

# Lewis and Clark NHT Geotourism Program Frequently Asked Questions



Wilderness Inquiry Paddle at Carter Lake, IA.  
Photo by Greg Lais

## ***What is Geotourism?***

***Tourism that sustains or enhances the geographic character of a place, its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.***

Geotourism encompasses a range of travel including culture and heritage, history, food, nature, adventure, the outdoors, water, music, and arts.



Sacajawea Interpretive, Educational and Cultural Center in Salmon, ID. Photo by NPS

**Who is involved?** Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (LCNHT) - National Park Service office recently signed an agreement with Solimar International to develop and implement a Geotourism program along the LCNHT.

**How will the Geotourism program be developed?** The first step for the program will be to establish a Stewardship Council for LCNHT Geotourism program that has representation from the many diverse partners that are a part of the Trail to help guide the program as it is implemented.

**What will the program do?** The project is expected to include an interactive MapGuide website designed to make it easy for anyone looking to travel along LCNHT to identify the types of places that contribute to an authentic local tourism experience. Nominations may include things such as historic structures, scenic landscapes, Native American sites and attractions, wildlife viewing areas, trails and outdoor recreation, local cuisine and culture, festivals and events, artists and guides—the people and destinations that contribute to the unique beauty and diversity of the region. Local residents will have the opportunity to be a part of the story told of the region through the website and other platforms by contributing, in their own voices, their stories and the places that they would like to share with others. Local residents will also contribute to guiding the long-term vision and strategy for the Trail.

**What is special about the MapGuide Website?** Using a custom web platform and a comprehensive interactive map, the website highlights in one location historic sites, artisan studios, public lands, Native American lands, authentic “non-chain” accommodations and restaurants, small or regionally-focused businesses, family-friendly amenities, visitor centers, museums and much more. Website users can create accounts that let them organize and save trip plans and points of interest. It also features a special “local voices” section, where stories, quotes, and essays by local residents portraying special features, local flavor, and feelings towards their home region.



Canoes at the White Cliffs in Montana. Photo by Tommy LaVergne courtesy of Rice University

#### **What is the role of the Stewardship Council?**

The Council, made up of local representatives, will encourage community participation in the nomination process (where residents nominate points of interest that they would like to share with travelers); ensure the nominations reflect the diversity of the region; identify themes; and work with Solimar International and NPS to edit and design the website. Once these materials are complete, the group will oversee the website and through it support marketing and promotion of unique tourism experience in the region. In addition, the group will work with the communities, businesses, and people along the river to gather and disseminate engaging text and visual content about the stories of the region.

#### **What are the goals of the project?**

- Provide the public with a series of integrated resources, such as an interactive website, to better experience Lewis and Clark NHT in an authentic, sustainable way.
- Bring the many diverse partners along Lewis and Clark NHT together to re-establish partnerships and renew collaborative efforts following the conclusion of 2004- 2006 bicentennial festivities.
- Engage Native American tribes along the Trail, developing new opportunities for them to share their stories with travelers and leverage local tourism in a way compatible with their goals and sentiments.
- Support local small businesses and raise awareness of the wealth of amenities and experiences offered by communities along Lewis and Clark NHT.



Lake Sakakawea Sunset. Photo by Scott Mestrezat

#### **Where has this been done before?**

Geotourism MapGuides have been developed for many sites within the U.S.A and around the world, including:

- [Mississippiriver.natgeotourism.com](http://Mississippiriver.natgeotourism.com)
- [Delawareriver.natgeotourism.com](http://Delawareriver.natgeotourism.com)
- [Traveltheheart.com](http://Traveltheheart.com)
- [Crownofthecontinent.natgeotourism.com](http://Crownofthecontinent.natgeotourism.com)
- [Yellowstone.natgeotourism.com](http://Yellowstone.natgeotourism.com)
- [Fourcornersgeotourism.com](http://Fourcornersgeotourism.com)
- [Sierranevadageotourism.org](http://Sierranevadageotourism.org)
- [Easternsrilanka.natgeotourism.com](http://Easternsrilanka.natgeotourism.com)
- [Bahamasgeotourism.com](http://Bahamasgeotourism.com)
- [Sedonaverdevalley.natgeotourism.com](http://Sedonaverdevalley.natgeotourism.com)
- [Tequilatourism.com](http://Tequilatourism.com)