

Lewis and Clark Timeline Answer Sheet

Herb Thompson — Geographic Alliance in Nevada

January 18, 1803: President Jefferson sends a secret message to Congress asking for approval and funding of an expedition to explore the Western part of the continent.

July 4, 1803: News of the Louisiana Purchase is announced.

May 14, 1804: The Corps of Discovery begins its journey up the Missouri River.

November 4, 1804: Lewis & Clark hire French-Canadian fur-trader Toussaint Charbonneau and his Shoshone wife, Sacagawea, to act as interpreters for the expedition.

December 24, 1804: The men finish building Ft. Mandan—their winter quarters named for the neighboring tribe, across the river from the Indian village.

February 11, 1805: Sacagawea's son, Jean Baptiste Charbonneau – nicknamed Pompoy by Clark – is born with assistance from Lewis.

April 7, 1805: Lewis & Clark send a shipment of artifacts and specimens to President Jefferson; the “Permanent Party” continues west.

June 13, 1805: Lewis reaches the Great Falls of the Missouri and realizes that the expedition will have to “portage” all of their gear, supplies, and canoes around it.

Late July 1805: The Expedition reaches the Three Forks of the Missouri and proclaims the spot as the river source.

August 17, 1805: The main party arrives at the Shoshone camp, where Sacagawea recognizes the chief as her long-lost brother, Cameahwait.

September 11, 1805: The Expedition sets out over the Bitterroot ranges, a crossing of 160 miles, with many horses and a mule acquired from the Shoshone.

October 7, 1805: With help from the Nez Perce tribe, the Expedition departs the “Canoe Camp” in new dugouts with the current at their backs for the first time in two years.

October 16, 1805: The Corps of Discovery reaches the Columbia River, the last waterway to the Pacific Ocean.

November 24, 1805: Having reached the Pacific, the entire Expedition – including Sacagawea and Clark's slave, York – take a vote on where to build their winter quarters, Fort Clatsop.

March 23, 1806: After a winter of only 12 days without rain, the men present their fort to the Clatsop Indians and set out for the return trip home.

September 23, 1806: Having found an easier route across the country, Lewis & Clark and the Corps of Discovery reach St. Louis nearly two and a half years after their journey began and are acclaimed as national heroes.

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