



Lewis and Clark Bicentennial: Painting with Soils

The Lewis and Clark Expedition provided the first comprehensive view of the extent and magnificence of the natural resources of the United States. Lewis and Clark had specific instructions from President Jefferson to report on factors that would reveal the potential of this vast new land for agricultural purposes. As they explored the Missouri River watershed, the President wanted the explorers to report on "...the soil, and face of the country, its growth and vegetable production..." The efforts of Lewis and Clark to systematically describe the properties of soils, their relationship to native vegetation and landscapes and their potential for agricultural use led to a long-standing national commitment to understand our soils and manage them well.

Soils are the basis of life! As one of our most important natural resources, they also are important for the beauty their many colors add to our landscape. Most of us overlook this natural beauty because we see it every day. Often these colors blend with vegetation, sky, water, etc. Soil colors serve as pigments in bricks, pottery and artwork. The color and texture of soil painting is fascinating and a creative opportunity for all ages.

This card was designed by Kim Enck, a former art teacher, from Pierre, South Dakota. As a volunteer with the Earth Team, Enck joins a national network of volunteers working for a healthier environment. This card was developed by the Mrs. Enck, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and South Dakota Agriculture in the Classroom to support soils education in conjunction with the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration across South Dakota. To learn more about painting with soil, visit: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/feature/lewisandclark/paintingwithsoil.html>. For soils information, contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service office or visit: <http://soils.usda.gov>.



<http://www.sd.nrcs.usda.gov>



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