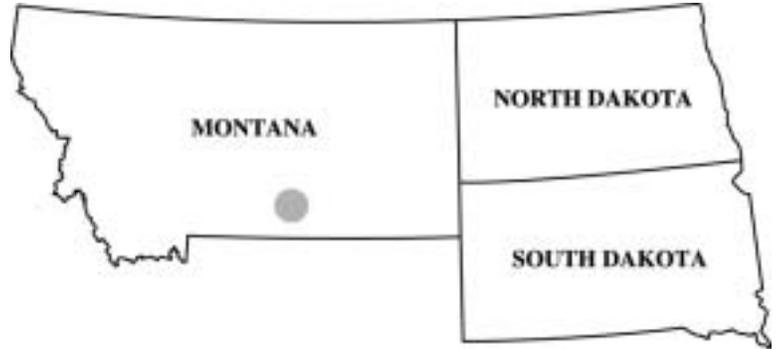




Pompeys Pillar National Monument

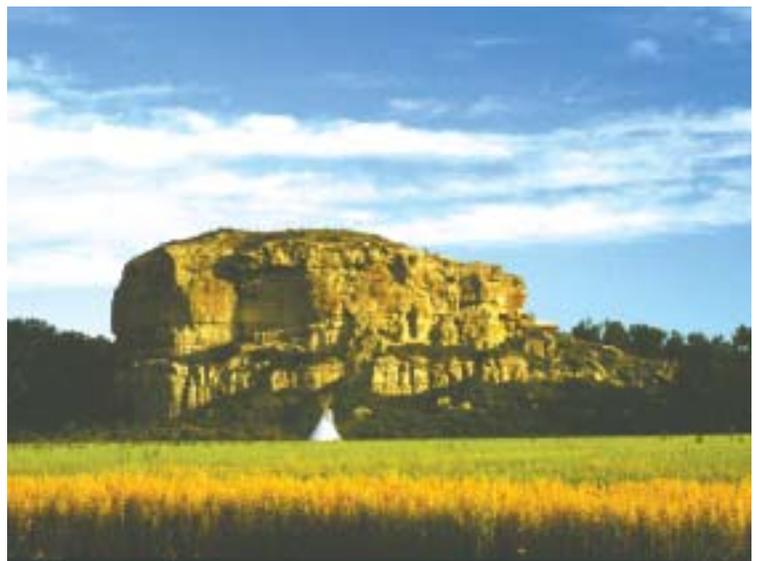
WHERE ARE WE NOW?

- BLM has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) for development at Pompeys Pillar. The preferred alternative identifies the general location of an interpretive center, provides a mid-range facility of about 5,700 square feet, allows for future expansion, and allows flexibility in the season of use. This alternative emphasizes outdoor interpretive experiences and is much more in line with available funding than was the 12,000-square foot facility recommended in a 1996 plan. However, long-term operations and maintenance costs remain a serious concern.
- Two protests on the EA were resolved in April 2002. The record of decision will be issued soon.
- As a side note, in late 2000, United Harvest began construction of a large, high-speed grain elevator near Pompeys Pillar. The Pompeys Pillar Historical Association has filed a lawsuit against the State of Montana to require a more extensive environmental study of the project.



HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- Pompeys Pillar is a 121-foot sandstone butte 28 miles northeast of Billings, Montana. The only known physical evidence of the Lewis and Clark expedition that is still visible along the trail is Captain Clark's signature which he carved into the Pillar on July 25, 1806, and recorded doing so in his journal.
- The BLM purchased Pompeys Pillar November 22, 1991, for its historic significance and its interpretive and recreational potential.
- In 1992, the BLM constructed limited facilities for the protection of resources and the comfort and safety of visitors. Facilities included a small log contact station and a stairway to Clark's signature and the top of the Pillar.
- The Pompeys Pillar Historical Association has worked closely with BLM in the acquisition, operation and development of this site. It has also agreed to raise \$2 million to match an FY1999 \$2 million Congressional appropriation to go toward the construction of a new interpretive center.
- In FY2002, Congress appropriated an additional \$2.9 million for construction of the center.



- Following the FY 1999 appropriation, the BLM hired a contractor to prepare an EA addressing construction of an interpretive center.
- The contractor's preliminary EA had a number of shortcomings including the lack of a "mid-range" alternative. Instead, it addressed only alternatives for "no action", a 12,000 square foot center, and a highway rest area/interpretive center.
- The site's designation as a national monument on January 17, 2001, was widely supported.
- The National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council selected the site for one of 14 National Signature Events; the Pillar event will take place in July 2006.



WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- We need to issue a record of decision as quickly as possible so construction can be completed in a timely manner.
- We need to remain cognizant of our ability to fund any new construction as well as our ability to fund annual operation and maintenance.

WHO ELSE IS CONCERNED?

- Public interest is high regarding both the site itself and construction of an interpretive center.
- Feedback from public meetings, briefings for elected officials, and public comment letters has been generally favorable toward the smaller interpretive center.
- Some members of the PPHA still prefer development of a larger facility.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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