

The Lewis and Clark Back Country Byway and Adventure Road

Tendoy, Idaho

BLM / USFS



The spirits of the men were soon much elevated at the prospect of getting horses. —

128

Courses and Distances traveled by Capt. Clark
August 17th 1805.

5 30^{mi}. W. 4. to a high Knob or Hill in the forks of Jefferson's River, the same being 10 M. by water. the river making a considerable bend to the S.W. the forks of this river is the most distant point to which the waters of the Missami are navigable. of course we laid up our canoes at this place and commenced our voyage by land. —

Sunday August 18th 1805.

This morning, while Capt. Clark was busily engaged in preparing for his route, I exposed some articles to barter with the Indians for horses as I wished a few at this moment to relieve the men who were going with Capt. Clark from the labour of carrying their baggage, and also one to keep here in order to pack the meat to camp which the hunters might kill. I soon obtained three very good horses. for which I gave an uniform coat, a pair of leggings, a few handkerchiefs, three knives and some other small articles the whole of which did not cost more than about 20¢ in the U.S. States. the Indians seemed quite as well pleased with their bargain as I was. the men also purchased one for ^{old} a checked shirt a pair of old leggings and a knife. Two of these I purchased Capt. Clark on with him. at 10 A.M. Capt. Clark departed with his Detachment and all the Indians except 2 men and 2 women who remained with us. Two of the inferior chiefs were a little displeas'd at not having received a present equivalent to that given the first Chief. to relieve this

The Lewis and Clark Back Country Byway and Adventure Road

Tendoy, Idaho

The Lewis and Clark Back Country Byway and Adventure Road is a 36 mile loop drive through a beautiful and historic landscape on the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. The mountains, evergreen forests, high desert canyons, and grassy foothills look much the same today as when the Lewis and Clark Expedition passed through in 1805.



Getting There

The portal to the Byway is Tendoy, Idaho, which is nineteen miles south of Salmon on Idaho Highway 28. From Montana, exit from I-15 at Clark Canyon Reservoir south of Dillon onto Montana Highway 324. Drive west past Grant to an intersection at the Shoshone Ridge Overlook. If you're pulling a trailer or driving an RV with a passenger vehicle in tow, it would be a good idea to leave your trailer or RV at the overlook, which has plenty of parking, a vault toilet, and interpretive signs. Travel road 3909 west 12 miles to Lemhi Pass. Please respect private property along the road and obey posted speed signs. Salmon, Idaho, and Dillon, Montana, are full-service communities. Limited services are available in Tendoy, Lemhi, and Leadore, Idaho and Grant, Montana.

Traveling the Byway is a Real Adventure!

- The Byway is a single-lane gravel road with pullouts. Passenger vehicles can drive the road safely but must have good tires. Buses, RVs, and trailers are not recommended on the Agency Creek Road [see map], which is narrow and has some tight corners. Even if you're experienced in mountain driving, drive slowly and carefully.
- There are three segments to the Byway. First is the "Lemhi back road" in the Lemhi Valley near Tendoy. Second is the "Warm Springs Wood Road" [185] from the valley into the Beaverhead Mountains to Lemhi Pass. The third segment is the Agency Creek road [013] from Lemhi Pass back to Tendoy.
- With a 4,000 foot gain and loss in elevation, expect some steep grades, at times approaching 20%. A hard climb on a hot day can cause your vehicle engine to overheat. Shift into low gear, turn off the air conditioning

and open your windows.

- The Byway is normally free of snow from early June through October. To check on current road conditions call the Public Lands Center in Salmon at (208) 756-5400.
- There are numerous opportunities for hiking and mountain biking. At lower elevations, be alert for rattlesnakes.
- Cell phone coverage is sporadic at best.
- The remains of mining operations are scattered throughout the area. These sites can be very hazardous. Stay out, and stay alive.
- Plan on taking a minimum of three hours to drive the Byway. Drive carefully and slowly, even if you're accustomed to mountain driving. Parts of the Byway traverse steep, exposed slopes and there are no guardrails.

Checklist for a Safe and Enjoyable Journey

- _____ At least half a tank of gasoline
- _____ A properly inflated spare tire, jack, and lug wrench
- _____ Drinking water; water from springs and streams must be chemically treated or filtered
- _____ First aid kit
- _____ Extra food
- _____ Sweater and rain gear; it can snow year-round at 8,600 feet elevation
- _____ Flashlight
- _____ Camera and film, binoculars
- _____ Books to identify birds and wildflowers



Mule Deer
Antlers



Meadowlark



Syringa



Scenic Attractions

The Byway traverses four habitats: river valley, sagebrush grasslands, mountain forests and meadows, and high desert canyons. The views of the Lemhi Valley and the surrounding mountain ranges are incredible. This is truly some of the finest scenery in America. Wildflowers are prolific in spring and summer. Early mornings and evenings are the times to look for wildlife, particularly where forest and meadow meet. You might see elk, mule and whitetail deer, black bear, moose, pronghorn antelope, coyotes, and many smaller mammal species.

Among the many bird species present are golden eagle, red-tailed hawk, chukar, hungarian partridge, blue grouse, sage grouse, nighthawk, mallard duck, Canada goose, great blue heron, mourning dove, boreal owl, four hummingbird species, belted kingfisher, flicker, Lewis' woodpecker, magpie, Stellar's Jay, Clark's nutcracker, chickadee, tree swallow, robin, blue bird, cedar waxwing, Western tanager, song sparrow, Western meadowlark, Brewer's blackbird, and American goldfinch.

Wildflowers bloom in spring and summer, their presence varying according to weather, elevation, and each species' characteristic requirements. Lemhi Pass is well-known for its wildflower displays. Captain Lewis collected three new plant species in this area: mountain maple, common snowberry, and Lewis's monkey flower. You may also see desert buckwheat, sunflowers, arrow-leaf balsamroot, buttercups, glacier lilies, larkspur, sticky geranium, sego lily, lupine, forget-me-not, yarrow, bitterroot, phlox, spring beauty, blanket flower, asters, violets, paintbrush, currants, evening primrose, yellow monkey flower, valerian, flax, blazing star, serviceberry, and syringa.

By late September shorter days and cooler temperatures release hues of red, yellow, and gold in aspens, cottonwoods, willows, and shrubs. Agency Creek is beautiful in October.



Shoshone fish weir on the Lemhi River, 1906

—Smithsonian Institution



Shoshone man fishing on the Lemhi River, 1906

—Smithsonian Institution

Native Americans

The Lewis and Clark Expedition did not blaze new paths here. They followed long-established Indian trails. This is the homeland of the Agai Dika [“salmon eater”] Shoshone, who came to be known as the Lemhi Shoshone after the Mormon settlement of Ft. Lemhi was established in the 1850s. Archaeological evidence suggests that the Shoshone may have arrived possibly 3,500 years ago. The chinook and sockeye salmon that returned here from the Pacific Ocean every summer to spawn were at the center of Lemhi life and culture.

Early in the 18th century the Lemhi acquired horses, which greatly increased their standard of living. The men used horses to hunt bison and to transport a winter’s supply of bison “jerky” to winter campsites. Women tanned bison hides and sewed them together to make tepees, which were hauled by horses wherever the family went.

Hunting bison took the Lemhi onto the game-rich plains of central Montana, where they came into conflict with other tribes. When their enemies the Blackfeet, Atsina, and Hidatsa acquired firearms from Canadian traders in the late 18th century, the Lemhi retreated to their mountain homeland. An annual bison hunt was still conducted, often with allies such as the Salish [Flatheads], Nez Perce, and Crow tribes. Sacagawea was kidnapped by the Hidatsa during a bison hunt around 1800. She was taken to the Knife River villages in North Dakota, where she and her husband Charbonneau joined the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Fur traders and trappers eventually reached the Lemhi Valley, then missionaries and finally miners and settlers. The Lemhi, now including Sheepeater and Bannock families who had joined the Shoshone, remained peaceful, but found it increasingly difficult to hunt, fish, and gather food in their traditional manner.



Fanny Silver was born on the Lemhi Reservation near Tendoy about 1897. She was at boarding school in Fort Shaw, Montana when the Lemhi Shoshone were moved to Fort Hall in 1907. Her family returned to the Lemhi Valley to hunt , fish and gather plants in the traditional manner.. Silver died in 1985 when she was eighty eight years old.

—Photography by Jed Wilson, 1971

President U. S. Grant authorized a small reservation for the Lemhi tribe in the 1870s, but the federal government pressured the tribe to move south to a central Shoshone Bannock reservation at Fort Hall in 1907.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition

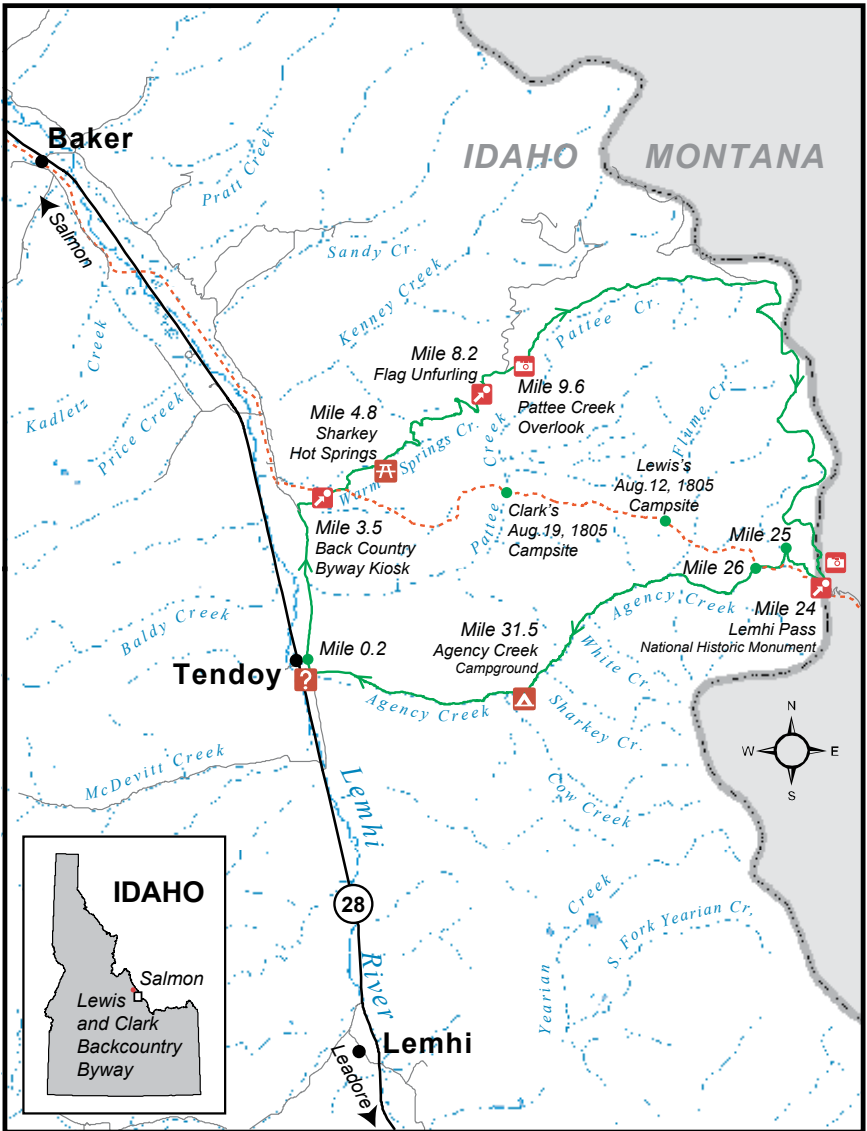
In August 1805 the Lewis and Clark Expedition reached the headwaters of the Missouri River. Lewis set out on foot with a small party to find the Shoshone, Sacagawea's people, whose horses he hoped would help portage the Expedition's baggage over the divide. But the mountain barrier he saw to the west from Lemhi Pass suddenly complicated the mission. Could there be a navigable river through such mountains? If not, then the Expedition must buy horses. If they could not find the Shoshone, or if the tribe refused to sell, the Corps of Discovery had only one option: return down the Missouri. Nothing less than the success of the Expedition, and the future of the United States, were at stake.

Euro-American Settlement

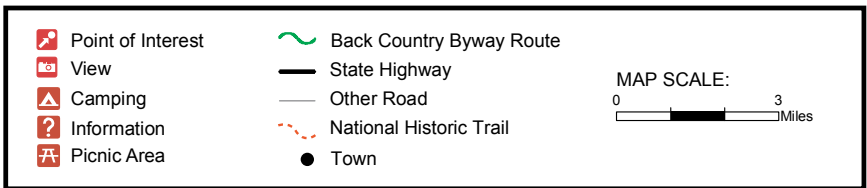
Trappers, explorers, and missionaries followed in the wake of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Permanent settlement began in the 1860s when gold was discovered in the nearby mountains and miners arrived. The Lemhi Valley was bracketed by the towns of Salmon City at the mouth of the Lemhi River and Junction at its headwaters. The valley and its major tributaries were soon occupied by ranchers and farmers, many of whose descendants still live here today.

The land that was not claimed by settlers was eventually brought under the management of the United States Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

LOCATION MAP



MAP LEGEND



Byway and Adventure Road Mileages

Although the mile guide is written in a clockwise direction, the Byway can be traveled in either direction. Mileages are approximate and will vary depending upon the eccentricities of your vehicle's odometer.

Mile 0—Tendoy

The “portal” to the Byway was named for Tendoy, head chief of the Lemhi Shoshone from 1863 to 1907. His strong leadership kept his tribe at peace and earned him great respect from local settlers. Tendoy successfully resisted Federal government pressure to move his people to the Fort Hall reservation near Pocatello until he died in 1907.

The first Tendoy store and post office was built in 1911. Its remains stand behind the present store.

Mile 0.2—“T” intersection

Turn left onto what is referred to locally as the “Lemhi back road.”

Mile 1.5—Sunfield

This area was homesteaded by Joseph B. Pattee, the last manager of Hudson's Bay Company Fort Hall trading post. A post office and school were built in the early 20th century.

Mile 1.8—Fort Lemhi

In 1855 a party of twenty-seven Mormons arrived in the Lemhi Valley to establish a mission among the Shoshone, Sheepeater, and Bannock tribes for the purpose of converting and “civilizing” them. The missionaries built both a fort with cabins surrounded by a nine foot high log palisade and an adobe livestock corral. At first relations with the local tribes were cordial, but tensions arose, particularly with the Bannock. More Mormons arrived and a second fort was constructed, signs that the mission station

was becoming a permanent colony. Bannock resentment and a series of misunderstandings led to a raid on the fort's livestock on February 25, 1858. Bannock warriors drove off most of the Mormons' cattle and horses. Two missionaries were killed and five wounded. A month later the Mormons abandoned their settlement and returned to Utah. The only visible remains today are portions of the corral wall. Please respect the private property upon which they stand.

The fort was named for Limhi, a king in the Book of Mormon. The spelling was changed to Lemhi and the name applied to the river, mountain range, and pass.

Mile 3.0—Turn right to leave the Lemhi back road and continue on the Byway along the “Warm Springs Wood Road [185].



Lewis meets women, gives trinkets

—Delbert Farmer, Fort Hall

Mile 3.5—Backcountry Byway Kiosk

Here you will find Byway information, interpretive panels, picnic tables and vault toilets.

In this area Captain Lewis’s advance party first made contact with the Lemhi Shoshone on August 13, 1805, when they suddenly came upon three Shoshone women. After “pacifying” them with gifts, Lewis persuaded the women to take the explorers to their encampment to speak with the chief. On the way there they met the chief and sixty of his warriors, who had been alerted to the presence of possible enemies by Shoshones who had seen Lewis’s party. When the women showed Chief Cameahwait the gifts Lewis had given them, he welcomed the four strangers as friends.

Mile 4.0—Intersection

Go left to continue on the Byway. Or, turn right for the Alkali Flat road, which follows roughly the route of the Lewis and Clark Trail toward Pattee Creek. This dirt road can be impassable when wet; use caution. Look for posts with the Lewis and Clark Trail emblem.



Sharkey Hot Springs recreation site

—BLM Photo

Mile 4.8—Sharkey Hot Springs is named for pioneer miner and rancher Frank Sharkey, this BLM recreation site features two large outdoor soaking pools, changing rooms, vault toilets, a fire pit and picnic tables. This is a recreation fee site.

Mile 8.2—The Flag Unfurling Monument commemorates the display of the U. S. flag by Lewis’s advance party on August 13th, 1805. This symbolic act introduced a new nation to the Lemhi Shoshone and strengthened the American claim to the Northwest. This was the first time the Stars and Stripes were unfurled in present-day Idaho.

Mile 9.6—Pattee Creek Overlook provides a hawk’s eye view of Pattee Creek from its steep forested canyon on the left through the grassy foothills to the front. A detachment led by William Clark camped on lower Pattee Creek below on the night of August 19th, 1805, on their way to assess the navigability of the Salmon River. [The river proved to be unnavigable.]

across the head of hollows and Springs....

Captain William Clark, August 19, 1805

The high peaks of the Lemhi Range lie to the southwest. Opportunities for hiking, fishing, and other types of recreation abound in these mountains.

Mile 10.3—The Salmon-Challis National Forest
As you climb from the steep slopes of the Pattee Creek canyon to its headwaters near the Continental Divide, you’ll see tree species typical of the northern Rockies. Douglas fir dominates the lower elevations, giving way to lodgepole pine, subalpine fir and whitebark pine nearer the Continental Divide. Engelmann spruce is found in wet areas. Evidence from timber and logging sales is apparent, but there are also stands of “designated old growth,” including the north-facing canyon wall of Pattee Creek to your right.



Lewis and men meet Shoshone on horseback

—Adolph DeVinney, Fort Hall

Aspen, a species with great wildlife value, have all but disappeared in this section of the byway. The philosophy of aggressive wildfire-suppression that prevailed in the 20th century permitted the encroachment of Douglas fir and other conifers into aspen stands. Historically, wildfires both removed competing conifers and stimulated the growth of new aspen trees (actually “suckers”) from their extensive root systems. Land managers have begun to implement strategies to restore aspen stands.

At the beautiful meadows that are the headwaters of Pattee Creek, the road turns south to contour near the Continental Divide for several miles. Congress designated the 3100 mile long Continental Divide National Scenic Trail in 1978. Every year a handful of “thru-hikers” complete the entire distance. The rolling, densely forested terrain in this area contrasts with the alpine lake country to the north and the broad-shouldered mountain and range country south of Lemhi Pass.



Westward view from Lemhi Pass

—BLM Photo

Mile 23.5—Lemhi Pass National Historic Landmark

This site features an overview of the Indian route the Lewis and Clark Expedition followed westward. To reach Lemhi Pass, turn left [north] as you exit the parking lot. Hikers can follow the ridgeline south to Lemhi Pass along the Continental Divide Trail. The 480 acre Landmark was designated in 1960. Parking and a vault toilet are accessible here.

Mile 24—Lemhi Pass (We-yah-vee)

Please use the parking area 500 feet north of the pass on the Montana side [Road 3909], which has an information kiosk, vault toilet, and visitor register box. An accessible interpretive trail leads back to a stone monument at the pass.

Lemhi Pass History

...we proceeded on to the top of the dividing ridge from which I discovered immense ranges of mountains still to the west of with their tops still partially covered with snow.*

Captain Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805.

Lewis and the other men in his advance party, John Shields, George Drouillard, and Hugh McNeal, were expecting to leave the Rocky Mountains behind them when they reached this ridge. Imagine their thoughts as they discovered how wrong they were. With determination, luck, and diplomacy, they proceeded on to find and befriend the Shoshones who would sell them the horses they needed to portage this pass and cross the Bitterroot Mountains to navigable waters on the Clearwater River.

The Shoshones called the pass We-yah-vee. They and other tribes had used it for many generations before the Corps of Discovery arrived in 1805. Lewis and Clark gave the pass no name, but during the fur trade decades that followed it was known as "North Pass," to distinguish it from South Pass in Wyoming. Several battles were fought near the pass during that time. In 1823 Hudson's Bay Company trappers led by Finan McDonald defeated a party of Blackfeet. Blackfeet massacred a Salish party near here in 1832.

Horse and mule pack trains crossed the pass regularly after the 1866 Leesburg gold rush brought permanent settlement to the Salmon River country. When the Utah & Northern railroad reached Dillon, Montana, in 1880, the citizens of Salmon pooled their resources to build a road over the pass to the Red Rock rail station south of Dillon. Known first as the Ft. Lemhi and Montana Wagon Road, it became the Red Rock-Salmon City Stage Road when stagecoach service began in the late 1880s.

\$8.00 bought a one-way ticket for the twelve hour trip from Salmon to Red Rock. Stations along the way provided meals and fresh mules and horses. The stage company employed from 35-40 people and operated up to fourteen coaches and a dozen freight wagons. It carried several thousand passengers and hauled over a million tons of freight over the pass each year until 1910, when the Gilmore and Pittsburgh RR was completed over Bannock Pass to Salmon. Since then most visitors to Lemhi Pass arrive in automobiles.



Lemhi Pass Fault Zone (arrow) and thorium prospects

—BLM Photo

Lemhi Pass Geology

Lemhi Pass exists because it straddles a fault zone characterized by broken and fractured rock that erodes more rapidly than the surrounding rock, creating the low “saddle” that offers an easy crossing of the mountain range.

The area around the pass contains one of the world's largest deposits of thorium, a radioactive mineral that attracted great interest in the past because it produces two times the energy as the same size unit of uranium and creates fewer hazardous by-products. Thorium prospectors have left behind roads, trenches and pits, which can be hazardous and should be avoided. Dust particles containing thorium that are inhaled or ingested in sufficient quantities can damage body tissue and lead to cancer.

What remains of the Withington Caldera (approximately 3.6 miles wide) can be seen to the northwest at the northern terminus of the Lemhi Mountains. Greenish ash-flow tuff blasted from this volcanic explosion about 48 million years ago can be seen cropping out at several places along the Agency Creek road below the pass.



Sacajawea Sees the Beaverhead

—Jill W. Hastings, Fort Hall

The Sacajawea Memorial Area (Montana Side of Lemhi Pass) Located 0.2 mile south of the pass on the Montana side, this Forest Service site created through the efforts of Laura Tolman Scott of Dillon honors the Lemhi Shoshone woman who served the Expedition as an interpreter. There are vault toilets, picnic tables, and an interpretive trail.

Agency Creek Road [No. 013] heading west off of Lemhi Pass
The first two miles of this road are very steep and narrow with several blind corners. It is not appropriate for trailers, buses, or motorhomes. Use your lowest gear and exercise great caution. If you meet another vehicle, back uphill to the closest pullout and allow them to pass.

Mile 25.0—Horseshoe Bend Creek

Lewis and his men drank from this creek where it joins Agency Creek 0.4 mile below this sharp curve. They consoled themselves following their shocking view from Lemhi Pass with the belief that they were drinking from a stream that would eventually reach the Columbia River.

Mile 26.0—Trail Crossing

The Lewis and Clark Trail climbs from Agency Creek on the left into the steep grassy draw to the right. Whenever possible, Indians in this area seem to have avoided travel through narrow, brushy canyons, which were both difficult for horses pulling travois and excellent places to stage an ambush. 0.2 of a mile up this draw, the Trail turns west into the lower Flume Creek basin. Lewis's advance party camped on the night of August 12, 1805, at a spring west of Flume Creek (see photo below).



Mile 27.5—Flume Creek at Ghould Basin Road along the Red Rock Stage Road.

The Flume Creek/Ghoul Basin side-tour provides access to the Lewis and Clark Trail from the Agency Creek Road. This tour is for 4WD, high clearance vehicles only. Wet weather can make the route impassable.

Mile 0—intersection with Byway.

0.6 miles—intersection with Lewis and Clark Trail, which comes in from the right [east] and continues down to a ford of Flume Creek. Park here and continue on foot.

0.8 miles—ford Flume Creek. From here it's about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to Lewis's 1805 campsite and a 500 foot climb.

1.4 miles—on the left is one of two springs that are likely candidates for the campsite of Meriwether Lewis, George Drouillard, John Shields, and Hugh McNeal on the night of August 12, 1805. This was the first time American citizens had slept in present-day Idaho. Because they had killed nothing that day, their supper was a piece of salt pork that had traveled with them from Illinois.

the Indain road...lead us over steep hills and deep hollows to a spring on the side of a mountain where we found a sufficient quantity of dry willow brush for fuel, here we camped for the night....

Captian Meriwether Lewis, August 12, 1805

The pleasant little spring would also serve as a temporary rest area during the later portage over Lemhi Pass on August 15th and 26th, 1805.

Mile 2.0—the second possible spring campsite.

Continuing on the Byway, the Cold Springs Stage Station was located in the Agency Creek bottom to the left.

Mile 27.7—Flume Creek

Secluded valleys such as this were favored winter retreats of the Shoshone. They provided water, firewood, and protection from wind. Horses could graze dried grasses on the surrounding mountains and nibble slender twigs from trees along the streams. Agency Creek supports small numbers of rainbow and cutthroat trout.

Mile 30.4—ranch yard

Please observe 15 mph speed limit. Much of the land along Agency Creek is privately owned. Please respect property rights.

Mile 31.5—Agency Creek Campground

This is a small, somewhat primitive campground that provides room for approximately four campsites. The campground has a vault toilet, interpretive signs, and is always full during the fall big game season.

Mile 32.0—Cow Creek Road

Mile 35.6—"T" intersection with Lemhi Back Road
Turn right.

Mile 35.7—Tendoy School

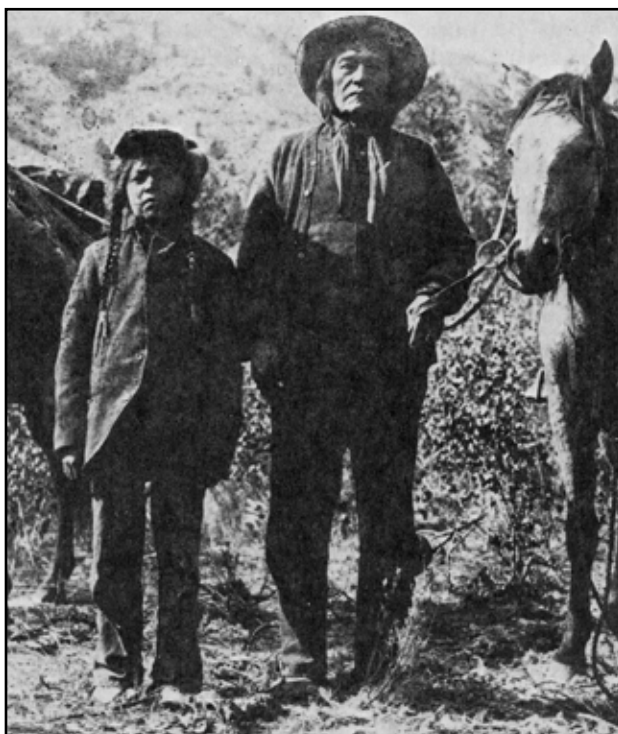
Mile 35.8—Intersection
Turn left to return to Tendoy.

Mile 36.0—Tendoy



Agency Creek Campground

—BLM Photo



Chief Tendoy and his
son, Yoho, near
Leesburg in 1896

—Photography
O.E. Kilpatrick



Objects of Curiosity

All Artwork: Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Museum, Fort Hall, Idaho
Cover: Sunset below Lemhi Pass, Glenn Oakley



—Evelyn Teton, Fort Hall

Inside Cover: Meriwether Lewis's journal, August 18, 1805,
American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia.



The Public Lands Center in Salmon, Idaho

Salmon-Challis National Forest / BLM Salmon Field Office
1206 S. Challis Street / Salmon, ID 83467 / (208)756-5400

BLM/ID/GI-08/006+1220