
 - c. A record of a patient's medical background.
 - d. An established record or pattern of behavior: *an inmate with a history of substance abuse*.
2. The branch of knowledge that records and analyzes past events: "*History has a long-range perspective*" (*Elizabeth Gurley Flynn*).
 - a. The events forming the subject matter of a historical account.
 - b. The aggregate [sum total] of past events or human affairs: *basic tools used throughout history*.
 - c. An interesting past: *a house with history*.
 - d. Something that belongs to the past: *Their troubles are history now*.
 - e. Slang one that is no longer worth consideration: *Why should we worry about him? He's history!*
3. A drama based on historical events: *the histories of Shakespeare*.

What is Oral History?

Oral history is history that is passed down orally from one generation to the next, rather than by being written down. American Indian tribes and many other peoples around the world have oral records of their histories. Oral histories can be in the form of personal stories, stories or names associated with particular places, songs, traditional tales, and accounts of tribal or family events. When tribes lose their own indigenous languages, as many of them have, they risk losing their historical knowledge, because the speakers of tribal languages are often the keepers of oral histories. Over the last century, some tribal oral histories have also been preserved in audio recordings and in writing.

Attachment B

Note: This introduction to Beaverhead Rock State Park is from the National Park Service, online at http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/lewisandclark/site14.htm. Retrieved on 07/09/2009.

Beaverhead Rock State Park

Always a locally prominent landmark, this massive stone outcrop was a major milestone to the Lewis and Clark Expedition, as it had long been to the Shoshonis. A flurry of anticipation passed through the expedition on August 8, 1805, when Sacagawea recognized it in the distance and said that the summer retreat of her people, the Shoshonis, was not far to the west. By this time, the explorers were worn out from navigating the troublesome Jefferson-Beaverhead River. Even worse, they were virtually lost and were anxiously seeking the tribe, from which they hoped to obtain horses and guides to cross the mountains to the Pacific.



Beaverhead Rock, Mont. Sacagawea's recognition of this landmark assured the expedition that the Shoshonis, her people, would probably soon be encountered. (*National Park Service (Grant, 1952).*)

That night, camp was made about 7 miles northeast of the rock. The next morning, Lewis and three men set out overland in search of the Indians, left the river, and traveled behind the rock. On the next day, the 10th, the main, or boat, party, under Clark, passed the rock on its river side. Three days later, on the 13th, Lewis and the advance party made contact with the Shoshonis. Because of the separation of the expedition at Travelers Rest, Mont., on the return trip, only the Clark segment passed Beaverhead Rock, in July 1806.

Considerable confusion exists about the identity of Beaverhead Rock because some writers and the local populace have given the name to what Lewis and Clark called Rattlesnake Cliffs, about 25 miles to the southwest, and have designated Beaverhead Rock as "Point of Rocks." To further complicate the matter, Rattlesnake Cliffs bear a closer resemblance to a beaver's head than does Beaverhead Rock. The cliffs, in contrast to the rock, are closer to the river, are almost perpendicular, and extend along both sides of the stream.

Mont. 41 crosses from the south to the north side of the Beaverhead River close to the rock and skirts its eastern side. Part of the property in the vicinity is administered by the Bureau of Land Management, and the remainder is held by private owners. Unfortunately, recent rock and gravel removal operations by one of the latter at the base of Beaverhead Rock have threatened its integrity. The surrounding area, however, has changed little since the days of Lewis and Clark.



Beaverhead Rock. (National Park Service
(Jefferson National Expansion Memorial).)

Attachment C

Note: The following reading selection from James Rhonda's book uses references that are not considered tribally accurate. The term Átsina is used in reference to Gros Ventre. Átsina is not used by the Gros Ventre to refer to themselves, and may in fact be an insult from their perspective. The term Gros Ventre is also a misnomer; it means "big belly" in French. The Gros Ventre call themselves "AH-AH-NE-NIN" meaning the White Clay People.

This particular Shoshone band is also referred to as the Snake and the Agaidika (Salmon Eaters) as well as the Lemhi Shoshone. They are a different branch of the Shoshone than the eastern Shoshone who now reside on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. Today these Shoshone share the Fort Hall Reservation in Idaho with the Bannock tribe.

The term Flathead is used here in reference to the Salish. Technically, there is no Flathead tribe. There is a Flathead reservation that includes the Salish, Kootenai, and Pend d' Oreille nations.

For more information check with your school librarian for the OPI-produced DVD entitled "Tribes of Montana and How They Got Their Names."

Excerpt from James P. Rhonda (1984) *Lewis & Clark among the Indians*, Chapter 6, "Across the Divide."

... As the explorers labored over the grueling Great Falls portage, the captains thought increasingly about finding Shoshone horses. Their growing concern can be measured by an important decision made during the portage. Earlier in the journey, Lewis and Clark had given some thought to sending one canoe and a few men back to St. Louis from the falls carrying news of the party. That plan was now quietly abandoned, partly because it might have discouraged the whole group and, perhaps more important, because "not having seen the Snake Indians or knowing in fact whether to calculate on their friendship or hostility, we have conceived our party sufficiently small." Although it is not clear from the expedition's record whether Sacagawea led the explorers to expect to find the Shoshones near the falls, there certainly were indications that those Indians had been in the area recently. On July 16, one day after the explorers finished the portage; Lewis was taking one of his usual walks along the Missouri when he came upon a large and recent Shoshone camp. Spotting what would later be familiar to him as the cone-shaped Shoshone brush wickiup and also noting much horse sign, Lewis concluded that he had "much hope of meeting with these people shortly."

Convinced that the Shoshones were just days away and could provide both horses and "information relative to the geography of the country," Lewis and Clark made an important decision. On July 18, Clark took an advance party consisting of York, Joseph Field, and John Potts on ahead. Moving quickly, Clark hoped to find the Shoshones before they were frightened by hunters' guns from the larger group. In the days that followed, both Clark's forward team and Lewis's main contingent strained for any hint that their Shoshone search was over. Saturday, July 20, brought more Shoshone signs but no Indians. Early in the morning Lewis saw smoke up Potts' Creek. Unsure of the smoke's significance, the explorer thought it was either accidental or a deliberate Indian signal. According to his journal entry for the day, he learned later that some Shoshones had seen either his or Clark's men, feared they were Blackfeet warriors, and fled from the river. Later the same day Clark's force, painfully working its way up a path filled with sharp rocks and prickly pear along Pryor's Valley Creek, saw a second smoke signal. Eager to let Indians know they were friends, not enemy raiders, Clark and his men took to scattering pieces of clothing, paper, and linen tape along their route. [15] Despite these efforts, the Shoshones seemed as tantalizingly out of reach as their smoke signals.

Frustrated by their failure to contact the Shoshones and increasingly tired by the rigors of a difficult river passage, the expedition pressed on toward the Three Forks. Although the explorers never expected Sacagawea to guide them in the usual sense of the word, they did hope she would recognize some of the country once the expedition entered Shoshone hunting grounds. But it was not until July 22 that the Indian woman began to see country remembered from those days before her kidnapping by Hidatsas. As the main body of the expedition neared Pryor's Valley Creek, Sacagawea pointed out familiar landmarks and assured Lewis that this was "the river on which her relations live[d], and that the three forks [were] at no great distance." Tacitly admitting just how worried the whole Corps of Discovery was at not yet finding the Indians, Lewis wrote that Sacagawea's news "cheered the sperits of the party who now begin to console themselves with the anticipation of shortly seeing the head of the Missouri yet unknown to the civilized world." Later that evening, with both the advance party and the main body reunited, Lewis and Clark planned strategy for what they felt was an imminent meeting with the Shoshones. Believing that the Indians would be found at Three Forks, the captains decided to send Clark again with a small group to reconnoiter the route and make initial contact.

Excited by the prospect that their Shoshone quest might soon be ended and that Indian horses would carry them over an easy portage to Pacific waters, the two groups set out the next morning. Clark took with him Robert Frazer, Joseph and Reuben Field, and Toussaint Charbonneau. To reassure Indians that they were friends, Lewis ordered that small American flags fly from every canoe. While Clark followed Indian paths toward Three Forks, Lewis and the boats pressed upriver. Each group found the going difficult and exhausting. Hiking over broken terrain filled with sharp rocks and prickly pear, Clark's men suffered twisted ankles and lacerated feet. The boat crews had it no less easy. The Missouri was now a narrow channel choked with willow islands, rocky shallows, and unexpected rapids. Towing their craft from the shore exposed the men's moccasins to the needle spines of the prickly pear. Working boats in the water became a back-breaking, bone-chilling enterprise. Ordway understated the obvious when he wrote, "The party in general are much fatigued." But swollen feet and aching bones would have been gladly accepted had the effort produced a Shoshone encounter. When Clark reached Three Forks on July 25, he found a fire-blackened prairie and horse tracks but no Indians. Two days later Lewis and the main body came to Three Forks, found Clark's note detailing what he had discovered thus far, and saw for themselves that the valley held only silence.

The Three Forks of the Missouri was what Lewis described it to be, "an essential point in the geography of this western part of the Continent." But one of the essentials was missing. Without Indian horses the expedition would be stranded on the wrong side of the Great Divide. Facing a second winter east of the mountains, on short rations and unsure of the route ahead, the expedition was at a desperate point. Lewis put it bluntly: "We begin to feel considerable anxiety with respect to the Snake Indians. If we do not find them or some other nation who have horses I fear the successful issue of our voyage will be very doubtful or at all events much more difficult in it's accomplishment." [18] The explorers did not understand that Shoshone and Flathead bands did not come across the mountains and into the Three Forks region until September. At the very moment when the worried captains were holding talks plotting what to do next, the Shoshones and Flatheads were still busy fishing along the Lemhi and Salmon Rivers.

The expedition camped at Three Forks, where Sacagawea had been kidnapped from a Shoshone band some five years earlier. It was a time to treat blistered and infected feet, repair clothing and moccasins, and dry dampened papers and trade goods. But the most important task at Three Forks was formulation of a plan to locate the elusive Shoshones. Perhaps guided by information supplied by Sacagawea, the explorers now believed the Indians were either further up the Jefferson River or across the mountains still fishing. Wherever they were,

they had to be found. Using a tactic employed before, Lewis and Clark decided to send a scouting party ahead while the main group continued up the Jefferson. Since Clark was still recovering from an infection caused by prickly pear punctures, Lewis led the scouts.

The first week of August 1805 must have seemed an eternity to the frustrated and exhausted men of the expedition. Everything that could go awry did. Laboring up the Jefferson in a channel that was barely navigable, Clark's boat crews slipped in the mud, tripped over hidden rocks, and spent hours waist-deep in cold water. Men who usually did not complain in the face of hardship were now "so much fatigued that they wished much that navigation was at an end that they might go by land." Canoes overturned, tow ropes broke, and the air was blue with tough talk. As a last straw, a beaver had gnawed through the green willow branch holding a message from Lewis, causing the boats to make a needless and painful detour up the Big Hole (Wisdom) River. And George Shannon got lost on a hunting trek up the Big Hole. The efforts of Lewis's scouting party to locate the Shoshones were no more successful than previous ones. There were signs of Indian activity, but as before they yielded neither people nor horses. When the two captains again joined forces on August 6 and proceeded up the Jefferson, they had to face some harsh realities. Several men, including Clark and Whitehouse, were injured and in pain, while many others were near exhaustion. Valuable trade goods, medicine, and powder were wet and damaged. Food supplies were uncertain. And above all, there was the inescapable fact that unless the expedition found horses very soon it would have to pack only a fraction of its supplies across the divide and look for a place to winter in mountains known for their scarcity of game. The men's spirits and prospects would not be as low again until the bitter days in the snows of the Lolo Trail.

These bleak prospects began to change on August 8. With the explorers just below the mouth of the Ruby (Philanthropy) River, Sacagawea recognized "the point of a high plain to our right which she informed us was not very distant from the summer retreat of her nation on a river beyond the mountains which runs to the west." Known to Indians as the Beaver's Head because it reminded them of a swimming beaver, the rock brought both hope and a sense of urgency to the expedition. "As it is now all important with us to meet those people as soon as possible," the captains decided to once again send Lewis on ahead with George Drouillard, Hugh McNeal, and John Shields. Lewis vowed to find horses if it took a month of hard travel. On the next morning, August 9, Lewis and his men swung on their packs and began to follow the Jefferson River toward the mountains. The whole future of the expedition depended on Lewis's success in finding the Shoshones and trading for horses in something less than a month.

All day on August 9, Lewis and his men tracked along the Jefferson. Seeing the river "very crooked much divided by islands, shallow, rocky in many places and very rapid," Lewis worried that Clark's boats might not be able to make the passage. On the following day the explorers "fell in with a plain Indian road" which took them past Rattlesnake Cliffs to a fork in the Beaverhead River. Because the path also forked and Lewis did not want to waste time on the wrong trail, he dispatched Drouillard up one way while Shields took the other. Sensing that this fork also marked the end of navigable waters, Lewis left a note for Clark telling him to go no further until the advance party returned. Lewis and his men now set out along Horse Prairie Creek, a small stream that flowed from the West. Horse Prairie Creek led the explorers into Shoshone Cove, described by Lewis as one of the "handsomest" coves he had ever seen. Camping that night in the cove, Lewis and his men ate venison roasted over a willow brush fire and wondered what lay beyond the dividing ridge.

Sunday, August 11, proved to be one of the most important days for the expedition. It was a day equally important for the Shoshones of Cameahwait's band camped over the divide along the Lemhi River. Soon after Lewis and his men set out from their camp in Shoshone Cove the Indian trail vanished in dense sagebrush.

Anxious not to miss what proved to be Lemhi Pass over the Beaverhead Mountains, Lewis ordered Drouillard to walk on the captain's right flank while Shields would cover the left. McNeal was to remain with Lewis as the whole formation moved slowly through the cove and toward the pass. Five miles of this maneuver got Lewis closer to Lemhi Pass, but it still seemed no nearer to the Shoshones. Then suddenly, some two miles off, Lewis spotted an Indian horse and rider cantering toward him. With the aid of his small telescope, Lewis identified the Indian as a Shoshone. The armed warrior was riding an "elegant" horse and had not yet seen the Americans. Overjoyed at the prospect of finally meeting the Shoshones, Lewis walked slowly toward the Indian. The explorer was certain that once the Shoshone saw his white skin any fears would disappear. With about a mile now separating the two the Indian stopped and Lewis is likewise halted. Determined to make some friendly gesture, Lewis took his blanket and waved it three times in the air. Perhaps Drouillard had told him that this was the accepted sign for peaceful conversation between strangers. But the Shoshone apparently discounted Lewis's signal and watched with mounting suspicion as Drouillard and Shields drew closer. Unable to catch the attention of either man, Lewis feared that their continued march would frighten the Indian and dash any hopes of a friendly meeting. Lewis took a few strands of beads, a mirror, and some other trade items and began to walk alone toward the still-mounted Indian. When the men were no more than two hundred paces apart, the Indian slowly turned his horse and began to ride away. In desperation Lewis shouted out the word "tab-ba-bone," which he believed was Shoshone for whiteman. The explorer knew that Drouillard and Shields had to be stopped or all would be lost. Risking a shout and some vigorous waving, Lewis commanded both men to halt. Drouillard obeyed but Shields evidently did not see the signal. The Indian moved off a bit more and then stopped a second time. With steady determination Lewis resumed walking toward the man, again saying "tab-ba-bone," holding up the trade goods, and even stripping up his shirt sleeves to show white skin. But none of this worked and when the two were no more than one hundred paces apart, the Indian whipped up his horse and vanished into the willow brush.

"With him," wrote Lewis, "vanished all my hopes of obtaining horses for the present." Depressed and angry, Lewis rounded up his men and "could not forbear abridging them a little for their want of attention and imprudence on this occasion." Although Lewis blamed Drouillard and Shields for the failure at Shoshone Cove, other factors were also at work. The Lemhi Shoshones had just suffered a punishing raid at the hands of Atsina warriors and were bound to view any stranger with considerable suspicion. More important, there was the matter of the word "tab-ba-bone." Lewis had probably asked either Charbonneau or Sacagawea for a word meaning "whiteman." Since that word did not exist in the Shoshone vocabulary, the explorer was given the term for stranger or foreigner. The Indian kinship world was divided between relatives who were friends and strangers who were potential enemies. Shouting "tab-ba-bone" to an already fearful Shoshone was hardly the way to begin a successful talk.

Knowing that the day's opportunity was lost, Lewis decided to pause in the cove for breakfast. While the rest of the men cooked, Lewis prepared a small parcel of beads, moccasin awls, paint, and a mirror. Tying the goods to a pole stuck in the ground near the campfire, Lewis hoped the gifts would attract Shoshone attention and convince them that the strangers were interested in trading, not raiding. A sudden rain shower made following the Shoshone's tracks impossible. Wet grass hampered walking and a maze of horse prints made deciding which track to follow difficult and frustrating. Camping that night at the head of Shoshone Cove, Lewis may well have wondered whether the Shoshones would forever remain just beyond his grasp.

For the Lemhi Shoshones of Cameahwait's band, August 11, 1805, had seemed like any other day in late summer. Groups of women and children were out on the prairies digging roots. Others were busy at fish weirs or giggering for salmon with sharp, barbed sticks. Most men were occupied with hunting or tending to the needs

of horses and weapons. One man who had been out riding near a creek on the other side of the mountains saw strangers whose faces he had described as "pale as ashes." But the report seemed preposterous and after some talk it was dismissed as an idle boast. What counted that day was that the band would soon join Flathead friends in journeying toward the Three Forks for the buffalo season. They would no longer be ágaideka'a, or salmon eaters, but kutsendeka'a, those who ate the buffalo. There would be danger from enemies like the Atsinas and Blackfeet, but there would also be fresh meat to end days of near starvation. That anything might alter the familiar seasonal rhythm was almost unthinkable.

Lewis expected the next day to bring the long-hoped-for Shoshone encounter. Early that morning Lewis sent George Drouillard out to track. Continuing on the trail as it led toward Lemhi Pass, Lewis saw places where Indian women had been digging roots. Brush lodges were also signs that the Shoshones were near. Although Lewis's party did not find the Shoshones on August 12, it was a memorable day. Near the crest of the pass the explorers found "the most distant fountain of the waters of the Mighty Missouri." Later recalling McNeal standing astride the headwaters creek, Lewis exalted that "thus far I had accomplished one of those great objects on which my mind has been unalterably fixed for many years." After drinking from the stream and resting for a moment, Lewis and his men crossed the Continental Divide—the first Americans to make the passage—and stood looking at the Bitterroot Mountains. Not even those "immense ranges of high mountains still to the West of us with their tops partially covered with snow" could dampen Lewis's enthusiasm as he drank at the Lemhi River and for the first time tasted western waters. For all the glory and excitement of the day, Lewis must have known that the expedition's essential problem remained unsolved. Seeing one Shoshone, observing many Indian signs, and crossing the divide did not bring horses into the explorers' corral.