

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Montana
COUNTY: Chouteau
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE DEC 16 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:
Lewis and Clark Camp at Slaughter River

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
in Lot 13, Sec. 31 T23N R15E *4 1/2 miles S of Big Sandy on No. 2*

CITY OR TOWN:
40 miles south of Big Sandy *ms*

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:
No. 2

STATE: Montana CODE: 30 COUNTY: Chouteau CODE: 015

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Comments			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

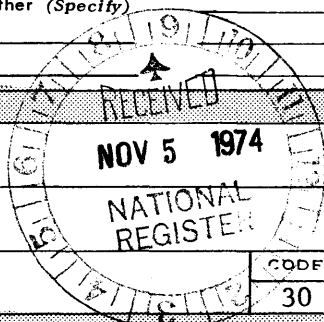
OWNER'S NAME:
State of Montana (Department of Fish and Game)

STREET AND NUMBER:
Mitchell Building

CITY OR TOWN:
Helena

STATE:
Montana

CODE:
30



5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Chouteau County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Fort Benton

STATE:
Montana

CODE:
30

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
The Lewis and Clark Trail: A proposal for development

DATE OF SURVEY: 1965 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
Washington

STATE:
D.C.

CODE:
08

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)				
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins
	(Check One)		(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The campsite is located on the north bank of the Missouri River about 3/4 of a mile upstream from the mouth of Slaughter River (now called Arrow Creek). The site is on a sagebrush and grass covered bench about 8 feet above the river level. About two dozen large cottonwood trees provide the only shelter along with 3 or 4 small Russian olive trees planted or escaped from a homestead about 3/4 mile upstream.

Many species of wildlife still thrive in the area. The cottonwoods on state-owned land have wire mesh screens around their trunks to prevent damage by the numerous beaver in the area. Other native wildlife still found in abundance in the vicinity are mule deer, antelope, otter, grouse, birds of prey, waterfowl and coyotes. The wolf, the elk, and the Audubon bighorn have long since been exterminated along with the buffalo.

The area surrounding the campsite is composed of rough broken hills covered with short grasses, yucca, and prickly pear cactus and is used primarily for cattle grazing. However, the bottomland less than 1/4 mile upstream of the campsite was plowed in early June of 1974 and converted to a cornfield.

The Montana Department of Fish and Game purchased 42 acres surrounding the campsite in 1967 for use as a primitive boat access recreation area. A pole fence has been erected around the camp area to eliminate cattle trespass, and two latrines and a garbage pit were installed. Future plans call for maintaining the primitive character of the site.



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8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) May 29, 1805; July 29, 1806

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This was one of the few campsites used by the Lewis and Clark Expedition on both their outward and return journeys. Many of their observations about the surrounding countryside could be repeated today as it has changed little over the 169 years since.

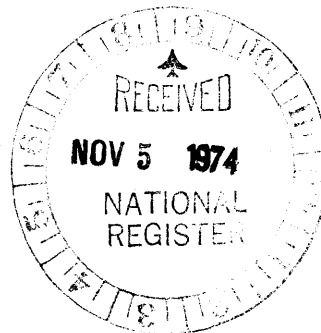
Of note is Lewis' observations on the climate--"The air of the open country is astonishingly dry as well as pure. I found by several experiments that a tablespoon full of water exposed to the air in a saucer would evaporate in 36 hours. . ."

In fact it was the weather that induced them to camp on their outward journey in this small grove of cottonwoods. "It began to rain and blow hard. . .", there was ". . .no timber for some distance above. . ." and the pine breaks had now given way to barren hills. The next morning (May 30) one of the party reported that there was snow intermixed with rain on the heights above the river. Despite the rain, they noticed that the Missouri River was now becoming much clearer than it had been downstream a few days past.

The expedition also made many notes on wildlife each time they camped here. A fresh buffalo kill downstream of over 100 animals induced them to call a nearby creek the Slaughter River.

Near this campsite the party killed a wolf, an elk, 2 beavers, and 9 Audubon bighorn sheep.

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9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Thwaites, Reuben Gold, ed. Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804-1806. (15 V. Dodd, 1904) Vol. II, Part 1, pp. 94-96, Vol. V, Part 2, p. 229, Atlas maps 23-24.

HB
NO
47M

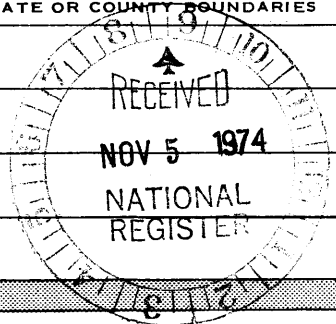
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	N 47°	43'	04"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	W 109°	50'	59"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 8 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



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11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
David G. Conklin, Recreation Planner

ORGANIZATION: Montana Department of Recreation and Parks Div., Fish and Game

DATE: 10-28-74

STREET AND NUMBER:
Mitchell Building

CITY OR TOWN: Helena

STATE: Montana

CODE: 30

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Ashley C. Roberts
Ashley C. Roberts

Title State Historic Preservation Officer

Date Oct. 30, 1974

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

R. Mortensen
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 12/16/74

ATTEST:
W. J. [Signature]
Keeper of the National Register

Date 12-9-74

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE		Montana
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(Number all entries)

Lewis and Clark Camp at Slaughter River

10. Geographical Data (continued)

The exact location of the campsite was determined by interpreting the journals and accompanying atlases of the expedition as edited by Thwaites. No excavation has yet been attempted.

The courses and distances for May 29 were plotted to determine the campsite location. The atlas reference for that date also quite accurately depicts the campsite in relation to the bends in the river channel and its tributaries.

The journal description of vegetation and topography aided greatly in pinpointing the site. It was described as a narrow bottom containing some cottonwood -- the only timber for some distance. The site is located on a narrow bottom and does contain the only trees in the vicinity -- a grove of cottonwoods and the remains of older trees.

