



Date: July 7, 2004
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The Bureau of Land Management has selected Connie Jacobs as the director of the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument Interpretive Center to be built in Fort Benton.

Jacobs managed Ulm Pishkun State Park for the last five years, and before that she worked for the USDA Forest Service and The Nature Conservancy of Montana. According to Gary Slagel, monument manager, "Connie brings a wealth of interpretive and management experience to this position, and she has a strong background in natural and cultural history. We're glad to have her in Fort Benton."

The 377,000-acre national monument, established in 2001, is located in northcentral Montana. The establishing proclamation states, "The Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument contains a spectacular array of biological, geological, and historic objects of interest." The centerpiece of the monument is the 149-mile Upper Missouri Wild and Scenic River which begins at Fort Benton and continues into the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge. The interpretive center will help visitors to the area appreciate and understand the cultural and natural history of the river and its surroundings.

The Bureau of Land Management, City of Fort Benton, and River and Plains Society are partners in the approximately 5,400-square-foot center project. Site preparation is currently underway, and groundbreaking is planned for spring 2005. Jacobs says the center should open during the summer of 2006. Meanwhile, she's busy both overseeing the BLM's current visitor center and working with the partners to make sure the center project stays on track. "We're gearing up for a busy couple of years at our contact station during the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. Then we're hoping those visitors come back to see the completed interpretive center," said Jacobs.

Jacobs can be reached in Ft. Benton at 406-622-3392.

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