



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Lewis and Clark NHP, Fort Clatsop News Release

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The Lewis and Clark Saltmakers Return!

February 17-19, 2006
9:00 a.m. Friday to 5:00 p.m. Sunday
Seaside, Oregon

Exactly 200 years ago this winter, members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition had a salt making camp about 15 miles from their Fort Clatsop headquarters. The salt was obtained from seawater by boiling the water away and was needed for preserving and flavoring elk and deer meat. A few soldiers at a time were stationed at this post near a Clatsop-Nehalem village in future Seaside, Oregon and the camp operated for about seven weeks from the first days of January until February 20, 1806. Approximately four bushels of salt were produced which the explorers calculated was enough for their winter here and the return river voyage to the United States.

This winter you can experience history by meeting the Lewis and Clark Saltmakers as they return to Seaside. As part of the Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial, a special living history program, "The Saltmakers Return" takes place this February 17-19. Historical Interpreters will set up a camp right on the beach in south Seaside. They will make salt from seawater 24 hours a day from 9:00 a.m. Friday through 5:00 p.m. Sunday. The Saltmakers will be on the beach at the west end of Avenue U in Seaside, Oregon. From Highway 101 take Avenue U to the beach. From the Promenade in Seaside, walk south to where Avenue U meets the beach.

"The Saltmakers Return" is a fun interactive learning opportunity for the whole family. Visitors to this 56-hour event are encouraged to talk and trade with members of the expedition while these soldiers are tending fires and boiling seawater to make salt. "This holiday weekend is a great chance for families to see first hand what life for the Corps of Discovery was like on the Pacific Coast." said Chip Jenkins, Superintendent. "Regardless of the weather, kids really enjoy the chance to talk and trade with members of the expedition."

This popular program which generally occurs on the third weekends of July and August attracts nearly 6,000 visitors each year. In 2001 the Seaside Museum and Historical Society approached the park in hopes of establishing a partnership to make "The Saltmakers Return" happen. Other partners in this program now include The Tides Motel, Fort Clatsop Historical Association, Destination: The Pacific, Clatsop County, and Oregon State Parks.

The Saltmakers Return has received generous underwriting from the Kinsman Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, Autzen Foundation, the National Park Service Challenge Cost Share program, and the City of Seaside. Additional support is provided by the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial in Oregon, Oregon Historic Trails Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation, and Oregon Public Broadcasting.

For more information, call Lewis and Clark NHP, Fort Clatsop at (503) 861-2471, ext 214 or contact the Seaside Museum and Historical Society at (503) 738-7065.

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