

Report of the Third Century Committee

Recommendations to the Board of Directors

February 10, 2005

The Third Century Committee is pleased to deliver this report and its many recommendations to the Board of Directors of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. The report has been shaped over a period of 18 months. It has gone through several drafts, influenced by the suggestions of Foundation members, staff, and several directors not on the committee, as well as by our own evolving ideas. We thank the Board for its support and patience, and we are grateful to all who have contributed to this effort to strengthen the Foundation in the years following the Bicentennial.

Respectfully submitted: Jim Gramentine, Chair; Bill Bronson, Carol Bronson, ex officio; Page Henley Jr., Ron Laycock, Dennis Limberhand, Darrell Martin, Jim Rosenberger, Herman Viola and Jane Schmoyer-Weber.

I. Foundation Membership

- A. Never lose sight of the fact that an essential purpose of the Foundation is to serve its members and its chapters, to the end that their experiences with both the Trail and the Story are significantly enhanced.
- B. Work to increase Foundation membership in chapters where not all of the members belong to the Foundation without insisting on 100 percent Foundation membership.
- C. Conduct in 2005, a thorough demographic survey of our current membership. Include questions asking why members joined the Foundation and continue to belong. Growth may be achieved most easily in geographic areas and age groups where we are already strong, but we also need to learn how to attract more young members and families.
- D. Revise or at least update the Strategic Plan before the end of the Bicentennial.
- E. Devise programs and promotions that will attract 20- to 40-year olds and young families. Responsible civic activities, on and off the Trail, should be especially effective in this regard. So should programs that appeal to youth, such as bike and camping trips along the Trail.
- F. Provide information and, when possible, discount coupons and free passes with new member packets to sites along the Trail, from Monticello to Fort Mandan, from the Interpretive Center in Great Falls to Fort Clatsop.
- G. Reach out to graduate and undergraduate students, especially those in close proximity to our chapters. Offer them reduced membership fees but also opportunities for service in areas such as trail stewardship, research internships and archeology.

II. Cultural Diversity

- A. Launch an effort spanning the length of the Trail to involve tribal organizations and individuals. Capitalize on current interest to establish long-term relationships. Encourage oral histories as a way for Native Americans and others to tell their stories.
- B. High priority should be given to having at least one Native American on the Board of Directors. The Board should so advise the Governance Committee.
- C. The Foundation's relations with the tribes should be a priority for the Board and a major responsibility assigned to a staff member, both working closely with our new Diversity Advisory Panel. Encourage the Panel to develop a plan for greater involvement by additional ethnic groups in the Foundation.
- D. Encourage our chapters to work with the tribes to their mutual cultural benefit in such areas as recording oral histories and both publicizing and protecting Lewis and Clark sites that are on tribal lands. Tours of these sites could be offered on a fee basis.

III. Finances

- A. We may well face a financial crisis by fiscal year 2007 if we do not take significant steps before then. To ensure the financial integrity of the Foundation, we must put in place secure funding sources for Foundation programs.
- B. Assign the highest priority to planning and then executing an ambitious endowment campaign. The Board must take the leadership role in this.
- C. Employ a Director of Development as a full-time staff member and begin working toward a Development Plan that will embrace the needs of the Trail and the Story as well as the Foundation.
- D. Each year devote major effort to a vigorous annual giving campaign. This, together with income from the endowment, will be the heart of our solution to the anticipated decline in grants from the government. More emphasis also needs to be assigned to grant writing and a planned giving program.

IV. Chapters

- A. Define what the Foundation's relationship with its chapters should be and continue to work at understanding and articulating how we strengthen each other. We should constantly offer services to all of our chapters.
- B. Continue to encourage the formation of new chapters in the East as well as the West, even if they are initially quite small. Offer special support during their formative years in areas such as membership recruitment. Recognize that many new members of the Foundation potentially could come through the chapters.
- C. Encourage communication between chapters and assist them in informing each other about such matters as their programs, speakers, projects, newsletters, maps and educational activities.
- D. Strongly encourage Foundation members to belong to a chapter but make clear that members are welcome from areas where chapters do not yet exist.

V. Networking & Partnerships

- A. Be alert to opportunities to partner with culturally diverse groups such as the Montana Tribal Tourism Alliance and Northwest Tribal Tourism Alliance, and develop criteria for evaluating potential partnerships.
- B. Short-term partnerships can be helpful too, such as the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation relationship that produced the "Pass It On" video with Rob Quist and Jack Gladstone in 2003.
- C. Historical associations and educational institutions often have similar interests and demographics to those of the Foundation. We should do more to develop relationships with them, especially in Trail states.
- D. We need to form strong partnerships with selected Federal and State agencies, while working to maintain and even strengthen the good ones we have.
- E. Nonetheless, we should be careful about the motives and reputation of any potential partner.

VI. Organization and Mission

- A. Monitor the process by which Board members are nominated and selected and the composition of the Governance Committee. Encourage the latter to take into account geographic, gender, and other balance factors.
- B. Continue to develop a quality orientation system for new Board members.

- C. We must treat our staff as professionals, provide opportunities for professional development, and implement realistic compensation and benefits. We want our staff to view their positions as career possibilities and not as interesting temporary employment.
- D. Regularly review the written job descriptions of staff, directors, and officers of the Foundation. Work to clarify the proper relationship between directors and staff.
- E. Work toward creating a committee structure that serves the long-term as well as the immediate needs of the Foundation and promises to be relatively stable.

VII. New Activities

- A. Place special emphasis on developing programs and materials for youth, young adults and families. An example might be a Lewis and Clark video game.
- B. Continue to give high priority to our Web site, including tribal information on it. Encourage our chapters to develop Web sites as well.
- C. "The Orderly Report" has been well received. Continue to make it interesting, while publicizing central office and Board activities. Do not overlook articles in it and "We Proceeded On" that deal with minorities.
- D. Work with chapters to organize regional symposiums, particularly after 2006.
- E. Establish a list of approved tour guides and revise the speakers list. Assist in connecting interested people with them.
- F. Promote Lewis and Clark at history symposiums and, when possible, at powwows such as the one in St. Louis.

VIII. The Trail

- A. Our chapters are the Foundation on the Trail. Stay informed about what they are doing and encourage them to give significant attention to the Trail, including chapters in non-Trail states. Each chapter should have at least one Trail-related program.
- B. Establish with the chapters a Trail maintenance and cleanup program, calling these opportunities especially to the attention of young adults. Regularly remind all parties concerned that sites we develop and improve must be scrupulously maintained and funded for the long term.
- C. Encourage Congress to continue its Caucus after the Bicentennial and to expand it to include the Eastern Legacy. Make clear that we support legislation that would extend the Trail to include the Eastern portion of the Lewis and Clark experience.
- D. Emphasize that after the Bicentennial we will continue to be interested in our partnerships with the land-management agencies along the Trail and will strive to improve our relationships with them.
- E. Pursue partnerships with organizations that share our mission along the Trail, and identify specific programs and projects to work on together.

IX. The Story / Education

- A. The Trail is hugely important, and the Story is as well. As we focus on what we are trying to preserve, develop, and promote, we should work cooperatively with educational institutions, including youth organizations such as the Girl and Boy Scouts.
- B. We should form partnerships when possible to encourage greater knowledge about the Story, e.g., with the National Council of Social Studies and the National School Boards Association.

- C. Look for other opportunities to get the Lewis and Clark Story and related Native American history into the classroom and associated with school activities, such as the National Academic Decathlon.

X. The Story / Research

- A. Actively encourage efforts of chapters and members to learn more about aspects of the Story that are not well understood. When possible, assist financially the most promising of such efforts.
- B. Support our Library and Archives, and publicize them as the major assets they are. Work at finding solutions to the problem of storage of Bicentennial and other materials.
- C. Aggressively collect materials and preserve records relating to the Bicentennial for the benefit of future generations.
- D. Help identify and support young scholars and their research projects, with monetary grants when possible.
- E. Appoint a small committee to provide guidance as to areas where research is most needed for “We Proceeded On,” the annual meeting, and other scholarly purposes.