Welcome to Sand Creek Lakeside Use Area

Sand Creek is situated near the eastern end of the delta at the headwaters of Lewis & Clark Lake.

Upriver, the delta formed by sediment from the Niobrara River extends for several miles to Verdel.

Downriver, the delta gradually fades into the open waters of Lewis & Clark Lake.

Please note: While traveling through the delta, pay attention to your surroundings.

There are many channels through which to navigate, so it is easy to miss your destination.

As you enter the lake, be aware of possible high waves and increased recreational use, including motorized and sail boat traffic.

Gavins Point Dam is the smallest and farthest downstream of six dams on the main stem Missouri River controlled under the Pick-Sloan Plan of 1944. Lewis & Clark Lake was formed by the completion of the dam in 1957. Anglers will find a wide variety of species, including walleyes, catfish, sauger, white bass, northern pike and smallmouth bass.

Bon Homme Island, historically located just downriver from this access point, was explored by Lewis & Clark on September 2nd, 1804. In his journal, Clark made note of the ‘ancient fortifications’ on the island, which are now thought to have been naturally occurring sand dunes.

The town of Bon Homme, French for ‘good man,’ was platted in 1860 on the Missouri River bank a couple of miles downstream, serving steamboat and stagecoach traffic with a connection to the Military Road from Sioux City to Ft. Randall.

The first school in Dakota Territory was built in 1860 in the town of Bon Homme.

A replica of the school, constructed in 1953, stands northeast of this access at the Bon Homme Historic Site.

The Niobrara River joins the Missouri some 14 miles upriver, carrying sand and other sediments from western Nebraska and South Dakota. Swift river waters drop sediments upon meeting the placid lake water, creating a delta. The effects now extend upriver to Verdel.

While this sedimentation produces rising water levels, impacts municipal water intakes, limits access to recreation points, and reduces the reservoir’s capacity, the delta also provides unique habitat for many wildlife species, including deer, dove, pheasant, quail, rabbit, squirrel, turkey and waterfowl.

The threatened piping plover and the federally endangered least tern take advantage of unvegetated sandbar habitat to nest and feed. To assist in their recovery, such emergent habitat was created some three miles downstream, east of the delta and near the Nebraska shore.

Please observe signs posted on the sandbars during active nesting season and do not disturb these rare birds.

The Isanti (Isenamani) or Santee Sioux are Dakota speakers, one of three major linguistic components of the larger Sioux Nation. Many members of the Mdewakanton and Wahpekute branches of the Santee Sioux were eventually moved in 1866 to their present location in Knox County, Nebraska, in the aftermath of the Dakota War or Minnesota Santee uprising of 1862. The Santee Sioux of Nebraska Reservation is directly across the delta from Sand Creek.

This sign was funded by a grant from the National Park Service. Please see the other side of this sign for information about the Missouri National Recreational River. Enjoy yourself and be safe!