

Native American Heritage Challenge

On an autumn day in 1808, elders of the Osage people gathered at Fort Clark, a new outpost overlooking the Missouri River near what is now Sibley, Missouri, about 25 miles east of Kansas City. The council assembled to consider a treaty with the young United States in its newly acquired Louisiana Territory, a treaty demanding that they relinquish claim to over 52 million acres of their home. The treaty came with a threat – sign, or become enemies of the United States. Over 100 elders indeed signed the treaty – ceding nearly the entirety of the current state of Missouri.



Missourians know so little of our rich Native American presence – mainly because a state law in 1839 made it illegal for Indians to reside in our state, a statute that was reinforced as late as 1899, and only repealed in 1909. Missouri became the primary avenue of not only Indian retreat across the Mississippi, from Eastern woodland tribes escaping bitter warfare and cultural destruction in the 1700s to thousands more forced through the state as a result of the Indian Removal Act of 1830, the Trail of Tears being the most recognized result – in fact, Missouri contains more miles of the Trail of Tears than any other state.

There are many other states without a permanent Native community, whether it is a reservation, trust land, state recognized or federally recognized tribe. Yet, local, state, and national parks across Missouri tell the story of our Native presence, and not just about the Osage but also numerous other tribes who call Missouri home. The land on which Missourians reside has cultural significance for many Native peoples, including the Otoe, Missouriia, Sauk and Fox, Ioway, Kansas, Illini, Kickapoo, Peoria, Shawnee, Delaware, Sioux, Piankashaw, and Cherokee. We should be ever mindful that these peoples continue a sacred relationship with the lands we occupy, and we should recognize and appreciate their integral contributions to the cultural heritage of this state and to our nation's history.

*The Native American Heritage Challenge is sponsored by the **Missouri Humanities Council**. Founded by Congress in 1971, Missouri Humanities is one of the fifty-six state and territorial humanities councils that receives support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. For nearly 50 years they have been dedicated to helping Missourians explore the people, places, and ideas that shape our society. Their focus for the future remains the same: for a more thoughtful, informed, and civil society.*



Native American Heritage Challenge ... Visit at least 6 sites. Remember: Missouri Explorers must be registered in the program, and they are responsible for checking hours and availability of sites. Upload your verification photographs using the online submission form at <https://missouri2021.org/missouri-explorers/> to receive your merit badge button.

Remember, Missouri Explorers, you are responsible for checking hours and availability of sites before arriving.

Adair County

Thousand Hills State Park
20431 State Hwy. 157
Kirksville, Missouri
660-665-6995

An interpretive shelter helps visitors understand the petroglyphs left behind by the area's inhabitants more than 1,500 years ago. Snap your photograph in front of one of the petroglyphs.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/thousand-hills-state-park>

Cape Girardeau County

Trail of Tears State Park

429 Moccasin Springs
Jackson, Missouri
573-290-5268

Gain a better understanding of one of the saddest chapters in American history at Trail of Tears State Park, where nine of the 13 Cherokee Indian groups being relocated to Oklahoma crossed the Mississippi River during harsh winter conditions in 1838 and 1839. The park's visitor center tells the tale of the thousands who died on the forced march, as well as the park's many natural features. Snap your photograph at any one of the interpretive signs scattered through the park.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/trail-tears-state-park>

Clark County

Iliniwek Village State Historic Site

Hwy. 27
Wayland, Missouri
660-877-3871

The site is the only Illinois Indian village site found in Missouri and is thought to have been occupied from about 1640 through the late 1670s. Excavations at the site lead archaeologists to believe that perhaps 8,000 people lived in the village when Louis Jolliet and Father Jacques Marquette came through the area in 1673. Visitors to the site can walk a short trail to learn more about the village's inhabitants and the effect settlement had on them. Snap your photograph at any one of the interpretive signs scattered through the site.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/iliniwek-village-state-historic-site>

Crawford County

Osage Trail Legacy Monument

71 State Hwy P
Cuba, Missouri
573-885-2531

The sculpture stands 35 feet tall, 20 feet wide, and 80 feet in length. The sculpture depicts an Osage family moving westward on the Osage Trail. The monument is designed to work with the contours of the site which includes working water features and native plant landscaping. The monument allows interstate drivers to see the sculpture from the city limit boundaries, both east and west. This is one of the largest sculptures ever dedicated and erected to the Osage Nation. Snap your photograph next to the monument.

<http://www.osagetraillegacy.com/>

Jackson County

Fort Osage National Historic Landmark

107 Osage Street
Sibley, Missouri
816-650-3278

Built under the direction of General William Clark, joint commander of the famous Lewis and Clark expedition, Fort Osage was established in 1808 as a military outpost in the newly acquired Louisiana Territory. The Fort's purpose was to provide a military presence in the territory in order to assure Spain, France and Great Britain that the United States meant to protect its territory by military strength and to establish healthy relations with the Native American population in the territory. Snap your photograph at any one of the interpretive exhibits.

<https://fortosagenhs.com/>

Jefferson County

Mastodon State Historic Site

1050 Charles J. Becker Drive
Imperial, Missouri
636-464-2976

Mastodon State Historic Site contains an important archaeological and paleontological site: the Kimmswick Bone Bed. Here, scientists discovered the first solid evidence of the coexistence of humans and the American mastodon in eastern North America. Today,

visitors can learn about this discovery and how the landscape of Missouri looked in prehistoric time. The site features a museum with an interpretive video, displays of ancient artifacts and fossils, and an impressive mastodon skeleton replica. Programs explain more about the significance of the site. Snap your photograph at the mastodon replica.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/mastodon-state-historic-site>

Washington State Park

13041 State Hwy. 104
DeSoto, Missouri
636-586-5768

Petroglyphs, quaint hiking shelters and incredible Ozark overlooks define the Washington State Park experience. Easy access to the Big River makes the park great for swimming or fishing. Hikers can choose from three rugged hiking trails. Buildings constructed by African American Civilian Conservation Corps stonemasons complement the park and add to its sense of history. Snap your photograph in front of one of the petroglyphs.

<https://mostateparks.com/page/77856/petroglyphs>

Mississippi County

Towosahgy State Historic Site

County Road 502
East Prairie, Missouri
573-748-5340

Towosahgy State Historic Site is a former fortified village and civic-ceremonial center for the Mississippian peoples who lived in southern Missouri between A.D. 1000 and A.D. 1400. Visitors to the site can see mounds that speak to the site's past activities and exhibit panels that tell the story of Towosahgy through archaeological excavations. Snap your photograph in front of one of the mounds.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/towosahgy-state-historic-site>

Montgomery County

Graham Cave State Park

217 Hwy. TT
Danville, Missouri
573-564-3476

Artifacts uncovered in Graham Cave reveal that people occupied the cave 8,000 to 10,000 years ago. To walk through the park's 386 scenic acres, which includes the diverse Graham Cave Glades Natural Area, is to walk in the footsteps of the hunter-gatherers who lived in the area's caves during the ancient Dalton and Archaic periods. Visitors can go into the mouth of Graham Cave, and interpretive exhibits along Graham Cave Trail detail the life researchers believe early inhabitants lived. Additional interpretive exhibits throughout the park explain the cultural and natural significance of the site. Snap your photograph at any one of the interpretive panels.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/graham-cave-state-park>

Osage County

Clark's Hill/Norton State Historic Site

Osage Hickory Street
Osage, Missouri
573-449-7402

Walk in the footsteps of the Lewis and Clark expedition at Clark's Hill/Norton State Historic Site. The explorers camped at the base of Clark's Hill between June 1 and June 3, 1804, on their epic journey. William Clark climbed the hill on June 2 and saw a sweeping vista that included the confluence of the Missouri and Osage rivers. Today, a short trail takes visitors past two American Indian mounds mentioned by Clark in his journals and to an overlook that shows where Clark stood more than 200 years ago. Snap your photograph in front of one of the mounds.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/clarks-hillnorton-state-historic-site>

Pulaski County**Laughlin Park Trail of Tears Memorial**

Old Route 66
Waynesville, Missouri

If you had been in Laughlin Park in Waynesville, Missouri, the afternoon of December 9, 1837, you would have seen more than 350 Cherokee setting up camp in the fields along Roubidoux Creek. Read the Trail of Tears stories about removal along the northern route. Snap your photograph in front of the interpretive panels for Trail of Tears.

<https://www.nps.gov/trte/learn/news/hidden-history-unveiled-in-waynesville.htm>

Saint Charles County**Portage des Sioux Park**

1565 River View Drive
Portage des Sioux, Missouri

In 1815 representatives of Indian tribes arrived in several thousand canoes to negotiate a peace treaty with the white settlers. Snap your photograph in front of the 1815 Treaty Marker.

<https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=140635>

Saline County**Annie and Abel Van Meter State Park**

32146 N. Hwy. 122
Miami, Missouri
660-886-7537

Annie and Abel Van Meter State Park features remnants of the Missouri Indian village that sat at the Great Bend of the Missouri River, marked on a map by Jacques Marquette and Louis Jolliet in 1673. A hand-dug earthwork – Old Fort – and several burial mounds lie within the park's boundaries. The state's American Indian history is interpreted in displays and exhibits at the park's Missouri's American Indian Cultural Center. Snap your photograph at one of the exhibits inside the American Indian Cultural Center.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/annie-and-abel-van-meter-state-park>

Vernon County**Osage Village State Historic Site**

Hwy. C
Walker, Missouri
417-682-2279

The quiet and peaceful hilltop scenery at Osage Village State Historic Site only hints at the presence of a village that once housed between 2,000 and 3,000 people living in about 200 lodges. The site features a walking trail and outdoor exhibits that help visitors visualize the village, which was inhabited between 1700 and 1775. Snap your photograph in front of one of the outdoor exhibits.

<https://mostateparks.com/park/osage-village-state-historic-site>

Webster County**Hidden Waters Park**

716 W Hubble Dr.
Marshfield, Missouri
417-425-7495

Hidden Waters is located in Marshfield, Missouri, on Historic Route 66. The beautiful 10-acre park features tranquil walking trails, ponds, wildlife, waterfalls, bridges, gardens and fourteen springs that form the headwaters to the Niangua River. Snap your photograph in front of the historic log cabin in the park.

<https://www.hiddenwatersmo.org/>