

PLEASURE GROUND FOR THE FUTURE: THE EVOLVING
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF YELLOWSTONE LAKE,
YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK 1870-1966

by
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of the requirements for the degree

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ABSTRACT

Yellowstone Lake is located in the protected federal lands of Yellowstone National Park. This park is situated in the Rocky Mountains and its boundaries reach into the tri-state areas of Wyoming, Idaho, and Montana. While many researchers have investigated the history and geography of Yellowstone National Park, Yellowstone Lake has been largely ignored as a topic of research. In order to reconstruct the evolution of Yellowstone Lake as a cultural landscape, this study focuses on Yellowstone Lake temporally and spatially as an important and central area of Yellowstone National Park.

This study suggests that Yellowstone Lake's large and diverse physical geography produces diverse natural environments, cultural landscapes, and national park experiences. The results of this study show that through a combination of concessionaire investment, government management, and visitor demand, the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake has changed dramatically over time. This change is depicted through a verbal and cartographic description of Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape evolution from 1870 to 1966. The verbal description is accompanied by a series of maps reflecting significant changes in the lake's cultural landscape.

This research also provides a useful template and methodology for other historical geographers researching national park cultural landscapes. The archival research component to this project involved gathering data from Yellowstone National Park superintendent reports, development files, concessionaire files, historic maps, guidebooks, correspondence, and historic photography. By developing a set of methods that used a combination of data sources (aerial photographs, historic maps, guidebook descriptions, historic photographs, and field-based observations), conflicting and sometimes inconsistent written archival records could be reconciled and an accurate description of the lake emerged.

This study raises questions about the role Yellowstone Lake plays in the larger identity of Yellowstone National Park. The results of this study will be useful for future national park management and development professionals. A better understanding of Yellowstone Lake's historic cultural landscapes will aid these professionals in making decisions about cultural resource preservation, recreation, and historic preservation. In addition, this study may help national park managers and concessionaires to develop better cultural landscape interpretation for Yellowstone National Park and Yellowstone Lake.

A NATIONAL PARK LANDSCAPE

Introduction

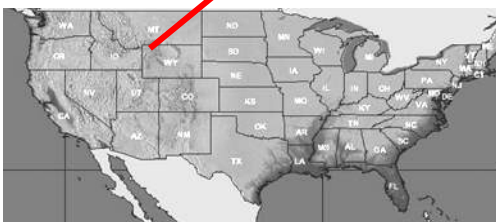
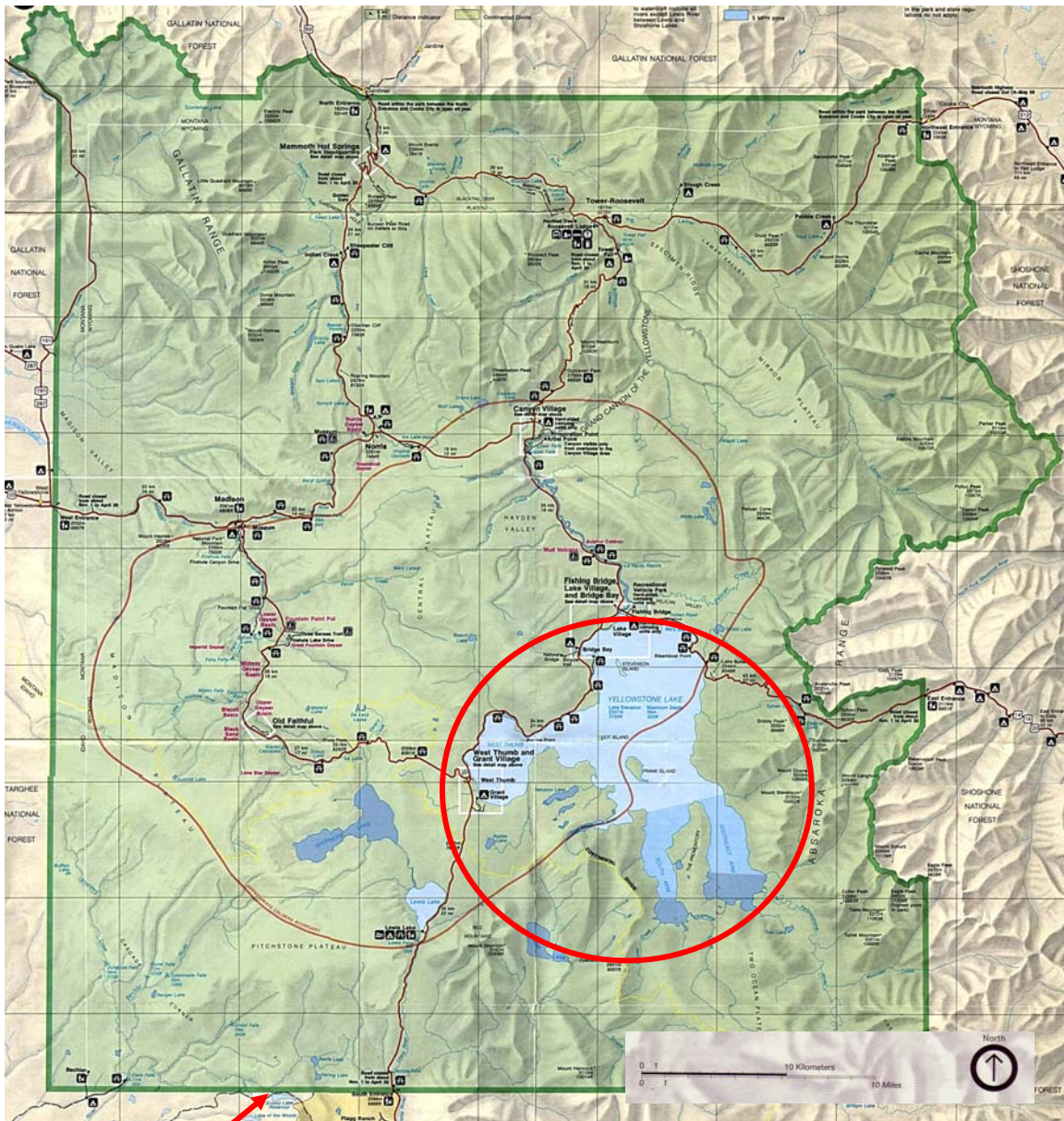
From summer dwelling by this wondrous lake thousands will visit the innumerable points of interest at convenience, returning hither at intervals to rest and start afresh. To simply give a list of places worth a visit hence, and of objects which in other lands would each be regarded as a wonder, would require a dozen pages (Doane, 1889).

Many historians and historical geographers have explored the evolution of national park landscapes (Runte 1997; Dilsaver 1994). Other studies have focused on the establishment of Yellowstone National Park and many features within the park (Haines 1977; Byrand 1995; Meyer 1996; Magoc 1999). The historical geography of Yellowstone Lake however has not been thoroughly examined. This thesis focuses on Yellowstone Lake temporally and spatially as an important and central area of Yellowstone National Park (Figure 1). It reconstructs the evolution of Yellowstone Lake as a cultural landscape between 1870 and 1966. In addition, it explores the different ways in which Yellowstone Lake was experienced, portrayed, and described during this same era. Ultimately, this research seeks to identify the role Yellowstone Lake plays in the larger identity of Yellowstone National Park and it provides a setting to analyze how changes in the national park idea and in American tourism play out in particular places.

Objectives

Objectives of this thesis include 1) reconstructing the cultural landscape features and infrastructure of Yellowstone Lake between 1870 and 1966 and 2) assessing the role

Figure 1. Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming
 Yellowstone National Park covers over 2.2 million acres and is located at a high elevation on the Yellowstone Plateau mostly in northwestern Wyoming. Yellowstone Lake is the largest lake in the park and is circled on the park map. [From the Collection of the author.]



that Yellowstone Lake played in the exploration of Yellowstone National Park and its creation. In reconstructing the cultural landscape evolution and changing visitor experiences at the lake, the scale of my work takes into account the vast spatial extent of Yellowstone Lake. My work focuses on Yellowstone Lake as an important and diverse region of Yellowstone National Park. My focus is to treat the lake not as a fragmented landscape but instead as a cohesive whole. Following this regional approach to the lake, I keep a keen eye on the geographic diversity of Yellowstone Lake and use this variation to highlight the complicated and varied spaces of the lake. This perspective is important because the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake does not evolve evenly across the lake's physical landscape. Instead, the northern and southern perimeters of the lake have received varying levels of attention over time in terms of mapping, interpretation, and development. This study suggests that Yellowstone Lake's large and diverse physical geography produces diverse natural environments, cultural landscapes, and national park experiences. By exploring Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape through time and space we may get a better appreciation for changing national attitudes and values about national park areas in the United States.

As Byrand (1995) argues, I also suggest this thesis has an applied as well as a scholarly significance. The utilitarian significance of this research lies in its reconstruction of the spatial evolution of the cultural landscape at Yellowstone Lake. I compare the evolution of decisions made by park managers and concessionaires and how these decisions shaped the spatial organization of the lake environment. I then compare the landscape and experience that was advertised to tourists to the one that they actually encountered when they visited the lake. This thesis should be helpful to park planners

and managers because it charts the lake's development and it provides valuable historical background on which to base future planning and policy decisions.

This cultural landscape reconstruction of Yellowstone Lake also has broader relevance to discussions of national park management, western tourism, and the making of Yellowstone National Park's cultural landscape. By tracing the decisions of national park managers over time we may get a better idea of how those choices affected the cultural landscape at Yellowstone Lake. Also, reconstructing the evolution of Yellowstone Lake's landscape may give us a better idea of the changing character of western tourism over time. In addition, as an important region of Yellowstone National Park, Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape evolution contributed to the overall project of creating the nation's first national park.

This thesis spotlights an area of the park that has not been studied in detail by historical and cultural geographers. Previous work on the park has generally overlooked the vast lake environment as an area to concentrate research. Although historians and geologists increasingly incorporate Yellowstone Lake into their research (see Anderson and Harmon, 2002), the cultural landscape and place images have not been the main focus of previous studies. I hope that this thesis will inspire and serve as a basis for future analysis of Yellowstone Lake as an area with cultural significance in national park literature and cultural studies.

Environmental and Historical Setting

Located in Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming, Yellowstone Lake is in a continental and mountainous location in the United States. The lake is positioned atop

the Yellowstone Plateau in the Rocky Mountains. It is the largest lake in Yellowstone National Park and one of the world's largest natural freshwater lakes. The lake's geological history leaves it centered over a large volcanic caldera. Along the shoreline of the lake there is a considerable amount of thermal activity owing to the lake's volcanic origins. There are many thermal basins in and around Yellowstone Lake. Some named features include the colorful West Thumb and Potts Hot Spring thermal basins along the southwest shore, the hissing fissures at Steamboat Point along the northeastern shore, and the now extinct Brimstone Basin along the southeastern shores of the lake. The lake floor is rising at a rate of about one inch per year, elevating the northern shoreline while sinking the southern shoreline (Eversman and Carr 1992, 123). The lake bottom consists of "rubble and boulders, black obsidian sand, and fine silt and clay mixed with organic matter" (Eversman and Carr 1992, 123). Yellowstone Lake is 430 feet (692 kilometers) deep at its deepest point with an average depth of 140 feet (225 kilometers) (Morgan 2003, Whittlesey 1988). The lake is 20 miles (32 kilometers) long, 14 miles (23 kilometers) wide, and expands across a total of 136 (219 kilometers) square miles. Yellowstone Lake is also a cold lake that freezes over entirely during the winter and has an average temperature of 41° F (Whittlesey 1988, 169). With 110 miles (177 kilometers) of shoreline Yellowstone Lake has more than 75 miles (121 kilometers) of that shoreline beyond the reach of any major road (Bach 1991).

The climate of this large inland lake derives from its high elevation, mid-latitude location and continental position. The average elevation of Yellowstone Lake is 7,733 feet (2,357 kilometers). Located at 44° 27' North and 110° 03' West, high winds, cold lake temperatures, heavy winter snowfall, and freeze over are all part of the lake's

mountain climate (Figure 2). Large waves often develop during frequent summer wind storms and contribute to erosion along the lakeshore. The afternoon storms produce hazardous conditions on the lake as high winds, waves, and cold lake temperatures combine.

Figure 2. Yellowstone Lake's Environmental Setting

A transect of Yellowstone Lake from the shoreline to the lake reveals a variety of physical environments. The vegetation and soil types vary across this large subalpine lake from the northern shores to the southern and include geothermal areas along the shoreline (top right). A typical sequence of events during the daily afternoon storms across the lake bring strong southwest winds and large waves (top right) that contribute to lakeshore erosion (bottom). [Author photographs (2003).]



The fauna and flora of Yellowstone Lake are adapted to this extreme environment. Although many species live in this area on a seasonal basis, some species have adapted to withstand the harsh conditions or to hibernate. The lake supports a variety of mammals and birds including grizzly bears (*Ursus arctos horribilis*), black bears (*Ursus americanus*), moose (*Alces alces*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), white pelicans (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*), bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), and ospreys (*Pandion haliaetus*). The lake hosts lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*) and contains the largest inland wild cutthroat trout (*Salmo clarki bouvieri*) population in the world. A transect of the lake's vegetation from the lake bottom, up to the shoreline, and then into the inland areas varies according to the available water, light, oxygen, soil, and climate. Aquatic plants, grasses and sedges, shrubs, evergreen and deciduous trees are all present at various areas around and in the lake. Common types of vegetation at the lake include sagebrush (*Seriphidium tridentatum*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*), Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), and trembling aspen (*Populus tremuloides*). A glance at Yellowstone Lake on a map also reveals several large bays, a number of islands, and tributary streams. The most prominent bays—moving from east to west—include the Southeast Arm, the South Arm, Flat Mountain Arm, and the West Thumb Bay in the southern areas of the lake. The lake also contains several named islands of varying size and dimensions. These include Pelican Roost, Stevenson Island, Carrington Island, Dot Island, Frank Island, the Molly Islands, and Peale Island. Over 124 tributary streams drain into Yellowstone Lake. The largest streams flow into the lake from the south, the most notable of which is the Yellowstone River (which drains out of the lake to the north, then into the Missouri and

Mississippi rivers, and finally into the Atlantic Ocean via the Gulf of Mexico). The circumambient highland areas of Yellowstone Lake are the Absaroka Mountains to the east and the Promontory, Flat Mountain, Mount Sheridan, Chicken Ridge, and Two Ocean Plateau to the south.

This research explores the historical and cultural changes that took place in this subalpine lake landscape between 1870 and 1966. The first chapter explores the cartographic history of Yellowstone Lake and early use of the lake by Native Americans and Euro-Americans. This chapter also includes a discussion of the creation of Yellowstone National Park and the role of Yellowstone Lake in this process. The second through fourth chapters of this research are organized around a framework of three time intervals—Period One (1870-1891), Period Two (1892-1932), and Period Three (1933-1966)—that relate to significant events in the evolution of Yellowstone Lake’s cultural landscape. The time frame extends from the early years of park exploration and establishment to the final year of the Mission 66 program in 1966.

This thesis begins with an analysis of early maps of the lake and the establishment of Yellowstone National Park. Early maps were of primary importance as explorers and visitors came to understand the lake’s physical geography. In this timeframe, early mapping and exploration of the expansive lake shoreline provided a steady challenge to early explorers. Although not an unknown landscape to nearby settlers and Native Americans, it was early scientific and military expeditions into the Yellowstone region that created maps that included Yellowstone Lake and brought its presence to the attention of a national audience (Meyer 1996; Smith 1999). While several notable travelers entered the Yellowstone lake region prior to 1870, it was in this year that the

first major organized scientific expedition entered the Yellowstone Lake area, described its features, and created maps of the lake as part of their endeavors (Haines 1977). This time period unveils multiple efforts to understand the extent of Yellowstone Lake and how it is approached and understood as a product of the routes, transportation methods, and mapping techniques employed by the expedition members. Also to be explored is the role Yellowstone Lake played in the political argument for the creation of Yellowstone National Park. How marginal or central was the lake in the Park's establishment? Did these early exploration and survey efforts that involved the lake increase interest in the establishment of the first national park?

A key focus during Period One (1870-1891) is the role that Yellowstone Lake occupied in the initial tourist era in Yellowstone National Park. With the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad's branch line to the northern entrance of Yellowstone National Park (to Cinnabar, Montana in 1883 and then—in 1903—to the North Entrance of the park at Gardiner, Montana), visitors traveled from greater distances to experience the park. Carried by stagecoaches or private carriages, early visitors were ushered around the "grand loop" road to park attractions including the vast vistas of Yellowstone Lake (Haines 1977; Schullery 1997). How did the infrastructure at Yellowstone Lake support large numbers of visitors? Scattered and unorganized camping ruled the day for these early visitors (Schullery 1997). This section will reconstruct the impact of these early camps as well as other forms of visitor housing, including early hotels. The early landscape of Yellowstone Lake was managed by the United States Army from 1886-1916 and this agency's role as protector and shaper of the lake's established cultural landscape will also be considered. This period concludes with the completion of Lake Hotel from

1889-1891. Built along the northern shoreline of Yellowstone Lake by the Northern Pacific Railroad, the Lake Hotel was initially a simple building of overnight accommodations that would later blossom into a grand “Lake Colonial Hotel” during successive renovations. This period ends with the Lake Developed Area and West Thumb Developed Area as the main sites of service activities at Yellowstone Lake.

Period Two (1892-1932) considers the continued supervision of Yellowstone National Park by the United States Army, the entrance of the newly formed National Park Service (1916) as guardians of Yellowstone National Park’s landscape, and the entrance of automobiles to the park scene. All these events left indelible marks on the landscape as decisions were made concerning developments and improvements along the lakeshore. This second period also focuses on the development of roads and trails around the lake, the growing number of boat tours and traffic on the lake, and other corridors of visitor travel. Travel paths used by early explorers and travelers are developed during this period into established trails and roads. Early twentieth—century travel modes were dominated by horse and carriage travel (traveling from established nodes of the Northern Pacific, the Union Pacific’s Oregon Short Line, the Burlington, and the Milwaukee railroads). These arteries of travel between train depots and stagecoach routes dictated the speed of travel (slow) and the locations of visitor services around the lake (spaced for a day’s coach travel).

Development during Period Two concentrates along the northern shore of Yellowstone Lake, while the southern perimeter is less emphasized in travel patterns, concessionaire facilities, and geographical descriptions of the lake. The completion of the Lake Hotel marked the first major hotel accommodations along the shoreline of the

lake and included such guest amenities as boating tours (Magoc 1999, 116). The new boat tours marked a shift in travel patterns on Yellowstone Lake from small boats and personal travel to organized and interpreted lake experiences. E.C. Waters organized the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company and, starting in 1892, piloted steamboat tours of the lake, highlighting attractions along the northern shore and the nearby islands.

The transformation of Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape was significant during Period Two. Moving from a stop along the stagecoach route and a day long steamboat tour experience to a major site of visitation in the park, the lakeshore experience gradually shifted to a different level of visitor use, park management, and concessionaire investment. Yellowstone Lake increasingly became a site for concessionaire development as increasing numbers of tourists visited this area. During the early part of the century, the Shaw and Powell Camping Company and the Wylie Permanent Camping Company began a system of permanent camps near park roads and offered tourists an option between the expensive Lake Hotel and self-reliant camping. The entrance of the National Park Service as a replacement to the United States Army's management and policing of the park also brought major reorganization and concentration of concessionaire operations in the park. Some of the noteworthy changes to the cultural landscape during this period include the building of the Lake Developed Area boat dock (1892), the West Thumb boat dock (1892), West Thumb lunch station (1895), Fishing Bridge (1902), Lake Fish Hatchery (1912), Lake Auto Campground (1917), Lake Ranger Station (1923), West Thumb Ranger Station (1925), Lake Lodge (1926), and the Fishing Bridge interpretive museum (1931).

Automobile tourism introduced new developments near the lake after 1915. Although the impact of the “casually attired, self-reliant automobilist” (Haines 1977b, 347) will receive more attention in the next period of my thesis, it is worth mentioning the entrance of this form of transportation and the affect that it had on the lake’s cultural geography. The automobile and the individual visitors that used them dramatically changed management policy, development patterns, and visitor services around the park and near the lake. The shift marked a move away from groups of stagecoach travelers ushered around the lake by licensed guides operating organized tours between nodes of hotel accommodations and park attractions. Instead, the “democracy of the automobile” added a new element in tourism in the park. As the concept of a vacation spread across class lines and stimulus from the Park-to-Park Highway movement grew, “tin-can tourists” or “sagebrushers” crisscrossed the nation. National highways linked Yellowstone National Park to the Midwest and East; tourists traveling these routes were not as regulated in terms of their accommodations or their sightseeing as were the early (and often more affluent) stagecoach travelers (Schwantes 2003, 182). Auto campgrounds, dining facilities, and park attractions become increasingly geared towards these independent and budget-minded individuals. This period ends with the economic recession of the Great Depression and the affect it had on overall Yellowstone visitation and on lake attractions. Many areas of the park received less visitor use during this period. The lake areas in particular were almost entirely shut down and many facilities deteriorated during this era. The Lake Developed Area, Fishing Bridge Developed Area, and West Thumb Developed Area were the main sites of activity during the closing years of this period.

Period Three (1933-1966) begins during the first year of lake facility closures in response to the economic recession associated with the Great Depression. Many facilities at Yellowstone Lake were closed from 1933-1937. Left as vestiges from the stagecoach and pre-Depression era days, service buildings and roads along the lake suffered from a lack of use; extensive renovations and repairs were called for as the national economy improved and people once again sought a national park vacation. Until the outbreak of World War II, Yellowstone Lake was a site of renewed construction and visitation in Yellowstone National Park.

Throughout the years of World War II however, visitor numbers were generally down throughout the park and many facilities at Yellowstone Lake were closed to public use (Haines 1977). The plight facing park managers and concessionaires after World War II was a combination of outdated service facilities and a tremendous surge in visitors entering the park during these years. Escalating automobile traffic around the lake and throughout Yellowstone National Park after World War II encouraged park managers and concessionaires to invest the time and materials in improving and expanding tourist facilities at Yellowstone Lake. Growth after World War II included the enlargement of campgrounds and cabin areas, the expansion of concessionaire stores and dining facilities, and the extension of employee housing at the major developed areas around the lake. During this period many visitor facilities were upgraded or expanded and this movement increased the spatial extent of development along the northern shore of Yellowstone Lake. The post-war years brought prosperity to the nation and an accompanying increase in tourist activity in the park. This period ends with an increase

in visitor services and facilities being built, renovated, and enlarged to meet the growing demands of a nation recovering from war.

Period Three ends with the final years of Mission 66, a nation-wide project to improve national park infrastructure and interpretation. Taking an aerial snapshot of Yellowstone Lake in 1966, the final year included in this cultural landscape history, would reveal a landscape altered by the confluences of National Park Service management, concessionaire opportunism, and visitor density. Conceived by the National Park Service in the years after World War II, Mission 66 planned for a joint development effort between the National Park Service and park concessionaires. Mission 66 produced significant changes in the Fishing Bridge and West Thumb Developed Areas. For example, older and deteriorating buildings from those areas were moved to the previously undeveloped sites of Grant Village and to a natural cove at Bridge Bay (Haines 1977). Other Mission 66 plans involved building new visitor facilities and increasing park interpretation for the mounting visitor numbers entering Yellowstone National Park following World War II.

Another important influence on lake development during Period Three is the wilderness movement. The focus of the latter part of my study shifts towards the influences of the wilderness movement and how it shaped a contentious debate between park planners, concessionaires, and visitors over park planning. Environmental battles flared over conflicting ideas of National Park Service policy and use guidelines at newly developed areas of the lake—such as Grant Village and Bridge Bay—as well as the more remote south shore sites. The increased importance of ecosystem health and integrity as well as the desire to experience nature and solitude may be seen as a factor that draws a

growing number of modern Yellowstone National Park explorers towards the less visited South and Southeastern Arms and the islands of Yellowstone Lake. Period Three concludes with developed areas at Fishing Bridge, Lake, Bridge Bay, West Thumb, and Grant Village.

Sources and Methods

The three main sources of data that I use for this thesis include archival records, Geographic Information System (GIS) data, and field data that I collected during the summer of 2003 at Yellowstone Lake. I collected my archival data from the Yellowstone National Park Research Library and Archives in Mammoth, Wyoming and the Montana State University Special Collections at the Renne Library in Bozeman, Montana. This record set consists of both historical written records and photographs. I used the GIS data from the National Park Service, the Wyoming Geographic Information Science Center, and Environmental Systems Research Institute Inc. Western United States Data CD to create a series of maps depicting the evolving cultural landscape at Yellowstone Lake over time. I created three types of GIS-based maps for this thesis: a set of maps showing Yellowstone Lake and major developed areas at the lake in each of the time periods, a set of detailed maps showing infrastructure changes at these developed areas and corresponding to the ending dates for the chronological framework that I built this thesis around, and finally, a concluding section with comparison maps of the entire lake and then the detail maps of each developed area to show changes in the lake landscape over time. For the maps corresponding to the ending years of each of the three time periods, there is a map showing Yellowstone Lake's reconstructed cultural landscape for the years

1891, 1932, and 1966. My field observations of the lake's physical and cultural landscape were helpful in confirming my observations in the written record and on historical maps.

My sources for reconstructing the cultural landscape evolution of Yellowstone Lake are divided into two groups: National Park Service records and concessionaire records. Many of the National Park Service records that I use include records accessed at the Yellowstone National Park Library including Yellowstone National Park Superintendent annual reports in bound files. Other records that I used included superintendent correspondence to concessionaires and park visitors and United States Department of the Interior guidebooks, information circulars, and maps found in the Yellowstone National Park Archive. At the Montana State University Special Collections, I used the Haynes Collection as another site to locate National Park Service superintendent annual reports. I accessed concessionaire maps, blueprints, correspondence, and development reports at the Yellowstone National Park Archives in concessionaire boxes, files, and map drawers; Drawers 14 and 32 were particularly well stocked with concessionaire and National Park Service blueprints and maps. The Haynes Collection at the Montana State University Special Collections was helpful for concessionaire files also; in that archive I found concessionaire guidebooks. I also used historic photographs from the Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives to supplement the mapping and interpretation of this national park landscape over time. Finally, the generous loans of National Park Service and concessionaire maps and guidebooks from the private collections of Dr. William Wyckoff and Dr. Joseph Ashley were very valuable additions to the archival record and helped me to confirm the locations and descriptions

of some elusive park structures and building dates. These National Park Service and concessionaire records found at the Yellowstone National Park Archives and Library, the Montana State University Special Collections-Haynes Collection, and the personal collections from Dr. Wyckoff and Dr. Ashley also contributed to the data that I recorded and analyzed to create the GIS maps of Yellowstone Lake for 1891, 1932, and 1966.

From these National Park Service and concessionaire records I created two products that reconstruct the cultural landscape evolution at Yellowstone Lake – a written description of the lake’s development and a series of maps reflecting that change. My written description of activity at the lake takes the reader from the early years of exploration and the spatial positioning of the lake in the American West through growth and shifts in the maturing park’s development. In terms of scale, I feel that it is important to not segment the lake into portions but to consider it as a distinct region of Yellowstone National Park. Therefore, for this thesis project I take a broader look at the lake’s changing landscape with the intention of providing the reader with a cohesive narrative to follow the lake’s cultural history and a path for future research on the lake. I focus on the large and enduring features, the fleeting but intriguing features, and the highly contested battles at Yellowstone Lake.

The second product that I created to reconstruct the cultural landscape evolution at Yellowstone Lake was visual. I used historical data to make a series of maps depicting the changes in the patterns of human development around Yellowstone Lake. This venture in historical GIS involved combining information gained about the lake’s cultural landscape from archival maps, blueprints, photographs, guidebooks, government reports, and concessionaire reports. I also used GIS data obtained through the internet from the

National Park Service's Spatial Analysis Center and the State of Montana NRIS spatial data center. The elevation characteristics of around the lake are emphasized with a shaded relief profile and all map elements are projected in a North America NAD 1983 projection. The cultural and physical landscape layers (such as buildings, trails, roads, streams, lakes, and islands) used existing GIS data layers obtained from the National Park Service and Montana NRIS.

I also created a series of cultural landscape layers such as buildings, boat docks, and roads for 1891, 1932, and 1966 by hand digitizing approximate locations for these features based on archival written descriptions, maps, blueprints, historic aerial photographs from the United States Geologic Survey, and historic land photographs. These maps should serve future projects focused on cultural resources at Yellowstone Lake by providing base maps of the area and positions from which to take more accurate GPS coordinates for removed or relocated lake infrastructure.

Although no one source of data provided all of the information needed to create accurate maps of the approximate infrastructure at Yellowstone Lake from 1870 to 1966, a combination of several sources was invaluable to this reconstruction. The primary and secondary archival records were invaluable documentation, but sometimes these sources were inconsistent in their discussions of Yellowstone Lake's landscape. In addition, the archival written documents that I used were at times conflicting in their depictions of the lake. To resolve these issues of inconsistency and conflicting reports, I developed a set of methods that relied on multiple sources of data. I used the archival written documents to outline a basic picture of the development at the lake and to check references to changes at the lake, but I also used visual data sources and field observations to

substantiate data collection and analysis. I consulted aerial photographs, historic land photographs, guidebook maps and descriptions, and historic maps of Yellowstone Lake to resolve conflicting issues in the archival written documents and to fill in the gaps where previous studies did not directly reference changes to the lake's cultural landscape. Over the course of this study, my methodology became a synthesis of referencing archival written records and secondary written sources and then confirming and complementing that information with aerial photographs, historic maps, historic photographs, and other guidebook descriptions. I developed this set of methods because previous cultural landscape reconstructions for Yellowstone Lake had not been completed before and an accurate study of this area required consulting a variety of sources. One of the strengths of this study is its use of historical methods *and* geographical methods for exploring past landscapes. While few historians have focused their work exclusively on the lake, even fewer geographers have completed such a study.

Through this methodology, I created a written description of landscape changes over time at Yellowstone Lake and a cartographic description. This study includes a series of maps that I created using a geographic information system (GIS) that provides an accurate portrait of development patterns for the years 1891, 1932, and 1966; these years correlate to major development changes on Yellowstone Lake and correlate with my chosen time line. These time periods are significant in that they reflect major spatial shifts in the lake's landscape as new features of development are added, removed, or altered. To clarify the locations of development around Yellowstone Lake during this time and to avoid confusion between these locations that I encountered in the archival record, this study refers these sites as developed areas. This addition to my methods

helped clarify the geographical aspects of this study that previous research has overlooked.

In addition, I focused on the evolution of geographical knowledge of the lake, particularly as it came together during the late 19th century. Before 1891 (Period One), the portrayal of Yellowstone Lake changed significantly as more information was gathered about the area and more sophisticated and accurate maps were created to reveal the current understanding of the lake's diverse physical geography. For this early period then, I use historic maps of the area to show changes in the knowledge of Yellowstone Lake's geography.

The GIS-based maps that I created for this project begin after the physical dimensions of Yellowstone Lake were established through geographic surveys. I chose a GIS for creating my maps because I think that it is a useful and effective tool for illustrating the changing landscape of this subalpine lake. These maps provide a glimpse into how Yellowstone Lake's developments evolved during the three time periods of my study. I also assessed plans for developments at the lake that were never carried out. These instances—as well as fleeting but intriguing examples of Yellowstone Lake development—receive a more thorough treatment in my written description of the landscape's evolution. Examples of this type of event include plans for roads, hiking paths, building relocation and removal, and campground changes. Although this method of collecting data and constructing maps to depict changes in the cultural landscape has been employed in at least one other study in Yellowstone National Park (Byrand 1995), previous studies have not focused primarily on the evolution of Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape nor employed a historical GIS analysis.

The third source of my thesis data—field observations and photographs—and the methods that I used to analyze that data are inspired by the words of geographer Carl O. Sauer.

Let no one consider that historical geography can be content with what is found in archive and library...One of the first steps is the ability to read the documents in the field. Take into the field...an account of an area written long ago and compare the places and their activities with the present, seeing where the habitations were and the lines of communication ran, where the forests and fields stood, gradually getting a picture of the former cultural landscape concealed behind the present one....Questions begin to take shape as to what has happened to local site values” (1965, 367).

I made frequent trips to Yellowstone Lake throughout the summer of 2003 to compare the present landscape with maps, photography, and textual descriptions of the lake that I encountered throughout my archival research. This valuable methodology gave me a good sense of the landscape at Yellowstone Lake as well as alerted me to any hidden parts of the lake that I did not readily encounter in my research.

Conceptual Framework

Although numerous studies of the park exist, the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake has not been thoroughly examined as a central focus of study. This research is situated in the ongoing discussion concerning Yellowstone National Park’s history, but it is further strengthened by applying the perspective of the geographer’s lens. By exploring the temporal *and* spatial history of Yellowstone Lake’s landscape, a greater understanding of the unique features of this lake comes to light. Yellowstone Lake is also significant because of its role as a symbolic and sacred landscape among protected areas in the United States (Sears 1989; Hyde 1990; Meyer 1996).

Several cultural and historical geographers suggest the importance of studying landscape change and changing landscape images over time. Donald Meinig's "The Beholding Eye: Ten Versions of the Same Scene" (1979) offers a useful mode of interpretation when examining the early travel and exploration accounts of Yellowstone Lake. Meinig's ten versions of a landscape decipher how different intellectual traditions inform the viewing and appreciation of a landscape. This mode of analysis is useful for early travel accounts since early explorers produced different verbal and visual depictions of Yellowstone Lake. These varying descriptions arise from a combination of elements that include, but are not limited to: the route that they followed around the lake, the mountains that they climbed to gain a higher perspective on the lake, and the tools with which they measured the physical environment. The variety of experiences, traveling routes, and equipment resulted in diverse depictions of the Lake. In addition, these reported experiences of Yellowstone Lake were informed by the intellectual traditions carried in the minds of the explorers. In an age before remote sensing, a limited number of Yellowstone Lake maps are available since few individuals undertook the challenge of exploring, mapping, measuring, and depicting Yellowstone. Meinig offers a template with which to compare and analyze these stories.

Peirce Lewis's "Axioms for Reading the Landscape: Some Guidelines to the American Scene" (1979) also offers a helpful perspective for interpreting early visual and verbal accounts of Yellowstone Lake. He encourages students of landscape studies to ask questions about the everyday geographies they experience. The value of Lewis's argument lies in his emphasis of cultural landscapes as useful study areas because they can reveal important facets about culture, technology, and values.

Yi-Fu Tuan (1977) reminds his readers of the importance of environment and culture in creating and experiencing the human landscape. According to Tuan, sensations, perceptions, and conceptions of a place all blend together to form and influence viewers' experiences in a place. His observations are important landmarks when discussing the cultural landscape in a national park area. Another important work concerning space and place is an edited volume by Lowenthal and Bowden (1975) that commemorates the life and work of John Kirtland Wright. Wright's work is influential for my study in that it encourages questions about the impact of environmental ideas on Yellowstone Lake. How did ideas and actions concerning the lake's geography affect the formation of cultural landscapes and the treatment of Yellowstone Lake's environment by humans?

Richard Schein (1997) offers a useful framework for interpreting the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake. Schein's article discusses cultural landscape interpretation as a way to better understand the many cultural "discourses" that become tangible pieces of a landscape. In this sense, a landscape can be seen as a text that may be read to glean information about the people and events that shaped that landscape over time. According to Schein, a "close reading of a landscape in a specific time and place will yield an interpretation of its position within a number of discourses" (1997, 676). Landscapes are the "sum total" of their histories and, through interpretation, we may get a better idea of the people and processes that contributed to those histories. The author argues that "[c]onceptualizing a landscape within a set of discourses also provides a vision of landscape change (over time) attributable, in part, to individual, fragmented activity rather than simply presented as strata of (superorganic) cultural accretion(s)"

(Schein 1997, 675). Schein's framework for cultural landscape interpretation is applicable to this study of Yellowstone Lake where the "discourses" of national park managers, concessionaires, and visitors all contributed to the making of the landscape. These discourses varied in their influence and designs for the lake over time. Here again, Schein's framework is helpful since he warns that "the land-as-text is unstable and requires constant reinterpretation" (1997, 676). Interpreting historic cultural landscapes must be flexible and open to the complications of a variety of discourses that change over time. Applying Schein's framework to Yellowstone Lake requires asking questions about who participated in the lake's development, how those discourses changed over time, and how their influences became manifest on the lake's landscape.

Visual representations of landscape have also attracted increasing attention from geographers and historians. Addressing the impact of photography in the nineteenth century, *Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination* (Schwartz and Ryan, 2003) uses examples of photography to question ways of taking pictures and viewing places. Drawing from the work of several authors discussing a variety of geographical locations, the relevance of *Picturing Place* stands in its discussion of constructing images and the effects that this has on the person taking as well as viewing the photograph. Ways of presenting a photograph are selective and subjective, although objectivity and realism are often the presented ideals.

Visual representations of landscapes are a central focus for Richard Francaviglia's *Elusive Land: Changing Geographic Images of the Southwest* (1994). Although primarily concerned with images of southwestern landscapes, Francaviglia's work also provides a broad canvas upon which to discuss images of other western

regions. Through an examination of text, maps, and other graphics, the author finds that “portraying the landscape is always a selective process of inclusion, exclusion, and enhancement” (Francaviglia 1994, 26). Vale and Vale (1989) take yet another approach to landscape images and their interpretation. Following the route of U.S. 89, these two authors look at landscape change and perception along this transect through the American West. Drawing on the images presented in *Harper’s Monthly*, Wyckoff and Nash (1994) present an analysis of images and place them in six topical categories based on their content. This image analysis is helpful for this study in terms of methodology and classification of visual material.

Wyckoff and Dilsaver (1997) provide another western image analysis, but with a focus on national parks. This analysis of promotional materials emphasizes the importance of visual representation in portraying the park experience to a broader national and regional audience. Kevin Blake (2003) also argues that place identity matters in his study of Colorado mountain peaks. Blake’s work explores the symbolism and iconography of a place and its identity. His study focuses on high mountain peaks in Colorado and the ways that these peaks are seen as exclusive and idealized environments. Blake’s interpretation of these symbolic places offers a method for exploring Yellowstone Lake’s landscape. How does the size, shape, and elevation of Yellowstone Lake contribute to visitor experiences? Does the subalpine environment of the lake and its position in a large mountainous national park exclude human experiences? What role does Yellowstone Lake play in national, regional, state, and local levels as a popular environmental icon? Blake’s “Peaks of Identity in Colorado’s San Juan Mountains” (1999) suggests avenues for exploring Yellowstone Lake’s cultural landscape. In this

work, Blake identifies the San Juan Mountains as “peaks of identity” or areas that hold a special landscape signature for local communities’ identities. Does Yellowstone Lake occupy a similar role in the tri-state communities of Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho? Is Yellowstone Lake symbolized as an ideal natural scene, recreational opportunity, or a place of spiritual renewal?

John Allen contributes a valuable discussion of western exploration and geographic understanding of watersheds in his “Division of the Waters: Changing Concepts of the Continental Divide, 1804-1844” (1978) and in “Maps and Mountain Men: The Cartography of the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade” (1995). A key element of his work is the exploration of the intermountain West and the gradual understanding of the watersheds in this region. Allen’s discussion of early efforts by trappers, explorers, and surveyors to explore and map the intermountain West provides helpful guidelines for evaluating the arrival of explorers and tourists to the high and often inaccessible Yellowstone region. Allen explores how historical geographers employ maps as useful sources. His methods are particularly well suited to a discussion of early mapping efforts of Yellowstone Lake that drew from the accounts and maps of a select few fur trappers and explorers into the Upper Yellowstone drainage.

Another work by Allen (1992) discusses early exploration efforts in the American West and how geographers use art and literature in examining place images. Focusing on the fur trading era of the early nineteenth century, Allen deciphers the efforts of romantic writers and artists to portray western landscapes. Allen’s work poses questions for my study of Yellowstone Lake images and how they contributed to the larger context of images of a romantic West. How was Yellowstone Lake described and what methods

and images resulted from such depictions? Where did these images appear (national newspapers, travel accounts, magazines)? What did the lake look like in these images? Who was creating these images? Do visual and verbal depictions of Yellowstone Lake fit into Allen's romantic West?

Western historian Robert Athearn (1986) explores the American West through image making in the twentieth century. Athearn finds that ignorance is a key ingredient in the formula that made the West a mythic place of unreal proportions. Eastern denizens relied on reports and survey records from a handful of individuals who actually traveled in the West. Through these remote networks, Americans along the eastern seaboard formed their images and expectations of western landscapes. Athearn's conclusions may well serve Yellowstone Lake. How was Yellowstone Lake represented to tourists? Before the ease and comfort of personal motorized touring of Yellowstone National Park, images of Yellowstone Lake were crafted by the few visitors with the financial and personal means to travel into remote mountainous area. These accounts were then sent great distances to east coast audiences hungry for a taste of western landscape images. What types of images reached these remote audiences? Who was producing these images? What affect did these images have on expectations of Yellowstone Lake by eastern visitors?

Dean MacCannell's *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (1976) aids in my discussion of visitor experiences. His work provides a framework for discussing the complicated nature of cultural productions and tourist experience. Indeed, MacCannell argues that these productions are "powerful agents in defining the scope, force and direction of a civilization" (1976, 29). How did the visitor experience of

Yellowstone Lake reflect American social values and ideas? Who participated in the experience of Yellowstone Lake? For how long did they visit the lake?

Using a case study of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Young reviews the landscapes of national parks (2002). This study is helpful for its historical aspects as it examines perceptions of a national park landscape through time. Inevitably, visitors come to the park with expectations and images of the landscape that are not consistent with an evolving landscape formed by human and natural influences. This process may have parallels in Yellowstone National Park. How do images of Yellowstone Lake's landscape illustrate the effects of time on this area? Are there aspects of Yellowstone Lake's image that are repetitively emphasized even though the actual landscape of the lake may have changed? For example, have geothermal features along the lakeshore been consistently depicted as remote or accessible in lake imagery? What is the significance of changing or even sustained images of the lake in terms of other national park landscapes?

Several historians direct their work specifically towards national parks. Peter Hales (1988) examines the images created by park photographer William Henry Jackson. Jackson's work played an early and pivotal role in the formation of Yellowstone National Park through dramatic, often highly staged landscape images. In another example, John Sears (1989) presents a critical discussion of American tourist attractions in the nineteenth century. Sears discusses the portrayal of Yellowstone as "exotic rather than pastoral or even picturesque" (1989, 165). Sears also describes tourist experiences in the park and compares them to other contemporary entertainment schemes whereby visitors could experience a landscape that challenged and invigorated their perceptions of the

West. Is this process evident for Yellowstone Lake's landscape? If so, how, why, and when does the lake become part of an experience related to western perceptions? Alfred Runte (1997) also examines the roles of national parks in national perceptions and experiences. Although his work tends to generalize American attitudes to national parks and the national park idea, his work offers a contribution to the meaning of national parks as recreation sites.

In *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth—Century American West* (1998), Hal Rothman asks his readers to reevaluate the role of tourism in American culture. Rothman's study explores the cultural meaning and representations of a diversity of tourist landscapes. His discussion of railroad promotion in tourism and intraregional tourism in national parks provides a useful context for a Yellowstone Lake study. Rothman encourages a critical look at tourism promotion schemes. How was Yellowstone Lake incorporated into a recreational ideal for automobile and other travelers? How was the lake represented as a natural space or a "wild" space for tourist consumption?

Marguerite Schaffer (1996) also investigates tourism by examining the roles of western businessmen and boosters in the formation and perpetuation of western touring culture and amenities. Her study sheds light on the important and persuasive role that these personalities had in creating and maintaining the tourist infrastructure in the West. In *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* (2001), Schaffer links American tourist features to larger national symbols and narratives. Her discussion of the Northern Pacific Railroad's investment in tourist infrastructure emphasizes Yellowstone

National Park as a tourist attraction and a landscape that assumed national importance as an alternative vacation area to European resorts.

In *Promised Lands: Promotion, Memory, and the Creation of the American West*, David Wrobel (2002) examines the ways that western American boosters represented places and how those places were remembered. Wrobel critically discusses a wide range of promoters and offers a vital element to my study of Yellowstone Lake. As a feature within Yellowstone National Park, how was Yellowstone Lake represented by western boosterism? What “promises” were made to the public by concessionaires and how were these promises actualized?

Another examination of national culture and western landscapes is presented by Anne Hyde (1990). The value of Hyde’s work for my study is her discussion of national expectations of western landscapes. What type of accommodations, experiences, and values would American tourists find at Yellowstone Lake? Hyde encourages a close examination of the types of hotels, interpretive tours, and recreational experiences that visitors had at Yellowstone Lake. Did taking a stagecoach to Lake Hotel and then spending the afternoon on a steamboat tour of Yellowstone Lake match visitor expectations of the lake? What comparisons did this type of experience provide for an American tourist seeking alternatives to European travel?

Numerous studies have examined Yellowstone National Park and its cultural features. Chris Magoc’s *Yellowstone: The Creation and Selling of an American Landscape, 1870-1903* (1999) focused on the early formation of Yellowstone Lake’s cultural landscape evolution. Aubrey Haines’s (1977) two volume history of Yellowstone National Park provides historical background on the creation and

development of Yellowstone National Park with a particular emphasis on the personalities behind its evolution. *The Yellowstone National Park* (1964) by Hiram Chittenden (edited by Richard Bartlett) is also a good source of information on the park's history as well as a primary source for early park interpretation since the book was originally published in 1895. In *Yellowstone: A Wilderness Besieged*, Richard Bartlett (1985) explores the history of Yellowstone National Park by focusing on three main groups within the park: concessionaires, park superintendents, and visitors. *Selling Yellowstone: Capitalism and the Construction of Nature* by Mark Daniel Barringer (2002) offers an in-depth look at development schemes and concessionaire-park service relations in Yellowstone National Park. Barringer's work is a useful resource for identifying specific site construction dates and proponents. Jim Walsh (1993) presents a history of mapping in Yellowstone National Park that includes many useful references to early mapping efforts of Yellowstone Lake.

The management of Yellowstone National Park is another theme for park writers. Concerning the post World War II years and Mission 66, Paul Schullery's *Searching for Yellowstone* (1997) and James A. Pritchard's *Preserving Yellowstone's Natural Conditions: Science and the Perception of Nature* (1999) offer valuable resources for sorting through the additions and renovations to Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape in the recent past. Both of these works are critical of the many political and cultural forces at work throughout Yellowstone National Park and Yellowstone Lake. Alston Chase (1987) is perhaps one of the most critical authors concerning the role of the National Park Service in Yellowstone National Park. In *Playing God in Yellowstone*, he examines the

powerful ways in which the National Park Service has managed the region's dynamic ecosystem.

Geographer Judith Meyer (1996) offers an interpretation of many cultural features of Yellowstone National Park in *The Spirit of Yellowstone*. In her study of Yellowstone National Park, Meyer asserts that Yellowstone Lake was one of six major locations that visitors experienced during their stay in Yellowstone National Park. Park visitor literature and guidebooks proliferated during this and later eras; one aspect of these regional guides was that park features came to have a ranking in terms of the importance of visiting and experiencing. Through guidebooks, diaries, and other travel accounts, the lake became a site noted for its diverse environmental and cultural experiences. Meyer notes how Yellowstone Lake visitor experiences were distinguished from other sites within the park; this area became known as a site for enjoying fishing, wildlife viewing, boat rides, geothermal features, and broad lakeshore vistas. Period Two (1892-1932) of this study reflects Meyer's argument that Yellowstone Lake became an ancillary attraction in the park, often overshadowed by the geysers basins near Old Faithful or the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone (Meyer 1996).

Excellent studies have also been completed that deal directly with Yellowstone National Park's evolution and changes in particular park localities. Langford Smith's (1999) master's thesis uses a variety of archival sources to discuss the evolution of the national park idea as it applies to Yellowstone National Park. Smith explores the changing roles of park visitors and the National Park Service. His work is particularly helpful to my study in that he explores the evolution of the Yellowstone National Park landscape in terms of changing perceptions and attitudes towards that park landscape.

Karl Byrand (1995) focused his research on Old Faithful as a developed area that was central to Yellowstone National Park's image. Byrand reconstructs the cultural landscape around this nationally-significant locality through the use of verbal description and maps. His method of analysis also calls for dividing the history of the area into several time periods to better grasp the changes that this landscape has experienced. His work is helpful for my project in terms of his methodology and focus: paralleling my approach, he explores a developed site within Yellowstone National Park through space and time.

EARLY CARTOGRAPHY AND THE NATIONAL PARK IDEA

Introduction

There was a war party. A man named [?]¹—I don't know what it means, I guess it's too old to translate—led a war party. They came to Yellowstone Lake. Although they were fearful of it, they did not want to go into it, they are drawn to it because of its power, and the mystical quality (Goes Ahead quoted in Nabokov and Loendorf, 2002).

The Indians approach it [Yellowstone Lake] under the fear of a superstition originating in the volcanic forces surrounding it, which amounts almost to entire exclusion (N.P. Langford, 1871).

Our understanding of Yellowstone Lake's personality and its relation to the national scene begins by tracing its cultural, economic, and political threads from the emergence of Yellowstone Lake on maps of the American West and the establishment of the early cultural landscape at the lake. This chapter consists of two sections. The first section of this chapter deals with early mapping and route finding at Yellowstone Lake. This part of my analysis focuses on cartographic and physiographic understandings of the lake up until the lake's shape, size, and extent were accurately portrayed on maps. I included a number of historic maps in this section as well as maps of routes taken to the lake. I found that understanding the route that travelers and explorers followed to and around Yellowstone Lake helped to illuminate their visual encounters with the lake and the maps they produced.

The second section of this chapter explores the role of Yellowstone Lake in the establishment of Yellowstone National Park. After passing through months of debate in Congress, the bill that founded Yellowstone National Park was passed on March 1, 1872.

I assess the frequency and types of references to Yellowstone Lake in the documents and debates involved with the creation of the park. Some of my guiding questions for this section include: How central was Yellowstone Lake in debates over the park legislation? Was Yellowstone Lake mentioned in the legal document that created the national park? How were images and descriptions of Yellowstone Lake used or not used to support the passing of the park bill? For this section I used several sources of information. These sources include images and documents used by park supporters, the debates in Congress over the park bill, and the legal document citing the founding of Yellowstone National Park.

Mapping Yellowstone Lake

More than simple depictions of Yellowstone Lake, maps serve as valuable tools to assess the impact and setting of early travels in Yellowstone. J. D. Overton (1981) offers some theoretical structure for looking at early exploration and mapping of Yellowstone Lake. Quoting D.J. Boorstin, Overton suggests a division between discovery and exploration: “discoverer...simply uncovers; but the explorer opens. The discoverer concludes a search; he is a finder. The explorer begins a search; he is a seeker” (1981, 56). Further, Overton reminds us that the selection of the area to be explored depends on how much knowledge is already gathered about an area and what kind of knowledge is being accumulated about an area. In this sense, exploration is a “conscious search for knowledge within and about imperfectly known areas” (1981, 57). Overton describes six “elements” of exploration. These include: a demand for new geographic information about “unexplored or partly explored areas,” the choice of where the exploration will take

place, the “journey of exploration,” the document(s) created by the explorers about their trip, the “evaluation of the explorer’s report by decision-makers,” and the development or continued exploration of an area (1981, 57-58). The author also reminds his readers of the larger social and economic milieu of exploration where “the decision to explore is seen as being primarily guided by forces other than personality characteristics alone” (Overton 1981, 58).

Overton’s model is useful for looking at early exploration and mapping of Yellowstone Lake and how information from early expeditions was used to support the creation of the first national park. Using Overton’s framework, I focus my discussion for this first section of the chapter on the many journeys that were taken to the lake, the relationships between those journeys, the motives that explorers had to enter the lake area, the role of non-explorers in the gathering of geographic data about the lake, the impact of explorers’ accounts on later trips to the lake and the establishment of Yellowstone National Park, and the economic and social contexts for these expeditions.

Building on Overton’s research also reminds us that the exploration and mapping of Yellowstone Lake was not an isolated affair—geographically, socially, or economically. Geographic information about the lake was gathered by a variety of people, over many years, with different motives for entering the area. Groups that contributed to the spatial understanding of the lake included Native American inhabitants and seasoned visitors as well as Euro-American trappers, prospectors, military personnel, and other travelers.

Native Americans have a long history of occupancy and use of Yellowstone Lake; a discussion of the lake’s exploration must include their contributions to its spatial

understanding. Often Native American people living in the area—Bannock, Crow, Sheep Eater, and Shoshone peoples—during the time of Euro-American exploration would relate their knowledge of the landscape to Euro-American explorers seeking routes of travel or information for mapping purposes. Patricia Galloway suggests that “Indian maps and geographic information were so important a factor in the European development of knowledge of the North American continent that it is impossible to gain an adequate idea of the process without taking them into account” (Galloway 1998, 223). This is sometimes a difficult process because “so very few Indian maps survive physically, even when documentary evidence describes specific instances when cartographic or geographic evidence was communicated to explorers by Indians” (Galloway 1998, 223). An example of a situation where “geographic evidence was communicated” between trappers and Native Americans comes from the journals of Osborne Russell. During an encounter with a Native American group Russell identifies as the Tibuboes (People of the Sun):

One of them drew a map of the country around us on a white Elk Skin with a piece of Charcoal after which he explained the direction of the different passes, streams etc From them we discovered that it was about one days travel in a SW direction to the outlet or northern extremity of the Yellow Stone Lake, but the route from is description being difficult...our leader gave out the idea....Our Geographer also told us that this stream united with the Yellow Stone after leaving this Valley half a days travel in a west direction (Russell 1955, 27).

This information not only served as geographic guidance for the trapper but it also represented a type of collaborative mapping between peoples. My research did not reveal any Native American produced maps of Yellowstone Lake. Nabokov and Loendorf support this finding in their 2002 research on Native Americans in Yellowstone. The only “indigenous mapping” that they found for Yellowstone National Park was a result of

the Nez Perce movement through the park in 1877 (2002, 183). This map depicts streams and geothermal areas in Yellowstone, but it does not show Yellowstone Lake.

Galloway continues that “it is vital for us to attempt to distinguish the Amerindian layers of the palimpsest of early European mapping of North America. By doing so we can begin to understand how Europeans manipulated and altered the reality of...native geography to incorporate it into their mapping practice, often merely by making a new cartographic reality” (Galloway 1998, 223). A “new cartographic reality” was created for Yellowstone, a place where Native Americans had a long history of use and route finding before Euro-Americans launched formal surveys into the area. Mapping and communication of geographic information between Euro-Americans and Native Americans in the Yellowstone Plateau has a long and convoluted course. Yet, tracing these information networks and their effects on maps of Yellowstone Lake is possible once we look at the maps and the records of exploration at the lake.

Although Native Americans and Euro-Americans shared geographic information about the lake, the geopolitical relationships that evolved between the two groups were highly unequal. Focusing his discussion on the Columbian Encounter, J. B. Harley argues that non-native maps can be seen as “statements of territorial appropriation, cultural reproduction, or as devices by which a Native American presence could be silenced” (1992, 522). Harley’s objections to traditional discussions of early cartography are grounded in his suggestion that Native Americans possessed extensive geographic knowledge and that their contributions offer a different, but equally informative method of recording spatial information versus those offered by European mapping traditions. Harley also notes that Native American knowledge was used to guide Europeans and was

integrated into the standard maps produced and distributed during the early settlement of North America. Harley outlines a “cultural exchange of geographical knowledge” that includes maps working in “material and practical processes” and as “reified symbols of power” (1992, 532). Harley asserts that maps were “critical agents in the graphic inscription by which the space of America was filled with some of the place-names, signs, emblems, and memories of the Old World” (1992, 532). While Harley’s position rests mostly in a description of mapping from the Columbian Encounter, his interpretation about the power of maps is particularly helpful to a discussion of early mapping of Yellowstone Lake.

By the time Euro-Americans began formal mapping and surveys of Yellowstone in the early 19th century, there were many non-European groups who lived near Yellowstone Lake and seasonally used its resources. Native Americans had a system of mapping the lake and understanding its location; however, these native systems of mapping were reinscribed by Euro-Americans in an effort to colonize the area and eventually develop it. By being aware of Native American contributions to mapping and geographical awareness of an area, Harley also suggests that we can become more informed about “the capacity of the Indians to play a sometimes decisive role in choreographing the early pathways of European exploration” (1992, 526). Indeed, Native Americans shaped route finding at Yellowstone Lake by establishing and using trails that were later used in the development of roads, bridle paths, and camping areas.

In *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks*, Mark Spence (1999) argues that Yellowstone National Park was not an “uninhabited wilderness” and that its establishment set a precedent for other parks to

exclude Native American use and settlement. His discussion of Native American use of Yellowstone Park and the Euro-American movements to control this area uncovers contradictions in early Euro-American accounts and in later decades once the park is established.

Spence complicates the picture of relations between Euro-American explorers and Native Americans at Yellowstone. Members of exploration parties recorded encounters with Indians in part of their journals, yet discussed an Indian presence in the park as if it was a historic element of the landscape. According to Spence, “[s]uch a conception of wilderness forgets that native peoples shaped these environments for millennia, and thus parks like Yellowstone...are more representative of old fantasies about a continent awaiting “discovery” than actual conditions at the time of Columbus’s voyage or Lewis and Clark’s adventure” (1999, 5). Indeed, native use of the lands within Yellowstone National Park often continued once the park was established and frequently did not fit into emerging ideas of activities appropriate to park use (Spence 1999, 43). This exacerbated disagreements and hostility between native groups wishing to use their traditional territory and officials charged with managing a national park to the exclusion of these original inhabitants.

The first appearance of Yellowstone Lake on a Euro-American map was a product of the transcontinental Lewis and Clark Expedition. William Clark’s *A Map of Part of the Continent of North America* (circa 1810) shows Yellowstone Lake (Figure 3) as a large, rounded, mountain-encircled body of water labeled “Eustis Lake.” Although the members of the Corps of Discovery did not travel into the present day boundaries of Yellowstone National Park, the lake’s presence was known. Native Americans knew

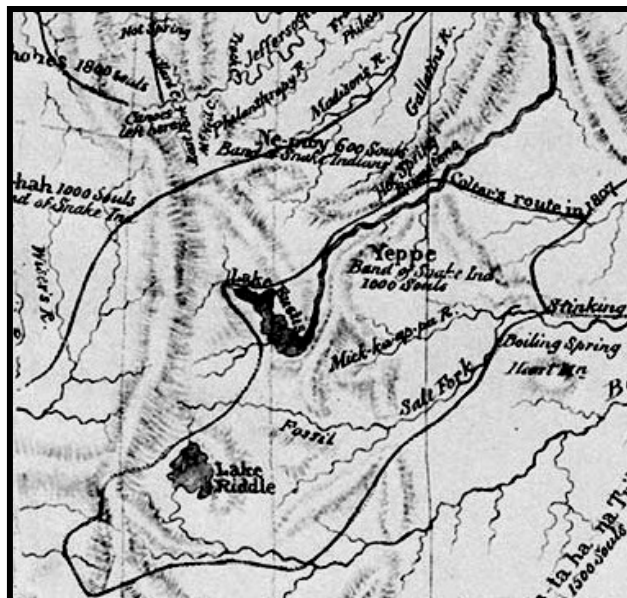
Yellowstone and used its resources on a seasonal basis. It is very likely that Native American groups shared some of their knowledge of the Yellowstone Plateau with Euro-Americans who then included this information on maps. Fur trapper and explorer John Colter traveled through the Yellowstone area after his assignment with the Lewis and Clark Expedition. After his travels, he shared his knowledge of the region with his former superior William Clark for inclusion in Clark's manuscript map.

This map may be a good example of the "cultural exchange of geographic knowledge" that Harley (1992) describes. This map served as a physical manifestation of Euro-American efforts to create symbols of their power and presence in the Yellowstone Plateau. This map included references to Native American knowledge of the area although it does not directly credit these sources. For example, many of the place names labeled on the map are Native American. Also, it is highly probable that John Colter communicated with Native Americans who were familiar with the Yellowstone Plateau to plan and find his route through the area. Several other aspects of this map are notable; including Colter's route around the lake, the location and shape of Yellowstone Lake, and the large stream depicted as flowing out of the lake.

These aspects of Clark's map also demonstrate how cartographers used oral geographic knowledge held by trappers and Native Americans but often overlooked in historical accounts (Allen 1978; Allen 1995). The use of Native American names provides a documentation of Native American contributions to Clark's map while also showing the early stages of a process of colonizing the area. Lewis and Clark gathered data about the American West which was then reviewed by politicians to plan the next survey of the area and to get a better idea of the potential resources at that site. Clark's

Figure 3. Maps of Yellowstone Lake printed c. 1810 and 1814

One of the earliest preserved depictions of Yellowstone Lake is William Clark's *A Map of Part of the Continent of North America* (circa 1810) (top). Named after the Secretary of War under President Jefferson, "Eustis Lake" is positioned with relative accuracy according to gathered hydrographic and topographical information. Samuel Lewis's engraving of Clark's map in 1814 (bottom) revised Clark's map but kept most of the features depicted on the earlier map. [Reprinted in Haines 1974, 185 and 186.]



1810 manuscript map shows Yellowstone Lake under a different name although the location and size of the lake are fairly accurate. Also, he portrays a large river flowing out of the northeastern part of the lake; presumably this is an early depiction of the Yellowstone River flowing out of Yellowstone Lake.

Samuel Lewis's 1814 engraving of William Clark's manuscript map (see Figure 3) made some alterations to Clark's earlier depiction of the lake. For example, Lewis's 1814 engraving elongates the lake's shape with greater variation along the eastern shoreline. Another notable distinction is that this later map shifted the stream flowing out of the northeastern portion of the lake to the southeastern edge. John Colter's route is highlighted more in the latter map also; whereas Clark's manuscript map shows Colter's route as a faint dotted line, Lewis's engraving shows a dark solid line. Many of the Native American place names are more legible on this latter map because of the darker print and larger lettering.

Even though Clark did not travel to the lake during his time in the Yellowstone area, his inclusion of Yellowstone Lake on his map is important. Incorporating Yellowstone Lake into his map reflects the prominence of the lake in the lore and accounts of explorers in the area. It also reflects the use of informal accounts of the lake provided by Native Americans and by at least one trapper. Instead, it is a printed verification of the cartographic contribution of trappers and Native Americans. By including Colter's route in the map, Clark was referencing this source of geographic knowledge of the area. In turn, by including many Native American place names on his map and the location of some groups of Native Americans, Clark was recording their presence in the area and providing written proof of their contribution to mapping this

area. At this point in cartographic history, Yellowstone Lake appears as a large subalpine lake with at least one major tributary in the continental recesses of the American West.

By 1868, many people had traveled through the area and had provided “extensive...yet fragmentary and often contradictory” information from their sojourns (Haines 1974, 41). Many Native American hunters and Euro-American trappers, prospectors, missionaries, and military personnel traveled through the Yellowstone area. This period between 1804 and 1868 includes the cumulative effects of Native Americans and trappers who frequented the lake as well as the informal collaborative mapping and route sharing between trappers, prospectors, missionaries, and other explorers. According to Euro-American sources, Yellowstone Lake was a large body of water near the headwaters of the Yellowstone River and the area was peopled by Native American groups.

First-hand accounts of Yellowstone Lake during this early period of haphazard exploration added to Yellowstone Lake’s growing reputation among Euro-American travelers and explorers. In 1822, Daniel T. Potts described the Yellowstone River as having “a large fresh water Lake near its head on the very top of the Mountain which is about one hundred by forty Miles in diameter and as clear as Crystal...on the South border of this Lake is a number of hot and boiling springs” (Haines 1974, 8). Trapper Osborne Russell also traveled across the Yellowstone Plateau. In 1836, he traveled along the east shore of the lake and found that the “lake is about 100 Mls. In circumference bordered on the East by high ranges of Mountains whose spurs terminate at the shore and on the west by a low bed of piney mountains its greatest width is about 15 Mls. Lying in an oblong form south to north or rather in the shape of a crescent” (Haines 1974, 14).

Russell's estimate of the shoreline was close to the actual 110-mile circumference, but he was mistaken about the shape. From his perspective on the northern shore of Yellowstone Lake, however, the lake *does* look as if it has two main arms. Russell journeyed through the Yellowstone Plateau as a guide and trapper, following Yellowstone Lake's northern and eastern shores, and continued to add to the increasing knowledge of this subalpine lake.

Yellowstone Lake appears on at least two maps before 1860. Although the depiction of Yellowstone Lake in these maps does not change significantly from earlier renditions, they are indicators of the lake's continued cartographic presence and they serve as bridges of information about the lake to the more organized survey parties later on. Captain Washington Hood's manuscript map (Figure 4) from an 1839 Corps of Topographical Engineers survey shows a "Yellowstone L." and attributes information on the map to "William Sublette and others" (Haines 1974, 17). This collaborative mapping between Sublette (a trapper) and Hood's military group is repeated in other maps. For example, Father DeSmet created a map of the area that included Yellowstone Lake. The location of the lake and many features on the map can be attributed to the knowledge of the area that trapper Jim Bridger gathered from Native American sources and his own travels and then shared with DeSmet. The 1851 DeSmet-Bridger map shows an elliptical Yellowstone Lake that does not carry the name of the lake but shows hot springs along its eastern shore, a "60 by 7" description near it, and several streams running into it (Haines 1974, 22).

Figure 4. Map of Yellowstone Lake, 1839

Captain Washington Hood's manuscript map from an 1839 Corps of Topographical Engineers survey includes "Yellowstone L." although there is no lake drawn by the notation. Hood noted some of his information sources as fur trappers "William Sublette and others." [Reprinted in Haines 1974, 187.]



Although Yellowstone Lake became an increasingly well-known part of the intermountain West for fur trappers, army personnel, and other explorers (Haines 1974; Whittlesey 1988; Walsh 1993), depictions of the lake on maps did not change significantly until 1860. In this year, Captain William F. Raynolds of the Corps of Topographical Engineers produced a map integrating information gathered during an expedition he led into the Yellowstone area from 1859 to 1860. The 1868 *U.S. War*

Department Map of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers and Their Tributaries Explored by Captain W.F. Reynolds Topl. Engrs. (Figure 5) made several improvements on the depiction of Yellowstone Lake from Clark's map. First, the lake appears as Yellowstone Lake instead of Clark's "Eustis Lake." The size and shape of the lake also gain more definition in Reynolds's map. The mountains surrounding the lake are depicted further away from the lake than in Clark's map and the lake in Reynolds's map lies in a large valley instead of at the headwall of a cirque.

The shape of the lake also changes in Reynold's map. Yellowstone Lake has shifted from a circular lake to a more elongated, narrow lake. Finally, the Yellowstone River flows into the lake's southern perimeter and out of its northern edges on this 1868 map. Although the accuracy of Reynolds's map is improved over William Clark's depiction of the lake, the Reynolds expedition shared Clark's lack of geographic intimacy with the lake. Reynolds was deterred from crossing the mountains to the lake by heavy snows and severe weather (see Figure 5). His map depicts the information he gathered about the lake from his guide who collected a great deal of his knowledge from Native American sources (Walsh 1993, 256-258).

Walter deLacy's *Map of the Territory of Montana with Portions of the Adjoining Territories* (Figure 6) is the next printed addition to the cartographic understanding of Yellowstone Lake. This first printing of this map was in 1865, two years after the 1863 expedition. The route that deLacy and his prospecting party traveled in the 1863 expedition did not include a visit to Yellowstone Lake (see Figure 6), but the lake was included in the 1865 map. Once again, this group could not include the lake based on

Figure 5. Map of Yellowstone Lake, 1860 and Route of the Raynold's Expedition
 Captain Raynolds produced a map of Yellowstone in 1860 (top) based on his travels to the Yellowstone Plateau. Heavy snows and inclement weather blocked his travels (bottom) to the shores of Yellowstone Lake (route outlined in bold). [Reprinted in Haines 1974, 190 and route printed in Haines 1977a, 88.]

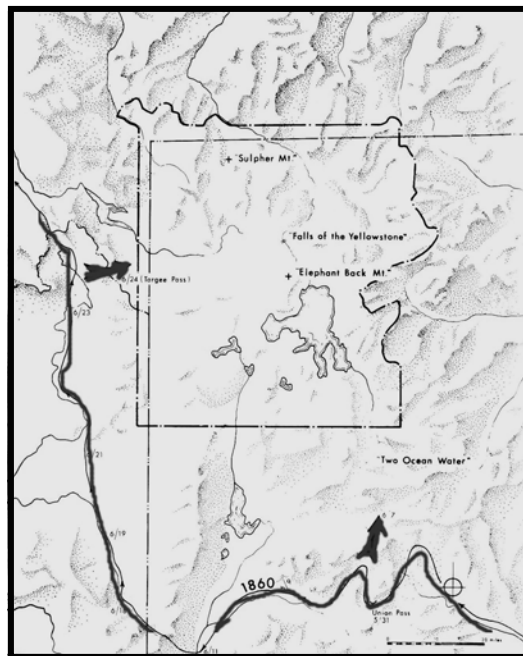
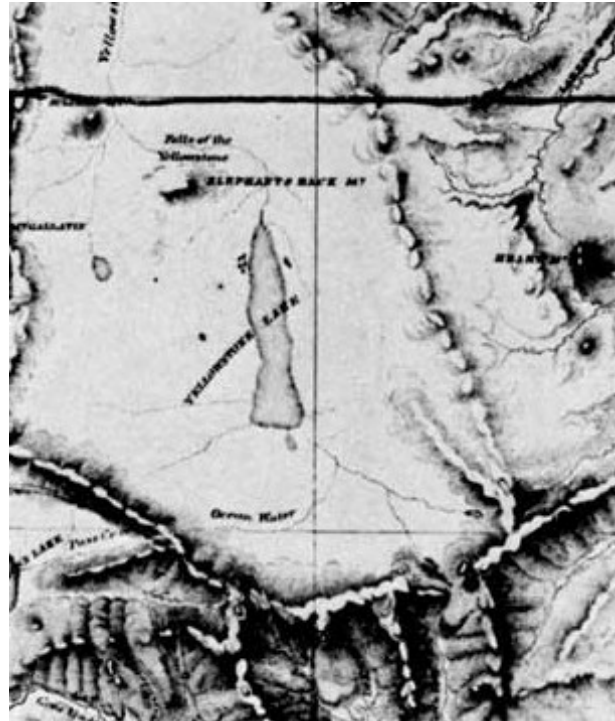
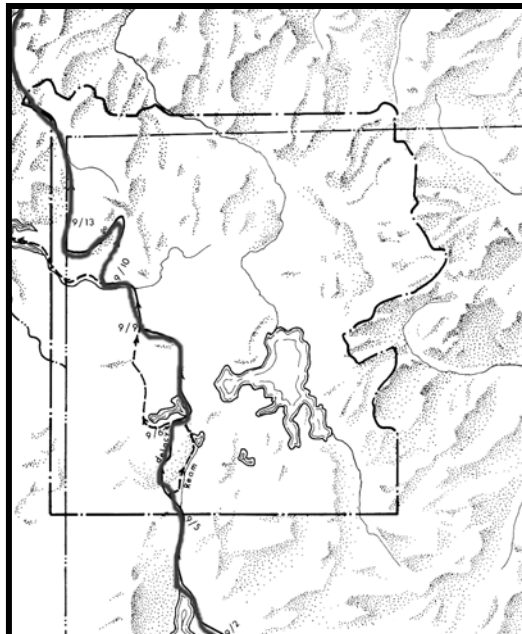


Figure 6. Maps of Yellowstone Lake, 1865 and deLacy's 1863 Route
 Walter deLacy and a group of prospectors traveled around Yellowstone in 1863 and he created a map (top) of the area which was printed in 1865. Although his route (outlined in bold) did not include a trip to Yellowstone Lake (bottom) he did include the water body in his map. deLacy's map was revised over the next twenty-four years with a notable revision in 1870 with David Folsom. [Reprinted in Haines 1974, 193 and route printed in Haines 1977a, 66.]



their personal experiences or observations, but they did secure information about Yellowstone Lake from second-hand sources such as Native Americans and trappers. Over the next twenty-four years this map was revised as new information about the lake was integrated into its format (Walsh 1993, 258). Before discussing these revisions, though, it is helpful to look at some of the events and explorations that occurred between these revisions.

Throughout the 1860's information about Yellowstone Lake continued to be gathered and recorded in various forms. This knowledge is an important clue to the evolution of the lake's image on maps, the history of Euro-American and Native American travels in the area, and the growing fame of Yellowstone Lake as a notable geographic feature in the American West. In 1864, John C. Davis and a group of fellow travelers ventured "into the park just above the lake, and immediately found ourselves in the midst of the wonders of this enchanted land" (Haines 1974, 30). Their route included a visit to the West Thumb thermal basin along the southwestern shores of Yellowstone Lake and then they "wandered along the shore for a while" (Haines 1974, 30). A Virginia City newspaper reported in 1867 another instance of Yellowstone Lake exploration when covering an organized expedition that took three weeks to go up the Shield's River "as far as Yellowstone Lake" (Haines 1974, 34). The same paper also reported another group of prospectors who "have been to the Lake at the head of Yellowstone and report the greatest wonder of the age" (Haines 1974, 36). An 1867 journalist described the lake:

Two main forks of the Yellowstone...empty into the big lake which has for its outlet the Yellowstone River, and just below the lake the whole river falls over the face of a mountain thousands of feet...The great lake, like all others in these mountains, is thick with salmon trout of from five to forty pounds weight, and where the milky boiling

mineral waters from the running star bolt geysers intermingle with the pure, clear water from the running streams, elegant fish can be forked up by the boat load (Haines 1974, 38).

The lake also attracted stories that grossly exaggerated its character. In 1868, Leigh Freeman wrote:

This is the largest and strangest mountain lake in the world. It being sixty by twenty-five miles in size and surrounded by all manner of large game, including an occasional white buffalo, that is seen to rush down the perpetual snowy peaks that tower above, and plunge up to its sides into the water. It is filled with fish half as large as a man, some of which have a mouth and horns and skin like a catfish and legs like a lizard (Haines 1974, 39).

Freeman continued that Yellowstone Lake was “so clear and so deep, that by looking into it you can see them making tea in China” (Haines 1974, 39).

Although such descriptions of Yellowstone Lake contributed to images of the region during the 1860’s, there were few new maps of the area produced during that time. In 1869, David Folsom, Charles Cook, and William Peterson organized a trip into the Yellowstone Plateau that marked a shift in this trend. This small group did not bring instruments to measure the features they encountered, but they did record their findings and their accounts of the trip reflect the accuracy of their observations (see Smith and Wyckoff 2001). Their route (Figure 7) followed the lake’s north shore. In David Folsom’s journal he recorded:

...we arrived at Yellowstone Lake, about twenty miles from the falls. The main body of this beautiful sheet of water is ten miles wide from east to west, and sixteen miles long from north to south; but at the south end it puts out two arms, one to the southeast and the other to the southwest, making the entire length of the lake about thirty miles. Its shores—whether gently sloping mountains, bold promontories, low necks, or level prairies—are everywhere covered with timber. The lake has three small islands, which are also heavily timbered. The outlet is at the northwest extremity (Haines 1974, 53).

From the low lying position along the shoreline of Yellowstone Lake, Folsom found that “the forest-crowned hills” around the lake “bounded” his view of “this inland sea”

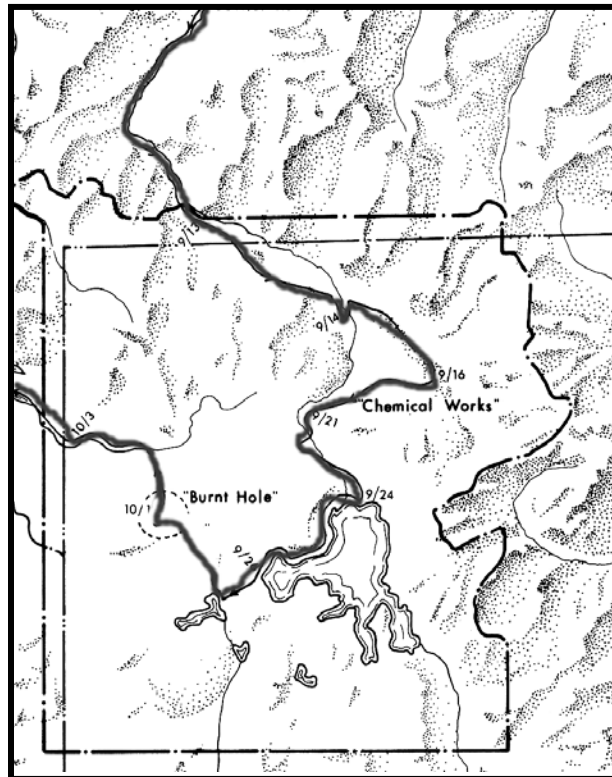
(Haines 1974, 53). These kinds of experiences contributed to Folsom's image of the lake and to subsequent maps of Yellowstone Lake.

Upon his return from the 1869 trip to Yellowstone, Folsom collaborated with Walter deLacy and created a revision of deLacy's 1865 Yellowstone map. The result of their efforts was a map published in 1870 (see Figure 7). The 1870 map is significant for several reasons. It documents collaboration between Euro-American explorers to map the Yellowstone Plateau, it depicts a revised image of Yellowstone Lake, and it contributes to the evolving understanding of this high elevation lake. The image of Yellowstone Lake has changed considerably when compared to deLacy's 1865 map. The latter map illustrates a divided Yellowstone Lake with two arms or bays. The elongated southern arm is the receptor of the "Main Fork" river, and the bulbous west arm shows a "Hot Springs" area (probably West Thumb thermal area). Three other hot springs areas are shown: one along the northeastern portions of the lake, a second near Pelican Creek and towards the north, and a third near the outlet of the river flowing from the lake.

Another major addition to this map is its depiction of islands at Yellowstone Lake (three are shown). These revisions reflect Folsom's recent trip to Yellowstone Lake and his observations of the lake from the northern shoreline. Standing on the north shore and looking into the vast arms of the lake, it is difficult to discern the arms and it appears as if there are two large bays that constitute this lake. Also from this vantage point on the shoreline, one may easily see that there are several large islands in the lake, although their shapes are also deceiving from this perspective.

The 1870 deLacy map also reveals the continued efforts of Euro-Americans to represent the area as an uninhabited wilderness open for potential economic development.

Figure 7. Map of Yellowstone Lake, 1870 and Route of the Folsom Expedition
 This 1870 revision (top) of deLacy's 1865 map of Yellowstone reflects new geographical information gathered by David Folsom and shared with Walter deLacy. Folsom, unlike deLacy, visited the north shore of Yellowstone Lake (bottom) in 1869 and recorded his observations of the lake (route outlined in bold). [deLacy map reprinted in Haines 1974, 192 and route printed in Haines 1977a, 93.]



This map shows a marked contrast to Lewis's engraving of William Clark's map from the early 1800's. Unlike Lewis's engraving (or Clark's manuscript map), deLacy's 1870 map does not record Native American place names or the locations of Native American groups. The 1870 map has a lot more empty spaces bereft of landmarks or labels which could be interpreted as unsettled landscapes or wilderness areas. This could be attributed to Native American depopulation across the Yellowstone Plateau throughout the 19th century from migration, illness, and armed conflict with advancing Euro-American settlers.

The year 1870 marked a shift in the method of accumulating mapping data for Yellowstone Lake. This was the year that the first organized "scientific" expedition entered the area. While the Folsom Expedition certainly was an organized group and their travels and observations aided the mapping effort of the lake, they did not enter the Yellowstone area equipped with the equipment, funds, and personnel to measure and catalog their observations. The Washburn Expedition or Yellowstone Expedition left Montana in late summer 1870 and returned from a trip into the Yellowstone region with volumes of new information about the area. Spurred by the accumulating first-hand accounts of the Yellowstone Plateau, advocates of western expansion deemed it necessary to fund and organize a formal group of explorers to the area. The demand for new knowledge of Yellowstone reflected the growing number of Euro-American settlers in the region, the interest in cataloging natural resources in the Yellowstone region, and growing conflict between Euro-American and Native American groups to use and access the area.

Judith Meyer (1996) offers some parameters for looking at early “discovery accounts” of the Yellowstone region. Her work helps to discuss the relationship between different early exploration accounts of Yellowstone Lake. The journals and maps that were created by expedition parties often built upon previous knowledge of the area from Native American and Euro-American sources. Through this process, the accounts were very similar to each other. Meyer outlines four factors that contribute to this phenomenon: all of the explorer’s had a familiarity with “‘prediscovery’ accounts describing Yellowstone,” there was a great deal of “scientific and geographic exploration” being completed during this time which gave the explorers a context in which they could place their experiences, the park explorers were “greatly influenced by each other,” and all of these accounts used accepted language and writing styles prevalent during the late nineteenth century (1996, 34).

The Washburn Expedition traveled with the intent of exploring the region and documenting what they found: They brought scientific instruments to measure the local topography and kept written records of their experiences. Fearing hostile encounters with Native American peoples in the area, the expedition was accompanied by an army escort under the supervision of Lieutenant Gustavus Doane. This group of sojourners experienced and documented many of Yellowstone’s features that had been observed by previous explorers to the area.

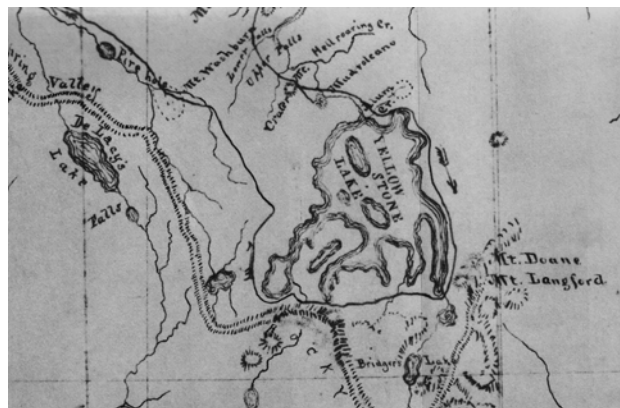
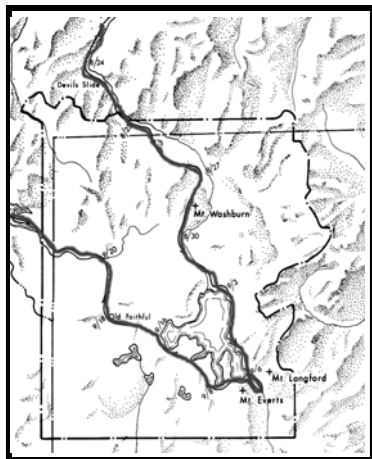
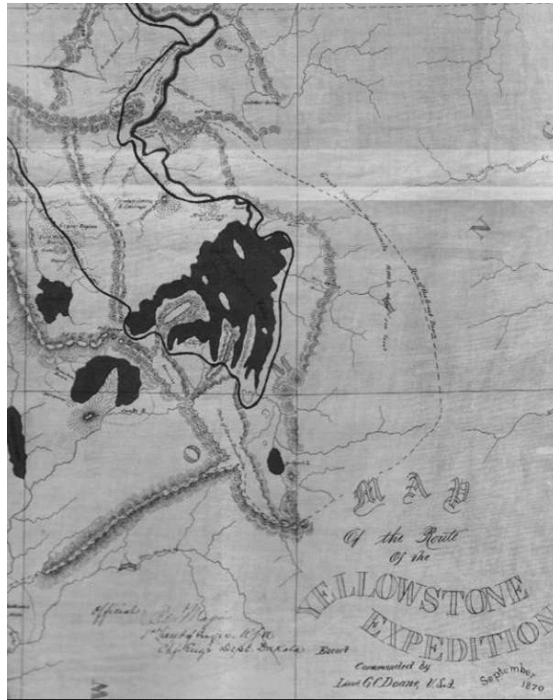
However, the prestige of this formally organized group of politically connected citizens and military personnel added to the perceived reliability and acceptance of their travel accounts. This was a contrast to the fragmented accounts from trappers, prospectors, military personnel, and other explorers that were often discredited by

government officials and the popular press as fabricated stories. The entry of the Washburn Expedition into Yellowstone also reflects the rising tide of hostility towards Native Americans; Bannock, Crow, and Shoshone peoples were still living in and actively using Yellowstone's resources throughout the 19th century. Washburn's formal expedition into the area was a sign of increasing political and economic pressures to organize this territory and develop it for uses deemed appropriate by Euro-American groups.

The route of the Yellowstone Expedition (Figure 8) reflects the maps that they produced and the organization of their travel accounts. Their route included a tour around Yellowstone Lake: they approached Yellowstone Lake from the north, arriving at the lake outlet of the Yellowstone River. Then, they traveled southeast along the foot of the Absaroka Mountains along the shoreline of the lake, changing their route as they crossed the Yellowstone River flowing into the lake. After that crossing they moved in a westerly direction along the southern shores and arms of the lake. Finally, the group cut through heavy fallen and standing timber to the west bay (or thumb), and then out of the lake region and towards the thermal areas of the Upper Geyser Basin.

Two notable maps were published by expedition members from the 1870 Yellowstone Expedition: General Henry Washburn's map and Lieutenant Doane's map (see Figure 8). The maps that Washburn and Doane produced were official government documents and they altered the cartographic representations of the lake from previous maps. As a testament to the accumulated cartographic knowledge of Yellowstone Lake, General Washburn carried and referenced a copy of deLacy's 1870 map with him as he traveled into the Yellowstone region. The group traveled around the east, south, and

Figure 8. Maps of Yellowstone Lake, c.1870 and Route of the Yellowstone Expedition Both Lt. Doane and General Washburn printed maps (top and bottom right) based on their travels to Yellowstone Lake in 1870. The route (bottom left) that the group traveled (outlined in bold) around Yellowstone lake gave them a better idea of the size and shape of the lake. Doane's journal entry reflects his view for mapping the lake from the top of a peak on Yellowstone Lake's eastern shore. "The view from this peak commanded completely the lake enabling us to sketch a map, of its inlets and bearings with considerable accuracy" (Bonney and Bonney 1970, 309). [Doane and Washburn map reprinted in Bonney and Bonney 1970, 199 and 295; Route map printed in Haines 1977a, 110.]



western shorelines of the lake yet, the maps drawn by this group still show inaccurate contours for the lake. These errors are not due to the lack of exploring prowess by the group. During their adventures, they walked and rode around the heavily forested lake shore, climbed several mountains to take barometer readings and view lake vistas, attempted to float a raft on the lake to explore some of the islands, and camped each evening in the heavily wooded forest by the lake. The routes and the peaks that they climbed afforded views of many portions of the lake, but the heavily wooded and hilly areas adjacent to the lake obstructed views across the lake. Indeed, such birds-eye perspectives on the lake would not be realized until airplanes flew over the region.

The obscured viewpoints posed problems for making accurate maps of the lake.

A journal entry from the leader of the military escort for the expedition—Lieutenant Doane—reflects some of these cartographic hurdles:

Our camp to-night [*sic*] is due south from the head of the Yellowstone, on the other side of the lake. Long wooded promontories here extend out into the basin inclosing bays several miles in length. These are so numerous as to render it impossible to give a correct profile of the shores without actual measurement, the perspective in such distances rendering appearances very deceiving (Cramton 1932, 132).

According to Doane, when the party did try to float on the lake to explore some of the nearby islands, they “built a raft for the purpose of attempting to visit them, but the strong waves of the lake dashed it to pieces in an hour” (Bonney and Bonney 1970, 301).

Sturdier boats and supplies to mend them improved this situation and in 1876 Doane finally made a trip to Stevenson Island (Bonney and Bonney 1970, 482). The physical scene of the lake—its large size, heavily wooded shores, turbulent waters, and nearby highland areas—was a major factor in shaping early maps of the area.

The maps created by the Yellowstone Expedition members resemble one another, but they do reveal slight variations in the shape of Yellowstone Lake. Lieutenant Doane's 1870 *Map of the Route of the Yellowstone Expedition* and Washburn's 1870 *Route of Washburn Party 1870* (see Figure 8) both show detailed topographic features around Yellowstone Lake such as mountains, rivers, and other lakes. Yellowstone Lake's position on both of these maps is too far south and east as on deLacy's maps. But, unlike previous maps of the area, the official maps improve upon the size and shape of the lake's arms. No longer merely a two bay area, the lake is shown to have four distinct narrow bays. The islands are also mapped more accurately. Doane's map shows four islands and Washburn's map depicts three islands. The mountains that merely encircled the lake in previous accounts now enter into the recesses of the bays and we start to see three ridges towards the south end of the lake. The area of greatest accuracy on Washburn and Doane's maps is along the east shore where the party spent most of its travel time. The north shore and the area between the Flat Mountain and West Thumb bays—areas that the group did not travel and could not clearly see from their various vantage points around the lake—are the least accurate. There are also some differences between Doane's map and Washburn's drawing. Washburn's version includes more place names and streams around Yellowstone Lake than Doane's map which provides more detailed mountain ranges and far fewer place names. Although the party certainly encountered signs of Native American activity at the lake, neither map shows native trails, place names, or camps.

It is also worth noting that the written accounts of the Yellowstone Expedition included many contradictory entries concerning Native Americans at Yellowstone Lake.

Native American groups were actively using the rich natural resources and good camping sites at Yellowstone Lake during the time of the Yellowstone Expedition. David Spence (1999) writes about Washburn party's encounters and perceptions of Native Americans in Yellowstone. According to Spence the members of the Yellowstone Expedition were "keenly aware of Yellowstone's native inhabitants. Fear of Indian attack led them to request a military escort, and the explorers set up a regular night watch through the first half of their journey" and they found several formerly occupied Indian camps during their trip (1999, 42). Indeed, during the first part of their trip into Yellowstone, Washburn's party followed trails blazed and used by Native Americans. By the time the expedition reached Yellowstone Lake, however, they decided to avoid any potential encounters with Native Americans by choosing to cut a path through the thick, fallen timber around the lake's southern shores rather than follow the worn paths around the lake that would potentially put them closer to Native American parties also traveling in the area (Bonney and Bonney 1970).

An example of the expedition's contradictory reports may be found in Nathaniel P. Langford's account of the trip that he published in *Scribner's Monthly* (1871) and later in *The Discovery of Yellowstone* (1905). The author describes traveling in a "pathless wilderness" (Langford 1905, 69), but in another account he related that the party following a Native American trail; "[t]he marks made in the soil by the travais (lodge-poles) on the side of the trail showed that it had been recently traveled by a number of lodges of Indians,—and little colt, which we overtook soon after making the discovery, convinced us that we were in their immediate vicinity" (Langford 1871, 7). Spence (1999) found similar records in the journals from the Yellowstone Expedition; while the

group was traveling across the “the hills south” of Yellowstone Lake, they “discovered an abandoned tepee, a game run used for corralling herds of animals, and stacks of lodge poles left behind for later use” (1999, 42). Although the members of the party recorded these references to active and current use of Yellowstone by Native Americans, they also disregarded the native presence in the area. According to Spence the Washburn party “dismissed these signs as ancient remnants of vanished Indians, or...the aberrant behavior of plains Indians who sought refuge in the mountains” (1999, 42).

The Washburn Expedition was quickly followed by other organized, scientific survey parties into Yellowstone. In 1871, two government sponsored parties traveled to Yellowstone to document Washburn’s findings and to gather more detailed geographic information. Under the auspices of the recently created United States Geological Survey of the Territories, Ferdinand V. Hayden led expeditions into the Yellowstone Plateau in 1871, 1872, and 1878. The 1871 expedition was a joint venture between the U. S. Geological Survey and the United States Army Corps of Engineers. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers group was led by Captain John W. Barlow and Captain David P. Heap. Both groups traveled similar routes around the lake (Figure 9 and Figure 10), although their timing was staggered. Both the Hayden expedition and the Barlow-Heap expedition produced maps of Yellowstone Lake and combined, they gathered more data about the area than any previous Euro-American led expedition. Their contribution to the understanding of the lake and the Yellowstone area may be attributed to the extended time they stayed in the area and the large size of the groups. These conditions meant that they had the time to complete thorough surveys of the lake and they had the personnel to collect, record, and handle that data. The expeditions brought back floral, faunal, and

geologic specimens, the first photographs of Yellowstone, topographical observations, land measurements, sketches, and detailed journals.

Hayden completed a report of his expedition's findings-- *Preliminary Report of the United States Geological Survey of Montana and Portions of Adjacent Territories; being a Fifth Annual Report of Progress (Preliminary Report)*—which included many of the sketches and written observations taken by the group. His report was published in 1872 and it included a map of Yellowstone Lake drawn by E. Hergesheimer. The *Yellowstone Lake Wyoming Territory, Department of the Interior U.S. Geological Survey of the Territories Surveyed by the Party in charge of F. V. Hayden, U.S. Geologist 1871* (Figure 9) adds new definition to the spatial understanding of Yellowstone Lake.

Although the party traveled around the lake from the outlet of Yellowstone River west and then south to Flat Mountain (see Figure 9), this map portrays a false bay of Yellowstone Lake near Delusion Lake.

The U.S. Corps of Engineers also produced a map from their travels around Yellowstone Lake. The *Sketch of the Yellowstone Lake and the Valley of the Upper Yellowstone River* (see Figure 10) reveals a very similar picture of Yellowstone Lake to the map created by the U. S. Geological Survey. However, there are some notable differences in the maps. The U. S. Corps of Engineers map depicts a narrower West Thumb Bay and a less-defined South Arm than that seen on the U. S. Geological Survey map. Also, the map from the Barlow-Heap group shows Delusion Lake as a separate lake, not an extensive bay of Yellowstone Lake. Finally, the U.S. Corps of Engineers map does not include any depth readings of the lake.

Figure 9. Map of Yellowstone Lake, 1872 and Route of the 1871 Hayden Expedition
 An 1872 map of Yellowstone Lake (top) was drawn from the recorded depth readings and shoreline measurements taken by the U.S. Geological Survey expedition into Yellowstone in 1871. The organized, scientific party traveled (route outlined in bold) around Yellowstone Lake (left bottom) and gathered a great deal of information about its parameters. [Hayden 1872, map insert and route map printed in Merrill 1999, 34.]

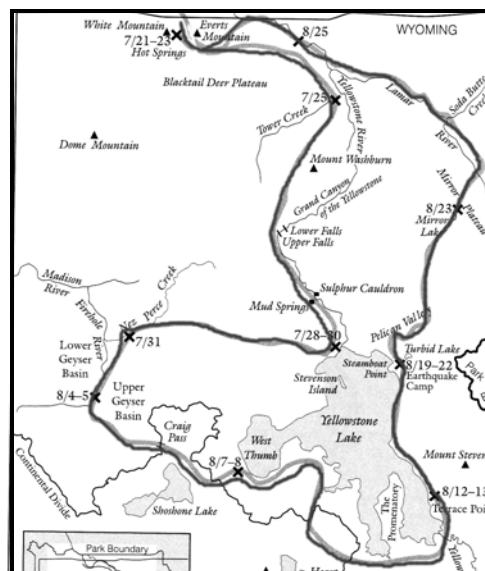
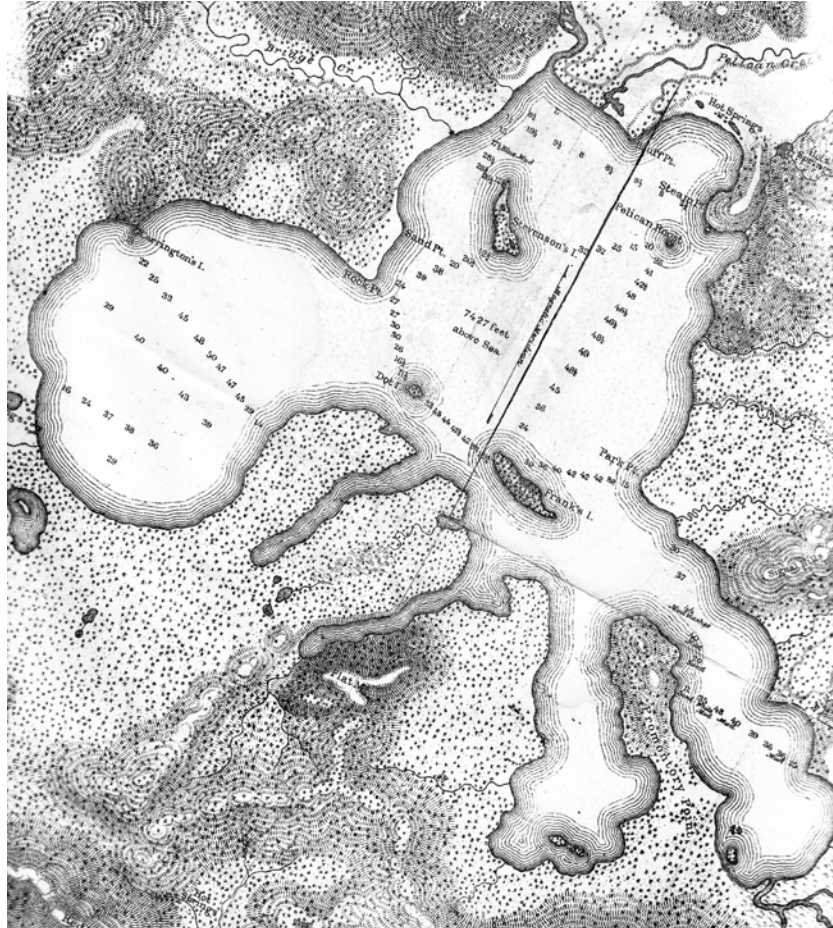
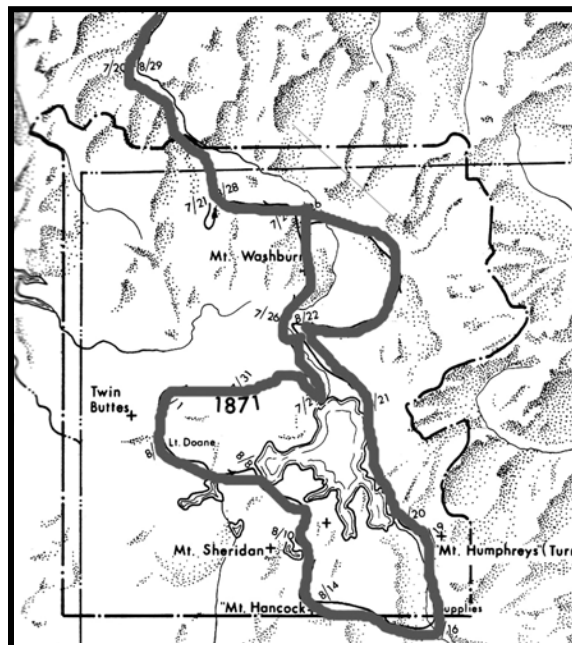


Figure 10. Map of Yellowstone Lake, 1872 and Route of the Barlow-Heap Expedition
 The U.S. Corps of Engineers produced a map of Yellowstone Lake in 1872 (top) based on the data and observations collected by Captain Barlow and Captain Heap while conducting a survey in Yellowstone. The expedition began their journey around the same time as the U.S. Geological Survey started theirs, but the two groups traveled (route outlined in bold) slightly different paths and often visited areas in the park at different times (bottom). [Map printed in Barlow 1872, map insert and route map printed in Haines 1977, 145.]



Hergesheimer's map revealed an aspect of Yellowstone Lake that had not been formally recorded before—its depths. The numbers across the lake mark the depth readings that were measured by two members of the expedition [Hayden 1872, 101]. The U. S. Geological Survey party launched the expedition geared with the tools and the personnel to make formal measurements of the lake; they traversed the shoreline of the lake, measured their distance with an odometer, and camped along the shoreline. The geological survey also brought a small “oak boat with a woolen blanket sail” (Figure 11) with them which they used to take a series of readings of the lake floor (Morgan 2003, 15).

Figure 11. A Precarious Task for Science

The U.S. Geological Survey launched an expedition into Yellowstone in 1871 that was prepared to gather data about Yellowstone Lake. This 1871 William H. Jackson photograph shows two members of the expedition in *The Annie*—a boat which the party brought to the lake to take depth readings. Taking soundings in the lake was not an easy task. According the Albert Peale, the expedition's mineralogist, “[t]he Lake was very rough. The waves coming in were equal to waves on the sea coast. Elliott says they were able to take but three soundings, it being rough all the time.” (Merrill 1999, 160) [Courtesy Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



Hayden's journals reflect the systematic nature of the survey crew's effort at Yellowstone Lake: "I have made quite thorough sounding of the Lake, explored the north and west sides and will now move to the south and east sides. We are making a good topographical and geological map of the entire district" (Haines 1974, 102). He also described Elliott's fieldwork as making a "a systematic sketch of the shore with all its indentations the banks down, indeed, making a complete topographical as well as pictorial sketch of the shores as seen from the water, for a circuit of at least 130 miles. He will be also making soundings, at various points" (Morgan et al. 2003, 15). The increased geographical accuracy of the Yellowstone Lake maps created by the U.S. Geological Survey and the U. S. Corps of Engineers is noticeable when compared to the maps from the 1870 Yellowstone Expedition. In Hergesheimer's map, the lake's west bay is rounder and enlarged. The South and Southeast Arms of the lake are also more accurately portrayed in terms of their comparative length and size with the rest of the lake. However, Hergesheimer's map still shows a fifth arm of the lake merging Delusion Lake into a bay of Yellowstone Lake. The U. S. Corps of Engineers map amends the depiction of Delusion Lake, but does not include depth readings for the lake. When the information from the two maps is compared and combined, however, they do change the understanding of the lake. Whereas Doane and Washburn's maps depict four elongated arms in the southern regions of Yellowstone Lake, the 1872 maps narrow the proportions of the middle arm and divide it to show five arms for the lake. The islands are also more clearly defined in the 1872 maps. Not only do these maps illustrate the three larger islands on the lake (Stevenson, Dot, and Frank), the geological survey map and the

engineer's map also show the relative locations for the smaller islands scattered around the lake (Pelican Roost, Carrington Island, the Molly Islands, and Peale Island).

The U.S. Geological Survey expedition was the first group to explore Yellowstone with a photographer (William Jackson) and a painter (Thomas Moran) in its ranks. These two artists produced some of the earliest and most striking images of Yellowstone Lake (Figure 12 and Figure 13) and contributed to the documentation that was used to sway Congress's opinion about Yellowstone and to establish Yellowstone National Park. Both Moran and Jackson worked in coordinated efforts to depict the regions of the park and the lake that the survey party traveled through (Figure 14). Although their images depicted scenes of the natural environment at Yellowstone Lake and, occasionally members of the survey parties, they did not include any signs of Native American activity at the lake.

Both Moran and Jackson created images of Yellowstone Lake during and based on their 1871 travels to Yellowstone. Moran produced several sketches and later woodcuts and paintings from the trip. Jackson also produced a number of images showing the lake. Hayden's *Preliminary Report* was widely reproduced in guidebooks of Yellowstone National Park. Many early guidebook writers did not travel to the park, but instead copied passages from early accounts of the area and used them to describe the environmental settings of the park (Meyer 1996, 43). The images created by Moran and Jackson were also widely reproduced in early Yellowstone guidebooks and were the main sources of visual information about the park to eastern audiences.

In the winter of 1871, a bill was introduced to Congress to designate Yellowstone a national park. Although I discuss the passage of this important piece of legislation in

Figure 12. William H. Jackson Photographs

During the 1871 U.S. Geological Survey party's travels along the shores of Yellowstone Lake, Jackson captured the first photographic record of Yellowstone Lake. Often Jackson included members of the survey party in the shots for a sense of scale. F.V. Hayden included some of these pictures from the 1871 trip as documentation during the Congressional debates over the Yellowstone Park Act. These photos (from top to bottom) show camps along the north shore of the lake, Mary Bay on the north shore, and a portion of West Thumb Bay of Yellowstone Lake. [Top photo Haines 1977a, 147; middle Milstein 1996, 36; bottom photo Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



Figure 13. Thomas Moran Wood-Block Prints and Painting of Yellowstone Lake
 Thomas Moran accompanied the U.S. Geological Survey in 1871 and created many sketches of Yellowstone Lake. Some of his sketches and wood-block prints were used to illustrate popular articles that N.P. Langford authored. Moran's work, along with William H. Jackson's, was included in the documents used during the Congressional debates over the Yellowstone Park Bill. [top images printed in Langford 1871, 122 and 119; bottom left image reprinted in Bonney and Bonney 1970, 300; bottom right printed in Hayden 1872, 96.]

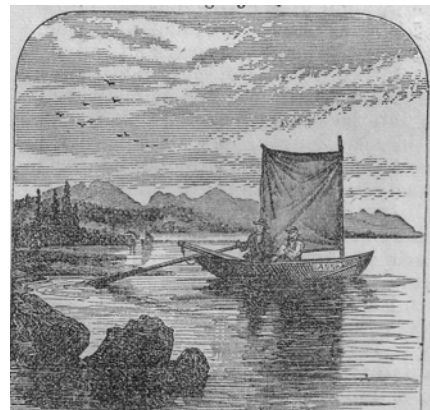
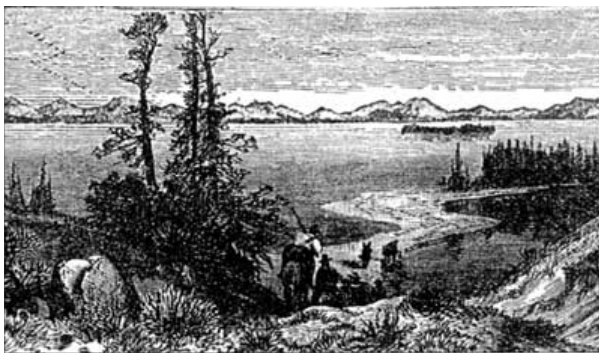
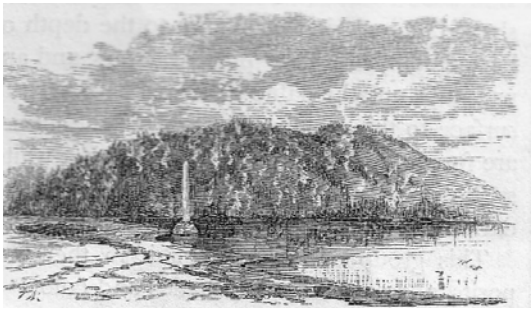


Figure 14. Images of Yellowstone Lake created by Jackson and Moran

During the 1871 U.S. Geological Survey, Jackson and Moran created many images of the Yellowstone region. Often they worked collaboratively when they chose locations to take photos and make sketches. The top images are from the mountains along the eastern shore of the lake looking at the Promontory. Moran also created a vivid painting of Yellowstone Lake's Southeast Arm (bottom right) from the inspiration of Jackson's photo of the same area. [in order of appearance Printed in Hayden 1873, map insert; Merrill 1999, 160; Whittlesey 1997, 20; Courtesy Yellowstone National Park Archives; National Park Service.]



more detail in the second section of this chapter, it is worth noting here the passing of that bill in 1872 and the subsequent establishment of Yellowstone National Park. The passage of the park bill marks a stage in the exploration process that Overton (1981) outlines in his theoretical framework. This turning point may come when information from explorers's reports are evaluated by "decision-makers" and a verdict is reached as to whether an area should be explored in more detail or developed (Overton 1981, 57-58). Up to this point, reports and the accumulation of geographic knowledge about Yellowstone was not enough to warrant a shift in the land use patterns at this site. Hayden's report and the images from the expedition were added to the accumulated data about Yellowstone and a decision was made to formally recognize this area as a recreational preserve. It is important to also note that this did not change many facets of Yellowstone. The physical environment of Yellowstone Lake was still not accurately mapped by Euro-Americans. Native Americans did not disappear from Yellowstone and cease using its resources.

After the establishment of Yellowstone National Park, there was still a demand to map its boundaries and features with greater detail. Government surveys were funded with orders to enter the park and gather more geographic data. While the contours and topography of Yellowstone Lake were redrawn with greater accuracy than found on maps since William Clark's manuscript map, there were still many areas of the lake (and of Yellowstone National Park) left to be cataloged, measured, and traversed by Euro-Americans. Between 1872 and 1879, several Euro-American groups entered the new park with these objectives in mind. Hayden made another trip to Yellowstone in 1872, and in 1873 Captain William A. Jones led a Corps of Engineers expedition into the area.

His Report Upon the Reconnaissance of Northwestern Wyoming, Including Yellowstone National Park, Made in the Summer of 1873 included 49 trail-maps and one of the first colored geologic maps of the region. Captain William Ludlow led the next group on a reconnaissance of the park in 1875. The party spent forty-five days in the park and produced improved maps and a plan for conservation of the recently established park (Walsh 1999, 268). Another U.S. Geological Survey party was sent into Yellowstone in 1878 under the direction of F. V. Hayden. The *Map of Yellowstone National Park, Showing Distribution of Hot Springs* (Figure 15) was produced from the data collected during this trip. This map corrects and improves upon the 1871 U.S. Geological Survey map and incorporates geographical information gathered by the Jones and Ludlow groups. By 1879—a year after Hayden’s last trip into Yellowstone—a new government agency was created which changed the methods and mission of mapping throughout the West.

The United States Geological Survey, established in 1879, brought an “organized and systematic mapping program” to the national scene and improved the clarity of mapping from Hayden’s reports (Walsh 1999, 271). The first topographic map of Yellowstone National Park was produced in 1896 by the U.S. Geological Survey. The *Topographical Map of Yellowstone National Park and North Western Wyoming* (Figure 16) included many named features in the park and an enhanced topography of Yellowstone Lake. The 1896 topographic map accurately shows the lake’s arms, islands, and topographical contours, and many place names. This map originally appeared in Arnold Hague’s *Geology of the Yellowstone National Park* printed by the U.S. Geological Survey in 1904. Hague led several expeditions into Yellowstone; he entered

Figure 15. Map of Yellowstone Lake, 1878

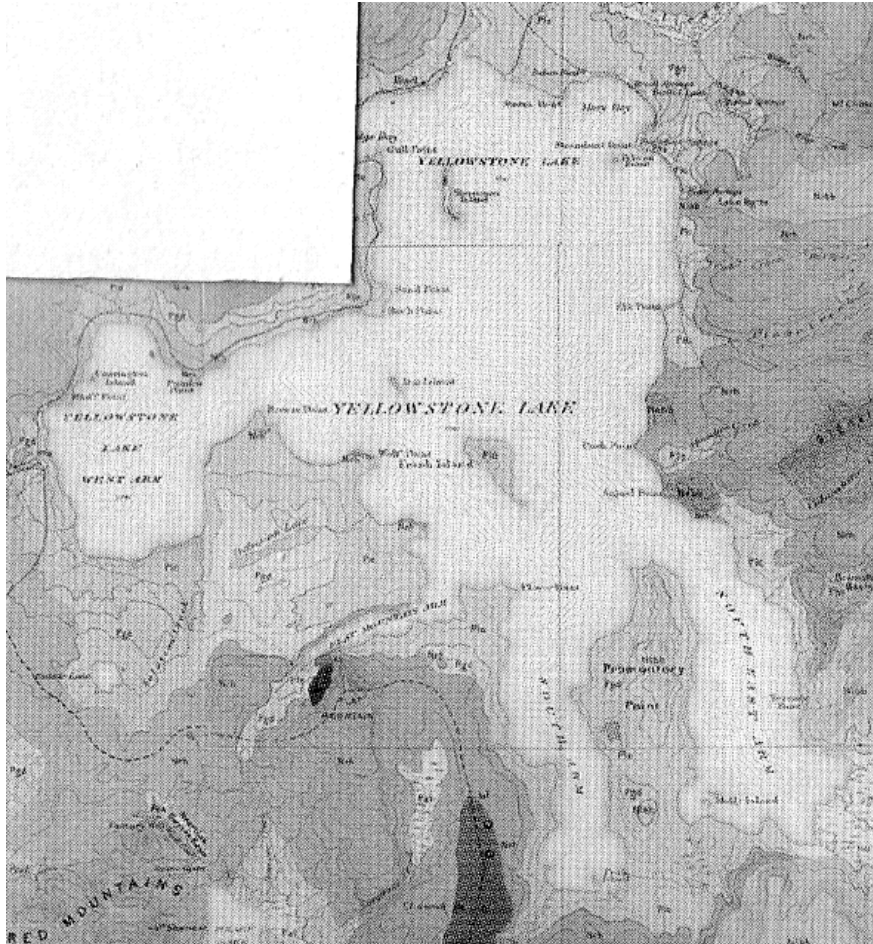
In 1878, Hayden took his last survey trip into Yellowstone National Park. This map reflects continued efforts to collect new topographical data about the lake. [Library of Congress on-line map collection.]



the area again with exploration parties between 1883 and 1889, then again from 1890 to 1891, and for a final expedition in 1893. During these many trips back into Yellowstone National Park, he resurveyed Yellowstone Lake and triangulated those readings (Morgan et al. 2003). The topographic map that was produced in 1896 was the first in a series of topographic maps of the lake, periodically updated with later versions appearing in 1961, 1972, 1982, and 1986 (Figure 17). Maps after the Hague surveys also showed a marked improvement in the accuracy of topographical measurements around the lake; more sophisticated instruments were used to measure the lake's features and a greater number of exploration parties were sent to survey the lake. Topographic maps of the lake

Figure 16. Map of Yellowstone Lake, 1896

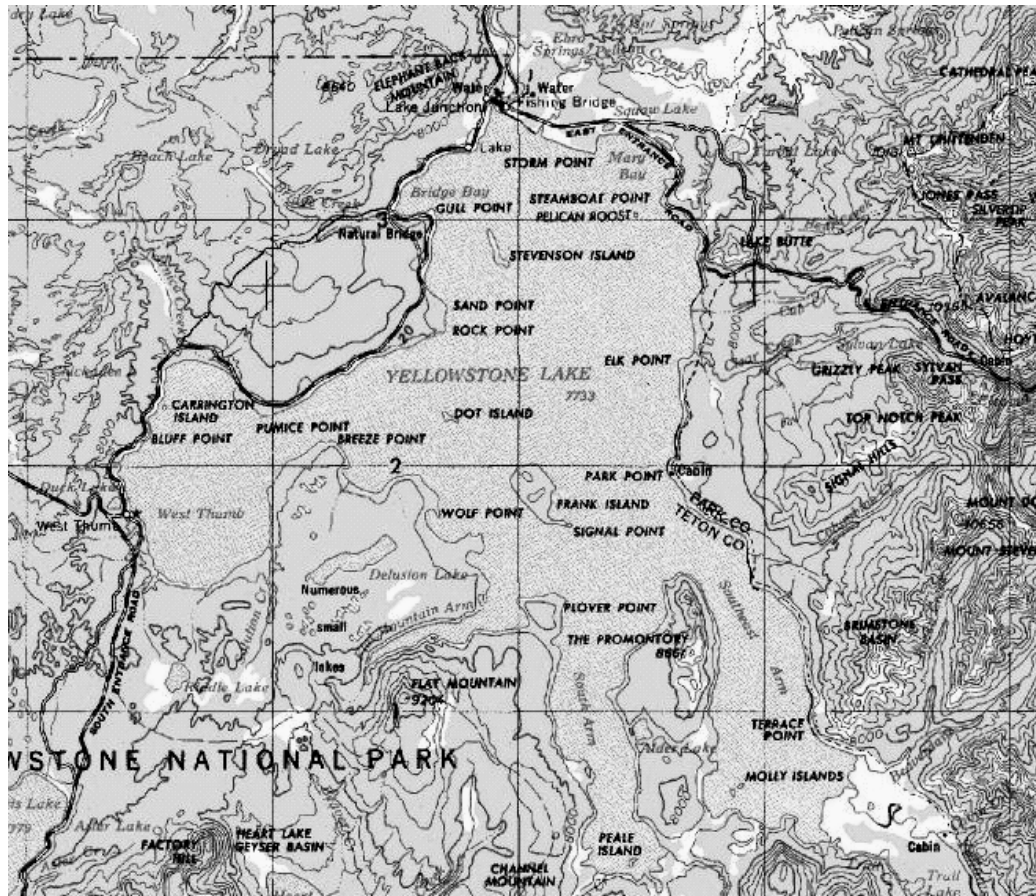
The first topographic map of Yellowstone National Park was produced in 1896 by the U.S. Geological Survey. The *Topographical Map of Yellowstone National Park and North Western Wyoming* included many named features in the park and an enhanced topography of Yellowstone Lake in color. The 1896 topographic map accurately shows the lake's arms, islands, and topographical contours, and many place names. This map originally appeared in Arnold Hague's *Geology of the Yellowstone National Park* printed by the U.S. Geological Survey. [Morgan et al. 2003, 14.]



after 1896 also started to record cultural features and place names as the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake continued to evolve (Figure 18). The depths of the lake, however, would not be precisely charted until the 1990's, when more refined instruments were used to update the soundings taken in 1871 by Hayden's survey crew (see Morgan et al. 2003).

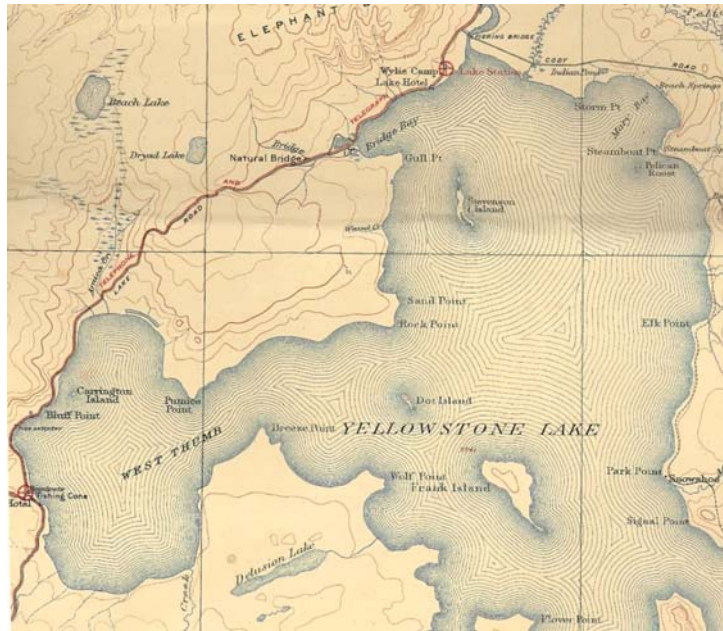
Figure 17. United States Geological Survey Map, 1972

The United States Geological Survey created many maps of Yellowstone Lake. Revised in 1961, 1972 (seen below), 1982, and 1986 this government agency has a long history of mapping in Yellowstone. [TerraServer Image Courtesy of the United States Geological Survey.]



Maps of Yellowstone Lake produced in the late 19th century also started to depict a more diverse set of features than previous maps of the lake. As more information about Yellowstone Lake's physical environment was gathered and transferred to maps and more people started to visit and develop the new national park, cultural aspects of the lake received renewed attention on maps. Earlier maps of Yellowstone Lake such as William Clark's maps or Washburn's map highlighted place names and areas of interest at the lake. This trend changed, however, as funding and cartographic demands called for

Figure 18. Topographical Maps of Yellowstone Lake, 1910 and 1930
 The United States Geological Survey continued to update and revise their topographical maps of Yellowstone Lake from 1896 to present times. These maps from 1910 (top) and 1930 (bottom) show progressive changes in the detail and organization of features mapped at the lake. Both of these maps include clustered development at the Lake Area and West Thumb Area as well as a road connecting the two locations. [From the collection of William Wyckoff.]



more detailed surveys of Yellowstone's physical environment. After the establishment of Yellowstone National Park, maps of Yellowstone Lake reflected new place names and other cultural features. The new park attracted development and an increase in the number of people visiting the lake. Early park superintendents, such as Philetus Norris were keenly interested in exploring the lake to scout for potential sites to develop.

By the turn of the 20th century, Yellowstone Lake had been well traveled and mapped using European cartographic conventions. Maps that highlighted cultural features of the lake began to appear more regularly. Two examples of this style of mapping are P.W. Norris's map of 1881 (Figure 19) and an 1887 map from W. C. Riley's *Official guide to the Yellowstone National Park* (Figure 20). Norris's rendition of Yellowstone Lake includes a number of place names and localities not included on earlier maps. Examples of these types of features include numbered camps, large, circled stars printed near places of interest, trails, and place names such as "Concretion Cove." Norris created a series of these maps based on accumulated knowledge of the lake from previous travel accounts as well as from his own experiences boating and traveling around the lake. A version of this map accompanied each of his annual reports to the Secretary of the Interior and eventually he included the 1881 version in a Yellowstone guidebook he authored. Norris devoted many pages of his superintendent's annual reports to documenting signs of Native American activity at Yellowstone Lake. Superintendent Norris also included maps of Yellowstone National Park with his annual reports and at least one (see Figure 19) of these maps (later included in a park guidebook that he wrote) reflected an "Indian Pond and Camp" along the northeastern shore of the lake at Storm Point.



The map (see Figure 20) included in W. C. Riley's *Official Guide to the Yellowstone National Park* (1887) presents yet another cultural mapping of Yellowstone Lake. This map presents a Yellowstone Lake that looks very similar to Norris's map, but the 1887 guidebook map includes some interesting features. Along with the numbered camps,

Finding a Lake in the Woods: Yellowstone Lake and the Creation of Yellowstone National Park

Yellowstone Lake was drawn on many Euro-American maps of Yellowstone and was a seasonal focus of Native American activity in the area. But how—if at all—did this information about Yellowstone Lake play into the creation of America’s first national park? I assessed three groups of sources to get a better understanding of the lake’s role in the debates and legislation surrounding the establishment of Yellowstone National Park; these included the record of debates in Congress over the park bill, the documentation used by park promoters to encourage a favorable vote for the legislation, and the act that is the original legal document which transformed the park bill into law. I analyzed these sources for references—both in visual or written format—to Yellowstone Lake. Once I encountered a reference to the lake, I ran that reference through a series of questions trying to understand how central or peripheral the lake was to the passing of the park bill. How was the lake being described or used to document the park? How often was the lake mentioned? What kind of place was the lake being promoted as? In the visual documentation, what parts of the lake were depicted? How was the lake visually represented? How was the lake being described in written accounts? What sort of documents cited Yellowstone Lake?

An Act to Set Apart a Certain Tract of Land Lying near the Head-Waters of the Yellowstone River as a Public Park (Yellowstone Park Act) was introduced into Congress on December 18, 1871. In the following months, debate ensued through Congress as to the future of the park bill. The debates are a useful source of study since they reveal the rationale behind the creation of Yellowstone National Park and the

objections that were presented by those who questioned the bill (Smith 1999, 127). The debates also reveal *where* the park would be located. This basic geographical facet of the debates is important since eastern lawmakers—like much of the American public during the late 19th century—had little contact with Yellowstone and most of the information that was distributed about the area consisted of second-hand reports from the accounts of explorers and promoters. This point both strengthened and weakened support for the bill.

Some of the strongest and most adamant supporters and promoters of the bill were people who had recently traveled to the area. During the debates over this bill, park promoters were actively advertising Yellowstone to members of Congress; they used documents from surveys of Yellowstone and personal contact with senators to convince the members of Congress to pass the park bill. According to historian Alfred Runte, “Langford, Walter Trumbull, and others worked long and hard to effect a favorable vote. For example, they placed 400 copies of Langford’s article in the May and June, 1871, issues of *Scribner’s Monthly* on the desk of each senator and representative prior to the debates in both houses. Similarly, William H. Jackson’s photographs and Thomas Moran’s watercolors and sketches were displayed prominently in the halls of the Capitol.....Finally, Hayden and his associates tried to meet personally with as many members of the Congress as possible” (1997, 46). All of the personalities Runte mentions had traveled to Yellowstone and circumnavigated Yellowstone Lake as part of an organized survey party. Nathaniel P. Langford and Walter Trumbull were members of the 1870 Yellowstone Expedition that journeyed through the park and around Yellowstone Lake. After the expedition—and with the encouragement of the Northern Pacific Railroad—Langford lectured extensively throughout the eastern United States

describing his trip and experiences in Yellowstone. He also published a number of accounts from his journey; the May and June editions of *Scribner's Monthly*—a popular publication—carried two of his articles about Yellowstone. Months before the bill was introduced to Congress, F. V. Hayden had led a survey party into Yellowstone which included William H. Jackson and Thomas Moran. The expedition traveled throughout Yellowstone and around Yellowstone Lake. As a geologist in charge of the expedition, Hayden had ordered an extensive mapping of the areas the group traveled through, including the shoreline and depths of Yellowstone Lake.

F. V. Hayden was an active supporter of the Yellowstone Park Act. According to contemporary historians, Hayden's report from the 1871 expedition to Yellowstone and the images prepared by Jackson and Moran were key factors in the swaying of opinion to establish Yellowstone as a national park (Bonney and Bonney 1970; Haines 1977; Whittlesey 1988). The *Congressional Globe* reflects this in an entry for January 23, 1872: "This bill [the Yellowstone Park Act] originated as the result of the exploration, made by Professor Hayden, under the appropriation of Congress last year" (United States Congress 1872, 520). Hayden's report, with an accompanying recommendation to pass the park bill, was another document used during the Congressional debates. Hayden was an ardent supporter of the bill; he included the aforementioned documents in his report and he visited with members of Congress to discuss the park bill.

Nathaniel Langford's account of the 1870 Yellowstone Expedition was published in two issues of *Scribner's Monthly* in 1871. It is helpful to look at his descriptions of Yellowstone in these articles, since they were reproduced and given to every member of Congress who voted on the Yellowstone Park Act. Langford's articles were a key part of

the documentation used by park supporters to promote Yellowstone to Congress. The account described the trip following the route that the party took from Montana Territory, south to Yellowstone, and then back again. The article that appeared in the May edition of *Scribner's Monthly* recounted the first part of the trip—from Montana Territory into Yellowstone and along the Yellowstone River. Langford's article in the June edition picked up where the previous one left off and continued the journey through Yellowstone and eventually back to the party's starting point.

Although the May article includes an adapted version of Henry Washburn's map of Yellowstone (which included Yellowstone Lake), I found many references to Yellowstone Lake in Langford's article published in the June 1871 edition of *Scribner's Monthly*. The second installment of Langford's account opens with the party reaching the northern shores of Yellowstone Lake. The author devotes ten of the sixteen pages of this article to describing his experiences at Yellowstone Lake; Langford recounts the party's route around the lake's eastern and southern shores, their encounters with Native Americans, views of the lake from various mountain tops, features Langford deemed interesting (such as the West Thumb geyser basin, Steamboat Point, the dense stands of trees along the shore), a search for a missing member of the group, and daily camp activities (such as preparing meals and deciding on travel routes). Langford describes the lake in terms of its size, weather, surrounding vegetation, and topography. Comments about the sublime beauty of the lake are common. Upon seeing Yellowstone Lake for the first time, Langford was moved to write: "Water, one of the grandest elements of scenery, never seemed so beautiful before. It formed a fitting climax to all the wonders we had seen, and we gazed upon it for hours, entranced with its increasing attractions" (1871,

114). Indeed, Euro-American explorers frequently observed this opposition between the excitement of other features and the calm, restorative presence of the lake. Langford's account in *Scribner's Monthly* is an example of a description of Yellowstone that is copied and used in many guidebooks throughout the early park years.

Other sources of information used in the promotion of the park bill to Congress from 1871 to 1872 included Yellowstone images created by William H. Jackson (see Figure 12 and Figure 14) and Thomas Moran (see Figure 13 and Figure 14) during their 1871 trip to the area. Accompanying the U. S. Geological Survey of the Territories under the command of F. V. Hayden, these two artists captured images of Yellowstone Lake that were included in Hayden's report of the trip. Jackson's pictures from this trip were "presented in bound portfolios to a number of influential senators and congressmen" (Hales 1988, 108). While Congress debated the Yellowstone Park Act, the Capitol rotunda featured "a prominent Yellowstone display featuring Hayden's geological specimens, Jackson's photographs, and Moran's sketches... [which] heightened the sense of curiosity and national pride" among the legislators (Magoc 1999, 19). Jackson took several pictures of Yellowstone Lake. Some of these pictures include people and camp activities while others portrayed only the natural environment. The photographer often worked in concert with Thomas Moran who was creating sketches of the trip. Moran's prints appeared in Hayden's 1871 report as well as in Langford's *Scribner's Monthly* articles on Yellowstone. Langford's June 1871 article for *Scribner's Monthly* included twenty wood-block prints to accompany Langford's descriptions. Of those images, nine were used to illustrate stories that Langford related about the lake and two of those images depict Yellowstone Lake (see Figure 13—the top two images). Hayden's 1871

Preliminary Report (which was also made available to Congress during the park bill debates) included five of Moran's prints of Yellowstone Lake.

Although the two artists often collaborated on the landscapes they depicted, there were differences in their creations. Moran created sketches, black and white wood-block prints, and (for a few of the prints) color paintings. Jackson, on the other hand, took black and white photographs of his subjects. These two artist styles created different ways of looking at landscapes and the people. Another difference between Moran's work and Jackson's is scale; while Moran oftentimes portrayed small scale events like camp scenes or geothermal features at the lake, Jackson captured images across vast vistas of the lake. Still, Moran did create a number of images of the lake showing a broader horizon. His collection included a drawing of the expedition traveling along the lake's shoreline and, several years after the passage of the Yellowstone Park Act, he painted a highly romanticized, evocative image of Yellowstone Lake looking north across the lake from the Southeast Arm (see Figure 14). This image is significant in that of all the locations that Moran sketched during his time in Yellowstone, he selected Yellowstone Lake as the subject of his painting. His painting of the lake highlights the centrality of Yellowstone Lake and adds to its presence as a national landscape feature, building on a similar image (see Figure 14) of the lake from a W. H. Jackson photograph published after the 1871 expedition.

Through this type of campaigning, the park promoters showed legislators selective aspects of Yellowstone; while they included many places in Yellowstone they also excluded descriptions or images of other points. A certain amount of this exclusion may be attributed to the number and intent of exploration parties. Many areas of

Yellowstone had not yet been documented by Euro-American explorers since a relatively small group of people had entered the area with that task in mind. It is also important to note that a relatively small group of people were representing their views of Yellowstone to Congress and their perceptions of beauty and significance guided what they chose to describe in the park and how they decided to depict it. Judith Meyer argues that early exploration accounts were very similar because of several reasons. One of the factors that she cites is the familiarity that these people had with each other's accounts and an observance of language and description that was common during the late nineteenth century (1996, 43). Although park supporters made good use of documents and images of Yellowstone, they still had a notable source of opposition to overcome. The lack of intimate knowledge of Yellowstone worked against the park bill supporters; they had to convince the members of Congress that Yellowstone was worth protecting.

The debate over the Yellowstone Park Act began when the bill was introduced on December 18, 1871 and ended with the passing of the bill on March 1, 1872. I assessed several documents recording the Congressional debates for references to see if they alluded to Yellowstone Lake. I did not find any direct references to Yellowstone Lake in the recorded debates of Congress over the Yellowstone Park Act printed in the *Congressional Globe*. The only direct reference to Yellowstone Lake that I found from the Congressional debates was in a report from the House of Representatives. The report from the Committee on the Public Lands, 42nd Congress, 2nd Session, Report Number 26, from the House of Representatives, is a brief document that describes the committee's approval of the park bill (H. R. 762) (Hayden 1871, 163-164). The report is primarily dedicated to outlining the committee's thoughts on the threatened status of the park

region, the geothermal areas in Yellowstone, and the low potential of this area being suitable for settlement. However, Yellowstone Lake is briefly mentioned in this document:

Whenever the altitude of the mountain districts exceeds 6,000 feet above the tide-water, their settlement becomes problematic unless there are valuable mines to attract people. The entire area within the limits of the proposed reservation is over 6,000 feet in altitude, and the Yellowstone Lake, which occupies an area fifteen by twenty-two miles, or three hundred and thirty square miles, is 7, 427 feet (U. S. Congress 1872, reprinted in Dilsaver 1994, 28-29).

In this reference, the lake is used to support the argument that Yellowstone is not a viable area for settlement. This was not the first instance where Yellowstone Lake was used as an indicator. Historian Aubrey Haines argues that this idea can be attributed to Cornelius Hedges, a member of the 1870 Washburn Expedition (1977a, 166). Hedges wrote a series of articles for the *Helena Herald* and in his final piece—“The Yellowstone Lake”—he described the lake as being inaccessible and a gauge of the poor quality of the surrounding lands for economic return (Haines 1977a, 134-135). Report number twenty-six also mentions the physical environment of Yellowstone Lake—its high elevation and extent. The lake is used as a geographical reference point in the “proposed reservation” to compare the park lands to other areas where people live. An interesting point about this mention is that Yellowstone Lake is selected from the catalog of high elevation, natural park features to support this argument.

Looking at the Congressional debates reveals some of the questions that Congress deemed important to address in the bill. By looking at the Yellowstone Park Act, we can see some of the outcomes of those questions. *An Act to Set Apart a Certain Tract of Land Lying near the Head-Waters of the Yellowstone River as a Public Park* (Yellowstone Park Act, 1872) (U.S. Congress 1872b, reprinted in Dilsaver 1994, 28-29)

is a brief document; it is divided into two sections. Important issues for legislators revealed in the bill include: how the park would be managed, who would have access to the park, the activities that were allowed in the park, how large the park would be, where the park would be located, what features were deemed valuable enough to place under protection, and the spatial extent of the park. The Yellowstone Park Act included references to Yellowstone Lake. It was incorporated into the confines of Yellowstone National Park; in fact, its parameters (recently surveyed by Hayden) served as markers for the boundary of the park. The Yellowstone Park Act demarcates the actual piece of real estate that encompassed the first park boundaries as:

...the tract of land in the Territories of Montana and Wyoming...running eastward of the most eastern point of Yellowstone Lake; thence south along said meridian to the parallel of latitude passing ten miles south of the most southern point of Yellowstone Lake; thence west along said parallel to the meridian passing fifteen miles west of the most western point of Madison lake; thence north along said meridian to the latitude of the junction of the Yellowstone and Gardiner's rivers; thence east to the place of beginning (U.S. Congress 1872b, reprinted in Dilsaver 1994, 28).

In this description, Yellowstone Lake is used as a geographical reference point for locating the park and surmising its extent. The lake is one of four natural features mentioned in this description as points of reference for the boundaries and it is used three out of the five times that locations are aligned to latitude and longitude measurements (Figure 21). The importance of water resources to Congress in passing this bill seems evident from the title of the act as well as the prominence of water bodies as anchor points for the boundary markers.

Yellowstone Lake is not mentioned in the second section of the Yellowstone Park Act. This part of the legislation is devoted to leases allowed in the park and the types of business enterprises deemed as appropriate to a national park. The scenic attractions and

rationale for establishing the park are not described in the second section of the Act; instead, this section outlines the duties of the Secretary of the Interior in protecting park resources (“against the wanton destruction of the fish and game found within said park”), regulating park businesses, and dealing with trespassers in the park (U.S. Congress 1872b, reprinted in Dilsaver 1994, 28-29).

Figure 21. Yellowstone Lake as a Geographic Reference Point in Yellowstone National Park

Yellowstone Lake figured in the Yellowstone Park Act as a geographical reference point for establishing the park’s boundaries. Granite blocks are located along Yellowstone Lake’s shoreline marking the latitude and longitude of the lake’s parameters. This photo shows the marker located (stone block in foreground) along the north shore near the Lake Area development. [Photo by author 2003.]



Conclusion

Yellowstone Lake has a long history of human use and mapping. From Native American camps along the northern shore of the lake as early as 10, 000 years ago (Sanders 2002, 213), Yellowstone Lake has offered humans a location for seasonal

activities. Indeed, looking at the cartographic history of Yellowstone Lake, we see this continued human activity as the lake was early on a geographic location included in early maps of the Yellowstone Plateau. The information for these maps came from a variety of sources including Native American guides, Euro-American fur trappers, miners, military personnel, and exploration parties. Often the pathways of communication between these groups were informal but it nonetheless represents an important dialogue about the lake between a variety of people.

Yellowstone Lake's prominence as a geographic reference feature was supported and enhanced by later organized scientific exploration parties that traveled around the lake and produced detailed maps of the area. Government published maps, verbal descriptions from the journals of expedition members, sketches, and photographs of Yellowstone Lake also played a role in the creation of Yellowstone National Park and the passing of the Yellowstone Park Act. For this landmark legislation, Yellowstone Lake images and published accounts were used by park promoters to support the claim that the headwaters of the Yellowstone River was an exceptional area and must be set aside from traditional development. The Yellowstone Park Act named the lake as a reference location for marking the park's borders. Although the Yellowstone Park Act may have passed successfully through Congress based on the fantastic landscapes of the geothermal basins or the canyons in the park, Yellowstone Lake's role as a large geographic reference point is significant for its centrality to marking the park's boundaries in the vast expanses of the American West for an eastern audience of legislators and citizens. The appearance of Yellowstone Lake in early maps, Congressional debates, and the Yellowstone Park Act also lays the base for Yellowstone Lake being an important central

geographic feature that contributed to the founding of the nation's first national park.

Yellowstone Lake has a long history of being documented and described in park literature and images and, as such, is a valuable physical and cultural landscape to help better understand the evolution of the national park idea and its implementation in western politics, booster campaigns, and recreation. The lake transitioned from this period of mapping and exploration to being an early site of park development.

PERIOD ONE: 1870 TO 1891

Introduction

[Yellowstone Lake] possesses adaptabilities for the highest display of artificial culture, amid the greatest wonders of Nature that the world affords, and is beautified by the grandeur of the most extensive mountain scenery, and not many years can elapse before the march of civil improvement will reclaim this delightful solitude, and garnish it with all the attractions of cultivated taste and refinement (N.P. Langford, 1871).

A task of this thesis is to reconstruct the changing cultural landscape at Yellowstone Lake over time. The term landscape has a long and notable history of thought and practice for geographers (Meinig 1979; Wyckoff 1988; Vale and Vale 1989; Conzen 1990; and Wyckoff 1999). Landscape refers to

the signatures people leave upon the visible scene and what those imprints can tell us about a culture and its relation to the environment....Geographers believe that the landscape can tell us important things about the people who created it....landscape is material culture, a concrete expression of habits, technology, and the distributions of power and authority within society” (Wyckoff 1999, 6).

In the introduction to his study of Colorado, Wyckoff suggests that “every place has a unique cultural landscape and yet...common cultural, economic, and political threads continue to weave predictable patterns onto the visible scene that reminds us of the larger significance of the localities within our purview. Tracing those threads from their origins to their new settings helps us to understand how a place acquires a particular personality and how it reflects diverse cultural, economic, and political roots” (1999, 6).

This chapter reconstructs Yellowstone Lake’s cultural landscape between 1870 and 1891. This discussion delves into the establishment of a cultural landscape at Yellowstone Lake and follows the initial development of that landscape up to 1891. This

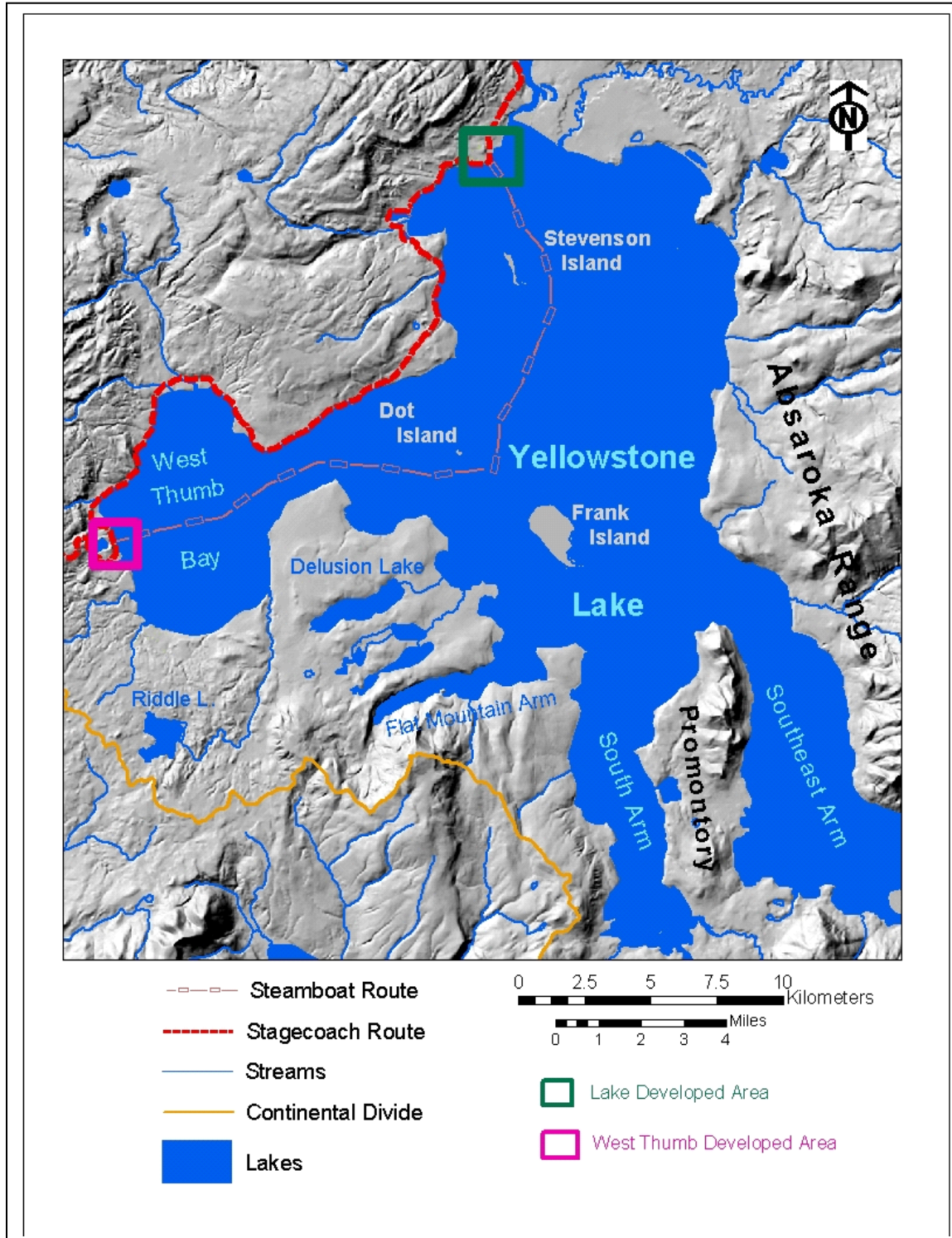
chapter is further subdivided into four infrastructure discussion sections: transportation, pre-park structures and early park development patterns, government structures, and concessionaire structures. The transportation section is also separated into four parts covering early trails, roads, bridges, and boating routes. The chapter concludes with the opening of the first major overnight tourist accommodations at Yellowstone Lake—the Lake Hotel. The major developed areas at Yellowstone Lake by 1891 were at the Lake Developed Area and West Thumb Developed Area (Figure 22).

The Emergence of Yellowstone Lake’s Cultural Landscape

A dynamic relationship between humans and their environment takes place on many levels at Yellowstone Lake. Even from the early years of park settlement, the lake’s physical environment shaped the location of Yellowstone Lake’s cultural features. In turn, the development at Yellowstone Lake also altered the physical environment at the lake by leveling areas to build structures, clearing forests for roads and trails, and reshaping the shoreline of the lake to accommodate boat docks. Geographical information about the lake’s features and formations was revised and updated as more information was collected by Native Americans and Euro-American explorers, government surveys, and travelers. This section of the chapter explores the dynamic relationship between Yellowstone Lake’s physical and human setting.

The earliest evidence of human occupation of the lake comes from the archeological record: According to a recent study by Ann M. Johnson, the “oldest sites in the park” are found around Yellowstone Lake (2002, 87). Johnson’s study reveals that the earliest site found at Yellowstone Lake was over 9,000 years old (2002, 82). Her

Figure 22. Yellowstone Lake, 1891



study also found that early peoples used the lakeshore and islands of the lake on a seasonal basis from early spring through the fall. From the archeological evidence it appears that early inhabitants used the lake areas for “tool stone procurement, tool manufacture, and repair activities” (2002, 87). In addition, the author argues that Yellowstone Lake was an important site to visit and use because of its many plant, animal and stone resources (2002, 87).

Sanders (2002) also documents a long history of Native Americans at Yellowstone Lake. His work explores geomorphic factors affecting early land use around Yellowstone Lake. From archeological and geological evidence, Sanders reveals that changing lake levels, the availability of good camping locations, and paths of travel all affected the sites of human settlement. By combining all of these factors with the available archeological record of sites recovered at Yellowstone Lake, Sanders concludes that there were many areas of human land use at the lake that were concentrated along the shoreline in the Southeast Arm, the western shoreline of West Thumb Bay, and the northern shoreline of the lake particularly near the outlet of the Yellowstone River (2002, 218-228). Of particular interest for this study, Sanders also argues that “most of the Paleoindian sites...were reoccupied by later groups, suggesting that the characteristics that made these particular locales attractive for extractive activities and habitation during the Paleoindian period continued to be attractive in the later periods as well” (2002, 228).

Spence adds to the growing story of Native Americans in Yellowstone, both before and after it was designated a national park. His work is important for discussing not only the archaic use of the park by native peoples, but also the interactions between

native peoples and park managers during the early park years. Spence's research focuses on the uses of the land by Native Americans, disputes about park boundaries, accepted uses of the land inside the park, and the forced exodus of Native Americans from the park. Building on archeological and cultural studies, Spence finds that Yellowstone was "a landscape that had been shaped by thousands of years of human use and habitation" (1999, 43). That history of land use did not end with the establishment of Yellowstone National Park. Indeed, even though park promoters and managers were eager to sell Yellowstone as an experience bereft of an Indian presence, the reality of the early park years reveals a very different park landscape. Seasonal groups of Bannock, Shoshone, and Crow peoples traveled in and resided throughout the park (including Yellowstone Lake) throughout the 19th century (Nabokov and Loendorf 2002). Common uses of the land included hunting, camping, plant gathering, tool making, and spiritual quests. They also established a vast system of trails that provided some of the earliest routes through the park. Furthermore, the mosaic of vegetation in the park "provides the best documentation of native habitation and use of the Yellowstone area" by recording the use of fire to manage and shape the physical environment (Spence 1999, 43-44).

Much of the confrontation between Native Americans and park managers arose because early park personnel did not see Native American manipulation of the land as appropriate park activity. During the early park years, superintendents and other regulating personnel provide contradictory evidence of Native Americans in the park. Sometimes documenting shelters or other structures created by native inhabitants and other times prescribing that presence to the distant past, park superintendents were reshaping the spatial distribution of cultural landscape features at the lake by favoring

some uses of the land—such as the building of concessionaire lodging and roads—while discouraging alternative uses of the land—such as gathering native plants for subsistence or using fire to open hunting areas.

In the early park years, Euro-American tourists did not see many Native Americans; this lack of contact only supported park promotional strategies that emphasized an uninhabited wilderness. Spence suggests that

[d]espite a growing awareness that Indians probably outnumbered tourists during the first years of the new national park, officials expressed no opinions about native use of Yellowstone until the late 1870s....At a meeting with the Crow in August 1873...government treaty commissioners learned that the tribe still considered Yellowstone and the surrounding area as part of their homeland” (1999, 52).

Poor communication and differing visions of appropriate park activities only added to the fragile relations between Euro-Americans and Native Americans. Unwilling to acquiesce their traditional activities in the park, the “Tukudeka [Sheep Eaters] remained in Yellowstone on a more or less permanent basis until 1879, when they were induced to settle on reservations in present-day Idaho and Wyoming. Nevertheless, they spent a good part of subsequent years in their former homes” (Spence 1999, 53).

Although personnel and funding opportunities for development were scarce during the early park years, a framework for park infrastructure was established at Yellowstone Lake. Early park managers made numerous efforts to integrate Yellowstone Lake into the developing park scheme. Examples of this can be seen in how they scouted the lake environment for suitable development sites, appropriated funds to build a system of transportation routes around part of the lake, and continued to encourage concessionaire investment near the lake.

The United States Army also exerted great influence during this period. After several years of personnel shortages and vague guidelines for park use, the U.S. Army was assigned the formal regulation of the park in 1886 and stayed in the park until the establishment of the national park service in 1916. Concessionaire activity between 1871 and 1891 was fragmented and exploratory in terms of what would be feasible to build and maintain. The construction of the first permanent overnight accommodations at the lake was supported through heavy financial investment from the railroads. Tourists were transported around the park through joint ventures between the transportation companies. The U.S. Army scouted and built the roads and paths that the companies used to transport visitors around the lake.

The founding of Yellowstone National Park was revolutionary in terms of land use planning and landscape design. Although various tourist attractions were established throughout the country by the late nineteenth century (Sears 1989), none of them carried the moniker and identity of a national park. Once the Park was created, the regulations and vision for this new type of land use slowly adapted to changing conditions within the Park. One of the strongest guiding principles for this new national institution was that it was geared towards conserving and preserving the natural features of this area for the “benefit and enjoyment of the people” (U.S. Congress 1872b, reprinted in Dilsaver 1994, 28). Since early experiences and mapping efforts by Euro-American explorers and surveyors included Yellowstone Lake, it was a logical move to include the lake as one of the major attractions to visit in Yellowstone. The evidence for this lies in the early building of roads to the lake, the early establishment of a hotel there, and park service personnel being stationed there. Also, the lake area developed a unique form of

transportation in the park: the steamboat. Steamboat tours became a popular attraction at Yellowstone Lake. These half-day tours started as a shuttle (and respite) for stagecoach travelers weary from the dusty days in the confines of a coach from the West Thumb Area to the Lake Area. Gradually, these trips across the lake blossomed into a bustling business. The lake tours eventually expanded to include stops at nearby islands, tours of the southern perimeters of the lake, fishing trips, and boat and fishing equipment rentals.

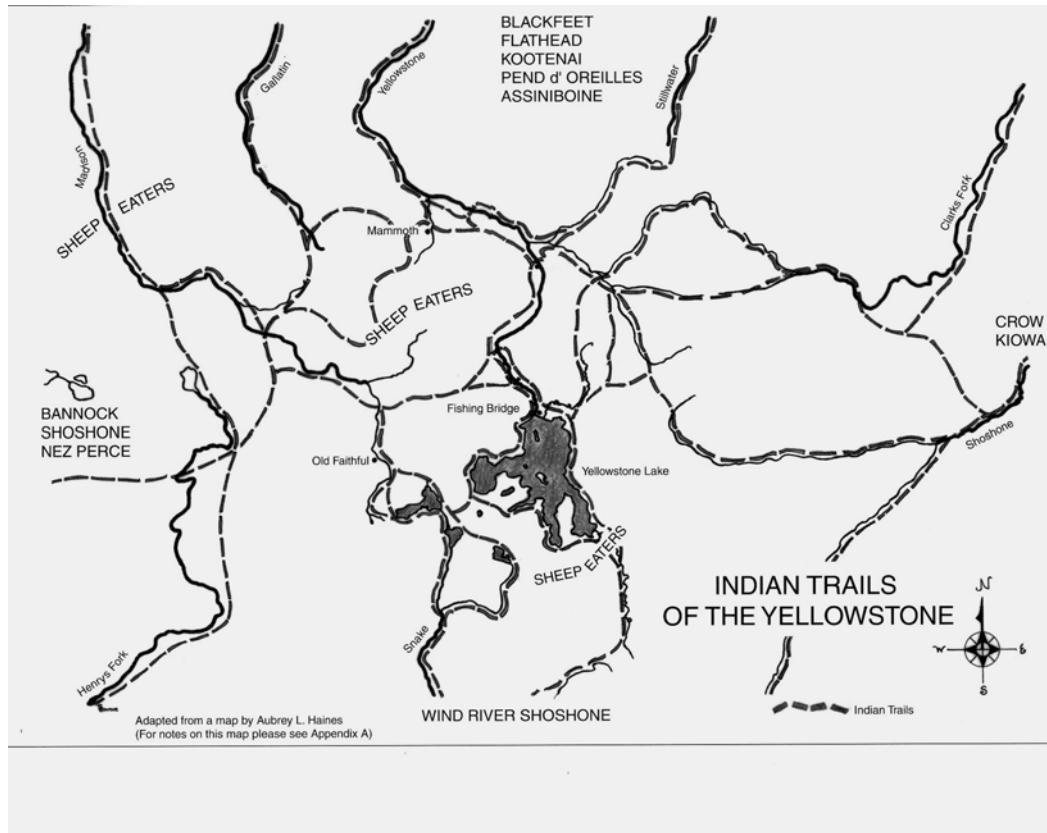
After Yellowstone National Park was established in 1872, the policing of the park was poorly coordinated and sparse. A superintendent was named and served (mostly in the summer) in the park, but without sufficient reinforcements and funds (the park received no funding for its first six years), this position was powerless and not very effective in regulating the park. After several years of this political strategy, the United States Army took over the position as the chief administrative force in the park. With little to no pay and few guidelines, the superintendents of Yellowstone National Park struggled to find a path for use and recreation in the park (Haines 1977; Byrand 1995; Smith 1999). From 1886 to 1916, the Army oversaw the establishment and regulation of park policies and early concessionaire activity. There were few park personnel assigned to regulating this region and most of their efforts were necessarily spent on enforcing park regulations. P.W. Norris, an early park superintendent, hinted at the challenges of regulating such a park of over 3,400 square miles from the perspective of a regulating official: “This wonderful region is really less one large park than a group of smaller ones, partially or wholly isolated, upon both sides of the Continental Divide” (Norris 1880, 27).

Even with considerable demands on their time and energy, early park superintendents were keen on developing the park to accommodate visitor travel. They

scouted for suitable building locations and road corridors. In locating these sites and routes, park regulators hoped to build a system that would allow visitors and park personnel to access the park attractions. Park managers did not always need to scout trails through unmarked territory; indeed, the routes of early visitors and explorers (see Figures 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) as well as Native American trails (Figure 23) established “a pattern of human use within Yellowstone” (Smith and Wyckoff 2001) that park managers could then use to build more established corridors of travel. Early travel paths included dirt roads for stagecoaches, bridle paths, foot paths, and steamboat routes across the lake. Finding a suitable course of travel across the lake and moorings for boats along the shoreline was no easy matter. Although the lake’s broad, open waters afforded a clear view of the lake, navigating through the strong winds and high waves was an obstacle to travel and safety. Certainly many explorers and visitors attempted to float the lake but the few documented early adventures on the lake usually ended in swamped boats, wet gear, a setback in the travel schedule, and the chance of injuries. Steamboats provided a reasonable alternative to these encounters and opened the lake, its islands, and vast shoreline to larger groups of travelers.

Early park infrastructure at Yellowstone Lake can be categorized into four major varieties: pre-park structures, transportation networks, government facilities, and concessionaire facilities. Once the park was established, government funding and concessionaire interests often jointly created park infrastructure. Once the infrastructure was constructed, however, one institution (either government or private) was charged with maintaining and managing the improvements.

Figure 23. Trail Networks around Yellowstone Lake
Native American trails coursed throughout the Yellowstone Plateau and around Yellowstone Lake. These trails offered seasonal routes of access to the lake and were later used by Euro-American explorers and early park transportation networks. [map printed in Nabokov and Loendorf 2002, 33.]



Transportation

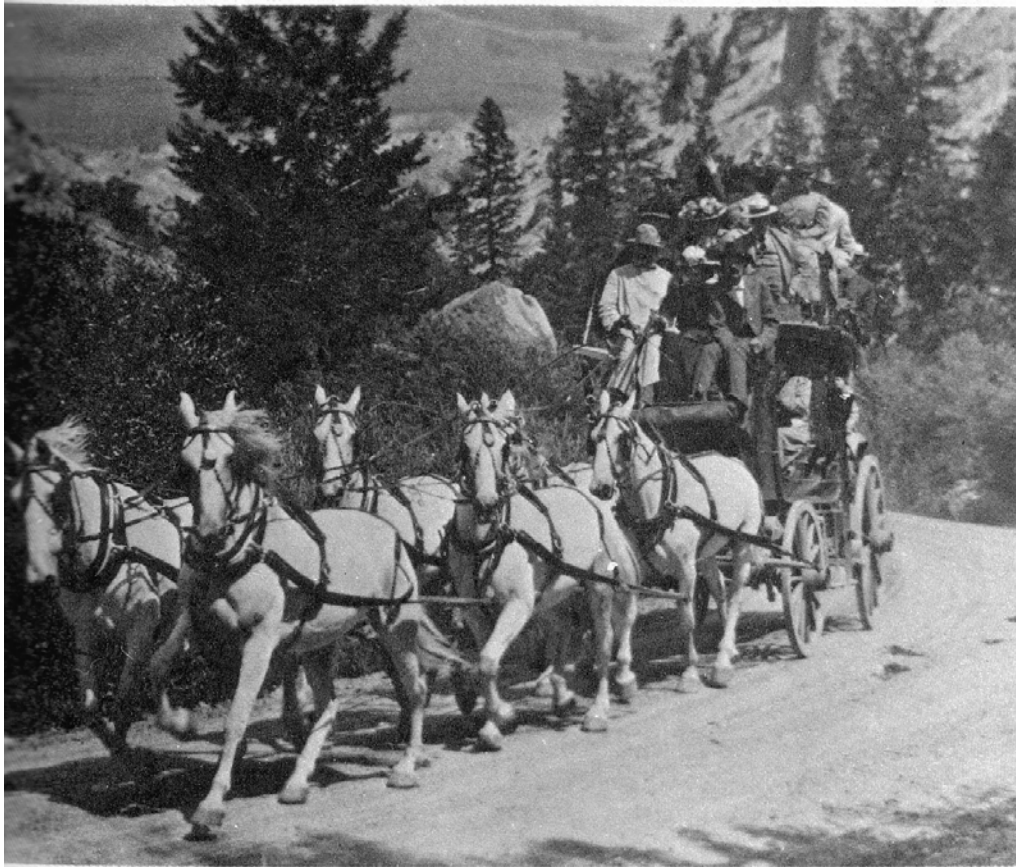
When Yellowstone National Park was established in 1872, the park did not have an established system of roads but it did have a well-used network of trails. These routes were blazed by Native Americans, explorers, prospectors, and trappers. Park managers needed to establish an initial transportation network that 1) brought visitors and park personnel to all the important features of the park and 2) was feasible given the park's varied topography.

For Yellowstone Lake, the obvious path of land travel was around the shoreline. However, the shoreline was often rocky, full of cliffs, and even dotted with spots of geothermal activity. What part of the shoreline should be included? The northern shore of the lake seemed reasonable given that it was closer to the Grand Canyon and Old Faithful area (in terms of establishing a circuit of routes to park attractions). What about the southern shores that were significant routes of travel for Native Americans and early explorers and travelers? When considering the possible layout of the road network, Superintendent Langford—the first park superintendent and member of the 1870 Yellowstone Expedition—suggested that “these roads, when completed, would enable the visitor to reach all the great points of interest by carriage....The opening of these roads would insure the early erection of large and commodious public houses at Mammoth Springs, Yellowstone Falls, Yellowstone Lake and the Upper and Lower Geyser Basins” (Langford 1873, 2-3).

After scouting possible travel routes, park managers began the task of building and maintaining roads. Clearing roadways began with designating bridle paths and walking trails. Gradually, these paths were widened and altered to accommodate stagecoaches. Building roads and trails was a collaborative endeavor even from the early park years. Under the direction of the U.S. Army and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the government took on the task of constructing many of the major road and trail arteries in the park and around the lake. The concessionaire investment in this project varies a great deal over time. For this early period, the government scouted and built most of the roads and trails to locations that the concessionaires then developed for guest services. From 1870 to 1891, travel around the park was by carriages, wagons, saddle and pack

animals (Norris 1879, 22) (Figure 24). By 1891, all of these forms of transportation were supported around the lake and were augmented by boat services across the lake.

Figure 24. Early Transportation in Yellowstone National Park
Early roads were few and far between at Yellowstone Lake, although a stagecoach road was completed to the northern shores of the lake by 1881. Park visitors were shuttled between the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River and Yellowstone Lake in a stagecoach similar to the one pictured here. [image printed in Haines 1977b, 145.]



Many park visitors were from distant locations (usually on the eastern seaboard of the United States). The process of moving these tourists through Yellowstone National Park usually included a train trip to nearby Montana, then a stagecoach ride through the park, and—in the case of Yellowstone Lake—an optional ride on a steamboat. The main railroads that serviced the park by 1881 included the Northern Pacific and Utah Northern

Railroads (Norris 1881, 68). By 1888, the Union Pacific joined the rank of railroads connecting their networks to roads in Yellowstone National Park (Harris 1888, 12).

The cost to travel to the park, however, was prohibitive to most Americans in the early years. Not only was the long and arduous train trip expensive but costs once in the park were also steep. As a captive audience, most visitors were forced to use the few available hotels and coach services offered in the park. Transportation rates by stagecoach in 1887 from Mammoth Hot Springs (the park headquarters and the main entrance to the park) to Yellowstone Lake were twelve dollars, from Norris to Yellowstone Lake were eight dollars, and from the Grand Canyon to Yellowstone Lake five dollars (Harris 1887, 26). Conditions were slightly different for local visitors to the park. Tourists from lands adjacent to Yellowstone entered the park on horseback and could travel more freely and independently around the park than those bound by stagecoach time tables. This “grassroots affair in the West” influenced many facets of early “park development and policy making” (Smith and Wyckoff 2001, 95).

Transportation infrastructure at Yellowstone Lake may be divided into several categories during this period of my study including foot trails, horse trails, stagecoach roads, bridges, and steamboat routes.

Trails

Early park trails included bridle paths for saddle and pack animals and foot trails (see Figure 22). Many of these trails took advantage of routes used by Native Americans and then traversed by Euro-American travelers (Figure 23 and Figures 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10). In 1878, Superintendent Norris suggested that a “trail is greatly needed from the Upper Fire-Hole Basin to those of Shoshone, Lewis, and Heart Lakes, and those upon the

fingers and eastern shore of the Yellowstone some 100 miles in length” (Norris 1878, 996). Eventually a trail was developed between the Upper Geyser Basin and Yellowstone Lake, but not by the route suggested by Norris. The first park maintained trail system around the lake was along the north shore of Yellowstone lake.

Eager to encourage travel to the “matchless mountain lake” (Norris 1881, 13), Norris pushed for more connected trail systems. In 1879, he describes the opening of a trail around the western shore of Yellowstone Lake for “26 miles to its outlet” (1879, 6-7). According to the superintendent in 1880, the trail around the lake at that time connected the major features of the lake: “hot springs at west thumb, cliffs on lake, bridge creek bay, [and] foot of Yellowstone Lake” (Norris 1880, 59). By 1881, the bridle path for horse traffic was extended from the Upper and Lower Falls of the Yellowstone River (Grand Canyon Area) south to the outlet of the Yellowstone River. The trail roughly followed the north and west shorelines of the Yellowstone Lake between the lake outlet and the West Thumb geothermal basin (Norris 1881). Yellowstone Lake roads were developed later than other park road systems. For much of this early period of lake development, trails were the main established paths available around the north shore of the lake.

Roads

Park roads were improved, widened, dirt pathways that followed many of the same routes used since early occupancy of Yellowstone by Native Americans. Although bridle paths were the dominant established travel conduits at the lake during the early park years, park managers supported developing roads to the area by scouting routes, encouraging government investment in the road building schemes, and suggesting sites of

development at points along the roads. In 1877, Norris discussed the need to build “a wagon-road” between Mammoth, Canyon, Tower, Mt. Washburn, Yellowstone Falls, Yellowstone Lake, and the “Fire-hole Basins” (1877, 843-44). This road, he suggested would “connect all the main points of interest within the park” (Norris 1877, 843-44).

By 1879, the park superintendent’s record reflects that park roads terminated at the Upper Geyser Basin but a new trail was in the works between “Shoshone and Yellowstone Lakes, Mud Lake, and the Lower Geyser Basin, to the junction, and 45 miles additional along our road to the Mammoth Hot Springs. Tourists may thus, in a coach trip of some 250 miles from the railroad, reach and make a circuit of the leading wonders of the park” (Norris 1879, 23). Although Yellowstone Lake was a park attraction noted even by the earliest park managers, trails and roads were slow to reach its waters. Two prime reasons for this lag in development are the distance between the lake and the main park entrance at Mammoth and the difficulty in clearing the forest and finding suitable routes across the uneven terrain to and around the lake. Norris’s 1879 report describes the difficulty of finding a route along the heavily timbered shores of the lake.

Even with these hurdles, establishing a circuit of roads around the park would be an important accomplishment for the fledgling park. According to Norris, building roads (and hotels) “assures immediate coach connection with civilization, convenience for tourists and ultimate self sustaining [*sic*] character of the park” (1879, 24). By 1881, the kind of road system supported by Norris was under way and it included Yellowstone Lake in its path. By the end of that season, a dirt road was built from the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River south to Yellowstone Lake (Norris 1881, 70). But Norris did

not want to settle for merely one connecting point to the lake. His vision for roads around Yellowstone Lake also included an eastern and western extension. In 1879, Norris found a good trail from the Yellowstone River outlet at Yellowstone Lake, up a nearby creek to the northeast, and then into the Absaroka Range: “This season’s explorations clearly show an excellent trail and fair-wagon route from the foot of Yellowstone Lake via the east fork of Pelican Creek to the Stinkwater Pass” (Norris 1879, 19). Other routes were also included in the park plans:

...across [the] continental divide to the west arm of the Yellowstone Lake; thence along the western shore of Yellowstone Lake to lake outlet; and along the Yellowstone to the Falls and Grand Cañon...Although this scheme does not embrace all the roads necessary or desirable in the Park, it will, when carried into effect, enable tourists to visit the principal objects of interest without discomfort, and without passing twice over the same road (Wear, 1886, 8-9).

The work of enlarging and clearing trails, then clearing a dirt road wide enough for a stagecoach to travel to Yellowstone Lake with connections to the Upper Geyser Basin began in 1891. By the closing of that year, a newly established road ran from “Fountain to the West Thumb of the lake,” over the pass from the Upper and Lower Geyser basins to Yellowstone Lake (Anderson 1891, 6). The trail system that ran from the Lake Area (near the outlet of the Yellowstone River) across the northern shore of the lake was enlarged and fortified for coach travel. According to Anderson, the “road from the cañon [sic] to the Thumb, via the Lake Hotel, is also under construction” (1891, 6). This systematic approach to park paths was repeated throughout the lake area. First trails were scouted, then the trails were cleared, and finally the roads were built along the same routes in a piecemeal fashion working within the framework of limited finances, short construction seasons, and few road crews.

Bridges

According to my research at the park archives, there were no formally constructed bridges at Yellowstone Lake during this period. The one exception was a natural arch located over Bridge Creek along the north shore of the lake (Figure 25 and see Figure 22). The “Natural Bridge” –as it came to be referred to in accounts and maps of the lake—was used as a convenient travel route over a small stream in the area. This geologic formation was an early park landmark and was frequently documented in photographs and sketches. Superintendent Norris led the effort to use the bridge as a more formal travel route. He erected a guard rail over this “one substantial natural bridge of stone over a permanent stream” to make a safer passage across the arch (Norris, 1880, 22-23).

By 1891, a bridge had not yet been built over the Yellowstone River close to Yellowstone Lake. Further downstream, there were bridges over this large river by 1891, but none of them afforded an easy passage for horses and coaches to cross the river near the lake. Park managers targeted safe and convenient travel for tourists as a prime goal of early development. The inconvenience and danger (during high water) of crossing the Yellowstone River at the lake outlet deterred all but a few harder visitors who were mounted on horseback and braved the ford across the Yellowstone River. Most visitor traffic at Yellowstone Lake did not cross to the eastern shore of the lake until a bridge could be constructed over the stream (Norris, 1881). Although the bridge was a natural stone arch across a stream, park managers made additions to the shape and construction of the bridge in order to use it for travel. Here we see humans shaping the landscape around them while the modest opportunities for development were intimately linked to

the physical landscape. Unable to afford the cost and maintenance of a bridge at this point on the lake, park managers blended pragmatic and aesthetic aspects of the lake landscape to produce a locality that was at once a tourist attraction and a route of travel.

Figure 25. The Natural Bridge

Although no formal bridges were constructed during the early period of the lake's history, this naturally occurring limestone arch was augmented by park managers and used for travel across a steam ravine. The additions of guard rails (center of picture) made passing over the bridge safer for horse and foot traffic while also offering an opening in the dense shoreline timber for vistas across the lake. [Courtesy Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



Boating Routes

Another aspect of the transportation geography of Yellowstone Lake is the early development of boating routes across the lake. Archeological evidence reveals that Native Americans utilized boats on the lake. Sites have been recovered and documented on six of the lake's seven islands (Johnson 2002, 82- 83). In addition to these forays to the islands, Native American travel on the lake could no doubt have included shorter trips.

The establishment of Yellowstone National Park affected all forms of transportation in the park including boats. The beginning of steamboat service across the lake offered some of the earliest consistent concessionaire activity on the lake's waters. The opportunity to travel by a steamboat on a body of water in the park was a unique experience that could only be found at Yellowstone Lake. There were no other lakes in the park that offered the connections to transportation networks (roads and trails) combined with the deep waters (to allow safe passage and docking of large boats) required for this form of travel. Although other park lakes could be and certainly were traveled on, Yellowstone Lake concessionaires shifted their development schemes from seasonal travel on simple wooden sailing boats to large, steam-powered vessels. Indeed, given the tempestuous nature of "this inland sea" (Haines 1974, 53), the safest route across the lake was in a large sturdy boat that could withstand large waves and steer a course through stiff winds.

Early Euro-American boating experiences on Yellowstone Lake, however, were far from the organized and scheduled ferry service of the steamboats. Exploration parties into the park area made many attempts at floating the lake, but usually without success

and certainly not for long distances. Superintendent Norris explored most of the “wave-lashed shores” of Yellowstone Lake on a small wooden vessel, and eventually circumnavigated the whole lake “after encountering many mishaps and dangers, being once beached and nearly frozen in” (Norris 1881, 11-12).

There were a few other small boats plying the waters of Yellowstone Lake during these years. The superintendent noted the cabin of Eugene Topping on the northern shores of Yellowstone Lake and Topping’s boating services. Most of Topping’s business came from tourists who traveled to the lake by horseback along park trails. He describes Topping’s boat as “a small sail-boat of green whipsawed timber built by Captain Toppin at his cabin, near the foot of Yellowstone Lake, in the summer of 1875, and which, after perilous service during a small portion of the seasons 1875 and 1876, was dismantled, abandoned, and finally lost” (Norris 1880, 37). Topping operated a joint business with Frank Williams and the two men succeeded in securing a permit to operate boats from the Department of the Interior (Whittlesey 1997, 77). Norris also reports a number of other boats that “buffeted the blue waters of this mystic lake” including *The Anna* (used by Hayden’s 1871 crew), *The Explorer* (used by Norris to explore the lake), and *The Topping* (Norris 1880, 36-37).

Given his personal experiences on the lake and his interests in developing visitor services at that location, it is little surprise that Superintendent Norris strongly supported a cooperative business between park hotel operators and a steamboat ferry service across the lake. His 1881 report mentions the windy and capricious nature of the lake and suggests:

On this account and because of narrow deep seas, rocky shores, and sparse anchorage, this lake, while one of the most beautiful and interesting is one of the most

dangerous for sailing craft. I am confident, however, that with even a small steamer, well built and managed, there would be little danger attending regular trips around the fingers, thumb, and palm of the lake, and for at least seven miles down the river....With a suitable steamer making regular excursions of, say, three hundred miles, it is safe to predict that a hotel on some one of the many charming terraces near the foot of the lake would ultimately prove a profitable investment in this region of wonders (Norris 1881, 12-13).

By 1891, Norris's vision of travel on Yellowstone Lake came to fruition. During that season, E. C. Waters was granted a concessionaire's permit to transport tourists by boat (Figure 26) to connect their trip with the stagecoach tours from the West Thumb Developed Area to the Lake Developed Area. Acting Superintendent Anderson described the new commercial steamboat ferry service:

Early in July an inspector came and gave the boat a license to carry 125 passengers. It is a smooth-running, seaworthy little vessel and will add much to the attractiveness of the lake as a resort. I hope to see it made a part of the park transportations, and used in ferrying tourists from the Lake Hotel to the West Thumb in their journey around the circuit (Anderson 1891, 7-8).

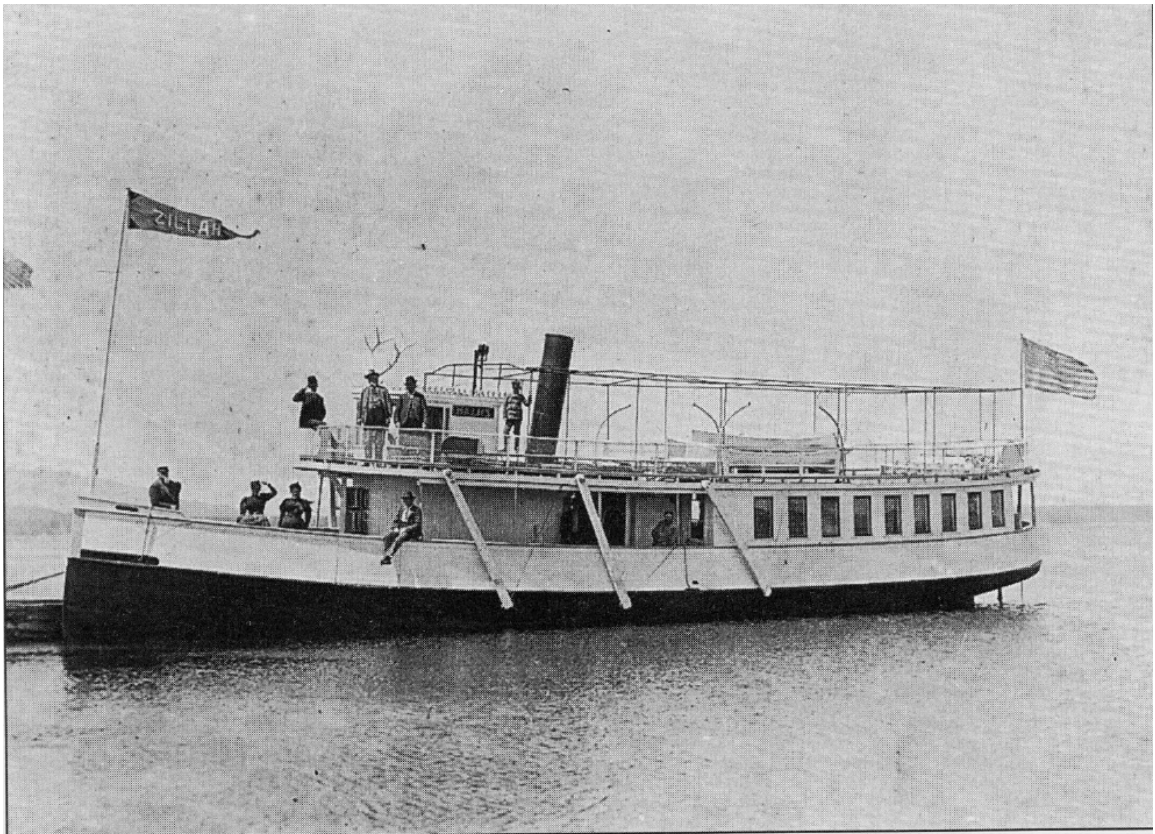
Simple wooden boat docks were established at the West Thumb Developed Area near the geothermal basins and in front of Lake Hotel at the Lake Developed Area to accommodate the steamboats.

Pre-Park Structures and Development Patterns in the Early Park Years

Prior to the creation of Yellowstone National Park, Native Americans and, later, Euro-Americans seasonally used Yellowstone Lake. Some of the oldest dated archeological sites in Yellowstone are found along the shores of Yellowstone Lake. An analysis of some of the sites has revealed an active Indian presence at Yellowstone Lake for 9,000 to 10,000 years (Johnson 2002 and Sanders 2002). Archeological evidence also supports the finding that early peoples seasonally camped and hunted along the west, north and southern shores as well as the islands (Sanders 2002, 218-228). The lake

provided many floral, faunal, and lithic resources which attracted Paleoindian use (Johnson 2002, 87). However, these sites were attractive to later occupation and use as well. Paul Sanders found that locations once used by early peoples were also frequented by later groups because of these sites offered good opportunities “for extractive activities and habitation” (2002, 228).

Figure 26. Steamboat Tours Come to Yellowstone Lake
Brought to Yellowstone Lake in pieces and later assembled there, *The Zillah* carried passengers across the lake from the West Thumb boat dock to the more extensive docks in front of the newly built Lake Hotel. By 1891, the steamship route offered visitors the opportunity to see the lake from a different perspective and a respite from the dusty long stagecoach ride around the north shore of the lake. [Courtesy Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



Throughout the 19th century—when Euro-American contact in the park increased—many Native American groups continued to frequent Yellowstone and take advantage of good camping and hunting areas. Some of the groups that traveled to Yellowstone included Bannock, Crow, Shoshone, Nez Perce, and Sheep Eater or Tukudeka. The journals and reports from Euro-American explorers include many entries that refer to encounters with Native Americans and signs of their presence in the area. My discussion of early cartography for Yellowstone Lake includes some of these references that I found in the diaries of trappers, prospectors, and explorers such as Nathaniel Langford, Gustavus Doane, Ferdinand V. Hayden and others. Accounts by Euro-American travelers relate finding trails, camps, horse corrals, and route markers as well as actually seeing Indians at Yellowstone Lake (Spence 1999, 42-43).

Native American movement and occupancy in Yellowstone did not cease with the creation of Yellowstone National Park. Mark David Spence argues that during the initial years of Yellowstone's park designation, Native Americans "outnumbered tourists" (1999, 52). Relations between native peoples and Euro-American travelers became increasingly antagonistic as these two groups competed for use of the same area throughout the 19th century.

The creation of Yellowstone National Park marked a shift in the power structure between Native Americans and Euro-Americans in the park area; the language of the Yellowstone Park Act did not encourage the continued use of the park by Native Americans even though it was part of their traditional hunting, gathering, and spiritual lands. According to the Yellowstone Park Act (U.S.C., title 16, section 21) "all persons who shall locate or settle upon or occupy the same, or any part thereof, except as

hereinafter provided, shall be considered trespassers and removed therefrom” (U.S. Congress 1872, reprinted in Dilsaver 1994, 28). The act (U.S. Congress, title 16, section 22) outlined the “preservation, from injury or spoliation” of the natural features of the park “in their natural condition” (U.S. Congress 1872, reprinted in Dilsaver 1994, 28). The law was interpreted by early park superintendents to mean that Native American (as well as Euro-American trapper, hunters, and prospector) uses of the park such as camping, fire managing, and hunting were not conducive to the park being in its “natural condition.” Park superintendents were charged with the mission of enforcing the act and forcing people not considered as “trespassers” to be “removed” from the park.

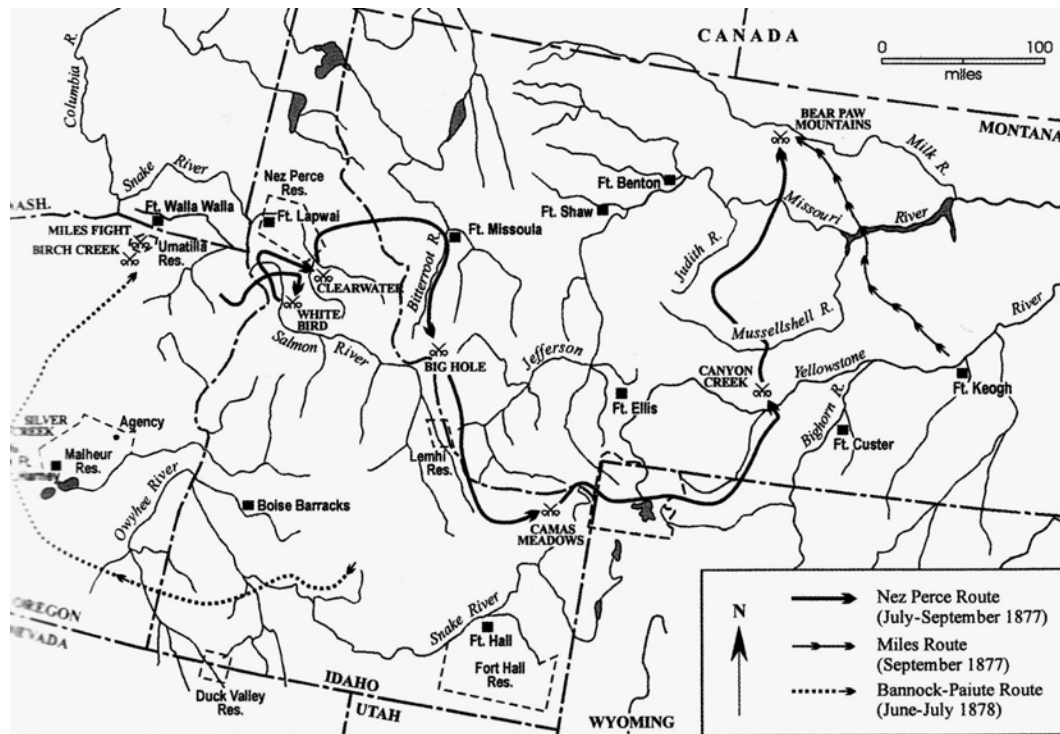
However, early park superintendents who lacked funding and were overwhelmed with managing a national park with such vast acreage, did not take many direct measures to remove Native Americans from Yellowstone during the early park years. That situation changed over time. By the late 1800’s a national system of Indian reservations was established and Native Americans found themselves in the precarious position of traveling between the two “islands” or isolated communities of the reservation system and the recently established and regulated national park in Yellowstone (Spence 1999). Nevertheless, native peoples still continued to travel in Yellowstone.

Hostilities between Native Americans and Euro-Americans in the park and throughout the West continued to escalate. One of the culminating events in these tense relations occurred in the summer of 1877. That summer, Nez Perce people fleeing the forces of the U.S. Army moved through Yellowstone National Park and along the northern shore of Yellowstone Lake (Figure 27). There had been several violent encounters in Yellowstone between Native Americans and Euro-Americans since the

park was established. These situations did not go unnoticed by park superintendents; according to Joel C. Janetski, park managers were concerned that Native Americans posed a “potential deterrent to tourist traffic in the Park” (2002, 65). By 1879, Sheep Eater groups were forced to settle on reservations in Idaho and Wyoming and other native groups were also strongly discouraged from entering the park. Park superintendents called on the efforts of reservation managers to keep Native Americans in the reservations, but these efforts often did not work (Spence 1999).

Figure 27. The Path of the Nez Perce in 1877

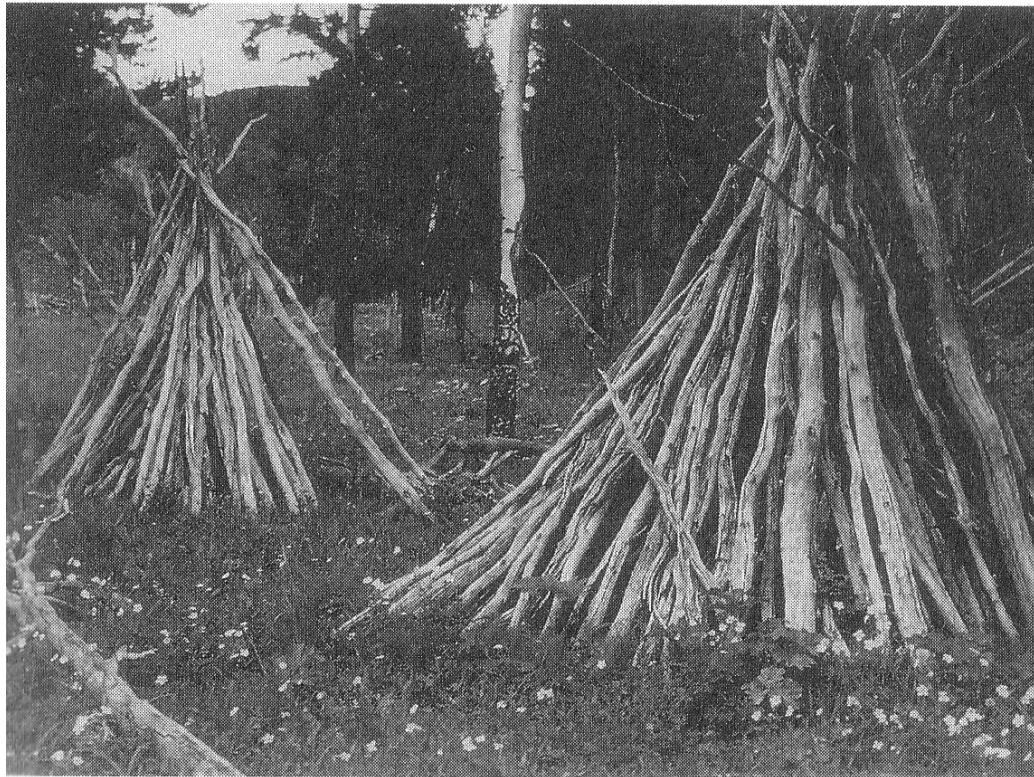
After the creation of Yellowstone National Park, Native Americans still continued to access the area. Tensions between Native American groups and Euro-American tourists in the park flared in 1877, when Nez Perce fled the U.S. army forces through Yellowstone National Park. Their route through the park included a path along the northern shore of Yellowstone Lake. [image printed in Nabokov and Loendorf 2002, 189.]



Several sources document Native American activity and settlement at Yellowstone Lake after the park was created. References in park superintendent reports document Native American groups seasonally living along the shores of Yellowstone Lake and erecting camps. References in the park records testify to the types and presence of structures built by these groups at the lake (Figure 28); Superintendent Norris mentions “skin-covered lodges or circular upright brush heaps called wickeups, decaying evidences of which are abundant near...the shores of Yellowstone Lake” (Norris 1880, 35).

Figure 28. Early Park Structures

Some of the earliest structures at Yellowstone Lake were Native American lodges. Wickiups such as this one were found along the lake’s northern and eastern shores. [image printed in Spence 1999, 69.]



Norris was an active explorer of the park and he devoted multiple pages of his annual reports to documenting Native American occupancy and use of the lake. In his 1881 report, he interviewed We-saw who said that "...his people (Shoshones), the Bannocks, and Crows occasionally visited the Yellowstone Lake...but very seldom the geyser regions" (Norris 1881, 38). It is difficult to assess how this statement was interpreted by Norris and how We-saw was questioned about Native American uses of the park. Recent literature and archeological records indicate that Native Americans have a long and varied history of travel and occupation in the park. In addition, many Native American sites have been recorded around thermal basins (including West Thumb Basin at Yellowstone Lake), dispelling the long perpetuated myth that these people avoided geothermally active areas of Yellowstone National Park (Nabokov and Loendorf 2002; Spence 1999). The superintendent's reports offer conflicting observations about Native American settlement in the park. In Norris's early reports, he devoted a great deal of effort and description to "decaying" and remnant evidences of early inhabitants in the park. But in his 1881 report, Norris noted that Sheepeater groups were permanent occupants, Bannock and Shoshone groups visited the area often, and "Mountain Crows," Blackfoot, and Sioux occasionally visited the park (1881, 45).

Guidebooks confirmed a Native presence at the lake. W. C. Riley's *Official guide to the Yellowstone National Park* (edition of 1887) includes a small map insert depicting the park and a multi-page description of Yellowstone Lake (see Figure 20). Along the north shore of Yellowstone Lake near the outlet of the Yellowstone River, Riley's map depicts a cluster of triangular structures which are labeled "Indian Camp" (Riley 1887, map insert). The author does not provide any reference to this point on the map in his

description of Yellowstone Lake in a section of the book called the “Grand Tour of the Park.”

The early years of the park experience showed other signs that this was not an uninhabited wilderness. Along with Native American groups, many Euro-American prospectors and fur trappers resided at various times in the park. The transition period of the park from its unregulated stages included removing “a number of disreputable characters from the Park” and then demolishing their homes (Wear 1886, 6). It is unclear from this report who the “disreputable characters” were or what kinds of structures were destroyed. A slightly more detailed description of the structures removed during the early park years comes from the annual report of Superintendent Moses who mentions abandoned cabins and shacks and “debris of a hundred camps,” although his report does not include exact locations of these camps (Moses 1887, 15).

Government Structures

Just after Yellowstone National Park was created, the park headquarters were built at Mammoth Hot Springs in the northern part of the park. Because of the distance between the park headquarters and the lack of permanent structures at the lake for much of this early period, Yellowstone Lake was managed from afar. However, park personnel made frequent trips to the lake during the summer time. Indeed, Superintendent Norris was an early and eager advocate of establishing a network of roads throughout the park that would provide a tour of its major attractions. He personally spent a great deal of his tenure as park superintendent exploring and scouting the park for potential roadways.

Norris's forays into the park included many visits to Yellowstone Lake by foot, horse, and boat. In what would become a common plight for the later National Park Service, park superintendents continually wrestled with basic funding issues from the federal government. Norris, as well as succeeding superintendents, noted the difficulty of policing and developing the park with "slender appropriations," short access seasons between the long park winters, and the area's varied terrain (Norris 1881, 74). In fact, many of Norris's summer jaunts through the park were spent scouting the ridges and timbered shorelines of Yellowstone Lake seeking a reasonable route of travel. He developed a natural arch near the lake, known as "Natural Bridge" for foot and horse traffic (see Figure 25).

In the early days of park development, superintendents pushed to build roads and hotels to accommodate tourist travel in Yellowstone National Park. At Yellowstone Lake, Norris encouraged a combination of hotel and steamboat service as the best option for development at the lake. In his 1878 annual report, Norris notes that "with another season's improvement and construction of roads and bridle-paths, [and] the promised routes of access...I have all confidences of being able to effect leases to responsible parties for the construction of much-needed hotels, and also for a yacht or small steamer upon the mystic Yellowstone Lake" (Norris 1878, 987). The government was eager to develop the lake and the park as a tourist attraction and pushed to build the facilities to support that business. Norris's proposed location for lake facilities was near the outlet of the Yellowstone River from Yellowstone Lake—close to the present Lake Area development. He describes "several charming sites for a hotel and yacht or steamboat landing near the foot of Yellowstone Lake" (Norris 1878, 986).

Soldiers and park superintendents scouted the park to regulate activities and to look for suitable development sites. A soldier station (Figure 29) for patrolling U.S. Army scouts was built on the northern shore of Yellowstone Lake on the west side of the Yellowstone River outlet. Built in 1884, this simple log cabin structure was “located where today’s Lake Lodge road crosses Lodge Creek” (Whittlesey 1997, 152). This structure, along with other U.S. Army patrol cabins and structures was later used by the National Park Service as an early ranger station at Yellowstone Lake.

Figure 29. Lake Soldier Station

The U.S. Army Lake soldier station (seen here in 1905) served as an outpost for early park personnel when traveling to the lake. It was located along the north shore of Yellowstone Lake near the current site of the Lake Area Developed Area and was later appropriated by the National Park Service as an early ranger station at Yellowstone Lake. [image printed in Whittlesey 1997, 152.]



Concessionaire Structures

Concessionaire activity at Yellowstone Lake was slow to develop compared to other sites in the park (see Haines 1977; Whittlesey 1997; Byrand 1995). This is probably because of the slow construction of roads and trails connecting the lake to the park entrance and to other major park attractions—such as the Upper Geyser Basin and the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. Many of the sites favored and considered for development were the locations of camps used by Native Americans, park personnel, early survey parties, and other Yellowstone travelers. Norris describes one of his preferred camping locations on the north shore of the lake near the Yellowstone River outlet and reflects this pattern of use by many traveling parties around the lake in his annual report:

My favorite camp on the Yellowstone Lake (and it has evidently been a favorite one for the Indian) has ever been upon the grove-dotted bluff, elevated thirty or forty feet above the lake, directly fronting Indian Pond....This cove, so landlocked as to be safe except during southern gales, and the bluffs at its head will doubtless remain a chosen haunt for the scientist and tourist long after the now abundant evidence of its frequent occupancy by the Sheep-eater aborigines shall have vanished (Norris 1881, 17).

One of the earliest structures built along the lake and used as an established area for visitor services, was a log cabin built by Eugene S. Topping. Norris describes Topping's cabin built at "the foot of Yellowstone Lake" (1880, 37) which, more precisely was located at "the first bulge in the shoreline of Yellowstone Lake above the outlet, on the west side" (Haines 1996, 151). Historian Aubrey Haines explains that the point on the lake "was named for Eugene S. Topping, whose residence there was noted...on August 1, 1875: 'One Commodore Topping has established himself on the banks of the Yellowstone In a log hut and has a fine boat for the use of tourists' " (Haines 1996, 151).

A system of concessionaire leasing of national park land was soon developed to regulate this facet of park enterprise. Once the sites of potential development were scouted, the next step towards establishing a cultural landscape at the lake included integrating the efforts (and financial investment) of private companies. One of the first concessionaires in the park offering accommodations to tourists was the Yellowstone Park Association. Superintendent Harris recorded “six leases of ground” that were purchased in Yellowstone National Park including one acre at Yellowstone Lake and one acre along the shores of the West Thumb Bay. This business enterprise followed Superintendent Norris’s plan to establish overnight accommodations and a steamboat service at the lake. The leases “granted permission to the Yellowstone Park Association to place a naphtha launch on the Yellowstone Lake, the said launch to conform to certain standards” (Harris 1889, 131). Modest wooden boat docks were built in front of the Lake Hotel at the Lake Developed Area and at the West Thumb Developed Area near Winter Spring, one of the geothermal features along the shoreline of the thermal basin. The dock at the Lake Developed Area was a larger structure than that at the West Thumb Developed Area; the docking site in front of the Lake Hotel expanded throughout this period to include row boat rentals and docking sites for those smaller boats as well at the steamboat.

Once the foundation was laid to accommodate concessionaire activity at Yellowstone Lake, construction soon started for overnight accommodations. By 1889, Superintendent Boutelle noted that “a good hotel is in course of erection at the Yellowstone Lake” (1890, 10). Construction of the Lake Hotel (Figure 30) took place between 1889 and 1891 and was funded by the Northern Pacific Railroad. Opening in

1891 with 80 rooms available, this lakeside lodging was simple in form and structure but park managers were eager to lure tourists to its doors (Haines 1977b, 127).

Superintendent Anderson describes the hotel:

The Lake House has one wing completed, and this is all that will be needed until the tide of travel sets more in that direction. It is one of the pleasantest, best kept hotels in the Park, and deserves better patronage than it has yet received. I regard it as the most desirable place in the park for a prolonged stay (1891, 6-7).

Figure 30. An Early Hotel at Yellowstone Lake

Before the additions of ionic columns, multiple wings, and a grand porch, the first lake hotel was a more simplified affair. This structure was located at approximately the same site as the current hotel. Later additions and renovations would transform this structure to its successor—The Lake Colonial Hotel. The lake hotel is the oldest standing hotel in the park today with construction beginning in 1889 and finishing in 1891. [Courtesy Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



Conclusion

A view of Yellowstone Lake 1891 (see Figure 22) reveals a dynamic cultural landscape shaped by Native Americans, park superintendents, concessionaire investment, and budding transportation networks. In turn, the lake was not an “inert medium” (Colten and Dilsaver 1992, 1) upon which park developers shaped their schemes. Park developers’ decisions about travel routes and structure sites were influenced by previous human uses of the land, the size and extent of the lake, the lake’s varied topography along the shoreline, and the short summer season for access to the lake. This period ends with two main areas of development being developed at the lake: the Lake Developed Area (Figure 31) and the West Thumb Developed Area (Figure 32). With limited funding and few personnel to manage these areas, park superintendents oversaw the building of road and trails connecting Yellowstone Lake to the other major attractions in the park by a loop road. Although many trails existed around the lake from Native American use and Euro-American appropriation of those areas, park superintendents focused their efforts on building and maintaining horse and foot trails along the northern shore between the West Thumb Area the Lake Area. Steamboat service offered an alternative route of transportation across the lake that generally paralleled the route of the trail along the northern shore.

Along these lines of connectivity, several structures were built to accommodate early visitors and promote accepted standards of activity in the park. Although the lake had a long history of Native American use and settlement, park managers discouraged their claims to this territory. Superintendents nevertheless scouted these same areas as good sites for development and entreated concessionaire investment to build a hotel and

Figure 31. Lake Developed Area, 1891

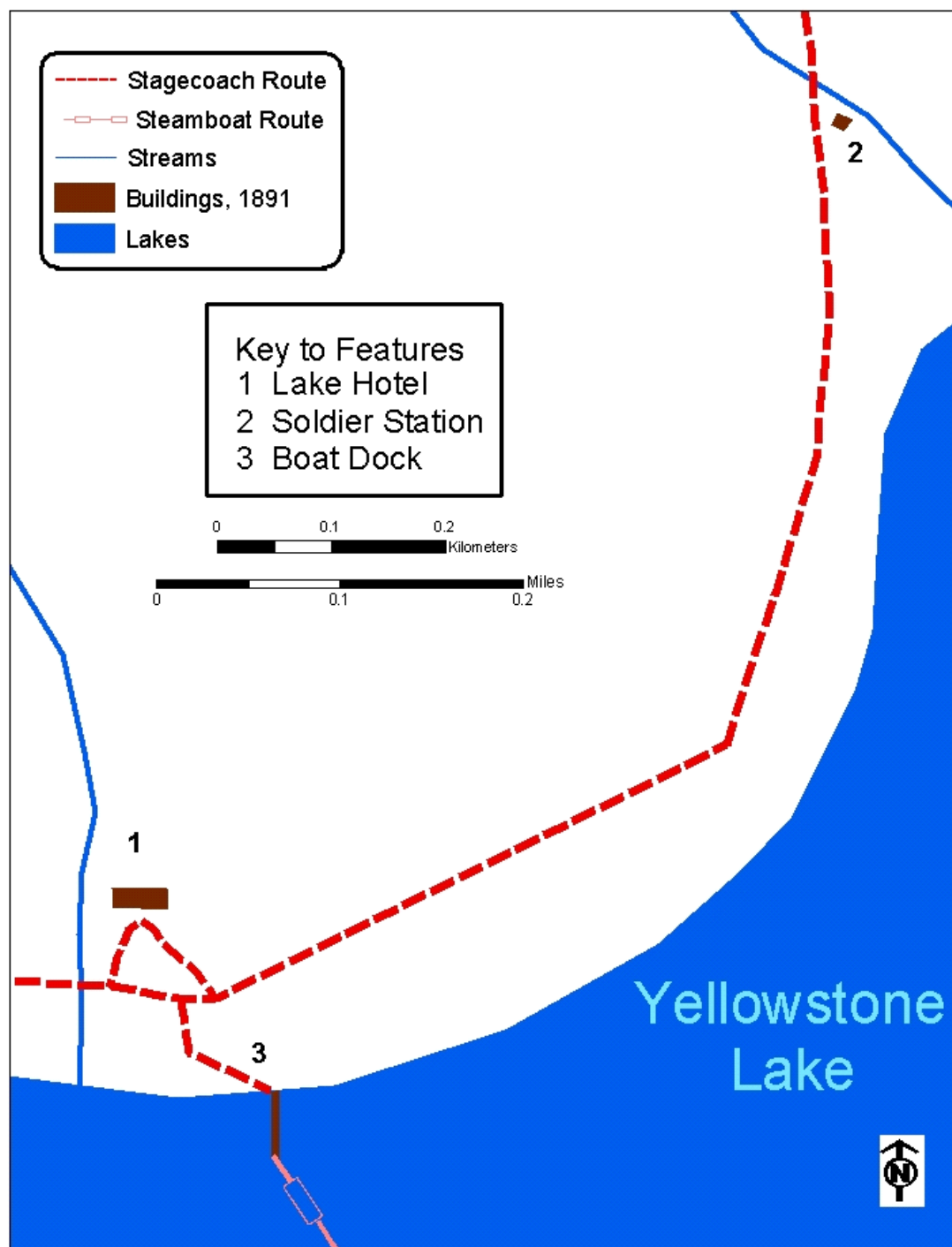
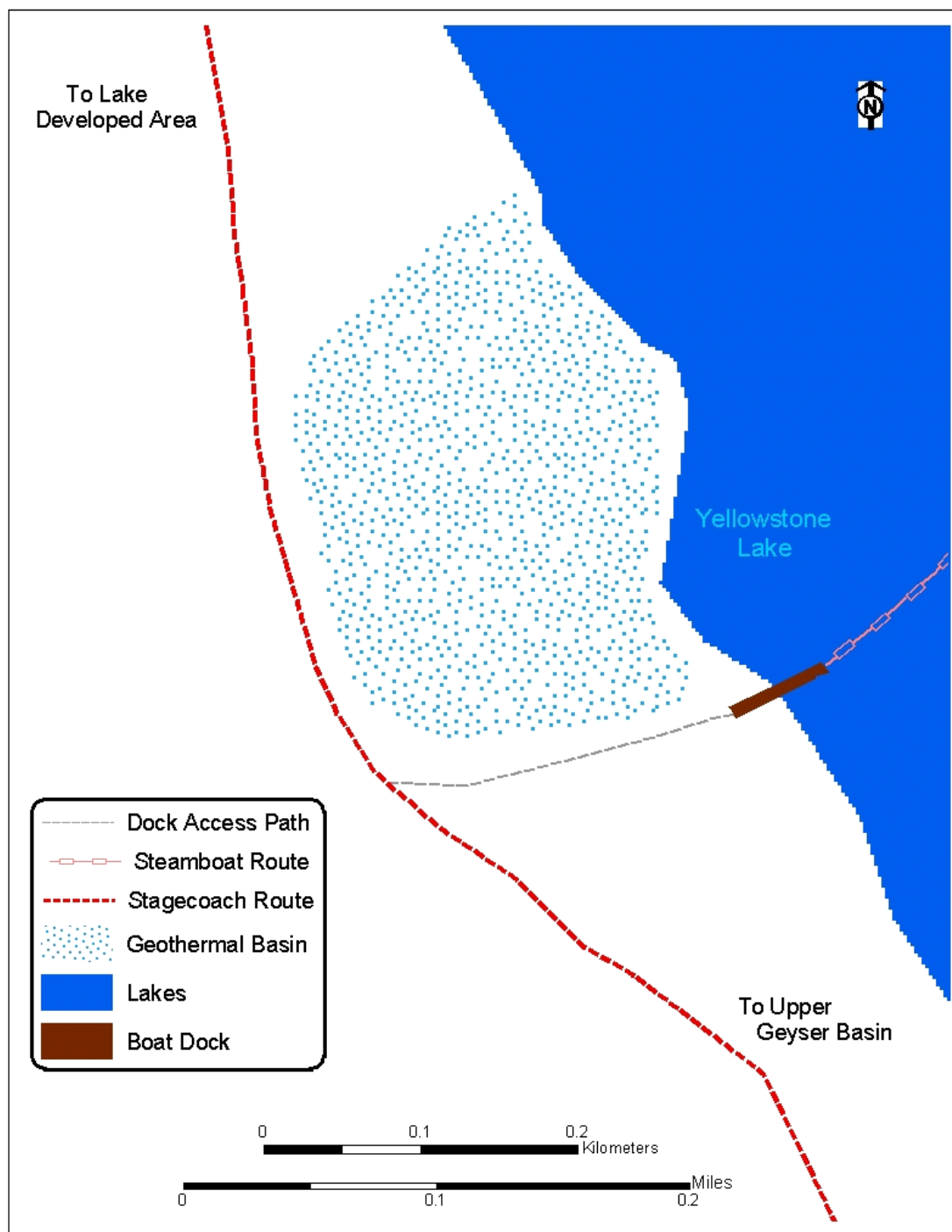


Figure 32. West Thumb Developed Area, 1891



boat docks at Yellowstone Lake. With the addition of the U.S. Army's soldier station (later Lake Ranger Station) in 1884, the Lake Area (north shore) emerged from this period with a higher concentration of structures than other areas on the lake. The establishment of Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape happened gradually and was a scene of contested visions of land use between Native Americans, park superintendents, and early tourists. However, once park roads and trails formally linked Yellowstone Lake to other park attractions and park entrances, this area quickly became a site of increasing park management and investment.

PERIOD TWO: 1892-1932

Coming Ashore: Yellowstone Lake's Evolving Shoreline

This spacious and elegantly appointed hotel tends greatly toward making the Yellowstone Lake the resort, par excellence, of the Park. Here everything is so arranged that guests can spend the entire season, if they so desire, making short, easy trips of sightseeing or explorations to all points of the great reserve....To visit any or all of the points circumjacent to this grand mountain lake, vehicles of all kinds, saddle and pack animals, guides, rowboats, and steamers are ever at command...(A. B. Guptill 1897).

Between 1892 and 1932, several national and international events had a significant effect on Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape development: the entrance of automobiles into Yellowstone National Park, the creation of the National Park Service, World War I, and The Great Depression. The outbreak of World War I dramatically decreased visitor numbers in the park and at Yellowstone Lake. By the close of this period, Yellowstone Lake's landscape experienced unprecedented changes including an expansion of the number and extent of concessionaire facilities and the completion of a road network linking Yellowstone Lake with other park areas.

The arrival of the first automobile in Yellowstone in 1915 increased the number of people who came to the park, the way that they moved around the park, and the timing and spatial organization of park development. According to historian Aubrey Haines: "The changes from dusty, one-lane stagecoach roads to paved, two-lane highways testifies to the magnitude of the overall change wrought by the automobile and to its importance for the Park. Corollaries of that change were the facilities developed to serve the automobilist who used the better roads" (1977b, 357). Visitor numbers to the park

dramatically increased once auto travel became economically and technologically feasible for more Americans. In 1914, a year before the first automobile officially entered the park, 20,250 people visited the park, a tally that more than doubled to 51,895 the following year (Haines 1977b, 479). The transition from stagecoaches to automobile tours was an expensive and complicated process; the federal government spent thousands of dollars and many human hours converting trails and stagecoach roads for automobile travel and concessionaires were forced to sell the horses, equipment, and stagecoaches used for park tours to buy automobile fleets to serve park visitors. The annual park superintendent's report for 1917 noted this historic transition: "The stagecoach of the Yellowstone passed into history; a new era for the park dawned with the opening of the 1917 season" (U.S. Department of the Interior 1917, 7).

The 1916 creation of the National Park Service also transformed the cultural landscape of Yellowstone National Park by forcing concessionaire consolidations and by regulating the construction of all buildings constructed in the park. With the creation of the National Park Service in 1916, the U.S. Army was relieved of its administrative duties in Yellowstone National Park. With this shift came a major reorganization of the concessionaire structure in the park. A driving force behind this reorganization was the first director of the National Park Service, Stephen Mather. Mather's vision for park concessionaire operations included limiting the number of businesses allowed to operate in the park and attempting to shelter the concessionaries from competition. The National Park Service also initiated a landscape engineering division that oversaw and approved all new building plans in the park; through this department, the government exercised

control over the appearance and design of both concessionaire and government buildings in Yellowstone.

Another goal for the National Park Service under Stephen Mather's direction was increasing the number of visitors to the parks. The first director wanted to "persuade Americans to visit the national parks" by providing as many opportunities as possible for the greatest number of people to enter the parks (Bartlett 1985, 87). In the process, Mather hoped to expand national awareness and support for the national parks. An ideal vehicle for increasing the speed and number of people who could visit the parks was the automobile. Mather encouraged auto travel to Yellowstone. Park Superintendent Albright agreed with Mather's ideas of park promotion and he "enthusiastically encouraged auto tourists into Yellowstone" (Bartlett 1985, 87) while also actively pursuing park development schemes that would provide more services for auto tourists; under Albright's direction, for example, many auto campgrounds were developed around the park including several locations at Yellowstone Lake. The National Park Service also effectively marketed national parks in conjunction with the See America First movement. The See America First campaign urged Americans to explore their homeland scenic areas instead of the attractions offered by a European vacation. While travel abroad was limited by the events surrounding World War I, the See America First movement also sought to express "a sense of western identity and nationalism" by promoting national parks as spectacular sites of national pride and as distinct western landscapes (Schaffer 2001, 37).

Before 1916, there were a number of concessionaires in the park and many of them had operations at Yellowstone Lake. Reorganizing park concessionaires and

shifting park transportation over to accommodate automobiles were jointly executed.

Park historian Aubrey Haines notes that the reorganization of the park concessionaires in 1916 and motorizing park transportation were “far-reaching and unsettling to park business” (Haines 1977b, 274). He cites the financial burden of this change during the turbulent years of World War I. But, he also says that once these troubles were overcome “the Park was set upon that course of democratization which would make it truly *for the benefit and enjoyment of the people*” (Haines 1977b, 274).

The concessionaire consolidation mandated by the National Park Service affected the administrative structure of all park businesses, but concessionaires operating overnight camping businesses experienced some of the most dramatic changes in terms of their administrative structure and spatial organization on the landscape. Park historian Paul Schullery argues that the concessionaire consolidation process had an ultimately beneficial affect on the park’s physical environment. Schullery finds that by consolidating park concessionaires, the National Park Service was fusing multiple businesses that often situated their operations over large spaces and without much thought to environmental impact.

An example of Schullery’s observation may be seen by taking a closer look at the tent camps run throughout the park and at several locations at Yellowstone Lake. These camps were comprised of tents for overnight guest accommodations, dining tents, barns and stables to house the horses used for transportation, and various support and service structures. The reorganization initiated in 1916 changed that scheme: “The removal of the many permanent camps run by Wylie or Shaw and Powell, with their hundreds of tent-cabins and support facilities, is a remarkable gain in ground; at most of these sites

only archaeologists and a few knowledgeable locals even notice evidence of what once were big, active villages” (Schullery 1997, 181). Schullery argues that the consolidation of the park concessions by the National Park Service in 1916 was of “immediate advantage to the landscape” that resulted in the “eventual elimination of a lot of small ground-disturbing sites and a surprising number of larger ones”. According to the author this movement for “monopolistic concessions” decreased the spatial extent of the operations and brought more regulation to their activities (Schullery 1997, 182). At Yellowstone Lake, tent camps at the West Thumb Developed Area and Lake Developed Area were removed or relocated and gradually replaced by National Park Service automobile campgrounds at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area and West Thumb Developed Area.

The changes in the park organization were far reaching. As an introduction to a 1917 park superintendent’s report, the author notes the reorganization of the park under the new National Park Service system:

This year has been epoch making in Yellowstone National Park history. The entire concession system has been reorganized; large 10-passenger automobiles, especially adapted to the requirements of tourist travel have superseded the ancient stagecoaches; the regular park tour has been extended to included...regions of splendid scenic quality; and the development of the park as a great summer resort, instead of a region to be glimpsed in four or five days of hasty travel, has been initiated. All of these projects have been revolutionary in their scope, and it is worthy of note that they were largely advanced and made effective during the tourist season without inconveniencing the public or interfering with its pleasure in any manner (U.S. Department of the Interior 1917, 1).

It is important to understanding the cultural landscape evolution of Yellowstone Lake to investigate the plurality of businesses at the lake. Although a business was often billed as providing one type of service, it by no means confined them to only building and supporting that type of service. For example, the tent companies provided guests

with overnight accommodations as well as food service and transportation around the park. Often the companies worked under cooperative business agreements. Such was the case between the transportation companies and the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company. The boat company did not transport tourists to the lake, but once there, these visitors were encouraged to take the steam ferry across the lake and opt out of a dusty stagecoach ride. Another example of this cooperative agreement is evident in Hamilton Store operations. This park purveyor of souvenirs and groceries had a joint agreement to run boats and tours with the Yellowstone Park Boat Company.

Park businesses also elude easy differentiation in their building types. The bread and butter of Yellowstone Lake Boat Company's business was selling boat rides and renting boats. However, the company expanded to include a grocery and souvenir store, tackle store, employee housing, and game corral. The early years of this period involves many concessionaires actually building homes near their business. These houses were gradually replaced by group housing such as dormitories or placed above other structures such as a second floor of a store. It should be noted that the National Park Service also had to find a solution to the problem of housing employees near their work. It was unreasonable to ask employees to commute from areas outside of the park, yet housing was not readily available in the park. Concessionaires and government agencies had to build facilities to house their employees. This period sees the U.S. Army and then the park service using soldier stations and ranger cabins to seasonally house employees. Concessionaire solutions to housing issues were more varied. The collage of uses and building types is complex and evolves throughout this period. This may be attributed to the evolving nature of Yellowstone as park managers and concessionaires continually

revised their understanding of what a park landscape should look like and how it should be managed.

The park concessionaires operating at Yellowstone Lake also focused their attentions unevenly in terms of development around the lake. Although the boat company occasionally used the islands as visitor service areas, generally this period sees the evolution of shoreline cultural landscape developments. Most services at the lake were located on the beaches, near the cliffs, or in close proximity to the northern and western shorelines of Yellowstone Lake. As park roads extended from the Lake Developed Area west around the shore to the West Thumb Developed Area, services were situated along this course. Once a sturdy bridge capable of carrying stagecoaches was built across the Yellowstone River near the lake outlet and the east entrance road to Cody, Wyoming was completed, services spread towards the eastern margins of the lake. Following the course of the road, overnight accommodations, dining facilities, and service stations were developed to serve tourists traveling the lake's roadways. In addition, trails were improved along the eastern perimeter of the lake. Trails also were developed to and around scenic areas of interest such as the Natural Bridge, the West Thumb Thermal Basin, and to lookout spots on nearby hills above.

Even after the massive reorganization under the National Park Service, various private interest groups vied for access and use of Yellowstone's resources. At Yellowstone Lake, this struggle is seen in battles over irrigation involving Yellowstone River and Yellowstone Lake. Montana agricultural interests proposed to dam and divert the waters of the Yellowstone River in order to augment their water supply. The proposal spurred a series of debates that ranged across the nation and attracted the attention of

political park allies. While discussing the proposed plan to move water from Yellowstone Lake for irrigation through a tunnel over the continental divide, Superintendent Albright remarks: “I am not advised as to the use that will be made of this water, but I know that these lakes and basins can not be used as storage reservoirs without seriously injuring the scenic beauty of Yellowstone Park and greatly impairing, for generations to come, its usefulness as a national playground” (Albright 1919, 44). For Albright, the irrigation proposals posed a serious threat to his vision of appropriate park development. He continues: “Furthermore, this commercialization of its waters would constitute a precedent for encroachment of other interests that have been held away from the park since early days. Once the park is opened to exploitation of its natural resources, anything may afterwards happen to it” (Albright 1919, 44).

Another proposed development for the park that would have affected Yellowstone Lake involved a railroad route through the park. Acting Superintendent Anderson said that the “line of this road would of necessity pass near the Yellowstone Lake. The great amount of moisture furnished by the lake and its numerous tributaries give a mantle of snow that will average 15 feet in depth, and with the strong winds prevailing in this mountainous country no railroad could be kept running during the six months of winter without being entirely inclosed in snow sheds, which would prove destructive to the natural beauty of the Park” (Anderson 1894, 5). Although these schemes did not come to fruition in the park nor at Yellowstone Lake, they serve as examples of discussions taking place in the late 19th century over the appropriate uses and forms of development in a national park landscape.

Another event of great consequence during this period was the outbreak of international hostilities during World War I. Although the efforts of the See America First campaign were in full swing, visitor numbers in the park declined during the war years and many facilities at Yellowstone Lake were closed. This trend reversed after the war. A look at visitation statistics for Yellowstone illustrates this trend (see Appendix). In 1918, 21,275 people visited the park but after the war in 1919, visitor numbers soared to 62,261 people (Haines 1977b, 479).

More than a decade later, the Great Depression also dramatically affected park visitation. For Yellowstone National Park, it was difficult to secure personnel and resources to support the park. Once again, park visitation statistics for this period reveal decreasing park use (see Appendix). In 1929, 260,697 people entered the park for the summer season. Visitor numbers continued to decrease until they hit a low point in 1932 with only 157,624 total tourists traveling into Yellowstone (Haines 1977b, 479).

After assessing the cultural landscape changes at Yellowstone Lake with a keen eye on these four events—the entrance of automobiles to the park, the creation of the National Park Service, World War I, and the Great Depression—this chapter ends at an economic recession for the park and the nation in the midst of the Great Depression. This chapter traces tremendous changes in the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake. The chapter is divided into three discussion sections: transportation, government facilities, and concessionaire developed areas. Each of these sections is further subdivided into units describing themes of development. The transportation at the lake during this period includes horse trails, dirt wagon roads later developed into dirt auto roads, bridges, and boating routes. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers oversaw the construction of park

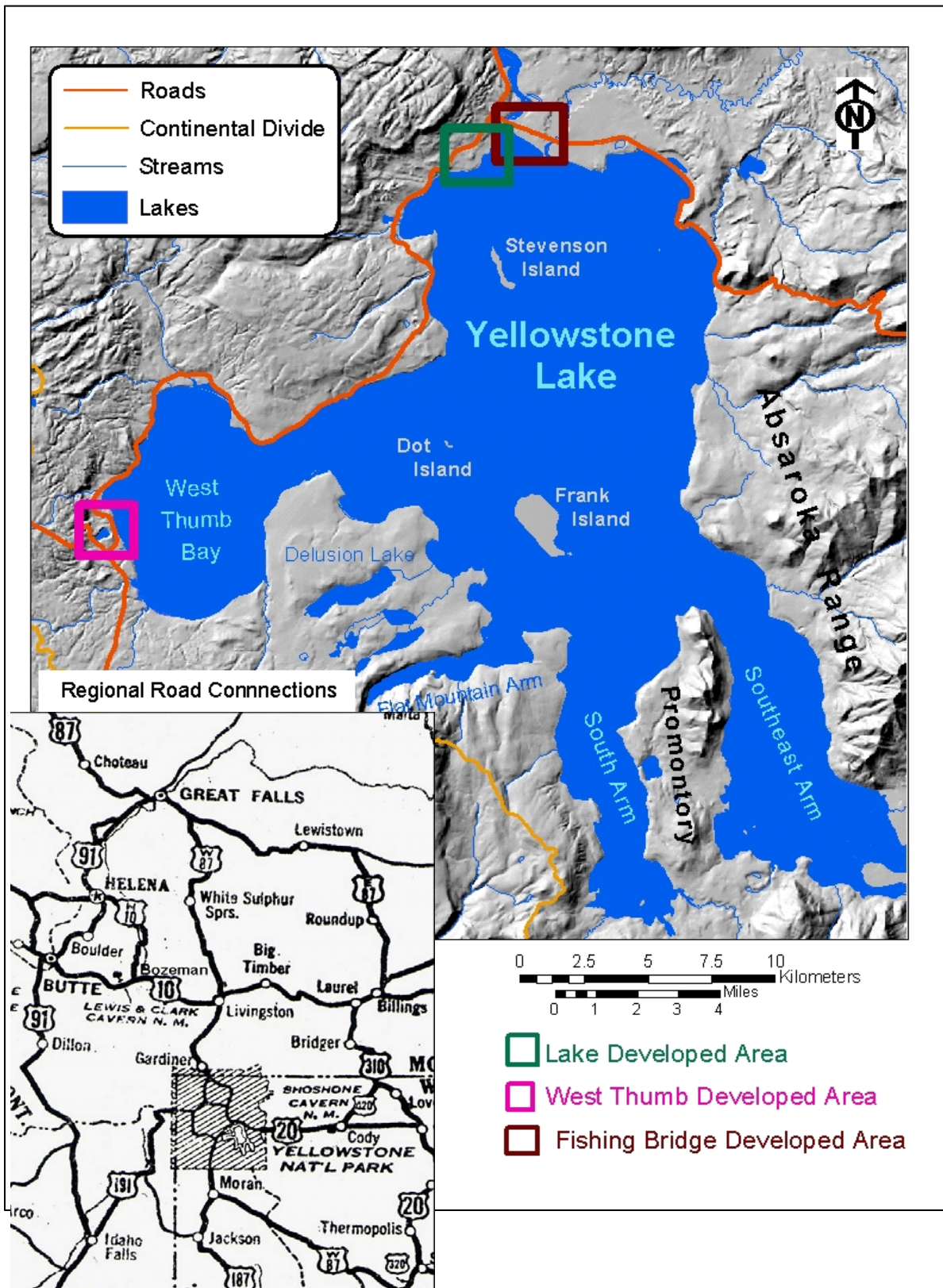
roads and then the upgrading of roads for automobilists often referred to as the “Belt Line” road. The structures at the lake proliferate significantly during this period as trails and roads increased and connected the lake to other park attractions. Facilities were built by government and concessionaires. Of the government facilities at Yellowstone Lake there were solidier cabins, ranger cabins, patrol cabins, a museum, free auto camps, fish hatchery buildings, animal viewing areas, and support or service structures.

Concessionaire structures included overnight tents, lodges, and cabins for guests, lodging for employees, boat docks, stores, garages and filling stations, stables and barns, animal viewing areas, and restaurants. The three major developed areas at Yellowstone Lake by the end of this period are the Fishing Bridge Developed Area, Lake Developed Area, and West Thumb Developed area (Figure 33).

Transportation

The transportation geography near Yellowstone Lake changed greatly between 1892 and 1932. During the early part of this period, narrow, dirt wagon roads and trails provided the main routes of travel. Stagecoaches and horseback travel were the most common vehicles until 1915. The admission of automobiles to Yellowstone in 1915 (Figure 34) transformed the face of lake transportation. Tour operators abandoned their stagecoach operations and equipment and reorganized their tours to accommodate automobile travel around the park. Lakeshore roads were enlarged and realigned to accommodate motor travel. Steamboat trips on the lake gave way to motorized boats tours and increasing motor boat rentals. The period also covers a transition in the government agencies that oversaw the construction of transportation routes in the park;

Figure 33. Yellowstone Lake, 1932
 Insert map of regional road connections from the collection of Dr. Joseph Ashley



after the creation of the National Park Service, road building and maintenance shifted to this agency from the U.S. Corps of Engineers in 1918.

Figure 34. Automobiles Enter Yellowstone National Park, 1915

The official entrance of automobiles into Yellowstone National Park changed the face of transportation geography throughout the park. Visitors could travel around the park at new speeds and they visited the park in unprecedented numbers. The National Park Service and park concessionaires undertook vast infrastructure changes to accommodate this new form of travel [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Archives].



Traveling and Touring in the Park, 1892-1932

Travel during the pre-auto period (before 1915) occurred in three ways: private travelers arrived with their own form of transportation, camping parties or groups of people used their own transportation (Figure 35), or organized, licensed transportation companies guided travelers through the Park (Erwin 1898, 4). Private travelers rode their own horses or traveled in private carriages. The licensed companies offered group

Figure 35. Sagebrush Tourists

An alternative to the expensive and scheduled park tours was travel through the park in groups of individual coaches. These intrepid park travelers became known as “sagebrush tourists.” [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Archives].



transport in the form of guided stagecoach tours (Figure 36) that traveled a circuit around the park. The stagecoach companies provided access to Yellowstone Lake from different routes while also providing a range of visitor services. As was common for many stagecoach companies, a tour of the park began at a railroad depot where the visitor would be deposited after a long train journey (Figure 37). For example, in 1897 the Yellowstone Park Transportation Company offered tourists stagecoach tours in the park entering from the park’s north entrance. Yellowstone Park Transportation Company stagecoaches met tourists at the Cinnabar train station and carried them around the park on a tour from Mammoth, to Norris, the Upper Geyser Basin, to Yellowstone Lake, to Canyon, and then back to the train station at Cinnabar. A different plan was offered by the Monida and Yellowstone Stage Company. This business started the coach tour of the

park from the west entrance, traveled to the Fountain Hotel, the Upper Geyser Basin, Yellowstone Lake, Canyon, Norris, Mammoth and then back to the riverside entrance (Erwin 1898, 4).

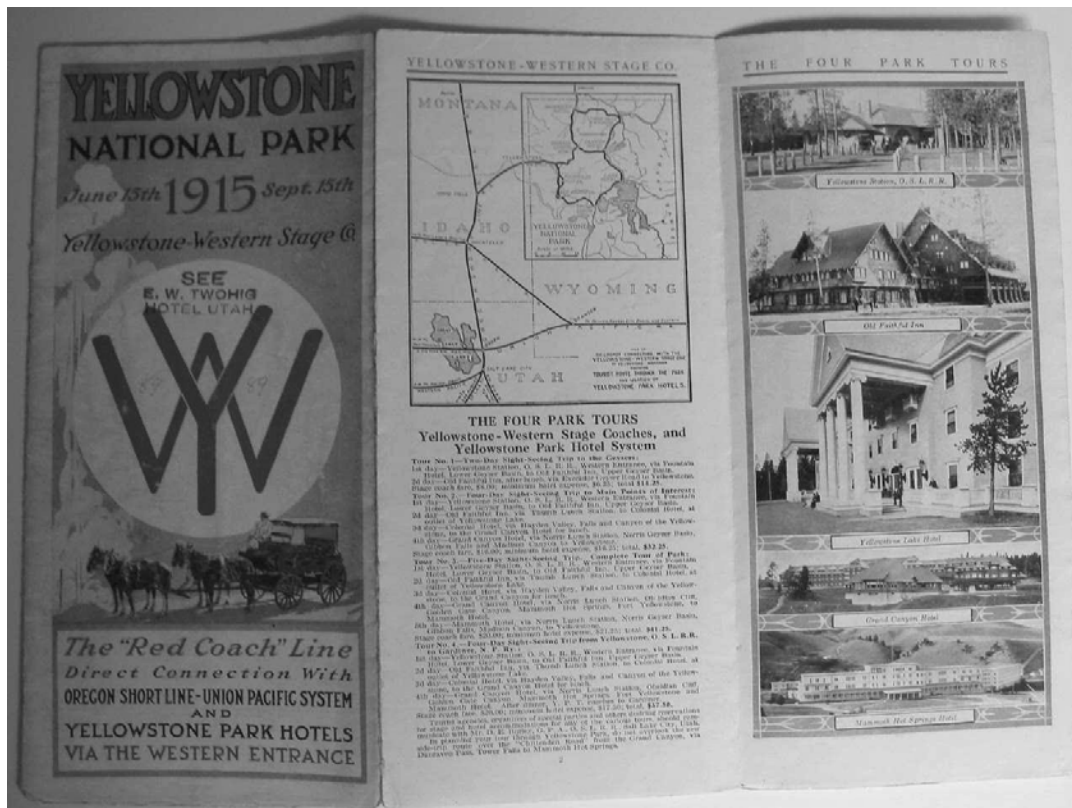
Thus, the transportation companies offered visitors similar sights once in the park, but varied the tours depending on which entrance they centralized their operations. Stagecoaches traveled between points that provided scenic attractions for visitors and that were feasible for a day's travel. For example, in 1898 the Monida and Yellowstone Stage Company provided service between the Fountain Hotel and the West Thumb of Yellowstone Lake in about five and a half hours. From West Thumb, tourists were given the option of taking a steamboat ferry across the lake (for an extra charge) to the Lake Hotel or of taking an additional two hour stagecoach ride around the lake (a longer, dustier, but less expensive route (Erwin 1898, 24).

Figure 36. Stagecoach Tour Concessionaire
Yellowstone tourists could join an organized and scheduled stagecoach tour around Yellowstone National Park operated by one of the park's transportation companies. These tours connected tourists arriving at railroad stations around the park with the park features via a system of park roads. A popular concessionaire during this period of Yellowstone history was the Wylie Permanent Camping Company (seen here in 1895 with guides and coaches) which offered transportation and tent lodging at various locations throughout the park [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Archives].



Figure 37. Park Tour Brochure, 1915

A popular option for tourist transportation in Yellowstone National Park before motorized travel was a stagecoach tour. These tours, as seen in this brochure from the Yellowstone Western Stage Company, met visitors coming into the park via railroad depots located near park entrances. From the railway connections, a variety of stagecoach tours were offered; each afforded a chance to visit the main scenic attractions in the park including Yellowstone Lake and a stay at the Lake Hotel. [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Archives.]



The concessionaire structure also changed over this time period (Table 1).

Before 1916, there were a number of concessionaires operating travel services to Yellowstone Lake. However, the creation of the National Park Service altered that structure from multiple businesses to one consolidated operation for each type of service offered in the park. It is helpful to consider the complicated nature of early park concessionaire operations, particularly those involved with transportation. There were many variations on the theme of moving and lodging visitors through the park; some

Table 1. Government Agencies and Concessionaires Operating at
Yellowstone Lake, 1895- 1919

Dates listed indicate the year that the agency or company started businesses at Yellowstone Lake or when agencies or companies changed names and/or ownership.

1895	Yellowstone Park Association, Yellowstone Lake Boat Company
1897	Yellowstone Park Transportation Company
1898	Wylie Permanent Camping Company, Monida and Yellowstone Stage Company
1903	U.S. Fish Commission
1906	U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, Yellowstone Park Transportation Company name change to Yellowstone National Park Transportation Company
1908	T.E. Hofer Boat Company takes over operations of Yellowstone Lake Boat Company
1912	Yellowstone Park Boat Company, Holm Transportation Company, Yellowstone Park Hotel Company
1913	Shaw and Powell Camping Company
1914	Yellowstone Western Stage Company replaces Monida and Yellowstone Stage Company
1915	Yellowstone Western Stage Company
1916	National Park Service replaces United States Army, Cody-Sylvan Pass Motor Company
1917	Yellowstone Park Camping Company (formerly Wylie Permanent Camping Company and Shaw and Powell Camping Company), Yellowstone Park Transportation Company, Yellowstone Park Hotel Company, Yellowstone Park Boat Company
1919	1919 Hamilton Stores

Source: Compiled from Annual Superintendent Reports for Yellowstone National Park (1895-1919).

early park companies only operated transportation companies for visitors, while others built businesses based on combined transportation and lodging packages. Perhaps one of the most complex transportation businesses at Yellowstone Lake was the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company. Over the years of its existence, this operation conducted boat tours and ferries across the lake through an agreement with the stagecoach companies, sold

various consumer goods at a small shop near the Lake Hotel, and offered boat rentals, fishing tackle, and eventually a guide service to park visitors.

Once automobile travel was allowed in the park, the transportation infrastructure in the park changed too. Now tourists could enter by their own volition in their private vehicles or they could decide to travel to the park by railroad and then join an organized guided trip through the park in specially built touring autos (Figure 38). Although the

Figure 38. Automobile Tours at Yellowstone Lake

Transportation infrastructure in Yellowstone National Park was dramatically changed by the entrance of the first automobile in 1915. After this date, park tour operators discontinued their stagecoach tours and began offering group automobile tours in specially built touring cars. Visitors in the image below are leaving Lake Hotel with an organized touring party [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Archives].

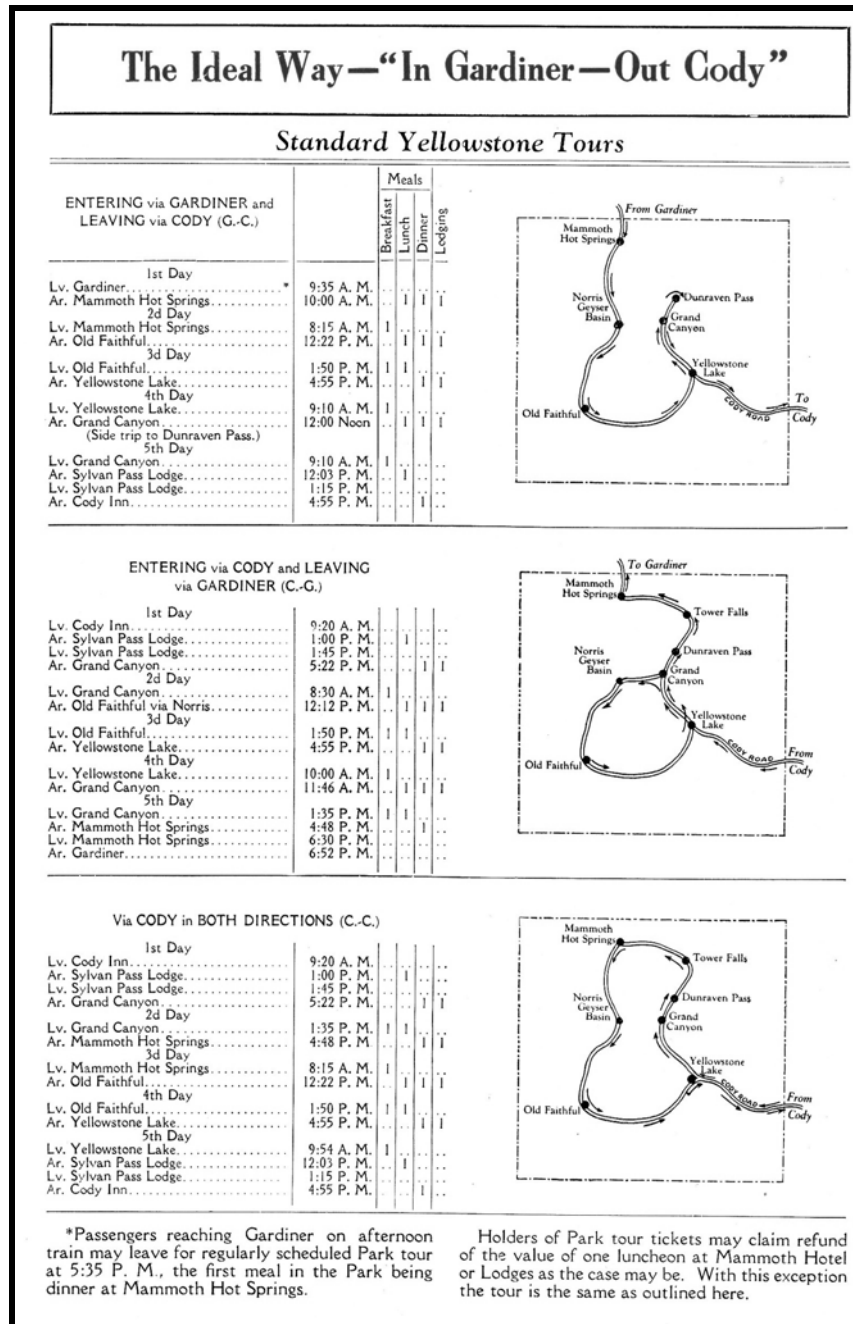


independent tourists had more freedom to choose their routes and schedules through the park, their trips were not without troubles. A woman and her family traveling through the park in 1928, related some of the experiences of early auto travelers at Yellowstone Lake; “we hunted up a garage, got all our flat tires repaired, bought groceries and

continued our journey” (Corthell 1928, 64). This experience was in contrast to the arranged hotel stays, scheduled meals at dining facilities, and repair-free experiences of visitors on guided motor tours. These auto tours continued to access Yellowstone Lake and make scheduled overnight stops at the Lake Hotel as well as at other featured sites around the lake (Figure 39). Although the attractions visited by these touring groups remained similar to those highlighted in previous tours, the motorized vehicles allowed visitors to see sights at a more rapid pace and allowed for longer distances to be traveled in one day.

Railroads also played a key role in transportation schemes for Yellowstone National Park and the surrounding region. Indeed, one historian remarks that railroads “restructured the landscape of the West” more than any previous form of transportation (Schwantes 2003, 37). Although there were no railroads built in the park, train service provided an important form of conveyance for park visitors from other parts of the country such as the Northeast. Not long after the establishment of Yellowstone, railroad companies completed branch lines of access to the park. Although the Northern Pacific Railroad had a station located at Cinnabar, Montana by the late 1800’s, by 1903 the company extended its route from Livingston, Montana to a station closer to the park at Gardiner, Montana near the Park’s northern boundary (Schwantes 2003, 84). The Union Pacific extended its Oregon Short Line from Saint Anthony, Idaho to the west entrance of Yellowstone by 1908 (Schwantes 2003, 85). Other railroads soon followed and competition for rail access to Yellowstone grew. By 1931, there were many established routes connecting Yellowstone National Park to the rest of the nation. Visitors could travel with the Northern Pacific Railroad to the north entrance at Gardiner or to Bozeman

Figure 39. Automobile Touring Routes in Yellowstone National Park
As Yellowstone tours transitioned from stagecoaches to automobiles, “standard tours” were continued to include Yellowstone Lake as a regularly scheduled stop along the route. This 1928 insert from a Northern Pacific Railroad brochure presented potential park tourists with a collection of touring options taking advantage of the railroad stations at Cody, Wyoming and Gardiner, Montana. [Northern Pacific Railway and Burlington Route 1928, insert.]



“reaching the park via the Gallatin Gateway” (United States Department of the Interior 1931, 10). The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad operated direct service to Gallatin Gateway (near Bozeman) and the Union Pacific Railroad served West Yellowstone, Montana and Victor, Idaho. Finally, two routes offered the visitor the combination of train and then auto connections to the park via the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad to Cody, Wyoming and the Chicago and North Western Railroad to Lander, Wyoming.

Growing visitation and more concessionaires had direct impacts on Yellowstone Lake’s cultural landscape. With more people visiting the lake, the demand for guest services rose and private businesses proliferated to meet these growing demands. A vital part of the infrastructure to support more visitor traffic and concessionaires was a fortified transportation network that linked Yellowstone Lake with other notable park features. Between 1892 and 1932, the transportation geography of the lake included growing infrastructure of trails, roads, bridges, and boating routes.

Trails

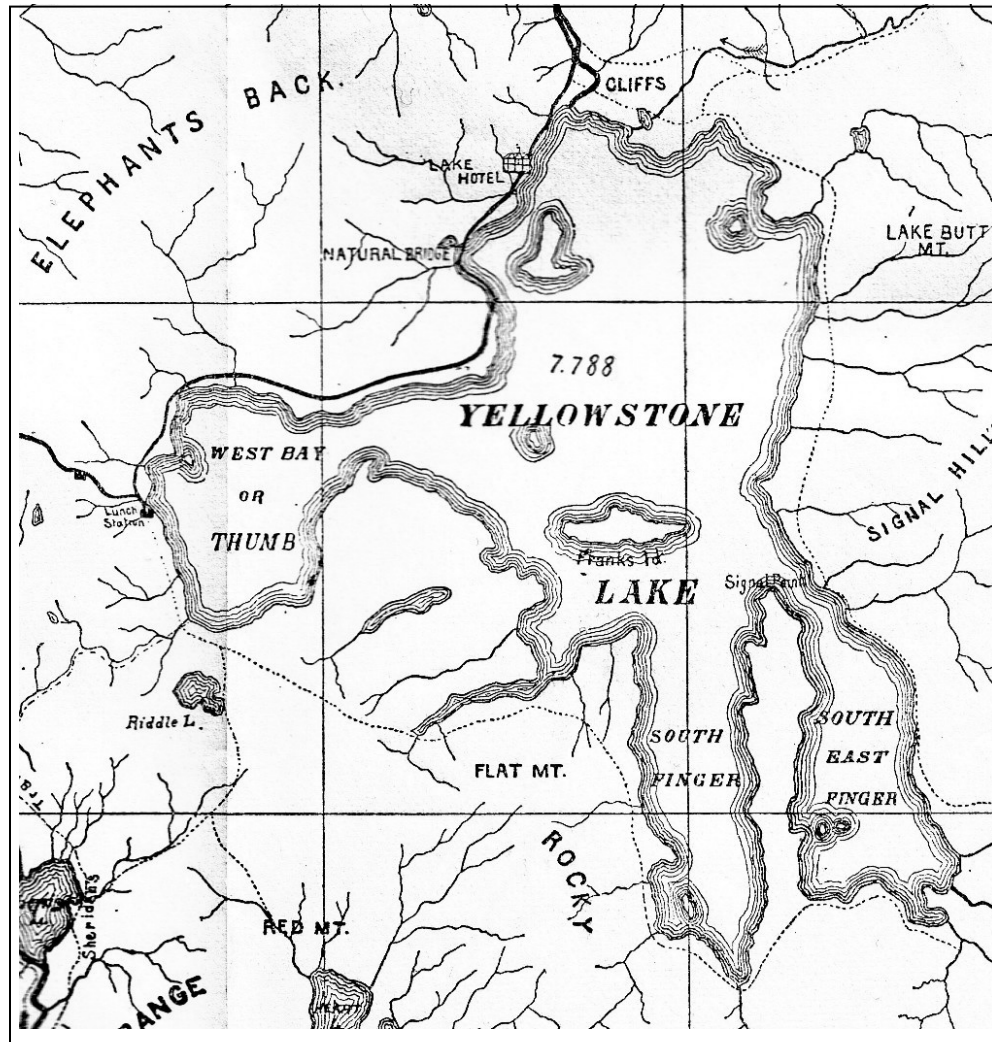
The trail system around Yellowstone Lake consisted of trails for horse and foot traffic. Although my research found most of the written discussion of transportation during this period to revolve around the road system, I did find some clues as to what trails were built and maintained. The early trail system around the lake provided horse traffic access to the lake until roads were built to Yellowstone Lake. Gradually, the road building projects replaced these trails with wider travel paths for stagecoaches and, later, automobiles. Foot and horse trails used by Native Americans and Euro-American

explorers were probably still visible through the forests and around the shores of Yellowstone Lake during the early part of this period; indeed, those trails may have served as the basis for foot and horse paths that were built and maintained by the government around the lake. I did find data—in the form of historic maps—that provided some evidence that a trail system was in place around the eastern, western, and southern shores of the lake. For example, an 1897 *Map of Yellowstone National Park* (Figure 40) shows a trail running around these areas of the lake. However, since the map is credited as “Compiled from different explorations and our personal survey, 1882,” it is uncertain whether the trail refers to a historically used route or a current trail (Guptill 1897, map insert). By the early 1900’s there was a growing interest in establishing a trail system to scenic features around the lake as well as better access to lake activities such as fishing. A government report for the park from 1917 notes a proposal to convert “fire lanes” into a trail system for visitors to explore the park along; “[n]ext year, it is proposed to build a broad new trail around Lake Yellowstone, penetrating the moose country and another region of striking beauty. These trails will also make a remarkable fishing territory readily accessible” (United States Department of the Interior 1917, 13).

The trail system around Yellowstone Lake was in a transition period between 1892 and 1932; trails that were once used as the main travel corridors to and around the lake were being replaced by roads. A road system was gradually installed around the northern and western portion of the lake by building and then connecting sections of road. Of the references that I found to trail use and maintenance during this period, foot and horse trails around scenic areas or service avenues were commonly mentioned. By 1918, the park had four hundred miles of horse trails (Lindsley 1918, 3). Improvised foot

Figure 40. Early Lakeshore Trails and Road

Evidence of early foot and horse trails around Yellowstone Lake may be found in historic maps showing routes along the eastern, southern, and western shores. Although the early horse trail between the Bridger Creek and Arnica Creek along the north shore of Yellowstone Lake ran a more direct route between these two locations, the early stagecoach route followed the shoreline. This 1897 map from a park guidebook revealed that early lake routes as well as a few of the cultural and scenic features at Yellowstone Lake such as the Lake Hotel, the Natural Bridge, and the West Thumb Lunch Station. [Guptill 1897, map insert.]



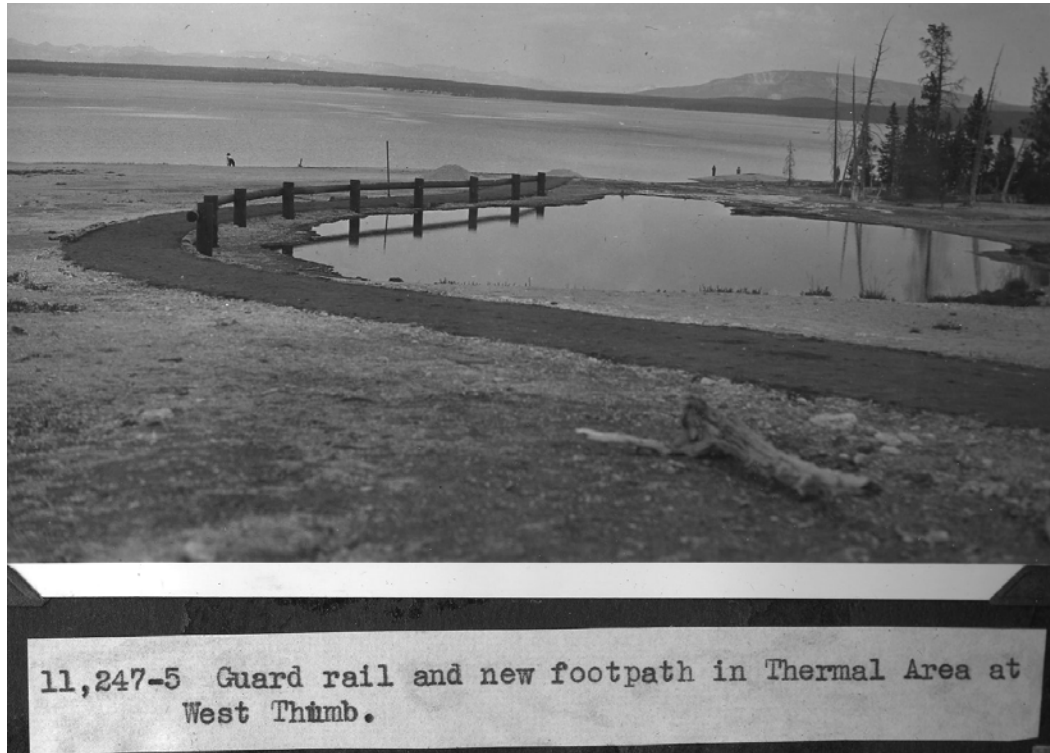
trails for visitors to access the lake and to move between concessionaire operations such as camping areas and dining spots were probably present on the landscape, although they may have taken a more informal role that escaped official written park records. I did find

a brief description of trails at the West Thumb developed area in 1918 that may provide some clues as to the shape and use of trails around the southwest section of the lake during this time. In a report of the park superintendent, a “Platforms and Board Walks” section records a brief mention of “[t]en landing platforms at various points of interest, originally built to accommodate passengers alighting from horse-drawn vehicles” (Lindsley 1918, 23). According to the report, these platforms were lowered that year to “accommodate automobile passengers” (Lindsley 1918, 23). The report also mentions repairing “185 feet of old walk” near the “Thumb” area (Lindsley 1918, 23). The author of the report does not provide further details about the use of the “old walk.” These trails may have been used as safe passage for sightseers around thermal features, to outline frequently used travel paths between concession operations, or as foot trails to the lake (Figure 41).

I did find evidence that plans were in the works to build a renewed system of foot and horse trails around the lake during this period. While making several suggestions for the park’s improvement, Superintendent Albright proposed building a “new trail” from “Trapper Creek, south of Lake Yellowstone, around the arms of the lake and over Chicken Ridge to Heart Lake” (1919, 103). It seems that these plans for trails did celebrate some sort of success. A 1923 U.S. Department of the Interior booklet notes that; “An extensive system of trails is available for the saddle-horse lover desiring to visit the more remote and wilder sections of the park...It is here where nature, except for trail, remains undisturbed...where spots that appeal may be studied...uninterrupted by any schedule of transportation” (U.S. Department of the Interior 1923, 57). By 1923 a system of horse trails had been established and maintained around the park including locations at

Figure 41. Trail Systems at Yellowstone Lake

Early trails around Yellowstone Lake were geared toward horse and foot traffic. This undated photograph of a “footpath” near a geothermal pool in the West Thumb Developed Area provides a clue as to the look and design of early paths around thermal this thermal basin. [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Archives.]



Yellowstone Lake. The “Howard Eaton Trail” was described in 1923 as “a linking up of a former series of short trails” (U.S. Department of the Interior 1923, 58). The 1923 booklet continued its description of the Howard Eaton Trail: the trail “closely follows the ‘loop’ road, touching the points of interest visited by vehicle travel, yet the trail is sufficiently distant from the road at most points to avoid contact” (U.S. Department of the Interior 1923, 58). The Howard Eaton Trail included twenty miles of trail between the Lake Developed Area and the West Thumb Developed Area. The booklet also describes several “branch trails” at Yellowstone Lake which visitors were encouraged to use in conjunction with the Howard Eaton Trail (U.S. Department of the Interior 1923, 58).

These trails were built along creeks and connected the Lake Developed Area with the east boundaries of the park and the West Thumb Developed Area as well as connecting the western edges of Yellowstone Lake with Heart Lake, Lewis Lake, and Shoshone Lake (U.S. Department of the Interior 1923, 59).

Roads

Between 1892 and 1932, the roads around Yellowstone Lake were extended around the north shore of the lake, transitioned from stagecoach roads to automobile routes, and they became more effectively linked to other travel corridors through the park. These changes were part of larger trends such as the availability of new road building technologies, the entrance of automobiles to the park, and growing visitor and concessionaire demands for more access to the park (Figure 42). The United States Army Corps of Engineers continued their work on all road projects in Yellowstone until July 1, 1918 (O'Brien 1965, 81). By 1905, the loop road system around the park was completed and then the U.S. Corps of Engineers turned their efforts away from constructing new roads to "upgrading the existing system" (O'Brien 1965, 125). Projects after this time were limited to shortening, straightening, and small scale relocation of park roads (O'Brien 1965, 125). The National Park Service took over the responsibility of road projects in the park in 1918. As national railroad and highway systems made connections to Yellowstone roads, the park became more accessible through a variety of transportation forms, routes, and schedules.

By 1892, a wagon road provided only limited access to Yellowstone Lake. Although O'Brien notes that the "first route adopted and completed" along the lakeshore at Yellowstone Lake was finished in 1894 (O'Brien 1965, 107), the annual park

Figure 42. Early Roads in Yellowstone National Park

Early roads to Yellowstone Lake were often built upon the same routes used by trails to the area. Road building was often a tedious task that involved clearing numerous trees and finding a path through the uneven terrain of the park. This 1895 image shows an early stagecoach road coursing through an opening in the forested shoreline of the lake and cliffs of the park toward Yellowstone Lake. [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



superintendent report for 1892 reveals a different completion date. In his annual report, Acting Superintendent Anderson discusses the completion of “an excellent new road opened from the Canyon to the Upper Basin, via the lake. This 52 miles of road is destined to become one of the most popular, as it is one of the most beautiful, drives in the park” (Anderson 1892, 5). The new road completed a connection between the Grand Canyon and the Upper Geyser Basin by a route traveling south from the Grand Canyon area to the north shore of Yellowstone Lake near the outlet of the Yellowstone River, then west across the shoreline to the West Thumb Developed Area and onward to the

Upper Geyser Basin over the continental divide. The road provided stagecoaches and horseback-riding visitors access to Lake Hotel and the north shore of the lake (see Figure 30). Anderson's description of the lake road is also notable for his description of the travel path; instead of referring to route numbers, he refers to the route that the road traveled and the areas that it connected. This template of road designations became a common practice by government, concessionaire, and visitor descriptions of park roads by the late 1800's. This system relied on a basic geographic knowledge of the park (a road from the Upper Geyser Basin to West Thumb traveled in which direction?) it could be confusing for those unfamiliar with the park transportation circulation since it involved references to unfamiliar locations and the labels of these roads varied slightly depending on the author invoking them.

After 1892, a wagon road served as the main road along the northwestern shore of Yellowstone Lake. Although the early bridle path between the Lake Developed Area and the West Thumb Developed Area ran a direct but steep route between the Bridge Creek and Arnica Creek, the route that was used for the stagecoach road was built closer to the lake's edge. This road along the shore of the lake fluctuated between northern and southern routes between 1894 and 1932, but the route completed in 1894 followed the shore line of the lake closely. The road ran so close to the lake that at times this proximity to the shoreline became a hazard as road engineers underestimated the dynamic physical environment of Yellowstone Lake. The new road was a narrow dirt path that required frequent maintenance. After only a year of being built the road required repairs. While discussing roads in the park, Acting Superintendent Anderson mentioned repairs to the road "between Upper Geyser Basin and Thumb" saying that "the important part, the

causeway along the lake, is as yet untouched” (Anderson 1893, 8). A problem for the early lakeshore road was the instability of its roadbed; a section of the roadbed that ran along the shoreline was built on a sandbar of soft, fine-grained, lakeshore sand.

Carriages would often get stuck in the sand (Figure 43) and the road proved difficult to maintain. Acting Superintendent Anderson mentions that a road was open from Lake Hotel to Natural Bridge along the shoreline to “Thumb,” and mentions the difficulty of building and maintaining roads on “loose beach sand” (Anderson 1895, 8). Park engineers had to balance the difficulty of maintaining this lakeshore route with the advantages of building the road along a fairly level surface around the lake.

The 1892 completion of the lakeshore road between the Lake Developed Area and the West Thumb Developed Area offered new opportunities for concessionaire operations and the government supported these private business ventures. This route was also important as it connected the lake to other park features and created more of a “loop road” around the park. Acting Superintendent Anderson mentions that the road is finally finished so that a loop can be made “from the lake to the Upper Basin without passing over any portion of the route a second time” (Anderson 1895, 3). The plan to create and maintain a road system that allowed visitors to travel—via a loop route—to the key park features was pervasive in park planning. By 1897, the route of the roads around the park tour included traveling by coach from Gardiner, Montana to Mammoth, then on to Norris, from there to the Fountain Hotel, then to the Upper Geyser Basin, then to the West Thumb Developed Area, around the north shore of the lake to the Lake Developed Area and then north to the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. Even from the early years of this plan, Yellowstone Lake was considered a major scenic attraction to be visited and

Figure 43. Early Roads and Bridges at Yellowstone Lake

Early road building projects along the shoreline of Yellowstone Lake often faced the hurdles of steep elevation along the lake's edge or soft sandy beaches nearer to the lake. This 1903 image shows a horse and carriage about to make a crossing of a bridge along the main road built on a spit of beach over the outlet of Arnica Creek flowing into Yellowstone Lake. The bridge was washed out several times over the years by flooding of the creek and carriages as well as later automobiles traveling along this road often were stuck in the soft lakeshore sands. According to park historian Lee Whittlesey, the bridge over Arnica Creek was used as part of the main road around the lake from 1897 to 1904. [image printed in Whittlesey 1997, 104.]

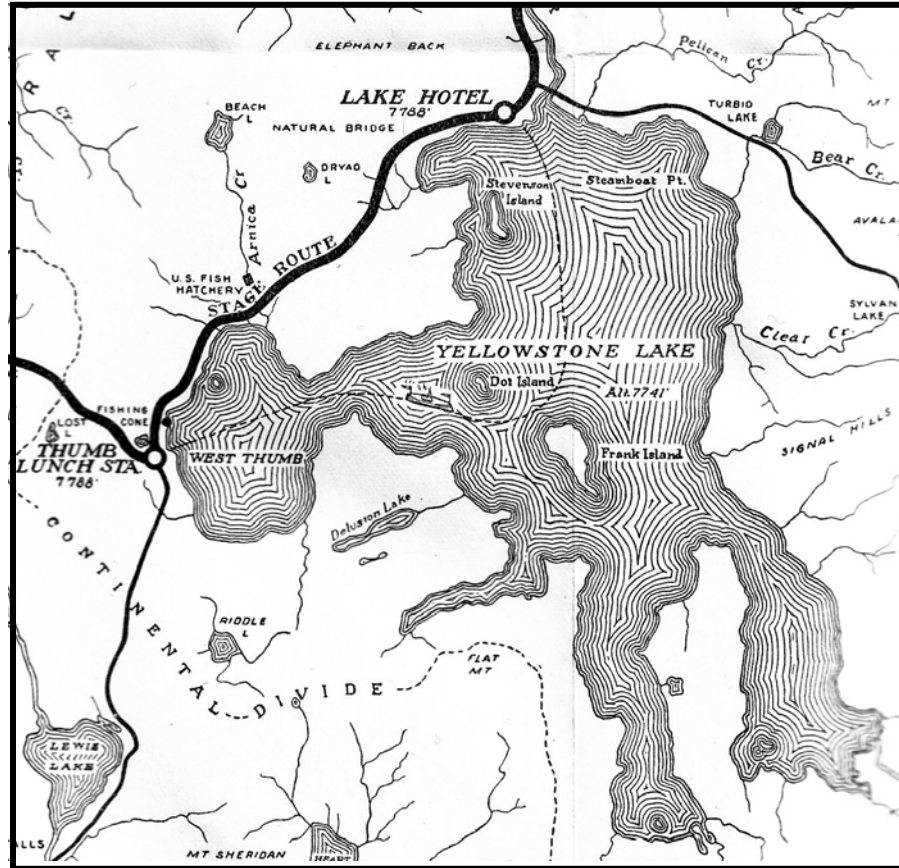


included in park tours. An example of this planning design can be seen in a report from the park's chief engineer. As the chief engineer of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Hiram Chittenden oversaw much of the early road building in the park. In 1900, Chittenden reported six "principal centers of interest in the park" that included Yellowstone Lake (1900, 9). He described a 153 total miles of "belt line" roads that connected a circuit between these notable "centers" (Chittenden 1900, 9-10).

The course of the road along the north shore of Yellowstone Lake shifted between several routes during this period. The greatest alteration in distance and course was the section of road between Bridge Creek and Arnica Creek (see Figure 43). The early horse trail between these two points ran a southwesterly direction along a fairly straight path (see Figure 30). However, a lakeshore path was later favored by travelers (see Figure 40). This route was a bit longer than the previous trail, but afforded more views of the lake and the ease of travel along the level shoreline. The path of the lake road would change again in 1900. Chittenden proposed shortening the route between Thumb and Lake by 4 miles to run “directly over the hills from the Thumb Bay to Bridge Bay” (Chittenden 1900, 10). The road designer’s suggestion came to fruition the next year. In 1901, the government built “9 miles of road...between the Thumb and Lake Hotel to cut out the Lake Shore road” (Pitcher 1901, 11). This more direct “cut-off” route (Figure 44) was used until 1916 (O’Brien 1965, 108). After 1916, the road was once again realigned along the lakeshore route between Natural Bridge and Arnica Creek (Figure 45). It seems that these changes in the lake road’s route arose from indecision concerning the need for a direct route between Bridge Creek and Arnica Creek. Road builders altered the lake road’s location from a path over a steep grade to one that ran along the more scenic shoreline route. However, the shoreline path proved difficult to maintain because of unstable terrain.

The completion of the north shore route along Yellowstone Lake was soon followed by road construction running east from the lake outlet and south from West Thumb. By 1897, the road from “Thumb Station to [the] southern boundary of timber reserve near Jackson’s lake” was completed and allowed visitors a southerly exit or

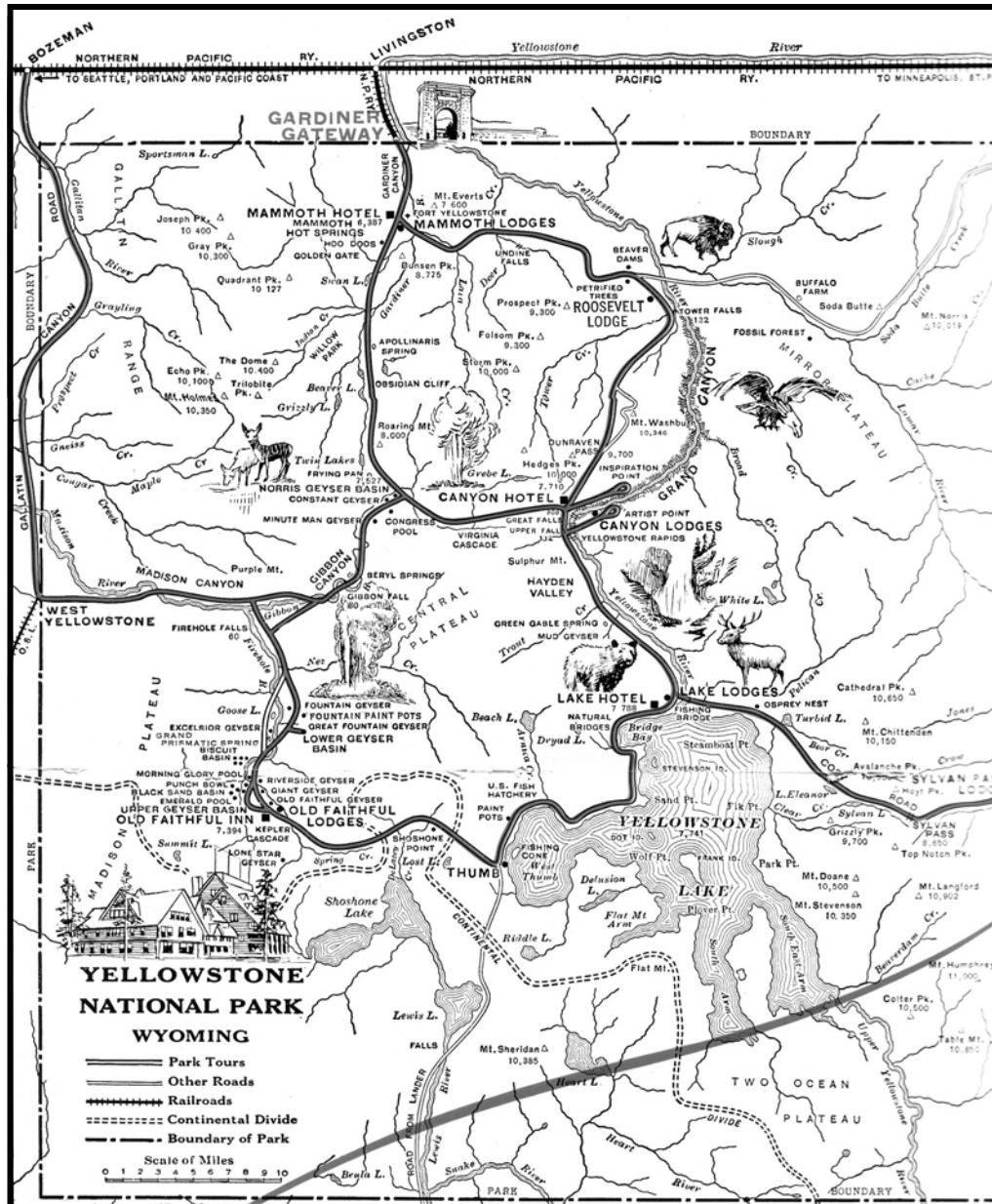
Figure 44. Adjustments to the Lakeshore Road and A Ferry Route
Adjustments to the lakeshore route during the early part of the 20th century included a shift of the road towards the original horse trail route that ran a more direct route over the hills between Bridge Creek and Arnica Creek. This 1912 map from a park guidebook shows this road as the “Stage Route.” Note the steamboat ferry route across Yellowstone Lake depicted as a dotted line with a small boat near the western side of Dot Island and the U.S. Fish Hatchery site marked by a small box near Arnica Creek. [Haynes 1912, map insert.]



entrance to the park (Young 1897, 4). By 1900, work was started on building a road east of the lake towards Cody, Wyoming. Hiram Chittenden reported that a new road was being constructed from the “lake outlet” to the “east boundary of forest reserve” (Chittenden 1900, 12). A 1908 park guidebook refers to the “construction of the road from the outlet of Yellowstone Lake to the eastern boundary of the Park” which “opened up a delightful portion of the Park scenery” (Guptill 1908, 86). This description of the

Figure 45. Lakeshore Road

The lakeshore road between Bridge Creek and Arnica Creek was adjusted to a southeastern position once more and after 1916 it stayed along this route. This 1928 park guidebook map shows the shoreline road. [Northern Pacific Railway and Burlington Route 1928, 32-33.]



east road also mentions a major addition to the lake that made travel possible along this eastern route—a “substantial bridge” across the Yellowstone River “about two miles

from the Lake Hotel” (Guptill 1908, 86). This new road opened up access to the park from the east while also encouraging more travel along the northeastern portion of Yellowstone Lake, particularly between the east road and the Fishing Bridge Developed Area and the Lake Developed Area. With the completion of the eastern entrance road and the south entrance road, transportation networks provided access to the lake from four different directions; from the west via the road between the West Thumb Developed Area and the Upper Geyser Basin, from the north along the route between the Grand Canyon and the Lake Developed Area, from the south along the road to Jackson, Wyoming, and from the east along the road to Cody, Wyoming.

The process of building and maintaining park roads was a common topic in the park superintendents’ annual reports. These reports carried comments from visitors who often complained of the poor road conditions including muddy, dusty, and unstable terrain making travel difficult if not impossible. Maintenance of the wagon roads included sprinkling of the road surface and clearing trees. In 1901, Acting Superintendent Pitcher mentions the need to sprinkle roads to cut down on the excessive dust (Pitcher 1901, 10). In 1906, the acting superintendent discussed clearing areas for building and for scenic purposes. He mentioned cleaning up timber and refuse around the Lake Developed Area where the roads and hillsides were “thoroly [sic] cleaned and all timber and refuse burned” (Pitcher 1906, 12). The lake environment provided a number of road building obstacles not found near other park roads. Besides the previously mentioned crossing in the sand at Arnica Creek, the shifting lake levels proved hazardous for road conditions. A testament to the dynamic lake environment is an incident in 1908 along the lake’s roadways. Yellowstone’s Acting Superintendent

reported that “[d]uring early July high water in Yellowstone Lake, with strong shore winds, caused bad washouts on the Lake-Thumb road in the vicinity of the Lake Hotel and the Thumb Station. Substantial retaining walls were constructed to hold the road in these places and the road was raised about 2 feet” (Benson 1909, 7).

While park road crews struggled to build and maintain travel routes through the park, national audiences were becoming more interested in automobile travel. However, inequalities between the advances and reliability in auto travel and poorly maintained and rugged road systems throughout the country presented hurdles to travelers. Making the best of available roads, early auto travelers developed “touring routes connecting the Park with eastern cities and with its neighbor to the north, Glacier National Park” (Haines 1977b, 265). Groups of automobile touring enthusiasts connected a “patchwork of country and rural roads” into a route of travel between the Twin Cities and Yellowstone Park (Haines 1977b, 265). By 1911, the Yellowstone Trail was scouted out and later developed into a marked route for eastern travelers to follow on the journey to Yellowstone. The Park-to-Park route was also developed in 1911 and connected the roadways between Yellowstone National Park, Glacier National Park, and Rocky Mountain National Park.

Although automobiles were admitted into Yellowstone in 1915, the roads were not capable of supporting safe and reliable travel through the park at that time. After Congress made the much-needed appropriations to support road work, government crews began the process of making the roads safe for both animal and motor powered vehicles. This process involved extensive work on all of the park roadways and often reworking the established paths of travel to accommodate multiple vehicles. An example of

reevaluating the road structure may be found in the acting park superintendent's report for 1915. The Acting Superintendent reported building a "turnout...at the Lake Junction, completing a triangle at this point and connecting the east road with the branch of the belt line leading to the north or in the direction of the Canyon. Previously the junction had consisted of a single turnout...making the turn for traffic from the north belt line onto the east road so sharp that freight wagons could not make it, but were compelled to pass to a point beyond where they could turn completely around and then enter the east road from the south" (Brett 1915, 14).

Automobile traffic not only changed the surface and structure of the roads around Yellowstone Lake. This new form of transportation altered the timing of visitor stays and the routes that tourists followed. Autos increased the speed at which tourists could travel around the park and routes that the park service and touring companies supported for park tours. Earlier park tours were dependent on the routes defined by the park tour companies and the pacing of these early trips was dictated by how far a horse-drawn coach could travel each day.

The organized park tour did not disappear instantly with the advent of the auto in the park, but the tour was altered to accommodate the faster mode of transportation and the growth of the road system through the park. Park roads were increasingly referred to in government reports as the "The Belt Line" or the "Loop Roads" (Lindsley 1918) and were spatially organized as a system of interconnected roads around the park; these transportation channels provided a system of circulation where visitors could optimize their routes to see as much of the park as possible while also visiting all of the park attractions deemed as important sights. In an *Annual Report*, the park superintendent

describes the road system for the park in 1917 (U.S. Department of the Interior 1917, 7). According to the report “the schedule of the transportation line was arranged to give the visitor as much time as possible at the points of greatest interest—Mammoth Hot Springs, Upper Geyser Basin, Yellowstone Lake, and the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone.” In addition to including the lake as one of four major sights in the park, the report also notes a new strategy for the circulation of touring parties around the park; “[a] third advantage of the new motor system was the arrangement that the railroads and the transportation company perfected whereby it was made possible for park visitors to enter via one gateway, tour the park, and leave via another gateway” (U.S. Department of the Interior 1917, 7). Indeed, an example of “another gateway” was the south entrance to the park. In the 1917 *Annual Report*, the new road system was described in terms of its connections to the south and with Yellowstone Lake; “for the first time, automobiles were operated from the Lake Hotel to the Jackson Hole on a regular schedule” (U.S. Department of the Interior 1917, 14). These examples show how tour companies were adapting to the expanding park road systems and the availability of new automobile technology. In the process, the transportation system around Yellowstone Lake was evolving to accommodate new demands and opportunities for transportation.

As the road system improved, park tour operators constructed and marketed a set of experiences in the park that defined what park features were considered important and how those attractions could be accessed. This process often went hand in hand with the construction of park transportation. If a road was built to an attraction and it was deemed an interesting sight, then visitors could easily find access to it. On the other hand, a road in poor condition or a lack of road access to a feature in the park translated into low

visitor contact and a marginalization of that feature in park advertising. Although various parts of Yellowstone Lake (usually along the northern shore) were incorporated into park tours after the lake road was completed between the Grand Canyon and the Lake Developed Area, the areas of the lake that were visited and highlighted in park tours changed over time.

Often this fluctuation in tourist routes involved access to the feature and the notability of the attraction. Two examples of this process are the tourist access to the thermal areas around the lake and the waning visitor contact with Natural Bridge. An 1893 guidebook touts the lake as having “no less than seven hot-spring areas surrounding Yellowstone Lake” but asserts that “those of the west arm or Thumb bay...are by far the most interesting” (Guptill 1893, 73). How much was this assessment of the thermal features along the lake influenced by the transportation geography of the lake? In 1893, park roads connected the West Thumb geothermal areas with other park attractions and boat tours departed from this thermal basin. However, I did not find evidence of organized trips (by boat or coach) to the thermal areas along the eastern shores of the lake or in the Southeast Arm. This abbreviated reference to the “seven hot-spring areas” at the lake was a contrast to earlier descriptions of these areas. An 1887 guidebook devoted a full section to describing the appearance and activity of thermal areas along the north, east, and southern areas of the lake. Yet the author of the “Other Hot Spring Groups” section of this guidebook concluded his assessment of these attractions by dismissing them from a tour of the park: “But all these springs, interesting as they doubtless are, would scarcely repay the tourist for the time and trouble necessary to reach them,

particularly as they present no special peculiarities in comparison with the various groups that lie within the range of routes that are more accessible” (Riley 1887, 100-101).

The Natural Bridge—a limestone arch over Bridge Creek near the north shore of Yellowstone Lake—is an example of a waning park attraction affected by the placement of roads. Previously the bridge served as a transportation structure (see Figure 24) and scenic feature for tourists at Yellowstone Lake. By 1893, however, the lake road ran along the shore of the lake and did not take visitors past the Natural Bridge during their course of travels. An 1893 guidebook describes the bridge as “just off the main road leading from the Outlet to the Thumb” and as “an arch of stone spanning a creek” (Guptill 1893, 76). By 1912, the main road around the lake was rerouted once again to travel along the direct but hilly route between Bridge Bay and Arnica Creek (see Figure 42). Natural Bridge rated a brief mention in a guidebook from this period; a 1912 travel guide advised the reader that the “Natural Bridge is passed on the drive around the Lake four miles from the Lake Hotel” (Haynes 1912, 87). Later, the road around the lake was moved back to its shoreline route (see Figure 45) and farther away from the Natural Bridge.

Park road crews and engineers continued to invest energy and resources in road building projects throughout the early 20th century. By 1918, the National Park Service relieved the U.S. Corps of Engineers of road building projects. After this time, projects along Yellowstone Lake included straightening roads, shortening roads, some relocations, and maintenance. One of the larger relocation projects involved the road between Bridge Bay and Arnica Creek which was moved yet again. While making a number of suggestions for improvements to the park, Superintendent Albright mentioned that the

road “between the Thumb of Lake Yellowstone and the Bridge Bay near the outlet of the Lake” had been “realigned” and “abandoned” for the shorter but less scenic route that climbs a bit of elevation (Albright 1919, 98-99). Albright calls for a return to the longer, more scenic road to citing that this “lake drive” would “be one of the most popular features of the park tour” (Albright 1919, 98-99). By the end of this period in 1932, this road was realigned to Albright’s suggestion.

Other road alteration projects were focused on the developed area around the Lake Hotel. The 1919 annual superintendent report included a proposal to change the “road that runs so close to the Lake Hotel and Lake camp” (Albright 1919, 98-99). The superintendent suggested that the road “should be changed to follow the lake shore from the hotel to the junction of the Cody approach road with the belt line system at the so-called ‘Fishing Bridge’ over the Yellowstone River where it leaves Yellowstone Lake.” According to the author, this road project would eliminate the “harassment of noisy automobile traffic at night” for campers and hotel guests at the Lake Developed Area (Albright 1919, 98-99). The course of this section of the lake road was altered in 1923; “a new road one-half mile in length was constructed along the lake shore...[to] eliminate the necessity for the through travel passing by the Lake permanent camp” (Albright 1923, 29).

Finally, the later years of this period reveal the National Park Service investing a good deal of time into the maintenance and improvement of park roads. These roads required routine repairs from wear and tear and environmental factors such as heavy rains and washouts. The early dirt roads were also sprinkled with water to decrease dusty travel conditions, particularly along the road between the West Thumb Developed Area

and the Upper Geyser Basin. Other activities associated with road maintenance were described in annual superintendent reports; these projects were diverse and ranged from altering the vegetation cover near roads for aesthetic purposes (Figure 46) to eliminating

Figure 46. Road Maintenance at Yellowstone Lake

Road maintenance between 1892 and 1932 included clearing trees for scenic purposes and preparing sites for future development. This 1926 photo provides a glimpse of some of these activities that were recorded in park records for Yellowstone Lake as early as 1906. [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



outdated infrastructure. Superintendent Albright comments on these “vista clearing” projects in his 1926 report; “[t]his cleanup work is greatly improving the scenic character of the park roads, and has been subject of a vast amount of favorable comment by tourists” (Albright 1926, 10-11). Some of the aspects of the “cleanup work” were described in a 1929 report; park crews completed “landscape engineering” such as

“planting shrubs or trees”, they removed “logs and debris of that nature along roads,” and eliminated “obsolete structures such as sprinkling tanks, pipe lines, etc” (Toll 1929, 18).

The National Park Service also used park roads to shape an aesthetic experience of the lake and park. The routes and sights that the roads traveled around dictated in many ways what visitors would see and experience in the park and at the lake. By 1930, the lake road system included an automobile route around the northern shore of the lake, along the shoreline from the Lake Butte on the northeast side of the lake to the West Thumb Developed Area on the southwest side of the lake. A 1930 National Park Service brochure described the trip from “West Thumb” to “Lake Junction” as a “lake-shore drive all the way” (United States Department of Interior 1930, 40). The road system connected the Lake Developed Area to other park settlements and features to the east, north, and west of Yellowstone Lake. A number of smaller roads were also built at the developed areas of Fishing Bridge, Lake Area, and West Thumb to facilitate auto movement in these settlements.

By the close of this period, national highway networks connected Yellowstone with regional and transcontinental roadways (see Figure 33). Visitors were encouraged to travel to the park over “good connecting automobile roads from a number of the main transcontinental automobile highways” (United States Department of the Interior 1931, 14). However, the main road around the lake was not completely paved until after 1932. Auto tourists could access the park through the north entrance at Gardiner, Montana, the east entrance from Cody, Wyoming, the west entrance through West Yellowstone, Montana via U.S. Highway 10 which roughly followed the Yellowstone Trail. Finally, the Lincoln Highway was another major transcontinental road that connected the eastern

United States to park roads from a southerly approach (United States Department of the Interior 1931, 14).

Bridges

There were several bridges built around Yellowstone Lake to accommodate travelers over streams or rough terrain. Once the road along the northern perimeter of the lake was built along the shoreline—the more direct but less scenic route between Bridge Bay and the northern extent of West Thumb Bay—the augmented Natural Bridge enhanced by Norris’s efforts in the 1880’s was no longer used for everyday traffic. However, the natural limestone arch continued to attract attention as a natural feature of interest at the lake. Park engineers also had to build a number of bridges across small streams that flowed into Yellowstone Lake. In 1897, Acting Superintendent Young mentions building one of these bridges “over [a] ravine near west thumb of lake” (1897, 4). Another crossing that required a bridge—as well as regular maintenance—was a portion of the early lakeshore road that ran across a natural sandbar near the lake. The sand made the road surface unstable. In addition, a small creek—Arnica Creek—drained into Yellowstone Lake at this site and often added to the instability of the crossing. (see Figure 43).

One of the more prominent bridge building projects in terms of its effect on the transportation geography of Yellowstone Lake was the bridge over the Yellowstone River near the outlet from Yellowstone Lake. Rebuilt and realigned a number of times, the Fishing Bridge served an important role at the lake as a major stream crossing. During the early park years, there was no bridge across the Yellowstone River at the lake outlet to afford visitors easy access to the eastern shores of Yellowstone Lake. During

this time, some visitors traveling on horseback did ford the river and explore its eastern perimeter, but these instances were few and far apart. The deep, cold, waters of the river flowing out of the lake often proved too difficult to cross for carriages or stagecoaches. In 1902, a 360 foot bridge “carried on piling bents 16 feet apart” (Figure 47) was built over the Yellowstone River near the lake outlet (Haines 1977b, 228). The bridge was aligned to cross the river with its eastern rampart farther upstream than its western end. This early bridge also had an arch in its center to accommodate row boats passing underneath it. By 1914, this bridge acquired the moniker “Fishing Bridge” because of the many fishing people who sought out this location to take advantage of the trout spawning grounds (Whittlesey 1997, 80). Fishing Bridge was rebuilt in 1919 (see Figure 47) to accommodate increasing auto traffic and pedestrians on the bridge.

Boating Routes

Boating was an early feature of Yellowstone Lake’s transportation geography. By 1892, a steamboat ferry service was operating regular shuttled trips between the West Thumb thermal basin and the Lake Hotel. This shuttle service was operated by the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company; the company worked collaboratively with the stagecoach companies to integrate the lake ferry into the tour of the lake. The early park stagecoach tour traveled from the Upper Geyser Basin to the West Thumb Developed Area and then onto the Lake Hotel. Guests would stop at West Thumb to have lunch and take a break from the confines of their stagecoaches. After this intermission, they could either take the stagecoach to the Lake Hotel or board a steamboat and be ferried across the lake. While the steamboat ride cost each passenger an extra fare on top of the

Figure 47. The Fishing Bridge over the Yellowstone River

The first bridge built over the Yellowstone River (top) near its outlet from Yellowstone Lake served as an important piece of infrastructure to the emerging transportation geography of Yellowstone Lake. This bridge provided safe passage across the cold, deep waters of the Yellowstone River and soon gained cultural significance as an ideal spot from which to fish or boat. The bridge was rebuilt in 1919 with a slightly different alignment and design. The bottom photograph shows the bridge after this second rebuilding and after the 1926 construction of a floating boat rental hut near the bridge. [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



stagecoach tour, it provided a quicker trip to the hotel and the opportunity to take in the vast expanses of the lake from a floating vantage point.

Mention of the trip is made in a government report from 1895: “The Boat

Company this season is obtaining a large percentage of the travel. It enables parties to reach the Lake Hotel several hours earlier than they would if they remained in the stages besides furnishing a delightful trip over one of the most beautiful sheets of water in the world” (Anderson 1895, 10). Acting Superintendent Anderson described the ferry across the lake; “the steamer on the lake has been running successfully...and adds much to the pleasure of a trip through the park. It is commodious and comfortable, and I believe perfectly safe. It is now made a part of the park transportation, and carries passengers, at their option, from the Thumb to the Lake Hotel, thus relieving them of 18 miles of tedious staging” (Anderson 1892, 7). Anderson also commented on the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company’s business of renting rowboats and fishing tackle to intrepid fishing parties; “I believe the boat company has enough small boats for the demands of fishing parties, but I think prices might be lowered where boats are used continuously for several hours” (Anderson 1892, 7).

The superintendent’s comments allude to what would soon be a common point of contention between the boat company and its clients—prices and quality for services rendered. In the next year’s annual park report, Anderson made a more direct reference to visitor dissatisfaction with the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company. “The steamer continues to be satisfactorily run, and is greatly enjoyed by all tourists who make the trip on it. There are complaints that an extra fare is charged for the ride, but people who do not care to pay it have the option of going on the Lake Hotel from the Thumb in regular coaches without extra price” (Anderson 1893, 10). However, the author makes a suggestion to alleviate some of the tensions between the boat company and its clients: “If the amount of travel on the boat would warrant a reduction of fare, and the transportation

company could make a small refund to those who used the boat, I believe all cause of complaint would be removed” (Anderson 1893, 10). The coming years only saw more grievances expressed about the boating company:

The complaints that I have heard in regard to it [the steamboat] are principally with regard to high charge, which is unavoidable on account of the small amount of patronage and the great expense of conducting the enterprise. It is a pity that this boat can not be made part of the regular Park transportation, and be used or not at the will of tourists, without extra expense. At present there seems not a good way of accomplishing this result. Mr. Walters, the manager of the Boat Company, is courteous, and attentive to the wants and the interest of his passengers. The complaints against him are mostly from overcharge of damage done fishing tackle, and other minor items furnished by him (Anderson 1895, 10).

Even with these complaints about the boat company, government officials were quick to support the boat company’s services and to call for an increase in boating activity on Yellowstone Lake. After a particularly difficult economic recession for park businesses, the superintendent remarked: “The boat company has suffered quite as much as other industries in the Park from lack of patronage. The boat has been put in excellent condition, and it furnishes one of the most delightful bits of travel on the tour. The proposition to put a few small steam or naphtha launches on the lake has not been carried out, but I believe it would prove remunerative and certainly would be a great accommodation to tourists” (Anderson 1894, 8). Many facets of the boat service were the object of praise. Acting Superintendent Anderson found that “[t]he boat is safe, clean, is capable of carrying as many passengers as will ever desire to use it and is deserving of patronage” (Anderson 1895, 10). E. C. Waters—the owner of the boat company as well as the head operator of the steamboat—also was the subject of commentary. “Mr. Walters, the manager of the Boat Company, is courteous and attentive to the wants and the interest of his passengers” (Anderson 1895, 10). Some of the

compliments about the boating service referred to the quality of the boat ride on the turbulent waters of Yellowstone Lake: “The Lake Boat Company transacted business, so far as my observation extended, in a satisfactory manner. I made several trips on the boat during the season—one in a severe windstorm—and the boat showed herself to be a staunch craft; every portion [*sic*] appeared neat and polite, courteous, and obliging” (Young 1897, 6).

Although the steamboat at Yellowstone Lake was operated according to a joint agreement with stagecoach companies, the two forms of travel were often in competition. An 1897 park guidebook describes the stagecoach route to be about nineteen miles and the steamer trip at about forty miles; even with the extended mileage the steamer tour was described as “very restful and is made in less time than the stage schedule” (Guptill 1897, 79). The choice of transportation at the lake did not escape the gaze of the park superintendents: “The steamboat company operates one steamboat, which daily makes the trip from the lunch station on the lake (known as West Thumb) to the Lake Hotel, and affords the tourist, whatever means of transportation he may use in making the park trip, an opportunity to take an exceedingly beautiful and interesting trip of some three hours on the lake” (Erwin 1898, 4).

As the boat tours continued to operate on Yellowstone Lake, the trip was critiqued for its safety, comfort, and scenic values. Looking at the comments made about the trip in government reports and guidebooks not only gives us a view into the perceived quality of the trip, it also provides information about the type of transportation used, the route the steamboat used across the lake, and the role of the steamer trip in Yellowstone Lake’s transportation geography. Reconstructing the route that the steamboat took across the

lake was a particularly elusive task for me in my research. Unlike the roads, trails, and bridges at Yellowstone Lake whose impression was recorded on the landscape and visible in land and aerial photographs and maps, the steamboat's path was ephemeral—visible only for the brief moments after the boat cut across the water—the route leaves few impressions upon the landscape to trace its outline. During the early years of steamboat service on the lake, the variables were few in number; there was only one steamboat that operated at the lake and it made one trip daily across the lake.

Later the pattern became more complex as more boats were added to the tour and the steamboats operated tours around the lake as well as a ferry across it. Two sources of data that I found about the route of the early steamboat across the lake were a brief comment about the tour in an 1897 park guidebook and a map (see Figure 42) in a 1912 guidebook. The 1897 guidebook provides a written description of part of the route of the steamboat as traveling “around the islands of this charming lake” (Guptill 1897, 79). Although the route along the shoreline might have proven an easier route in terms of wind protection, taking the longer route into the deeper lake water would have been reasonable too; by using this route the large steamer boat could have avoided shallow ground while also providing tourists the opportunity to view the lake's islands from a closer vantage point.

The quality of service provided by the boat operator also continued to be a selling point of the trip to the public. A park superintendent's report included the review:

The steamer Zillah, running daily trips on Yellowstone Lake... has given full satisfaction to the public. I have made many trips on the boat, always found her in perfect condition, and thoroughly safe. The entire personnel of the boat are always attentive and polite to the passengers, doing everything for their pleasure and enjoyment. In addition to the regular tourist business, this steamer has had many excursions (see Figure 25) (Erwin 1898, 7).

It seems that the increased popularity of the boat ride provided enough business and interest for the boat tours to diversify their business into other “excursions” in later years before automobile touring pushed the steamers out of business (Figure 48). In fact, the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company took advantage of its leased pieces of real estate around the lake and started offering trips to various points around the lake including its islands. One of the locations that the boating company incorporated into the ferry service from Thumb to Lake Hotel was a short stop at Dot Island. Of the various leased holdings

Figure 48. Boat Tours on Yellowstone Lake

As boating on Yellowstone Lake became more popular, tours on the lake extended beyond basic steamboat ferry service across the lake. This undated photo provides a glimpse into the type of boats used for these trips and the guests who embarked on lake tours. [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



around the park, the company had one acre on Dot Island and two acres for a “Dot Island Game Corral,” according to an 1897 agreement (Young 1897, 10). The “game corral” was present on the island before 1897. A park superintendent report the year before notes that “Mr. Waters has put on Dot Island a few bison, mountain sheep, and elk. Upon each

trip he lands the passengers at this point in order that they may see the game, and I believe it adds not a little to their enjoyment. All these animals were obtained outside the park and shipped into it by Mr. Waters” (Anderson 1896, 10). The zoological attraction on Dot Island was operated until 1907 when the park superintendent ordered it to be removed and disbanded because of inhumane treatment of the animals and frequent complaints for tourists about the conditions of the game pens.

The ebb and flow of tours on the lake continued throughout the early 1900’s with continued praise and criticism. The popularity of the boat trip may be seen in the number of passengers that chose to take a break from the stagecoach tours to travel across the mystic Yellowstone Lake (Table 2). The number of people who took the boat trip across the lake steadily rose from 1897 to a peak in 1909; of the 10,825 total visitors to Yellowstone National Park in 1897, 2,589 of those people chose to travel on the steamboat across the lake during their park tour (Young 1897). The peak in patronage of the boat tours was in 1909, when 7,959 of the 32,545 total Yellowstone tourists boarded the wooden planked boat to cross the lake (Benson 1909). After 1909 and until the forced park concessionaire consolidation in 1916, business started to dwindle for the boat tours. A rising tide of complaints about the boat tour accumulated throughout this period and may have contributed to the diminishing boating business.

The decline in steamboat passengers may have also been due to the increasing popularity of boat rentals. Comments concerning the boating trade during this period are often conflicting. For example, a government report noted that while the “boat provided by this company is apparently seaworthy, in good repair, staunch, and safe. The trip in this boat from the Thumb to the Lake Hotel is greatly enjoyed by the majority of tourists

who take it” (Pitcher 1901, 7). However, the same report found that “[w]hile the service on the steamer has apparently been entirely satisfactory to the tourists, there have been many verbal complaints concerning the excessive charges for the hire of small boats, fishing tackle, etc. by this company” (Pitcher 1901, 7). In 1901, it seems that the boating

Table 2. Boat Passenger and Park Visitor Statistics by Year

Compiled from Annual Superintendent Reports for Yellowstone National Park (1897-1916) and from Haines, A. 1977b. *The Yellowstone Story: A History of Our First National Park*. Volume II. Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming: Yellowstone Library and Museum Association.

Note: Passenger counts for boat shuttle were not recorded in the superintendent reports before 1897 or after 1916.

Passengers on ferry across Yellowstone Lake	Year	Number of visitors to Yellowstone National Park
2,589	1897	10,825
2,256	1898	6,534
3,106	1899	9,579
3,050	1900	8,928
3,378	1901	10,769
3,728	1902	13,433
3,598	1903	13,165
3,826	1904	13,727
7,362	1905	26,188
5,188	1906	17,102
5,275	1907	16,414
4,506	1908	18,748
7,959	1909	32,545
5,796	1910	19,575
3,048	1911	23,054
3,305	1912	22,970
4,205	1913	24,929
3,537	1914	20,250
4,277	1915	51,895
2,558	1916	35,849

service between the West Thumb Developed Area and the Lake Hotel was the main attraction and business was running smoothly minus the complaints about the smaller boat rentals. The next year's superintendent's annual report provided a different view of lake transportation; in opposition to Acting Superintendent Anderson's 1895 comments that the steamboat was "capable of carrying as many passengers as will ever desire to use it" (1895, 10), a 1902 report records that "[i]f the trip on the Yellowstone Lake is ever to be included in the regular trip around the park it will be necessary to place a larger boat or more smaller ones on the lake, as the one now in use is entirely too small to carry with safety and comfort all of the passengers to whom tickets would have to be issued" (Pitcher 1902, 12).

By 1902, park government officials were calling for a more diversified business base in transportation at the lake. A 1902 report gives us a glimpse of the lake transportation scene: "[v]ery little use is made of the lake at present beyond taking the trip from the Thumb to the Lake Hotel, but I believe that its beauties and attractions would be greatly enjoyed by many tourists if the boating facilities were better" (Pitcher 1902, 12). The author of this report even continues his discussion of the "boating facilities" to suggest that there needs to be more competition for the boat company on the lake. By 1905, the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company still held exclusive rights to commercial boating (see Table 1) on the lake but tensions seemed to be growing between the park officials and the concessionaire. Acting Superintendent Pitcher cites efforts to not have an extra charge for the boat ride from the "Thumb" to the Lake Hotel as "impossible" (1905, 5). He also cites complaints about the "excessive charges...for the hire of small boats on the lake" (Pitcher 1905, 5). He calls for some other "individual of

company” to keep small boats for hire at Lake Hotel and “Thumb lunch stations” and says that this does not violate the boat company’s lease to have competition (Pitcher 1905, 5).

Tensions between the government authorities and the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company came to a climax in 1906. Acting Superintendent Pitcher’s report records complaints about how the boat company did not cooperate with other transportation companies operating at the lake to bring more boats on the water or to abandon the extra charge for the steamboat trip across the lake. The penultimate expression of the strain between the superintendent and the boat company seems to come in 1906; by this year, Acting Superintendent Pitcher requests that the company’s lease not be renewed by the U.S. Department of the Interior. He also says that if the lease is renewed, then additional leases should be issued for lake transportation. To this end, he mentions that the Monida and Yellowstone Stage Company and the Wylie Permanent Camping Company were interested in operating a shuttle boat from the West Thumb Developed Area to the Lake Hotel (Pitcher 1906, 7-8). In 1908, the structure of boating operations shifted and resulted in a brief break in boating services at Yellowstone Lake. Superintendent Young’s 1908 annual report mentions that the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company was transferred to the new business of the T.E. Hofer Boat Company (1908, 6). The new company had a rocky start, however. The superintendent’s report mentions that “inclement weather” kept the company from putting commercial boats on the water until halfway through the season (Young 1908, 6).

Even with the new lake concessionaire, demands for more services and a reduction in fees continued to shape lake transportation infrastructure. As technology

and visitor demands changed, so too did the lake boating scene. According to a 1911 *Articles of Incorporation of the Yellowstone Park Boat Company* (a concessionaire name change from the T.E. Hofer Company- see Table 1), the boat company was licensed “to own, control, and operate boats propelled by steam, electricity, gasoline, or any other motive power upon the Yellowstone lake [sic]...to lease, loan, hire row and sail boats, fishing tackle, and other pleasure crafts and appliances” (*Articles of Incorporation of the Yellowstone Park Boat Company* 1923). An interesting facet of this agreement is that the company was allowed to operate watercraft powered by “gasoline, or any other motive power” on the lake. Although automobiles were not officially admitted to the park until 1915, motor powered craft were allowed on the lake by 1911.

The variety of propulsion devices mentioned in the Yellowstone Park Boat Company agreement with the government may have foreshadowed changes ahead for boating on Yellowstone Lake. The 1915 admission of automobiles into Yellowstone not only changed transportation networks on land; they changed the face of boating on Yellowstone Lake. According to historian Aubrey Haines “transportation across the lake” was made “unprofitable by the automobile” (1977b, 274). The decline in lake ferry service indicates more than just the speed of automobiles compared to steamboats. Early autos had a difficult time negotiating early park roads and the drive between the West Thumb Developed Area and Lake Hotel certainly remained time consuming. Instead, the lack of ferry business may have been an indicator of the flow of traffic around the lake. The steamboat offered what was described as a pleasant alternative to stagecoach travel during the early years of the business. In this circulation pattern, there is a heavy emphasis on traffic going from west to east around the lake. The choice before the tourist

was between two forms of transportation going to the same destination, but along different routes and at different speeds. The automobile changed this circulation pattern. Tourists traveling in autos could be traveling through the park on an organized tour or they could be driving around the lake in private vehicles. If visitors were traveling in a private car and wishing to end their day at the Lake Hotel, then they had no way of getting their car to that destination. The new auto tourists needed a more flexible option for traveling on the lake (one that did not require them to abandon their cars at the West Thumb Developed Area) as well as more of an incentive to patronize the boating operations.

Boating on Yellowstone Lake changed in other ways during this period. From a steam-powered vessel ferrying passengers between a West Thumb boat dock to the Lake Hotel boat docks to motorized moonlight cruises across the lake, the appearance of boating shifted to accommodate changing government regulations and shifting visitor transportation routes. Boats used in this period included steamboats, small rowboats, larger motor boats, small propeller craft, and sailboats. Different forms of floating transportation involved changing infrastructure to dock them, service them, and move people onto them.

Haines (1977) argues that the creation of the National Park Service and the forced concessionaire consolidations seriously hampered continued boat tours across the lake. Faced with the hurdles of consolidation and declining business, boat concessionaires relied more heavily on boat rentals, fishing gear rentals, guide services, and tours around the lake (as opposed to the scheduled ferry between the West Thumb area and Lake Hotel). By 1919, Hamilton Stores operated a boat rental business under an agreement

with the Yellowstone Park Boat Company. Park records did not indicate that this business flourished. While discussing the concessionaires in the park, Superintendent Albright mentions that the Yellowstone Park Boat Company has

rendered little service to the public this season. Its store at the Lake was operated by C. A. Hamilton. This company has very little useful boat equipment. Its big boats are in poor condition and will not meet present demands for service on the lake, and its small boats, except two 45-foot gasoline boats and a few launches, are old, dilapidated, and unsafe. This company has not furnished satisfactory equipment for boat service since 1916 (Albright 1919, 81).

Albright continued his remarks about the joint operation between Hamilton Stores and the boat company that faintly recall earlier suggestions made by park superintendents to expand and elaborate boating recreation on Yellowstone Lake. Concerning the boat company, Albright suggests that “[i]t should be required to purchase new equipment before the opening of the next season and be prepared to meet all demands for row-boat and launch service, as well as for longer trips to the upper arms of Yellowstone Lake. If it can not meet the requirements of the Service some other individual or corporation should be found who will develop the recreational advantages of this beautiful Lake” (Albright 1919, 81). Albright’s comments echo previous park superintendents’ criticisms of boating on the lake; park managers made references that focused on safety standards, an interest in longer tours to various locations around the lake, and increasing competition for business on Yellowstone Lake.

By the end of 1932, Yellowstone Lake boaters had abandoned steam powered locomotion in favor of motor boats. Correspondence between the park superintendents and concessionaires noted increasing motor boat inventories. A 1921 report records that the Yellowstone Park Boat Company bought a new “speed boat” that held eleven people, had an 185 horsepower engine, and could travel between 35 and 40 miles per hour (U.S.

Department of the Interior 1921-22, 41). The reference to passenger loads may be an indicator that the boat company was offering tours around the lake to smaller groups than the steamboats once carried.

An interesting feature of these smaller boat tours is a seeming revival of the boating service between West Thumb and Lake Hotel. Although Aubrey Haines argues that automobile traffic virtually put an end to “transportation across the lake” (1977b, 274), other records suggest that the boat touring companies were more resilient to changing economic and transportation demands than Haines allows. I did find that discussions of lake tours decreased after 1916 and records of ferry passengers were not available in the superintendent annual reports after 1916 (see Table 2); however, I also found that boat ferries between West Thumb and the Lake Hotel did not cease after 1916. I found several photographs of small motor boat tours on the lake dated after 1916 but I also found a direct written reference to a shuttle between West Thumb and Lake Hotel in a 1928 park guidebook (Figure 49). A Northern Pacific Railway brochure refers to “[a] speed boat operating between the Thumb and Lake Hotel, meets the regular park-tour automobiles, offering visitors a pleasant diversion during the journey around the Park” (Northern Pacific Railway 1928, 19). The railroad guide suggests that visitors buy their tickets for the boat ride at “Old Faithful Inn or Lodges” for \$2.50 a person (Northern Pacific Railway 1928, 19).

The data also indicate that the boating company was investing more time and financial resources in developing boat rental operations, guiding services, and boat tours around the lake. Yellowstone Park Boat Company bought ten “new steel rowboats” (Albright 1925, 33). In 1928 and again in 1930, Yellowstone Park Boat Company

Figure 49. Motor Boat Tours on Yellowstone Lake

Motorized travel on Yellowstone Lake proved a popular way to see the lake, either by a guided tour such as the one pictured below or in a private motor boat. [Northern Pacific Railroad 1928, 22.]



purchased more boats (Albright 1928, 19; Toll 1930, 23). With the addition of these boats to the company's inventory, they could offer park visitors scenic boat tours around the lake as well as fishing tours. By 1928, tours were offered to the Southeast Arm, Flat Mountain Arm, South Arm, and to Steamboat Point at Yellowstone Lake (Northern Pacific Railway 1928, 19). Another brochure, dated around 1929, informed park visitors of "Speed Boat Thrill Rides" that included a seventeen mile "morning trip," "twilight trips" on boats holding five, nine, or twenty passengers, and "special trips" such as "[m]oonlight trips" and trips to the "Southeast Arm and the various islands" (*What to do at Yellowstone Lake* n.d.). This same brochure also included a discussion of boating services at the West Thumb "boat house on the lake shore, where motor boats, row boats, guides, tackle for sale or rent, are available" (*What to do at Yellowstone Lake* n.d.). By

1932, the two main sites of boating operations at Yellowstone Lake were the boat docks near the West Thumb thermal area and in front of the Lake Hotel. There was also a small boat rental hut located near the Fishing Bridge at the outlet of the Yellowstone River after 1926.

Government Structures

From 1892 to 1932, there were several government agencies operating at Yellowstone Lake. The agencies active at the lake during this period included the United States Army, the National Park Service, the United States Fish Commission (later the United States Bureau of Fisheries), and the United States Corps of Engineers. The United States Army was the appointed managing agency for Yellowstone until the creation of the National Park Service in 1916. The exchange involved a shifting of park policing forces and eventually a consolidation of the park concessionaire activity: “The orders from the War Department direct that the military force now guarding the park be withdrawn, Fort Yellowstone abandoned as a post, and the guardianship of the park transferred to the Interior Department, effective October 1, 1916. The Interior Department is organizing a ranger force to replace the troops” (Brett 1916, 45). This period begins with few government structures at Yellowstone Lake, but by the close of this period in 1932 there are government supported facilities at all three of the major developed areas around the lake (West Thumb, Lake Area, and Fishing Bridge). The types of structures built and maintained by government agencies at the lake include soldier stations, ranger stations, geographical markers, a fish hatchery complex, an interpretive museum, a bear feeding area, and automobile campgrounds. These structures

served a variety of functions from employee housing to interpretive facilities, while they all contributed to the evolving texture of Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape.

Soldier Stations, Ranger Stations, and Location Markers

The earliest government built and maintained permanent structure that I found evidence of in my data collection was a soldier station (see Figure 28) located near the lake outlet. Built in 1884, this structure was used to house seasonal army scouts and then park service rangers until 1923 when it was demolished (Whittlesey 1997, 154). Haines describes the lake soldier station as a “frame building...erected near the outlet of Yellowstone Lake” that was used as a summer station for army scouts; this structure was replaced with a “log station built on the edge of a meadow opposite the present Lake Lodge” and “probably by 1891, when the road was constructed from Old Faithful to Lake Hotel by way of Thumb Bay” (1977b, 185-6). Haines also reports that the lake station was used throughout the year for soldiers after 1898. Whittlesey describes a soldier station built on the northern shore of Yellowstone Lake on the west side of the Yellowstone River outlet in 1884.

Another soldier station at the lake was located at the West Thumb area. A tent location was established in 1882 although it does not appear that any permanent structure was maintained at this site until 1904. In that year a “frame building” was built at the West Thumb area (Haines 1977b, 185-6; Whittlesey 1997, 151). Mention was made of these structures in an 1899 government report in which the Acting Superintendent of Yellowstone made multiple references to summer “detachments” of soldiers stationed around the park to keep law and order including at the “Thumb west side of lake” and at “Lake Station near Lake Hotel” (Brown 1899). The “Thumb” tent shelter was probably

not a very substantial structure at this point, since the Acting Superintendent also refers to abandoning the Thumb site in the winter (Brown 1899). The soldier stations apparently were used seasonally and as shelter for roving park patrols. When discussing the route of soldier patrols in 1899, Acting Superintendent Brown mentions that for winter patrolling, soldiers would go to Lake Station then along the east shore to the “southeast arm of the lake to cabin on Trappers Creek” (Brown 1899, 12).

Precise construction dates of these lakeshore soldier stations are difficult to reconstruct. Although historian Aubrey Haines records a soldier station at Lake Outlet by 1887 and one at “Thumb Bay” by 1897 (1977b, 185-6) records indicate an earlier date for the lake station (1884) and a later date for the Thumb station (1904). Research revealed a reference to a station at the West Thumb area in 1904 in Hiram Chittenden’s road report printed in Acting Superintendent Pitcher’s annual report for that year. Chittenden mentioned building “Two new station houses” with “one at the Thumb of the Lake” (Chittenden 1904, 13). The report does not specify the use of the “station” house at West Thumb; it may have been used by U.S. Army soldiers or even by members of Chittenden’s road building crew. Possible reasons for this discrepancy may be references to different locations (perhaps the Haines reference is to a building at some other site near the West Thumb Bay) or variations in what is considered a soldier station (a tent or a log frame building).

By the 1920’s plans were in the works to modify the older soldier stations and to build new ranger facilities at Yellowstone Lake. When the National Park Service was created to oversee the management and policing of Yellowstone, the agency took over many of the structures previously used by the U.S. Army. At Yellowstone Lake,

National Park Service rangers replaced the army patrols of the region and began using the soldier stations for temporary quarters and stations while on ranger duty. By 1921, the park superintendent proposed a plan to refurbish the structures at the Lake Developed Area and add a “community center” for rangers to provide educational services to park visitors. In his annual report, Albright discusses building the new lake ranger station, which was due for completion in 1923: “The lake station has become one of the talked-of structures of the park” (U.S. Department of the Interior 1921-1922, 20-21). The Lake Ranger station was completed with the “community room” in 1923 (Figure 50). The National Park Service was aiming for “an interpretive approach” that was “low-keyed and entertaining” during this period (Haines 1977b, 303).

A ranger station with a community room was one of the structural realizations of this interpretive style and it was “an entirely new type of facility” (Haines 1977b, 304). Haines describes the ranger station with community room as a “rustic hall, adorned with elk antlers, sheep horns, and bison skulls” that “served an information purpose by day: a place where visitors could get their bearings and any other help they might need” (1977b, 304). However, an alternative atmosphere was present at night where “visitors could listen to a ‘lecturer’ talk about the Park and join in group singing” (Haines 1977b, 304). A circa 1929 brochure advertises the ranger station as being “[l]ocated on the lake front within five minutes walk of the hotel. Authentic information, maps, etc., concerning the Park may be obtained” (*What to do at Yellowstone Lake* n.d.). A government report also mentions that alterations were under way at the “Lake Engineer Station” which would involve adding another room to the structure so that it could serve as a winter ranger

station (U.S. Department of the Interior 1921-22, 20-21). This reference may be to the old “station houses” constructed under Chittenden’s supervision, though it

Figure 50. Lake Ranger Station with Community Room

The Lake Ranger Station (top) was built under the supervision of park Superintendent Horace Albright. The structure featured a log design and a community room (far right in bottom photo) where visitors to Yellowstone Lake could gather in the evening for interpretive programs and social events. [Photos by Author 2003.]



is unclear when and where the original “Lake Engineer Station” was built and whether this structure was part of the ranger station at the lake outlet.

There were several other notable National Park Service stations at Yellowstone Lake. A ranger station was also built at the West Thumb Developed Area in 1925 and served as a point for National Park Service information and interpretation (Spatial Analysis Center). A third ranger station was built in Fishing Bridge in 1928 and an accompanying naturalist employee residence was built in 1930 that was located adjacent to the ranger station (Spatial Analysis Center). Finally, the National Park Service built a backcountry ranger patrol station for horse and foot patrols of the lake in 1933 (Spatial Analysis Center).

The U.S. Army also installed three granite monuments (see Figure 21) around the shores of Yellowstone Lake. Installed by 1895—at locations on the north, south, and eastern shores of the lake—these stone blocks were small but lasting features of the cultural landscape of the lake. They were installed under the supervision of the park’s acting superintendent as geographic reference points to the park’s boundaries. After the passing of the Yellowstone Park Act in 1872, it took many years to formally survey the park’s boundaries. As Acting Superintendent, George S. Anderson felt that it was an important task of his tenure to formally mark the park boundaries. He oversaw the building of the granite monuments to mark the boundaries of Yellowstone National Park according to the description in the Yellowstone Park Act. He placed stone reference markers at “the most easterly and southerly points of the lake and the westerly point of Shoshone Lake” (Anderson 1895, 6). He also placed a granite block monument near the current site of the Lake Lodge according to the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey based on

a “running a line of levels from the end of the Northern Pacific Railroad at Cinnabar, Montana” (Haines 1977b, 222) and engraved references of latitude, longitude, and elevation onto the block. Acting Superintendent Anderson’s vision for this work included a better assessment of the area’s features: “As this monument is plainly visible from all the distant peaks surrounding the lake, it will be easy to conduct a system of triangulation and accurately locate the lines of the Park astronomically” (Anderson 1895, 6). He felt that the markers on the east, south, and north shores of Yellowstone Lake and the one of the west shore of Shoshone Lake were important to establish since “these are by law the initial points of the three boundaries of the Park” (Anderson 1895, 6). Although the elevation is not congruent with the accepted measurement, these markers were used as reference points for later mapping and planning efforts around the lake. Anderson considered the monument installations to be “the most important bit of work yet to be accomplished” under his supervision (Haines 1977b, 221).

Fish Hatchery Complex

Another government agency with early roots at Yellowstone Lake was the United States Fish Commission (U.S. Fish Commission). Initially a small outpost at the West Thumb area, the complex of buildings under the auspices of the U.S. Fish Commission—and its successor the United States Bureau of Fisheries (U.S. Bureau of Fisheries)—grew into multiple sites at both the West Thumb Area and the Lake Area. These complexes served a variety of evolving tasks over the years including regulated fish breeding sites, early interpretive facilities, and a source of food for lake area hotels.

In 1902, the U.S. Fish Commission “authorized Mr. D. C. Booth, superintendent of the hatchery at Spear Fish, S. Dakota, to construct a building at the West Thumb of the

Yellowstone Lake for the purchase of eying the eggs of the black-spotted trout” (Pitcher 1902, 5). The U.S. Fish Commission was interested in establishing a base of operations from where a representative could actively work to breed and stock varieties of fish with sporting value. A location at West Thumb (see Figure 42) was well placed for such activity since Arnica Creek flowed into the lake at this site and provided ample opportunities for the annual fish fry release. By 1903, the U.S. Fish Commission constructed “a small frame and log building at the West Thumb of the lake for the purpose of eyeing the eggs of the black-spotted trout” (Pitcher 1903, 4). Pitcher also refers to a “cabin” that was “occupied and kept” by Booth near the West Thumb hatchery site (1903, 4). In the early years of Yellowstone when there were few park employees to accommodate, it was convenient to build houses for employees close to their place of work.

In the coming years, the fish hatchery complex grew and enlarged. In a 1906 report, Acting Superintendent Pitcher mentions improvements made to the “buildings and surrounding grounds at the fish hatchery near the West Thumb of Yellowstone Lake” and the completion of a “log cottage and barn” at that site (Pitcher 1906, 9). In 1906, the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries took over the operations of the U.S. Fish Commission at Yellowstone Lake. The structures at the West Thumb fish hatchery site apparently needed more substantial construction or enlargement by 1907. In a government report from that year, a “fish hatchery near West Thumb on Yellowstone Lake on June 5” was opened to collect fish eggs (Young 1907, 12). Since a fish hatchery had been operating at West Thumb since 1903, this reference could be to an improved or enlarged structure or perhaps to another building located at the West Thumb bay.

Multiple references to hatchery operations at West Thumb occur in the park records over the next few years. In 1910 the fish breeding operations were included in an inventory of park buildings (Benson 1910, 8). A 1911 report included a reference to a “subhatchery located on the shore of Yellowstone Lake near Thumb and maintained by the Department of Commerce and Labor” (Mitchell 1911, 8). By 1912, the work of the fish hatchery was deemed worthy of new upgrades and financial investment: “Prompted by the splendid success of the work of the season of 1911...the bureau [U.S. Bureau of Fisheries] built two 20-foot motor boats and a 16-foot rowboat, and purchased a speed launch to do duty as a scout, and also added to the capacity of the plant so that a larger amount of eggs could be handled” (Brett 1912, 9). This improvement to the hatchery operations also plays into the transportation history of Yellowstone Lake. As with commercial boat tours on the lake, the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries was authorized to operate motorized boats on the lake years before automobiles were allowed into the park.

By 1913, the fish hatchery operations at Yellowstone Lake changed yet again. In his annual report, Acting Superintendent Brett describes a new building built by the Department of Commerce to establish a fish hatchery near the lake outlet (Figure 51): “The Department of Commerce made considerable improvements to its plant in the Park. A hatchery building 34 by 60 feet was constructed of hewed logs, shingled over to present an attractive appearance, on the site near the outlet of Yellowstone Lake selected and approved by the department last year” (Brett 1913, 8). This site also was well chosen for fish breeding operations with numerous streams flowing into Yellowstone Lake as well as the Yellowstone River outlet located in close proximity. Like the hatchery operations at West Thumb, the lake outlet site included employee housing and support

structures: A “loft was finished and used during the past season as quarters for the employees and will be available for storage use after other contemplated buildings are

Figure 51. Lake Developed Area Fish Hatchery

The Lake Fish Hatchery was “constructed of hewed logs, shingled over to present an attractive appearance” near the shores of Yellowstone Lake (Brett 1913, 8). Although the hatchery building is now vacant, it once was the site of extensive fish breeding programs and visitor interpretive displays. [Photo by Author 2003.]



constructed” (Brett 1913, 8). Although the 1913 report does not elaborate on the “contemplated buildings,” a government report for the next year refers to “important improvements” completed by the Bureau of Fisheries that year (Brett 1914, 13). In a 1914 annual report of the superintendent of Yellowstone, the author refers to a “bungalow...near Lake Hotel, and a frame barn large enough to accommodate four horses, with storage for hay and grain” constructed by the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries (Brett 1914, 13). The bureau also oversaw some landscaping activities at the fish hatchery site near lake outlet where the “grounds were much improved by clearing up fallen timber, trimming trees, and improving the lawn” (Brett 1914, 13).

The lake outlet hatchery was located close to the Lake Hotel and its fish breeding activities were of growing interest to park visitors. During his discussion of fish hatchery

operations at the Lake Developed Area, Acting Superintendent Brett mentions that the “workings of the U.S. Fish Commission in the park is a matter of considerable interest to tourists, and is the most important point for collection of eggs of the black-spotted trout in the world” (Brett 1913, 10). Indeed, it seems that by 1914 so much attention was paid to the fish hatchery operations that hatchery employees were moved to provide interpretive information for tourists; “the main buildings of the subhatchery, located within walking distance from the Lake Hotel, attract the attention of many travelers, and the working of the plant have become a matter of interest to so many tourists as to require at times the services of one of the attendants in the park as relating to his department” (Brett 1914, 13). Indeed, such programs may be the earliest organized interpretive activities at Yellowstone Lake.

Far from being an afterthought, the interpretive presentations at the Lake Fish Hatchery continued to grow: While discussing the success in releasing black-spotted trout eggs, the park superintendent relates that “[t]he fish hatchery is located close to the Lake Hotel and some of the permanent camps and is of great interest to tourists, who are always welcome to observe and to whom an attendant is always ready to explain the workings of the hatchery” (Brett 1916, 28). In one year the responsibilities of the fish hatchery employees increased in frequency from providing information to tourists “at times” to being “always ready to explain the workings of the hatchery.” In the coming years, the fish hatchery continued to draw attention as an attraction to visit at Yellowstone Lake. A 1929 park brochure informed visitors that they are “invited to visit the Fish Hatchery near the Lake Hotel at any time during daylight hours. The attendant will be pleased to explain the work to you” (*What to do at Yellowstone Lake* n.d.). The

hatchery complex expanded during the final years of this period when, in 1930, a South District Office was built and then, in 1932, a residence was added to the complex (Spatial Analysis Center).

Another facet of the fish hatchery operation was its role in providing fresh fish for tourist fare. Copious quantities of trout were caught daily by both park visitors near the lake outlet of the Yellowstone River and by park lodging operators. Although regulations were in place to limit the number of fish that visitors could catch each day, the hotel and camp concessionaires temporarily escaped such policies. A 1918 report recorded a “Hatchery, located on the shore of Yellowstone Lake near its outlet, was operated during the summer as usual by the United States Fish Commission” (Lindsley 1918, 29). The author of the report continues that “[f]ishing was excellent throughout the summer, and many fine catches were taken by tourists and employees. No violations of the law were reported. Exception was made as the number to be taken in one day, in favor of the Camping Company, so as to provide the tables at the camps with trout, which are a great treat for tourists” (Lindsley 1918, 29). In another section of his annual park report, Albright discusses the concessionaire practice of catching fish for overnight visitors: “For many years it has been the practice to permit the catching of fish in some of the waters of the park, particularly in Yellowstone Lake, for table use in the hotels and camps...” (Albright 1919, 49-50).

However, the National Park Service barred hotels and camps from catching fish for their diner guests in 1919 based on revelations about the impact of “these catches” that were “made...after the spawning season had ended” (Albright 1919, 49-50). Albright continues his 1919 report: “Because of the apparent depletion of fish in so many streams

of the park this year, I reached the conclusion that this practice ought to be discontinued, and by the order made effective August 15, 1919, the further catching of fish for table use in the hotels and camps, except by tourists in strict accordance with the rules and regulations, was prohibited” (Albright 1919, 49-50). The park superintendent also provided some indication of the quantity of fish caught by the concessionaires: “Between the opening of the season and the effective date of this order the Yellowstone Park Hotel Company took 5, 327 pounds of fish from Yellowstone Lake and the Yellowstone Park Camping Company took from the same waters 2, 164 pounds” (Albright 1919, 49-50).

Museum and Bear Feeding Grounds

Before the 1930’s, interpretive activities at Yellowstone Lake were limited to the National Park Service operations at the Lake Ranger Station and the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries which conducted impromptu information sessions at the Lake Fish Hatchery. However, in 1931 formal, organized interpretive displays at Yellowstone Lake were built at the newly constructed Fishing Bridge Museum (Figure 52).

The museum was built close to the lake’s edge along the northern shore of the lake on the east side of the Yellowstone River outlet. The Fishing Bridge Museum marked a continuing commitment for the National Park Service to a dedicated style of architecture indigenous to national parks in the United States. As with the Lake Ranger Station which was designed as a place for ranger activity as well as an area of community gathering, the Fishing Bridge Museum was intended to house an interpretive display of lake ecology as well as showcase the beauty of the lake setting. The park service

Figure 52. Fishing Bridge Museum

The Fishing Bridge Museum was completed by 1931 and included organic architectural elements such as using native timber and stone to fortify its structure (top). Formal, organized interpretive activities were also conducted at the museum by National Park Service rangers (bottom) [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives].



attempted to display the museum's displays and the surrounding lake environment by using construction materials procured from around Yellowstone Lake and the careful positioning of the museum near the lakeshore. The museum was constructed out of

locally procured timber and stone that was intended to provide an organic reflection of the scenic beauty at the lake. It was also oriented so that as a visitor approached the museum from the parking lot to the east, they could view the lake through the museum's windowed entry and exit; the construction of the entryway was built with the "notion of focusing on the natural resources that the building was created to interpret" (The Official Website of Yellowstone National Park 2003). The museum was stocked with displays of preserved animal and plant specimens from around the lake, interpretive signs with written and pictorial descriptions of the lake's physical setting and habitats, and staffed by rangers available to assist visitors.

The National Park Service also built and maintained a bear feeding and viewing area behind the Lake Hotel. The attraction was publicized as bear "feeding grounds" which tourists were encouraged to visit (Northern Pacific Railway 1928, 19). Indeed, the bear feeding area did apparently become a part of the park tour as reported by Mrs. N.E. Corthell in her journal from a trip to Yellowstone in 1928. As an independent motor tourist of modest means, Mrs. Corthell described her fellow travelers of more affluent means; "At the Lake Hotel I saw women in party silks and loaded with diamonds strutting out to the garbage glen to look at the bears" (Corthell 1928, 42). Bear feeding grounds and display sites were also located at the Old Faithful area and Canyon area as contemporaries of the Lake area site. Park records did not indicate any description of what the lake bear feeding grounds looked like during their heyday. However, several park documents note its existence—through at least 1932—behind the Lake Hotel. Clues to the activities and orientation of the Lake Hotel feeding grounds are elusive in park records, but descriptions of other contemporary bear feeding areas in the park reveal at

least the general plan of these sties. A bear attraction area at the Grand Canyon area consisted of a seating area “behind a chain link fence on a hillside overlooking a concrete platform behind a chain link fence...overlooking a concrete platform where fifty or more bears, many of them grizzlies, would congregate each summer evening to forage the hotel garbage” (Haines 1977b, 304). As the popularity of this activity increased at the Grand Canyon site, park service rangers started providing a short interpretive commentary on bear behavior and activity.

Automobile Campgrounds

Not long after the entrance of the first automobile into Yellowstone National Park, government agencies began constructing free public auto campgrounds. The first such facility at Yellowstone Lake was constructed at the Lake Developed Area in 1916 (Figure 53). The idea behind these developments was to provide a place for tourists “traveling in private automobiles and carrying their own camp equipment” (Brett 1916, 42). Driving forces behind these developments included the desire to increase the numbers of visitors traveling in private automobiles and the need to control the accumulating refuse around the park near the larger number of scattered and unorganized camping grounds. Archival records indicated several descriptions of garbage and trash piles littering the roadsides of the park. An increasing awareness of the unorganized and polluted camping areas is evident in the superintendent descriptions of the auto camps as “special sanitary camps” which were built at Mammoth Hot Springs, the Upper Geyser Basin, and the Grand Canyon in addition to the facility at the Lake Developed Area (Brett 1916, 42). These camps were described as including a “large shed for housing automobiles, with a capacity of 12 cars at each point, toilets for men and women, and

Figure 53. Early Lake Automobile Camp

As more tourists entered Yellowstone traveling in private automobiles, the demand arose for concentrated camping areas for their use. The National Park Service built a number of campgrounds for early park motorists such as the one pictured here in 1928. The facilities at these camps included a “large shed for housing automobiles, with a capacity of 12 cars at each point, toilets for men and women, and cooking grates” (Brett 1916, 42). [image printed in Schreier 1989, 80.]



cooking grates. Dry wood is provided at each place...all without charge to the tourist.

These facilities were appreciated and should be improved upon and...changed to provide for increased travel” (Brett 1916, 42). A detailed description of the automobile sheds was also included later in the superintendent’s annual report:

[a]t each camp was constructed a [sic] shed 60 by 32 feet, 8 feet high at the eaves, frames built of poles cut in the park and covered with 28-gauge corrugated steel roofing, painted. The sheds are divided by rows of supporting posts into six double stalls each 32

by 10 feet, each stall to hold two automobiles, making a total capacity of 12 automobiles to each shed. The sheds coast an average of \$292.81 (Brett 1916, 44).

The camps were monitored by “park employees” and their cleanliness was apparently secured by these employees who were also charged with “carrying away garbage and keeping the camping grounds strictly sanitary” (U.S. Department of the Interior 1917, 23-24).

The free public auto camps were well-used and popular features of the lake landscape. However, World War I resulted in fluctuating visitor numbers to the park and a general closing of facilities at Yellowstone Lake. During these years, the Lake Auto Camp was open only as an “Emergency camp” (Albright 1919, 1). However, after the war ended in 1918, visitors in the park increased and new demands were placed on the auto camp facilities at Yellowstone Lake. In 1921, the National Park Service built another free auto camp at Yellowstone Lake, this time at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area. During this same year, the auto camp at the Lake Developed Area was enlarged to include more camping sites. By 1923 the park service built yet another automobile camp at the West Thumb Developed Area (Haines 1977b, 365). In 1929, additional campsites and wider roads were built at the Fishing Bridge and West Thumb camps (Toll 1929). The three auto campgrounds—at the Lake, Fishing Bridge, and West Thumb Developed Areas—were all operating at the close of this period in 1932.

Concessionaire Structures

Before the forced concessionaire consolidation under a National Park Service directive in 1917, concessionaire activity in Yellowstone operated under many names and

owners (see Table 1). Haynes Studios also operated stores selling photographs at locations along the lake, but, unlike the other concessionaires mentioned here, my research did not reveal that this operation built a separate structure for his business at the lake during this time. Instead, Haynes picture shops were located inside of hotels or stores operated by other concessionaires at Yellowstone Lake. From the 1890's through 1916, these companies operated at different times at the lake and often changed their names and their owners.

Early concessionaires in the park were encouraged to provide a variety of services to the public; however the spatial extent of their building plans were regulated by the government. In 1893, Acting Superintendent Anderson mentions a law that concessionaires were not permitted to lease more than ten acres in the park and they could not build a hotel within a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile of "any geyser or other object of interest"(Anderson 1893, 4). This policy was altered only a year later so that companies could lease twenty acres and build within $\frac{1}{8}$ of a mile of points of interest. Looking at the distribution of land holdings at the lake reveals an interesting pattern of leasing at Yellowstone Lake; for example, although there were several concessionaires operating at the lake by 1897, Yellowstone Lake Boat Company was authorized to lease a greater proportion of land acreage than the other companies operating at the lake. The distribution of the company's leased sites varied across the lake to include shoreline as well as island locations. According to the 1897 annual report of the park superintendent, Yellowstone Lake Boat Company leased two acres of land near the Lake Hotel, two acres of land on Frank Island, two acres on Stevenson Island, one acre on Dot Island, one acre at the West Thumb Developed Area, two acres at the Southeast Arm (the site at this bay

was not specified), one acre of “Ways,” and six acres “[t]o be located by the superintendent” for a total of twenty acres (Young 1897, 20). The Yellowstone Park Transportation Company, in contrast, only leased a total of two acres at the lake and the Yellowstone Park Association only leased the space occupied by the Lake Hotel and a barn.

However, in 1917 the National Park Service reorganized and concentrated all of the existing concessions into one business (see Table 1) to handle park transportation (Yellowstone Park Transportation Company), one to handle park hotels (Yellowstone Park Hotel Company), one to handle camping facilities (Yellowstone Park Camping Company (formerly Wylie and Shaw and Powell), and one boating concessionaire (Yellowstone Park Boat Company). The general stores in the park were not reorganized under the park’s “process of consolidation begun with the 1916 mergers” (Haines 1977b, 365). Hamilton Stores later moved in as the park’s prime purveyor of merchandise.

The types of concessionaire structures built and maintained between 1892 and 1932 may be subdivided into several categories. Park concessionaires at Yellowstone Lake built several styles of overnight accommodations including hotels, permanent tent camps, and mixed cabin and lodge areas. Dining facilities built at the lake included lunch stations, cafeterias, and delicatessens. The private companies operating at Yellowstone Lake built support structures such as boat docks, barns, and equipment storage areas. Places of amusement were built including an animal viewing area on Dot Island. There were several types of stores built including places which rented boating equipment and fishing gear, groceries and park souvenirs, and automobile service stations. Finally, the

concessionaire operations built employee housing that ranged from houses to dorm buildings.

Overnight Accommodations

The period between 1892 and 1932 included vast changes to the number and spatial distribution of overnight lodging facilities at Yellowstone Lake. In 1892, the Lake Hotel—located on the west side of the Yellowstone River outlet from Yellowstone Lake—was the only permanent construction offering shelter to lake visitors for nightly lodging. The scheme quickly changed as roads were built around the northern shore of Yellowstone Lake and extended from West Thumb Bay to the Upper Geyser Basin and the south entrance to the park. A variety of overnight facilities blossomed around the lake that catered to tourists traveling by stagecoach, horse, and—later—by automobile. By 1932, we see the variety of concessionaire lodging expand and vary from a modest hotel at the lake outlet to a grand hotel, a couple of scattered and simple overnight facilities around the lake to a lodge and cabin complex with several permanent camping areas. Along with the government built and maintained auto campgrounds, these areas provided a wide range of guest accommodations and prices at Yellowstone Lake. Constructing and maintaining these structures, however, underwent many building phases as park concessionaires struggled against the ebb and flow of national economic and political trends.

The opening of this period finds Yellowstone Lake on the verge of being developed to accommodate increasing visitor numbers. Overnight lake lodging during these early years included the Lake Hotel, rooms at the West Thumb Developed Area, and a cabin with a short history of use along the north shore of the lake. One of the most

resilient and consistent features of Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape, was the Lake Hotel. Built on the west side of the Yellowstone River outlet on the north shore of Yellowstone Lake by the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1891, the original hotel was a simple structure offering eighty rooms for park visitor use (see Figure 29). The site for this hotel was found through the combined efforts of park superintendents (such as Norris) and Northern Pacific Railroad survey crews. The site for the early, simple Lake Hotel was selected for its scenic views across Yellowstone Lake and its proximity to the Yellowstone River outlet. Since the Yellowstone River was a geographic reference for travelers and the site of the earliest road to the lake, this location made sense in terms of accessibility. Although park records included many descriptions of later phases of the Lake Hotel's designs by architect Robert Reamer, the early hotel designs were not commented upon in park superintendent reports. The Lake Hotel is notable since it is the largest human structure present at Yellowstone Lake during this period (and throughout the lake's history).

Visitors traveling on horseback or with a guided stagecoach tour were encouraged to stay at the Lake Hotel. It was advertised as an excellent base location for launching other excursions through the park; according to a 1897 park guidebook the Lake Hotel was described as a "spacious and elegantly appointed" building that was predisposed "toward making the Yellowstone Lake the resort, par excellence, of the Park. Here everything is so arranged that guests can spend the entire season, if they so desire, making short, easy trips of sightseeing or explorations to all points of the great reserve" (Guptill 1897, 81-82).

These early years also included two other visitor accommodation sites at Yellowstone Lake—one at West Thumb Developed Area (Figure 54) and the other, a more ephemeral facility along the north shore of the lake. The early West Thumb station was a tent complex that including a dining area. The West Thumb lunch station was operated by the Yellowstone Park Association and opened by 1892 when the road between the West Thumb Developed Area and the Upper Geyser Basin was finished (Whittlesey 1997, 72).

Tourists traveling along the shores of Yellowstone Lake could also take advantage of another lodging site at the lake located near the Yellowstone River outlet. John Yancy shared his small cabin with park visitors traveling independently on horseback to Yellowstone Lake. Yancy offered limited facilities for those wishing to remain at the lake and take advantage of its fishing opportunities. Describing the cabin in 1893, Acting Superintendent Anderson recorded that Yancy “keeps a very primitive kind of place, but it gives the necessary accommodations to the fishing parties that go there, as well as travelers on the Cooke City road” (Anderson 1893, 5).

Mention of Yancy’s operation fades from the park superintendent reports soon after this description, but the Lake Hotel and West Thumb lunch station continued to be the main visitor lodging areas at the lake. Indeed by 1897, the park superintendent report includes a reference to the “[g]reatest number of tourists accommodated over night at each hotel” for the 1897 season with 212 people staying at the Lake Hotel on July 26 and 257 people staying at the Thumb lunch station on July 26 (Young 1897, 21). Whittlesey refers to “some overnight rooms” at the West Thumb lunch station for “those who wished to tarry” (1997, 72) but the park records from Young’s 1897 report indicate that the West

Thumb site was a larger operation than just a few rooms. The park records do not indicate the exact layout of the West Thumb site, but from historic photographs and superintendent references to this operation, visitors must have stayed inside the building of the lunch station and in nearby tents. The West Thumb lunch station was a term used to reference a site near the West Thumb geothermal basins where visitors could eat a meal in a permanent structure (see Figure 54) with the option of using some overnight rooms or tents.

Figure 54. Early West Thumb Dining and Lodging Facility

The lunch station at the West Thumb Developed Area was first established as a tent facility in 1892. Later a more permanent building (below) was constructed to replace the tents. This lunch station operated as both a dining spot for lake visitors as well as a center of lodging activity at the West Thumb Developed Area from 1903-1916. [undated image printed in Whittlesey 1997, 72.]



Increasing numbers of visitors to the Lake Hotel soon placed demands on the facility so that additions and renovations were completed on the hotel in the early twentieth century. Acting Superintendent Pitcher described the visitor appeal of the hotel: “The Lake Hotel has been a very popular place during the past season on account

of the delightfully cool weather always to be found there, and also on account of fine fishing in the lake. This place will increase in popularity as its advantages as a summer resort become known..." (Pitcher 1901, 7). The 1901 report also records the addition of seventeen new rooms to the hotel completed in 1900 as well as Pitcher's praise of the building as a "very comfortable and quite a modern structure, and during the past season has been one of the most popular places in the park. A number of people have spent a good part of the summer here and were so much pleased with the place that they expressed their intention of returning again next year" (Pitcher 1901, 9).

In 1903, extensive renovations were planned for the Lake Hotel. By 1904, famed park architect Robert Reamer designed additions and remodeling plans for the hotel that included ionic columns in the front of the building facing the lake, extending the roof in three places for three large porches, and adding fifteen false balconies onto the front of the hotel (Figure 55). Although park records did not indicate the reasons for this architectural style, Reamer may have designed the hotel to reflect the style of resorts in the eastern United States or to invoke a sense of elegance at the lake from classical architectural features such as the ionic columns. The 1904 park superintendent's annual report included this description of the transformed hotel: "The hotel at the lake outlet has been practically rebuilt and refurbished, and like the Old Faithful Inn it also has all of the modern conveniences, including suites of rooms with baths attached. It is now the largest hotel in the park. It has 210 rooms and can accommodate 466 guests. The Old Faithful Inn has 140 rooms and can accommodate 316 guests" (Picher 1904, 9). The reference to the Old Faithful Inn was not offhand; not only did the two hotels represent the most "modern" lodging buildings in the park at the time, they also shared the same architect.

Although the Old Faithful Hotel and Lake Hotel both were advertised with “modern conveniences,” their different architectural styles were not widely discussed or explained in park records.

Figure 55. Lake Hotel Expansion and Renovations
Concessionaires expanded the Lake Hotel’s rooming capacity through several renovations between 1892 and 1932. This 1905 photo shows the ionic columns and grand porches of a newly renovated hotel. Park tours, such as the stagecoach tour pictured below, could easily access the front of the hotel to pick up tourists. [image printed in Whittlesey 1997, 74.]



A third type of lodging available at Yellowstone Lake catered to those travelers on a tighter budget than the hotel guests and those willing to stay in more modest accommodations that the grand Lake Hotel afforded. The “permanent camping” companies established services at the Lake Developed Area and West Thumb Developed Area and then spread around the lake to include a site at the Fishing Bridge Developed

Area. Although Richard Bartlett (Bartlett 1985, 187) records only one permanent camping operation at Yellowstone Lake—at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area—the park archives revealed that by 1898, The Wylie Permanent Camping Company also established camps at the Lake and West Thumb locations (Erwin 1898, 6; Young 1907, 8).

The camps became very popular features of Yellowstone Lake, but the Wylie Company had a rough start with the government leasing process. Early park superintendents expressed disapproval of the camping permits in the park. Although park managers realized the need for an intermediate form of lodging for those visitors on budgets (Anderson 1893, 9), they also were concerned that the camping companies would only perpetuate some of the less desirous actions of the private camping groups who already traveled through the park; complaints of littering and uncontrolled fires near camping sites were frequent in early park superintendent reports. Acting Superintendent Anderson discouraged permanent camping leases such as the one that Wylie Camping Company sought because he feared that such sites might lead to a “shanty” which would be a “desecration of the Park” (Anderson 1893, 10). Anderson also cited that those park visitors who travel with their own transportation may use “any unoccupied bit of ground for their camps” as this was a “right” (Anderson 1893, 9-10). However, park superintendents finally relented and, in 1896, the park granted Wylie Permanent Camping Company an annual pass with the rights to establish permanent camps and to operate stagecoach tours around the park and between camps (Anderson 1896, 4).

The early tent camps at Yellowstone Lake were simple affairs that soon gained popularity and expanded to accommodate increasing visitor travel. According to

historian Richard Bartlett the camps “catered to the American Class whose affluence and mobility was rapidly rising” (1985, 188). He continues that the camps appealed to middle-class Americans who sought the “activity-filled, never-a-dull moment regimen” offered by the camping experience (Bartlett 1985, 188). The historian adds that “[s]itting by the hour on a veranda or in a luxurious lobby had little attraction for people who spent most of their lives working long hours fifty weeks a year” (Bartlett 1985, 188). The camp complexes built by the Wylie Company included “tent cottages” (Figure 56) with

Figure 56. Interior View of Permanent Camp

A popular form of lodging during the early years of Yellowstone was found in the permanent camps. Several permanent camps were located at Yellowstone Lake and operated by the Wylie Permanent Camping Company and the Shaw and Powell Camping Company. These camps consisted of a number of tent cabins such as the one pictured below which were built around strategically located dining and bathing structures. [image Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



“wooden floors and sides four to six feet high; from there on up the sides and roof were of canvas, often livened with red and white or blue and white stripes” (Bartlett 1985,

187). The Wylie Permanent Camps consisted of multiple rows of these tents which were complemented by “strategically located dining halls, rest rooms, and bathing facilities” (Bartlett 1985, 187).

Permanent camping areas proliferated and expanded during the early twentieth century at Yellowstone Lake. In 1906, the Wylie Permanent Camping Company was upgraded to a ten year contract to operate camps and “transportation privileges in park with sites for maintenance of permanent camps therein, and right to conduct lunch stations at...[the] West Thumb of Yellowstone Lake” (Brett 1915, 28). In 1913, another company entered the camping scene at Yellowstone Lake. The Shaw and Powell Camping Company was issued a license to operate transportation and permanent camping facilities at the “West Thumb of Lake” (Brett 1913, 4). A 1915 blueprint provides an indicator of the many stagecoach trips that the Wylie Company operated by that time. The *Map of Permanent Camp No. 5 of Wylie Camping Co. at Lake West Thumb* shows that the company maintained a stable for 116 horses (*Map of Permanent Camp No. 5 of Wylie Camping Co. at Lake West Thumb* 1915). My research also revealed a *Map of Permanent Camp No. 6 at Wylie Camping Co at Yellowstone Lake* that showed the location of the Wylie Camp at the Lake Developed Area to be on the approximate location of the current Lake Lodge site (*Map of Permanent Camp No. 6 at Wylie Camping Co at Yellowstone Lake* 1915).

Other facilities at Yellowstone Lake also changed over time. Both the Lake Hotel and the West Thumb lunch station experienced periods of expansion and contraction during the early twentieth century. The West Thumb lunch station (see Figure 54) was improved to a permanent building in 1903 that provided a dining room and additional

rooms for overnight visitors (Whittlesey 1997, 72). A blueprint (circa 1915) revealed that the Lake Hotel was a three-story structure with two large wings, a “servant cottage” of two stories, and ice house, a engine house and laundry, a “grainery,” and a water tower (*Outline Plan Lake Hotel Yellowstone Park Hotel Co.* circa 1915). Another blueprint from the same era shows horizontal expansion of the West Thumb lunch station facilities. According to the drawing, the complex included an ice house, several tents, a store room and a toilet (*Outline Plan Thumb Lunch Station Yellowstone Park Hotel Co.* circa 1915). The West Thumb lunch station was operated as a dining and lodging facility until 1917, when automobile travel increased the speed at which visitors could see the lake and this eliminated the need for a stop in the lake tour at that dining facility (Whittlesey 1997, 72).

It is noteworthy that the concessionaire consolidation mandated by the National Park Service in 1916 involved both a legal and a spatial shift. Buildings moved or were transferred under the agreement: “The permanent camping company abandoned 10 of the camps and lunch stations operated by its predecessors, the Wylie and Shaw & Powell companies...and reconstructed the five remaining camps of the old systems; the hotel company abandoned...its two large lunch stations at Norris Basin and the West Thumb of Lake Yellowstone” (U.S. Department of the Interior 1917, 6-7).

The years during World War I dramatically affected the lake area with decreasing visitor use at the lake and labor shortages that forced the temporary closure of most facilities at Yellowstone Lake. The interim provided a time for necessary repairs and additions to the well-used and limited lake area facilities. In a section of Superintendent Albright’s annual report describing the hotel and camps at Yellowstone Lake, he includes an explanation of the closing of the Lake Hotel and the Lake Area permanent camp: “In

the first place, they were not in proper condition to open. Many necessary repairs had to be made to the hotel, and the permanent camp was in reality out of existence. The latter was torn down in the autumn of 1917 in preparation for the building of a complete new plant” (Albright 1919, 24-26). Albright also alludes to other difficulties facing the lake sites: “A new central structure was begun, but snow caused the early cessation of work, and of course war conditions prevented rebuilding last year. It would have been impossible to have rebuilt the camp during the spring of 1919. But quite aside from the physical difficulties in the way of opening the Lake resorts, the labor situation was such that it would have been practically impossible to have secured crews for either place” (Albright 1919, 24-26). Albright continued to describe the “rebuilding” of the Lake Camp and repairs to the Lake Hotel. The 1919 report also disclosed improvement at the Lake Hotel which included the addition of a porte-cochere “in front of the central entrance of the hotel, built with faithful adherence to the colonial architecture of the hotel itself. The old porch floors will be replaced by concrete walks, and the grounds in front of the hotel will be improved by planting” (Albright 1919, 24-26).

Another form of lodging entered the lake scene in 1919—the Lake Lodge. Superintendent Albright’s 1919 annual report included a description of an “exceedingly attractive log building of ample proportions” which was being built on the site of the old permanent camp. Indeed, his assessment of the new Lake Lodge included its use as a “a dining room and lobby, and will be in most respects more interesting and attractive than any building in the park except Old Faithful Inn and the Canyon Hotel” (Albright 1919, 24-26). The Lake Lodge was “oriented to the automobile, maintaining its services and prices midway between housekeeping cabins and the hotels....Units were grouped

conveniently near a central complex, the ‘lodge’, where the visitor found a comfortable lobby, dining room, gift shop, barber and beauty shops, and recreational facilities...”(Haines 1977b, 362).

By 1920, renovations and expansions were once again undertaken at the Lake Hotel. The Yellowstone Park Hotel Company started “an addition to Lake Hotel” that included an annex with 113 rooms and 59 bathrooms (Albright 1921-22, 39). Then, in 1923, the Yellowstone Park Hotel Company “completed [a] new wing” at the hotel and “installed new lobby furniture,” including a fireplace and an addition to the “engine room and laundry” (Albright 1923, 44). The park superintendent records also indicated more additions to the Lake Hotel in 1924. According to the report, the renovations included a “new wing of hotel; kitchen rebuilt; new kitchen equipment installed; capacity of dining room increased 50% old part of building re-plastered, re-kalsomined and rewired, and lobby remodeled. Many other improvements have been made, including installation of new lavatories, radiation in dining room, new 80 KW electric generator, two 100 H.P. boilers, electrical equipment, fire escapes and other fire equipment, etc.”(Albright 1924, 27). Finally, in 1929, a porte-cochere was completed at the Lake Hotel (Toll 1929, 43).

The expansion of lake lodging facilities was not limited to the Lake Hotel. Indeed, the pace of new construction strove to outpace the demands of increasing motor tourists in the park. In 1923, Yellowstone Park Camps Company built “[f]ifty new tent units with canvas tops” at the Lake Developed Area (Albright 1923, 45). In the 1924 annual report, the superintendent discusses improvements at the “Lake Camp” which included “27 two-room and 25 one-room lodges built” (Albright 1924, 26). In 1925, Yellowstone Park Camps Company “[r]econstructed 30 tent cottages into permanent pole

and frame lodges...installed more windows in all dormitories...and Commenced construction of a new log and frame building, 60' x 164'" (Albright 1925, 29). The 1926 park superintendent's annual report includes a description of Yellowstone Park Camps Company construction site at the "Lake Camp...in the Fishing bridge Auto Camp" that included "39 canvas and fram[e] lodges", a main building ("a log structure 48 feet wide by 140 feet long") remodeled to include a dining room, and "ten log and fram[e] lodges, 12 x 20 feet, 32 log and frame lodges, 12 x 12 feet" (Albright 1926, 31-32). In 1927, the Yellowstone Park Camps Company altered the Lake Lodge facility by constructing "25 permanent lodges for twin bed cabins, size 12x14...12 permanent lodges, size 12x12 feet...2 permanent lodges, size 12x20feet" (Albright 1927, 24). The company also started building "15 permanent lodges, 12x14 feet" (Albright 1927, 24).

Housekeeping cabins emerged as a new and popular form of lodging during this period. These overnight shelters were "established adjacent to the automobile campgrounds...These cabins were designed as economical shelter for automobilists who did not care to sleep on the ground or cook over an open fire. They were furnished in a Spartan manner; in fact, they could be rented with or without bedding" (Haines 1977b, 362).

According to park historian Aubrey Haines, housekeeping cabins were operated by the Yellowstone Park Camps Company until 1928. Cabin developments proliferated at the Lake, West Thumb, and Fishing Bridge Developed Areas. In 1928, the West Thumb Developed Area housekeeping cabins were constructed. In 1929, while discussing improvement in housekeeping units, Toll mentions 31 new tents for a total of 45 tents at West Thumb and a capacity of 100 guests. The 1929 report also reveals that

the older tents were “entirely removed from [the] auto camp” (Toll 1929, 43). At Lake, Yellowstone Park Camps Company built 40 permanent lodges. In 1930, the camps at the Lake Developed Area and the West Thumb Developed Area were again enlarged by the Yellowstone Park Lodge and Camps Company to include “10 permanent log and frame cabins and comfort stations” and “130 permanent log and frame cabins in housekeeping unit in public camp ground” at the Lake Developed Area and twenty-seven “permanent log and frame cabins and comfort station for 16x30 in housing unit” at the West Thumb Developed Area (Toll 1930, 23).

The Fishing Bridge Developed Area included a large housekeeping cabin area. At Fishing Bridge Developed Area a cabin office building with twenty-four person capacity dormitory above was completed. Other projects at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area included thirty-six new tents for a total of “160 tents with a capacity of 490 guests, and 60 permanent type cabins” (Toll 1929, 43). In 1929, the Yellowstone Park Company constructed “51 new cabins” for a total cabin count of 233 and a capacity of 550 guests (Toll 1929, 43).

A “Memorandum for the Files” dated October 2, 1928 relates a meeting between the president of the Yellowstone Park Camps Company and Albright. It describes the construction of housekeeping camps office at Fishing Bridge and clearing “the site of the new Thumb housekeeping camp and build roads in and through it, level it off, etc.” in the spring (“Memorandum for the Files” 1928). At the Thumb site, cabins and tents were moved from the previous Thumb housekeeping camp and twenty new cabins were built at the new site. At the Fishing Bridge Developed Area, forty “good tent cabins” were moved to Fishing Bridge from Lake Lodge and fifty more cabins were to be added by the

spring (“Memorandum for the Files” 1928). They also agreed to build forty “wooden cabins” in Lake Lodge and the porte cochere at Lake Lodge (“Memorandum for the Files” 1928). The letter also discusses that the company would furnish “complete cabin service” to “get away from demands in the lodges for European plan service” and to instead “keep the lodges on a strictly American plan basis” (“Memorandum for the Files” 1928).

Dining Facilities

There were also at least three public dining buildings at Yellowstone Lake built between 1892 and 1932. Early buildings catered to tourists on stagecoach tours and later to automobile tourists seeking a brief stop on their sojourns around the lake. The earliest facility at the lake for these purposes that my research revealed was the West Thumb lunch station built in 1892 (see Figure 53). The facility was renovated in 1903 and then abandoned and torn down in 1917 (Whittlesey 1997, 72). Then in 1927, the superintendent’s annual report records that a “cafeteria building” was constructed at the West Thumb Developed Area (Albright 1927, 24).

Dining areas were also built at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area. In Superintendent Albright’s 1926 annual report, he discusses the Yellowstone Park Camps Company building “a lunch counter and delicatessen building” at the “Lake Camp...in the Fishing bridge [*sic*] Auto Camp” (Albright 1926, 31). The next year’s annual report discusses some conversion of facilities at Fishing Bridge: “Converted lake lunch counter and delicatessen into cafeteria and delicatessen into cafeteria and delicatessen.” (Albright 1927, 24). This information aligns well with Aubrey Haines’ account of Fishing Bridge development that includes a cafeteria being built at Fishing Bridge in 1926; however—

counter to the information noted in other records—the historian also suggests that that the delicatessen “appeared at...Fishing Bridge in 1920” and at the West Thumb Developed Area in 1928 (Haines 1977, 361). Research into the park superintendent and concessionaire files did not reveal specific locations within the developed areas for the lunch counter, cafeteria, and delicatessen; the locations of these facilities on this study’s reconstruction map are approximate and based on mention of the buildings in the GIS building layer files table data, historic photographs, and approximations based on verbal descriptions of the sites as well as aerial photographs revealing available cleared spaces in the developed areas.

Support and Service Structures

Boat docks, barns, stores, employee housing, and equipment storage sheds were some of the more frequently discussed buildings at Yellowstone Lake in the superintendent and concessionaire files. As prominent features of the cultural landscape at Yellowstone Lake—based on the frequency of notation in reports and their repeated surfacing in blueprints and early concessionaire maps of facilities—I focus this part of my discussion of the cultural landscape at Yellowstone Lake on the evolution of these structures. By 1892, rudimentary boat docks were constructed at the West Thumb Developed Area (Figure 57) and the Lake Developed Area (Figure 58). These boat docks were built and maintained by the first boating concessionaire on the lake—the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company (see Table 1). The docks served as launching and landing points for the steamboat ferry service across the lake from the West Thumb dock to the Lake landing area.

Figure 57. Early West Thumb Boat Dock

A boat was present at the West Thumb thermal basin as early as 1892. Boat landing sites at the thermal basin were difficult to find since boaters had to negotiate the shallow lake waters near the basin, fluctuating lake levels, and the thermal features themselves. According to Yellowstone historian Lee Whittlesey, the first boat dock at the basin was located on top of the geyserite formations that jutted into the lake near Winter Spring and remained at this location until the 1930's (Whittlesey 1997, 20). The site was a hazardous one for passengers who had to negotiate the planked boardwalk to the boats in dangerous proximity to the hot geothermal pools [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives].



An interesting third docking site at this juncture of lake history was built on Dot Island in 1896 and operated there until 1907. Early park superintendents seemed pleased with the services offered by the boating company and encouraged expansion of the boating company's ventures with new leases. For example, while discussing the boat company Acting Superintendent Anderson relates: "The trip is most satisfactory to all who make it, and a very large percentage of the tourists use it on their tour...Last autumn Mr. Waters, the manager applied for authority to construct small landing places at several

Figure 58. Early Boat Landing Site near Lake Hotel

The earliest boat landing site in the Lake Developed Area was by the shoreline of the lake in front of the Lake Hotel. The docks at this area handled a variety of bustling traffic from the large steamboats that served as ferries between the West Thumb boat dock and the Lake landing (top) to small rented boats in the later years (bottom). Notice the house of E.C. Waters, the president of the boat company, on the hill in the background of the lower photo. [top image from the Collection of William Wyckoff; bottom image printed in Schreier 1989, 70.]



points on the shore of the Lake, -one on Dot Island and one for 'ways' near the site of his present landing in the front of the hotel. All of these have had my approval" (Anderson 1896, 10). The superintendent continues: "Mr. Waters has put on Dot Island a few bison, mountain sheep, and elk. Upon each trip he lands the passengers at this point in order that they may see the game, and I believe it adds not a little to their enjoyment. All these animals were obtained outside the park and shipped into it by Mr. Waters" (Anderson 1896, 10). As this quote reveals, the park superintendent seemed to support this early phase of Dot Island operations conducted by the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company.

Indeed, according to Mark Spence "park officials later supported" E.C. Waters who wanted to have Native Americans as well as bison and elk on "exhibit" to tourists on the island in the 1890's (Spence 1999, 69). Spence argues that Waters wanted to "attract more business for his Yellowstone Lake Boat Company by creating the sort of 'aboriginal exhibit' that had fascinated visitors at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago" (1999, 69). Spence found that "[p]ark authorities and the secretary of the Interior made only one stipulation: Waters needed to use Crow Indians instead of Shoshone or Bannock" (1999, 69). Here we see that building tensions between park managers and Native American groups extended well beyond the shoreline of Yellowstone Lake and into the island environment. Traditional Native American uses of the lake were being discouraged by the U.S. Army throughout the nineteenth century. Crow, Bannock, and Shoshone peoples were being forced to leave Yellowstone and by the time of the Dot Island project there were few recorded instances of Native American activity on the shoreline or islands of Yellowstone Lake. The U.S. Army encouraged the Dot Island operation and its appropriation of Native American authenticity. Water's plan

for a Native American display failed however, as he could not convince any Crow groups to live on the tiny island surrounded by Yellowstone Lake's cold, deep waters.

The U.S. Army's support of the Dot Island display did not have a long history. The animals for the Dot Island exhibit were kept in corrals at the Lake Developed Area in the winter time and then boated across the lake to Dot Island for the summer season. By 1906, the park superintendent recorded concern and disapproval of the Dot Island operation: "In the corrals of the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company, where buffalo, elk, and sheep were confined during the long previous winter, the conditions were found filthy, inhumane, and disgusting...These corrals were cleaned as soon as possible, and the buffalo and elk were removed to corrals on Dot Island and kept there in confinement as an attraction to induce tourists to take the boat trip. Numerous complaints were made criticizing the superintendent for permitting these native wild animals to be kept in captivity in the park" (Pitcher 1906, 5-6). Under the scrutiny of public attention to the situation at Dot Island, the U.S. Department of the Interior requested that Waters remove the animals from Dot Island. The president of the company refused to discontinue this operation from his business and eventually the corrals were dismantled under Superintendent Young's supervision on October 5, 1907; eight buffalo and seven elk were released into the park.

Many buildings at Yellowstone Lake—particularly during the early years of this period—served multiple roles. As was the case with the West Thumb lunch station being combined with early lodging at the thermal basin, support structures often served many uses and were remodeled and expanded over the years to meet new visitor demands. An example of the evolving construction of service and support buildings at Yellowstone

Lake may be found by looking at the records of the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company.

By 1912, the Yellowstone Park Boat Company was described as “operating a system of pleasure and fishing boats on Yellowstone Lake, renting and selling fishing tackle, etc.”

(Brett 1912, 20). Authorized activities for the company were further outlined in the lease described in the superintendent’s annual report for 1913:

Contracted date February 7, 1913, runs for 10 years, and grants to company privileges of maintaining, operating, and conducting on Yellowstone Lake...motor boats and launches, motor vessels, rowboats, and dories for accommodation of tourists, with right to sell and rent fishing tackle, and sell fruits, nuts, confectionery, books, periodicals, cigars, tobacco, and camping supplies, and lease or sell bathing suits. Contract agrees to lease lands on shores of Yellowstone Lake on which wharves and ways are constructed, and at other points to be agreed upon on which to erect buildings for storage of equipment, accommodation of employees, etc.” (Brett 1913, 14-15).

The boat company filled an interesting and unique space in the cultural landscape history of Yellowstone Lake and the bigger story of Yellowstone National Park in that it was the only operation licensed to conduct its business on park waters; no other park lake or stream was opened by the Army or National Park Service for concessionaire operations.

More specific locations for these facilities at Yellowstone Lake are difficult to pinpoint, but clues may be found by looking at the legal agreements between the boat company and the National Park Service. An *Articles of Incorporation of the Yellowstone Park Boat Company* lists several sites and buildings as part of the Yellowstone Park Boat Company including a store and barn “site near Lake Hotel,” a “Way Site near Lake Hotel,” a dock site near the lake hotel, and a dock site “at Thumb of Lake” for a period of nine years. The agreement also gave the boat company the right to harvest for building purposes local lumber and quarry stone (*Articles of Incorporation of the Yellowstone Park Boat Company* 1923). In addition, the boating company was allowed to operate motorized vessels on the lake prior to the official admission of automobiles to the park in

1915. According to the *Articles of Incorporation* signed by the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company and the U.S. Department of the Interior in 1911, the company's purpose is

to own, control, and operate boats propelled by steam, electricity, gasoline, or any other motive power upon the Yellowstone lake...to lease, loan, hire row and sail boats, fishing tackle, and other pleasure crafts and appliances...to construct, own, use, and occupy docks, piers, boat-houses, warehouses, lodging houses for employees, landing stages" (*Articles of Incorporation of the Yellowstone Park Boat Company* 1923).

Renting boats was not always the domain of a single concessionaire. The boat company pursued a joint business with another concessionaire on the lake to rent boats and sell fishing goods. This shared business was not very successful, but its inception speaks to the increasing popularity of boating on Yellowstone Lake and the need for more boats and equipment. Unlike other concessionaire operations such as lodging or dining that existed at multiple areas of the lake and park, the boating business required special equipment and storage structures that could not be transferred by companies between their other operating sites. For example, when tent lodging demands rose at Fishing Bridge Developed Area, the tent company could move its "good tent cabins" from the Lake Developed Area to the Fishing Bridge Developed Area. Such was not the case for the boating concessionaires at Yellowstone Lake which was mostly run by one concessionaire and had limited equipment at the West Thumb and Lake areas. Park Superintendents were frustrated by the limited services offered by the Yellowstone Park Boat Company and leaned on this concessionaire to increase its available services. Unable and perhaps unwilling to make this investment, the Yellowstone Park Boat Company entered into an agreement with Hamilton Stores. Under this arrangement, Hamilton stores would operate a boat rental facility at the Lake Developed Area. Even

with this concessionaire collaboration, the park superintendent was not satisfied with the level of service at the Lake Developed Area.

The boating facilities were redistributed and realigned starting in 1924. After the war years, many buildings around the lake were in need of repair and renovation. In a 1924 report, Superintendent Albright discussed the survey of a leased site: “The Old buildings in front of the Lake Hotel were removed last autumn, many old barns and sheds were razed at various points, and general clean-up programs carried out at several point of interest. If we now had the means to clean up the roadsides of Yellowstone, this park would be in first-class condition so far as its landscape protection is concerned...”(Albright 1924, 11). Then in 1926, the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company improved its facilities. In a 1926 report, Albright noted changes at the Lake Developed Area: “Old Boat house torn down and new one, 20 x 40 feet, built. New warehouse built. New speed boat, 2 new motor boats and 10 new rowboats purchased” (Albright 1926, 30). The West Thumb site was also reworked by the Yellowstone Park Boat Company during this period. In 1927, the Yellowstone Park Boat Company built an office and “sleeping quarters” for their dock attendants at the West Thumb landing and rebuilt the West Thumb dock. The boat company also built a “floating dock with office and sleeping quarters” near the Fishing Bridge (see Figure 47), bought twenty steel row boats and a motor boat, and started a “marine railroad and warehouse” (Albright 1927, 26). The Yellowstone Lake Boat Company also completed a “large building for the storage of boats” (Figure 59) at the Lake Developed Area “just west of the Fish Hatchery in the autumn of 1926” (Albright 1927, 26).

The lake's dynamic environment necessitated expanding lake boating operations and facilities. At the West Thumb boat docks, the fluctuating water levels and extent of the thermal features necessitated that the early boat dock be moved to a more stable location. Although this second site was still very close to such thermal features at the lakeshore thermal pool, it was not poised on the extension of the geyserites cliff over the lakeshore. This site was dangerous for a boat dock since the repetitive lake waves eroded the foundation of the geyserite and the thermal pool claimed at least one passenger's life; in 1926, a passenger lost their footing on the dock and fell into the boiling waters of the thermal feature (Whittlesey 1997, 20). The boat dock in front of the Lake Hotel had

Figure 59. Boat Storage Building at the Lake Developed Area
In 1926, the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company built a "large building for the storage of boats" and a "marine railroad and warehouse" (Albright 1927, 26). This 1941 photograph shows a government boat docked at the landing site. The "marine railroad" may be seen in the background and may have served as a way to convey boats down the hillside to the lakeshore at this location. The boat storage building is seen in the left background of the photograph [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives].

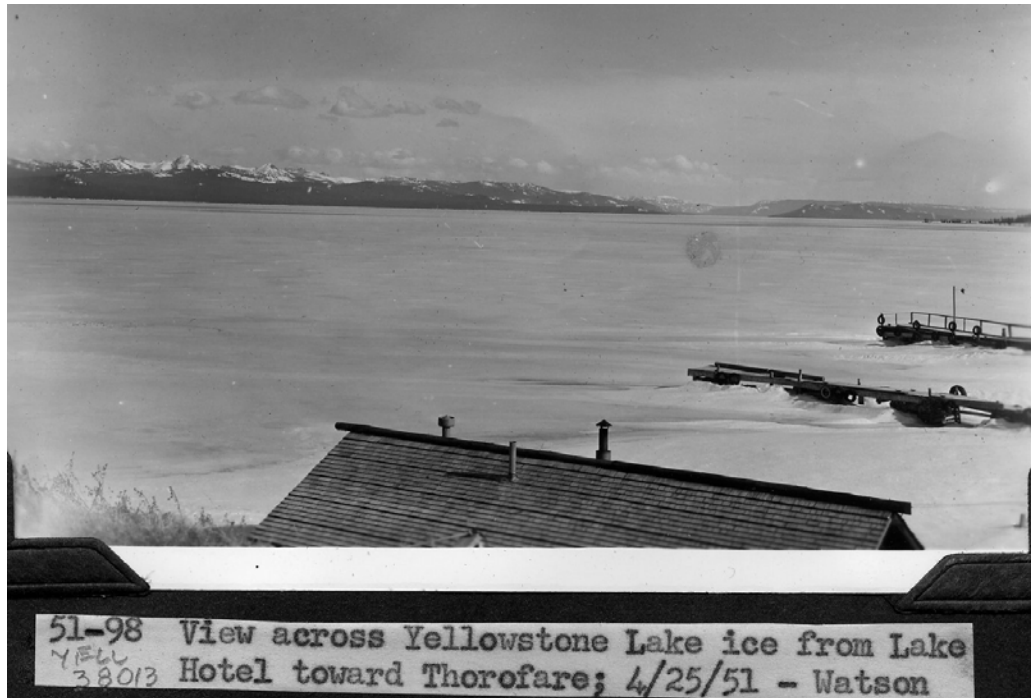


slightly different physical challenges. Not only was this dock built to withstand the strong, repetitive wave action generated by the daily afternoon southwesterly winds, it also had to withstand the movements from the winter ice over of the lake and fluctuating lake levels throughout the summer. A letter in 1929 from the president of the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company—J. Nichols—to the park superintendent asked permission to enlarge the company’s dock in front of the Lake Hotel. Nichols cited the need to enlarge the boat dock to “protect our boats against the severe southwest storms which frequently arise on the Lake” (Letter from J. Nichols to Mr. Roger W. Toll 1929). His letter also cited that part of the lake boat dock (Figure 60) had been “carried out by the ice several years ago” (Letter from J. Nichols to Mr. Roger W. Toll 1929). The boat company president also mentioned that docks needed to extend out into the lake to avoid times when “there is hardly enough water for the boats when the lake gets low” (Letter from J. Nichols to Mr. Roger W. Toll 1929).

Stores

There were also a number of stores built at the three main developed areas of Yellowstone Lake between 1892 and 1932. At the Lake Developed Area, there was a store selling consumer goods and a fishing tackle and boat rental store. The park superintendent report for 1895 relates that E. C. Waters—the manager and owner of the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company—ran stores (Figure 61) which provided a range of services and goods to tourists: “During the last year he [Waters] has been granted a license by the Department to sell candies, nuts and small groceries to camping parties, to do blacksmithing for the same, as well as take parties to the Natural Bridge by vehicle or on horseback. It was quite necessary that some one should conduct these small

Figure 60. Ice on Yellowstone Lake near Lake Area Boat Docks
 Boat docks at Yellowstone Lake proved difficult to build and maintain for park concessionaires. This 1951 photograph shows the lake frozen over in the winter with the lake docks in the foreground. The Yellowstone Lake Boat Company had to make revisions and improvements at least once to its docks because of the annual ice flow and fluctuating lake levels. [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



enterprises at this point, and Mr. Waters seemed to be the only person desirous of undertaking them, and so far, I believe has conducted them satisfactorily” (Anderson 1895, 10). The boat dock area in front of the Lake Hotel became a bustling area of activity at the lake where the boat company operated a store, the dock sites, and where Waters situated his residence.

Although the park superintendent supported the operation as a necessary component of the Lake Area development, there were problems. According to an 1895 superintendent annual report: “Mr. Walters, the manager of the Boat Company, is courteous and attentive to the wants and the interest of his passengers. The complaints against him are mostly from overcharge of damage done fishing tackle, and other minor

Figure 61. Yellowstone Lake Boat Company Store

The lake's first boating company also started a small store to "sell candies, nuts and small groceries to camping parties, to do blacksmithing for the same" in 1895 (Anderson 1895, 10). [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



items furnished by him" (Anderson 1895, 10). A later government report found additional issues with the multiple use site occupied by the boat company. Acting Superintendent Pitcher noted that the house "occupied by Mr. Waters" was "a very neat and pretty structure," but that Waters had "small boats and boathouse" and a store that was an "unsightly building and badly located, for it is entirely too near the proposed addition to the Lake Hotel" (Pitcher 1901, 7). Pitcher also noted that the "barns and corrals" were "too near the hotel" and listed guest complaints of the unpleasant smells from the detritus from the horse and Dot Island bison and elk corrals (Pitcher 1901, 7).

Nevertheless, later superintendent reports reveal that the boat company continued its store operations at Yellowstone Lake. A 1913 lease for the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company records that the company was authorized “to sell and rent fishing tackle, and sell fruits, nuts, confectionery, books, periodicals, cigars, tobacco, and camping supplies, and lease or sell bathing suits” (Brett 1913, 14-15).

The stores at Yellowstone Lake were operated as joint ventures between concessionaires and were susceptible to the same economic problems that affected the entire lake and park. While discussing the decreased travel in the park in 1918 because of World War I and the closing of most service areas at Yellowstone Lake, Acting Superintendent Lindsley noted:

Practically no business was done by the Yellowstone Park Boat Company during the summer, as there was no opportunity to patronize the boats, due to the lack of accommodations for the night at the Lake Outlet. A few of the motor and other boats were inspected by a representative of the Steamboat Inspection Service, for the use in case there was any demand for them. The Boat Company’s store at Lake Outlet was run by Mr. C.A. Hamilton, as a branch of his main store at Upper Geyser Basin (Lindsley 1918, 12-13).

However, the economic recession ended after World War I, and lake businesses benefited. Superintendent Albright was a zealous supporter of upgrading and enlarging park facilities to meet the increasing visitor demands. In a 1919 report, Albright noted: “Taken in connection with the new store that will be built at the Lake by C.A. Hamilton and the new filling station of the Yellowstone Park Transportation Company, the improvements at this point will go far toward making it the most popular tourist resort of the park. The establishment of a large new public automobile camp is another project that we hope to complete next year at this point, and if authorized a new ranger station and information office will also be erected here” (Albright 1919, 24-26). Albright also

discusses services provided by the Yellowstone Park Transportation Company, and included that a “[g]arage, gasoline and oil, and repair service was maintained by this company” at the Lake Developed Area (Albright 1919, 27). Albright offers an indicator that the company intended to replace or upgrade its automobile service station: “During the autumn or early next spring the company [Yellowstone Park Transportation Company] will construct three very attractive filling stations. They will be built of stone and logs, and will be located near the stores at Upper Geyser Basin, Lake Outlet, and Grand Canyon” (Albright 1919, 80). This reference is a bit confusing as to the location of the lake filling station since park superintendent annual reports alternately referred to the “Lake Outlet” as being the Lake Developed Area or the Fishing Bridge Developed Area.

The movements of the concessionaires around Yellowstone Lake were further outlined in Albright’s 1919 annual report. Based on the following reference to Hamilton Stores activities at Yellowstone Lake, it seems that the filling station mentioned in 1919 was constructed at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area. While discussing concessionaires in the park, Superintendent Albright’s 1919 report describes Hamilton making several alterations to his company’s operations in the park: According to the report, Hamilton ran a “general store...under a subleasing arrangement with the Yellowstone Park Boat Company...at Lake Outlet. In addition to general merchandise and groceries, Mr. Hamilton carried full lines of curios and souvenirs, and also operated gasoline and oil stations” (Albright 1919, 82). Hamilton also expanded his operations at the West Thumb Developed Area: “He is now engaged in building a fine new store at the Lake which will take the place of the boat company’s store...Mr. Hamilton expects to

arrange for the maintenance of a store next year in the old lunch station of the Yellowstone Park Hotel Company at the Thumb of Lake Yellowstone where the south approach road joins the belt line system” (Albright 1919, 82). In 1920, Hamilton Stores expanded its operations yet again by building a store on an “entirely new site; on the lake shore” at Lake Outlet (Albright 1920, 37). The work was completed for the store, “residence,” and a “filling station” in 1921 (Albright 1921-22, 42). The “small but very attractive store structures at West Thumb of Lake Yellowstone and at Fishing Bridge” were completed in 1924 (Albright 1924, 29). A more detailed description of these structures was available in the annual superintendent report: “New frame store with log trim erected at Lake Fishing Bridge and filling station with 5,000 gallon tank completed at this point; new lighting...at Lake store; new log trim store with 80’ frontage erected at Thumb and filling station with 5,000 gallon tank; float constructed for care of new boats in conjunction with Boat Company” (Albright 1924, 30-31).

Stores and related facilities continued to expand throughout the 1920’s and early 1930’s at Yellowstone Lake. A 1925 government report included this description of Hamilton Store operations: “Enlarged Fishing Bridge store to double its former size...Built a 30’ addition to Basin Auto Camp Store. Completed knotted wood porch on Basin store...ten rowboats were purchased to be operated jointly with the Boat Company” (Albright 1925, 34). The “Basin” site mentioned in this reference presumably refers to the West Thumb Developed Area that was also the location of an extensive geothermal basin. In 1926, Hamilton Stores completed an “addition to Fishing Bridge store and painted entire building” (Albright 1926, 33). In the same year, Yellowstone Park Camps Company built stores and additional service structures such as “a curie [sic]

store, registration building...transportation company office and general office...a boiler house building...new linen room building of log and frame” at the “Lake Camp...in the Fishing bridge Auto Camp” (Albright 1926, 31-32). The 1928 superintendent report relates lake shore building projects undertaken by Haynes Picture Shops Incorporated; the concessionaire “constructed [a] building 60x60 feet in size at Fishing Bridge automobile camp to house Haynes’ picture shop, mess and photo finishing plant” (Albright 1928, 19). In 1929, Hamilton Stores improved its Fishing Bridge Auto Camp operations by building a “duplicate” of its Old Faithful Store that had 150 feet of “frontage, with 48 capacity dormitory above” (Toll 1929, 44). My research also uncovered a 1931 reference to Hamilton Stores completing a “new Fishing Bridge store” (Toll 1931, 15). It is unclear whether this is a reference to a new facility or a remodeling of the earlier structure. Other Yellowstone Lake area developments included a “new bath house at Fishing Bridge” (Toll 1931, 16).

Employee Housing

Employee housing around Yellowstone Lake varied from houses to dormitories. Early housing structures were tents or houses often used as combination housing, store, and visitor service area. Such was the case for the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company operations where E.C. Waters built his house and store in front of the Lake Hotel and adjacent to his company’s boat docks (see Figure 58). By the 1920’s, concessionaires were building dormitories to house their growing numbers of employees at Yellowstone Lake. Between 1921 and 1922, the Yellowstone Park Camps Company constructed a women’s dorm for twenty four employees at the Lake Developed Area (U.S. Department of the Interior 1921-22, 39). Yellowstone Park Transportation Company constructed 2

new driver's bunk houses and 2 new mess houses at Yellowstone Lake (U.S. Department of the Interior 1921-22, 40). Yellowstone Park Transportation Company finished building a "12 room bunkhouse" (Albright 1923, 46) and a "Two-story girl's dormitory, consisting of 57 rooms" (Albright 1924, 27). Also by 1924, the Yellowstone Park Hotel Company completed a "new girls' dormitory" at the Lake Developed Area (Albright 1925, 32). In 1927, Hamilton Stores constructed "new quarters for kitchen crew" at the Lake Developed Area and the Yellowstone Park Transportation Company built a "new bunk house and drivers' wash house" (Albright 1927, 25). In 1926, the Yellowstone Park Boat Company built an office and sleeping quarters for the boat attendant" at the West Thumb dock site and a "floating dock with office and sleeping quarters" was completed near Fishing Bridge (Albright 1926, 26). At the Fishing Bridge Developed Area, an "office building with 24 capacity dormitory above" was constructed (Toll 1929, 43).

Conclusion

By 1932, Yellowstone Lake was the site of bustling service areas along the north and southwest shores of the Lake, centralized at three major nodes—the Lake (Figure 62), West Thumb (Figure 63), and Fishing Bridge (Figure 64) Developed Areas. Each of these developed areas increased in size. Little evidence is available to prove that the islands were used except the brief period of activity seen on Dot Island. Each of these sites posed developers with unique challenges that were connected to the lake's wide range of physical environments. From stabilizing the Lake Developed Area boat docks from wind and ice to maintaining a boat dock in close proximity to geothermal pools at the West Thumb Developed Area, concessionaires and federal agencies operating at

Yellowstone Lake faced challenges not present at other park developed areas. The three developed areas also varied by the facilities available, but there were similarities; by 1932, each area had government and concession operations that offered an array of services including transportation infrastructure, lodging, stores, employee housing, boat docks, and dining facilities.

National and international events affected development at Yellowstone Lake between 1892 and 1932. The entrance of automobiles increased visitation to the park and the need for more automobile campgrounds and cabin areas at the Lake, West Thumb, and Fishing Bridge Developed Areas. The network of park and lake roads also expanded during this period to include a continuous route along the north shore of the lake and connections to the Grand Canyon to the north, the Upper Geyser Basin to the West, Cody to the east, and to the south entrance. The creation of the National Park Service in 1916 also had a great impact on lake infrastructure. This federal agency constructed ranger stations at Lake, West Thumb, and Fishing Bridge Developed Areas and a museum at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area. The National Park Service also included a planning department that oversaw all plans for new structures in the park and regulated the style and design of lake buildings. World War I and the Great Depression were both major events that affected park visitation and economic conditions. Yellowstone visitation and employee counts dropped during both of these events and lake infrastructure was relocated and refurbished after these events.

Figure 62. Lake Developed Area, 1932

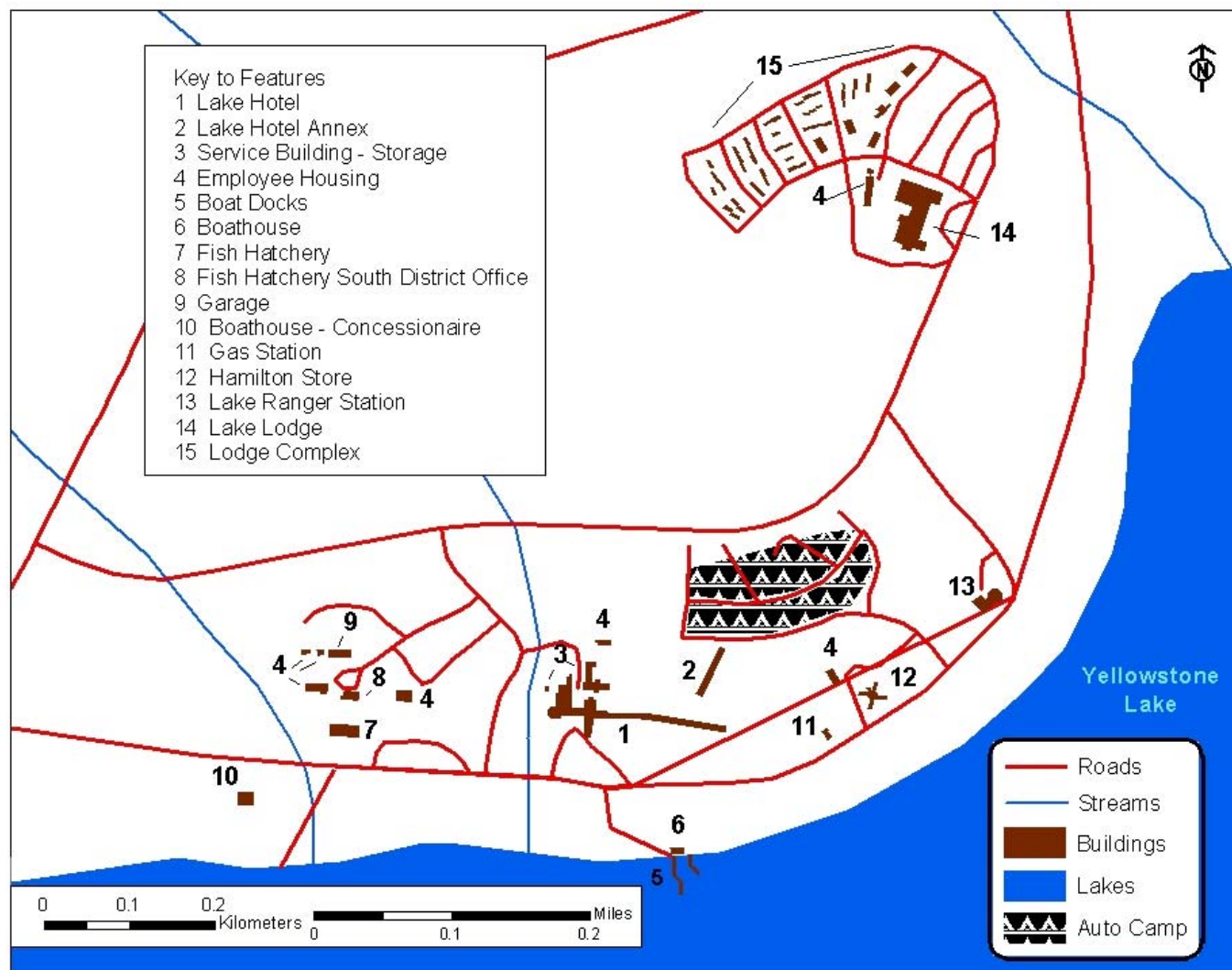


Figure 63. West Thumb Developed Area, 1932

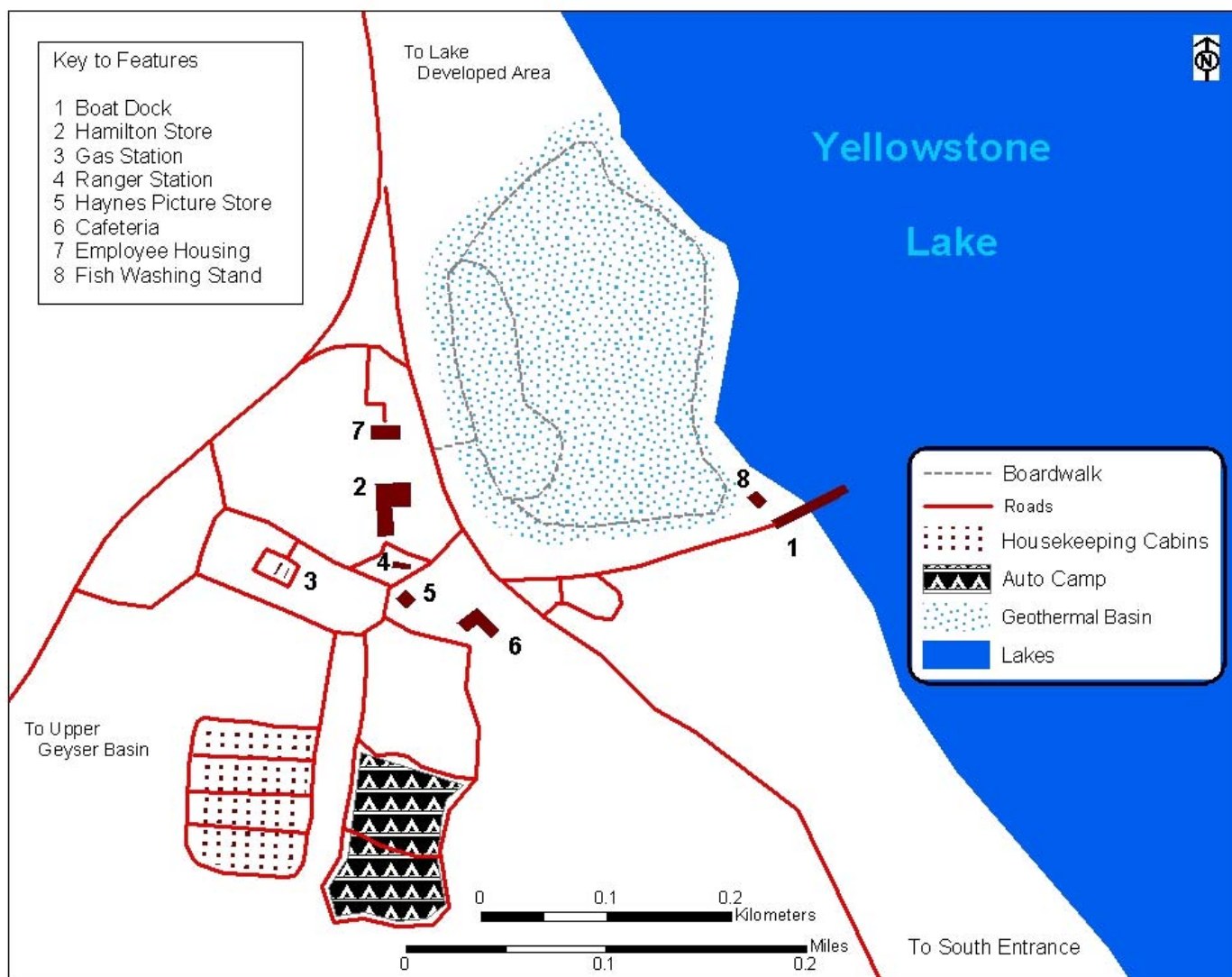
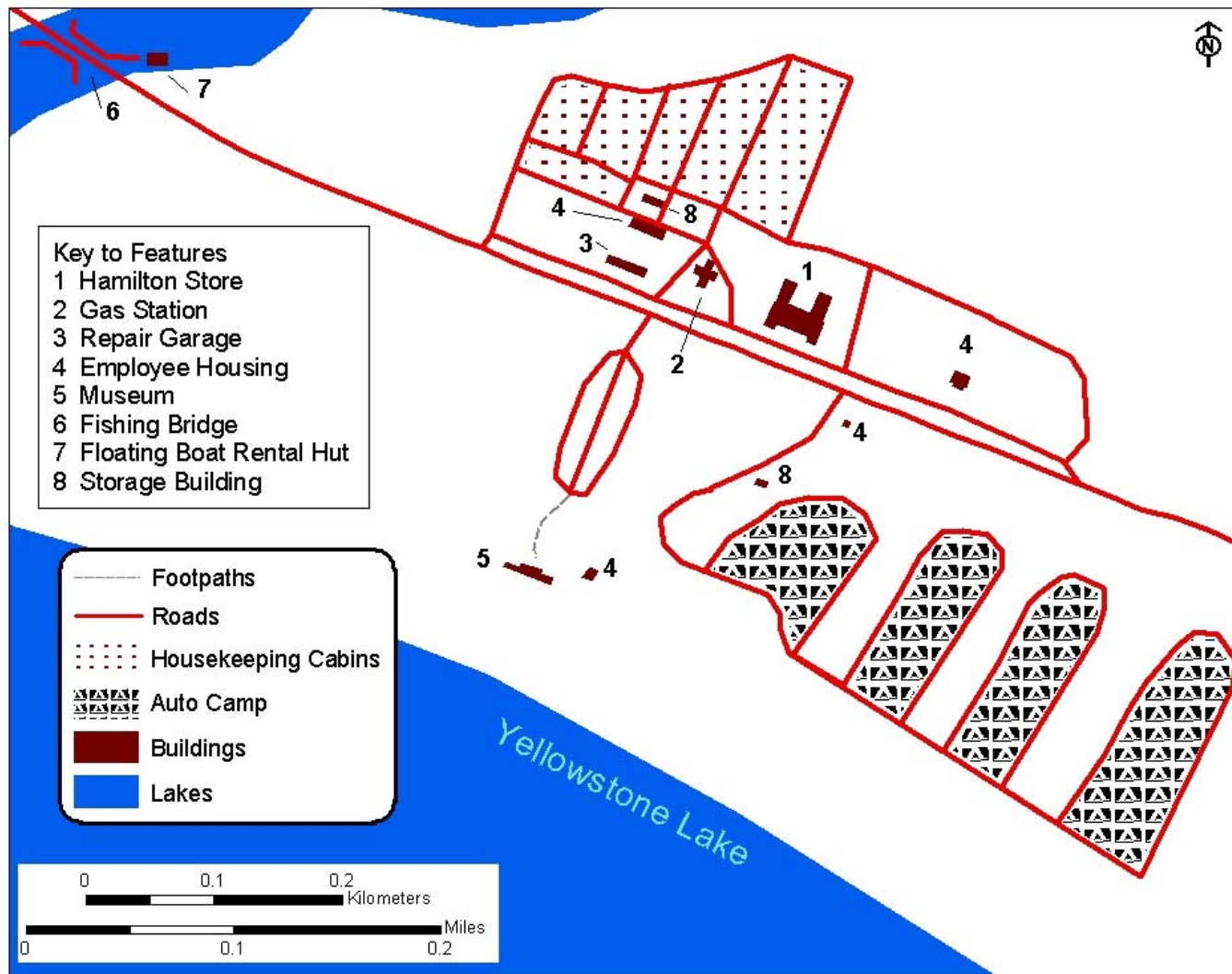


Figure 64. Fishing Bridge Developed Area, 1932



PERIOD THREE: 1933-1966

Planning a Wilderness Experience

In contrast to Nature's efforts to overawe and startle you at the geyser basins, she now puts forth every effort to reassure you and regain your confidence. The lake waves lap the shore in friendly fashion. Forests of lodgepole pine nod their tufted boughs and perfume the air. Bears amble about the glades and meadow and white gulls and awkward pelicans skim over the blue water (Northern Pacific Railway 1933, 17).

This site is most impractical both from the standpoint of present operations and/or future expansion. Unprotected waters forces loss of boating business for as many as 25 afternoons in one month....Steep slope at this site, lack of parking, poor approach and rough weather all combine to make this site unsuitable for further development (Pickering 1958, 38).

The rugged West Thumb Camper Cabins are in keeping with the mood of their wilderness setting on the western shore of Yellowstone Lake, where steaming hot springs meet the cool lake waters. They offer shelter for hardy folk who, on a vacation lark, enjoy roughing it for a bit without any frills...The fishing and boating on Yellowstone Lake is an outstanding recreation (Yellowstone Park Company 1966).

Between 1933 and 1966, Yellowstone Lake experienced a tremendous amount of change to its cultural landscape. Major events that affected the lake during this time included the Great Depression, the New Deal, World War II, the wilderness movement, and Mission 66. This chapter discusses changes in Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape and the effects of these events on development plans.

This period begins with many of the facilities at Yellowstone Lake being closed to public use. Although visitor estimates started to rise again (see Appendix) in 1933—161,938 people visited the park in 1933, compared to 157,624 tourists in 1932 (Haines 1977b, 479)—concessionaires with operations at Yellowstone Lake were hit hard by the

economic recession associated with the Great Depression. Most concessionaires closed their operations from 1933 to 1935 at Yellowstone Lake (Toll 1935, 2). By 1935, at least 317,998 visitors entered the park and lake businesses opened their doors once again. However, the years of inactivity took their toll on some of the park structures such as the Lake Hotel and the quality of services was reduced. A boost in business after the recession funded a brief spell of renovations and improvements for structures around Yellowstone Lake.

In response to the economic recession from the Great Depression, the New Deal implemented nation-wide measures to provide employment and business activity. Part of the New Deal measures included creating the Civilian Conservation Corps. The labor from the Civilian Conservation Corps had a direct impact in Yellowstone National Park as superintendents used this labor source to complete many useful projects and the construction of at least fifteen campgrounds (Bartlett 1985, 301). Bartlett describes some of these projects:

Roadcuts [*sic*] were sloped gracefully from roadbed back to timber, auto camps improved by planting shrubs and trees, and dead timber was removed. New barns and corrals were built where needed and abandoned buildings, many dating from stagecoach days, were destroyed and all signs of human habituation removed. Eyesores such as old trash dumps behind hotels were hauled away. Where roads had been abandoned, the CCC boys plowed them up in such a way as to encourage the return to natural flora. Barren slopes were reforested” (Bartlett 1985, 301).

Such projects would have been difficult for the National Park Service to fund alone. The Civilian Conservation Corps built a camp near the Lake Developed Area and completed many projects around the lake during the New Deal era.

The outbreak of World War II caused another slump in park activity and lake businesses. In 1941 (see Appendix), 581,761 tourists entered Yellowstone National Park

(Haines 1977b, 479). In 1942, even fewer people—191,830—journeyed into Wonderland (Haines 1977b, 479). The lowest wartime visitor counts were in 1943 at 64,144 (Haines 1977b, 479). Because of this lack of patronage as well as a paucity of personnel to operate businesses, park concessionaires decided to close many of their Yellowstone Lake facilities from 1940 to 1947 (Rogers 1947, 5). Many structures at developed areas around Yellowstone Lake suffered from neglect during this period, but some concessionaires took advantage of the slackening of business to make long overdue repairs and adjustments to their facilities. Starting in 1942, the superintendent's reports begin to document some of these projects at Yellowstone Lake: "At Lake most of the old Lake Hotel is being torn down and a combination of hotel and cottages...is programmed to take place [at] the Lake Hotel and Lodge" (Rogers 1941, 3). During the war years, limited services were available at Fishing Bridge but West Thumb and Lake did not offer services (Rogers 1943, 2; Rogers 1946, 5). At Fishing Bridge, the cabins and cafeteria were open; however the museum was closed (Rogers 1943, 2). By 1947, most facilities at the Fishing Bridge, West Thumb, and Lake Developed Areas were reopened to the public (Rogers 1947, 5).

The postwar years brought a tremendous surge in visitation to Yellowstone National Park. Comparing wartime with postwar visitor estimates reveals a telling picture of this period in park history(see Appendix); in 1944, 85,347 people visited the park; in 1945, the official count jumped to 178, 296 visitors; and in 1946, visitor estimates escalated to 814,907 people entering Yellowstone (Haines 1977, 479). With more leisure time, income, and the desire to explore new places, Americans traveled to their national parks in record-breaking numbers. Many of these postwar tourists traveled

to their national parks in automobiles. Private automobile travel in the Yellowstone became the transportation method of choice; park superintendents and concessionaires struggled to accommodate growing visitor use and impact on existing structures. According to a 1950 superintendent's report, "a maximum of 7,800 accommodations being available in the hotels, lodges, and tourist cabins, it was not possible to accommodate all the persons seeking accommodations in the park and many visitors had to sleep in their cars or leave the park" (Rogers 1950, 7).

Ideas about how to manage and use national parks also changed during this period. Growing awareness and interest in the ecological health of national parks was promoted by the Wilderness Society. Founded in 1935, the society's focus was "to work for the preservation of roadless, undeveloped land in North America" (Glover 1995, 686). The projects that this group focused on in lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service helped to raise national awareness of scenic landscapes and of human impacts in nature preserves. The passage of the Wilderness Act in 1964 also had a tremendous impact on National Park Service policies and management tactics. The act called for protection and management of wilderness areas or places "without permanent human improvement" (Cohen 1995, 686). More broadly, it promoted protection of open spaces, environmental integrity, and solitude.

These movements affected Yellowstone Lake in at least two ways: managing lake recreation and planning developed areas. Environmental historian James A. Pritchard points out a connection between the wilderness movement and Yellowstone Lake boating regulations: "Thinking about wilderness values in the parks was manifested in Yellowstone by the creation of wilderness zones on Yellowstone Lake" (Pritchard 1999,

197). The “wilderness zones” refer to the South and Southeast Arms of the lake. These areas were of special concern to wilderness enthusiasts and supporters since these bays were the favored nesting spots of osprey, Caspian terns, California gulls, double-crested cormorants, and white pelicans (Pritchard 1999, 198). Bird nesting areas in the southern arms of the lake were being disturbed by motor boat activity.

A recreational use study of Yellowstone Lake completed in 1959 confirmed these suggestions and recommended that motor boats should be prohibited from the southern arms of the lake (Haines 1977b, 382). The regulations “sought partly to protect fragile beachlines and nesting grounds of water birds from the damaging wakes of fast-moving boats and partly to provide a sanctuary of quiet naturalness for those wishing the experience of canoeing in a wilderness setting” (Haines 1977b, 382). In 1961, the National Park Service compromised its zoning regulations with “powerboat enthusiasts” by allowing them access, at reduced speeds, in the South and Southeast Arms of the lake (Haines 1977b, 382). Eventually, the zoning evolved to include non-motorized zones and no wake zones in the South and Southeast Arms.

The second influence of the wilderness movement on Yellowstone Lake involved the planning and design of the lake’s developed areas. Wilderness enthusiasts urged the National Park Service to consider development plans that encouraged people to step out of their cars and explore the scenic areas of parks. Speaking of the values promoted by the Wilderness Society president, Olaus Murie, Pritchard recounts Murie’s rationale: “Roads did not have to cling to the very edge of a scenic canyon; instead, the road might approach here and there, with parking areas hidden from view at panoramic vistas” (Pritchard 1999, 196).

The Mission 66 project also shaped the lake's cultural landscapes. It was a ten year plan initiated in 1955 that aimed to complete vast construction, relocation, and refurbishment goals in national parks by 1966. The plan accentuated "building and refurbishing trails, visitor centers, roads, campsites, employee housing, and other facilities" while also lessening the impact of swelling visitation in the national parks (Pritchard 1999, 198). At Yellowstone Lake, this project contributed to more trails being restored and maintained along the eastern and southern shores of the lake, the realignment of the north shore road along the lake to include scenic turnouts and picnic areas, the redistribution of park structures at Fishing Bridge Developed Area and West Thumb to alternative sites, and a proposal to remove boat docks from the fragile geothermal areas around the West Thumb Developed Area.

There were also other facets of the Mission 66 plan that affected Yellowstone National Park and Yellowstone Lake. The park-wide plan called for major revisions to park infrastructure and, thus, to the cultural landscapes of Yellowstone. Haines quotes part of the "Mission 66 for Yellowstone National Park": "Three things are necessary in order for Yellowstone to yield the benefits of which it is capable: an adequate road and trail system giving access to important and significant features of the Park; adequate facilities for visitor comfort, welfare, and subsistence; and effective pedestrian, interpretation, and protection of the resources of Yellowstone by a management staff" (Haines 1977b, 373). These changes would not come without a cost.

The "improvements to facilities and management" would call for a construction and management phase. The construction stage of the proposed park developments would cost \$70 million for new facilities in Yellowstone over the ten years of the

program's duration (Haines 1977b, 373). The expenses of this plan were to be shared by the federal government—covering \$55 million—and “private investment” that would total \$15 million in “new concession facilities” (Haines 1977b, 373). The other stage of the plan, the management phase, called for additional employees, “changes in protection and interpretation, and the dispersion of visitor use in order to lessen the impact on particular areas” (Haines 1977b, 374). An interesting and, at times, very difficult part of Mission 66 plans was the delicate task of creating more spaces for increasing numbers of visitors and employees while also designing settlements to disperse and lessen the impacts of all that activity. Over two million visitors were expected to visit the park by 1966 and the National Park Service intended to prepare the park for such an increase in activity. Many of the buildings and support structures were outdated and unable to accommodate these new visitor estimates. In addition, Mission 66 planners aimed to reorganize “the administrative and concession facilities” and relocate these buildings “as a means of conserving scenic, geological, and recreational values” (Haines 1977b, 375).

This government-initiated program called for massive projects to relocate, upgrade, and modernize park structures while being sensitive to ecological resources and human impact on the park's natural features. Although Mission 66's goals were “essentially developmental, intending to improve access to the Park, services rendered to visitors, and the administration of the area generally,” it also aimed to further “use of park resources by preparing the area for an increased visitor load” (Haines 1977b, 380). But this plan had another side that made it a particularly beneficial and, at times, contested initiative. Mission 66 proponents were also interested in preservation of the natural resources of Yellowstone, a movement that was “apparent in the steps taken to

protect ecological relationships, and maintain ‘naturalness,’ in the effort to disperse visitor use and thereby lessen its impact on the park environment, and in better orientation of the visitor-user to the wilderness” (Haines 1977b, 380).

Mission 66 changed the spatial organization of numerous park facilities as well as how those facilities were managed, improved, allocated, and designed. Highlights from the original plans that involved Yellowstone Lake included altering the lakeshore road around the north section of the Yellowstone Lake, constructing two new developed areas (Grant Village along the West Thumb Bay and Bridge Bay near the Lake Developed Area), massive relocation of structures from the Fishing Bridge Developed Area, West Thumb Developed Area, and—to a lesser extent—the Lake Developed Area. However, these plans ultimately met with controversy from gateway communities, environmental organizations, and other federal agencies.

Ultimately, the Mission 66 plans for the lake did come to fruition, although some aspects of these proposed changes—such as the relocation of Fishing Bridge facilities—were not completed until the early 1980’s and then, only a portion of the settlement was relocated (Pritchard 1999, 264). Another important obstacle to the successful completion of Mission 66 plans came from concessionaires; the decade long program called for joint activity and investment from the National Park Service and the Yellowstone Park Company—the park’s major concessionaire. The Yellowstone Park Company, however, suffered under the financial burden of Mission 66 development and reluctantly cooperated with the National Park Service. The National Park Service forced the hand of concessionaires in Mission 66 plans. The federal agency threatened to not renew the

concessionaire's franchise which was coming up for review if the concessionaire did not agree to the proposed park development schemes (Haines 1977b, 375-6).

The contentious relationship between concessionaires and the National Park Service played out well past 1966; however a look at the beginning of Mission 66 projects and concessionaire responses to the plans provides a useful portal into which we may explore some of the planning issues that faced Yellowstone Lake throughout this period. One of the first steps in the Mission 66 program was an assessment of current park infrastructure. Such a survey was conducted at Yellowstone Lake to assess the concessionaire services.

The results of that survey—which included photographs and verbal descriptions of the lake area—were recorded in a 1958 “Survey of Facilities and Operations for Yellowstone Park Company.” The report rated the condition and economic feasibility of visitor services at the Lake and made development recommendations on the three major developed areas—West Thumb, Lake, and Fishing Bridge. The survey found that the facilities at all these sites were in poor structural condition, not developed to their full economic potential, and were generally inadequately prepared to handle the growing number of park visitors (Pickering 1958, 25-44). Plans to improve these service areas began in the early 1960's, but uneven contributions to development plans by concessionaires and the National Park Service caused escalating tensions between the two organizations.

The effect of the uneven development was apparent on the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake; according to historian Mark Barringer, the Yellowstone Park Company “had fallen so far behind construction schedules that new roads led only to

vacant sites, and government service buildings stood idle near proposed developments” (2002, 165). This description certainly fit the newly developed Grant Village site. By 1966, the National Park Service completed roads, utilities, campgrounds, comfort stations, a marina, and a visitor center—all usable by this year (Haines 1977b, 378). However, new roads built by the National Park Service to proposed lodging and dining areas led to “vacant sites” where Yellowstone Park Company had not matched the federal investment at Grant Village and failed to construct facilities there. The concessionaire was hesitant to take on the enormous financial burden of relocating its profitable stores, boat docks, and overnight accommodations from the adjacent development at the West Thumb Developed Area to Grant Village.

Other developed sites around Yellowstone Lake suffered from similar problems. The company also lagged behind National Park Service efforts to relocate facilities from the Fishing Bridge Developed Area. The Bridge Bay Developed Area was a slightly more successful operation (in terms of Mission 66 proposed plans); at this site, the National Park Service completed most of its proposed facilities by 1966. These structures included a large multi-use building (housing a marina center, ranger station, and comfort station), dredged a new marina, and constructed roads and service stations for a campground at that site.

By 1966, Yellowstone Lake was caught in the crosshairs of National Park Service planning and concessionaire resistance to increasing investment; the dueling objectives of creating vast modern visitor facility areas while also providing a national playground for wilderness recreation ultimately wore on the relations between the federal agency and private corporations. This chapter explores some of the decisions and planning that

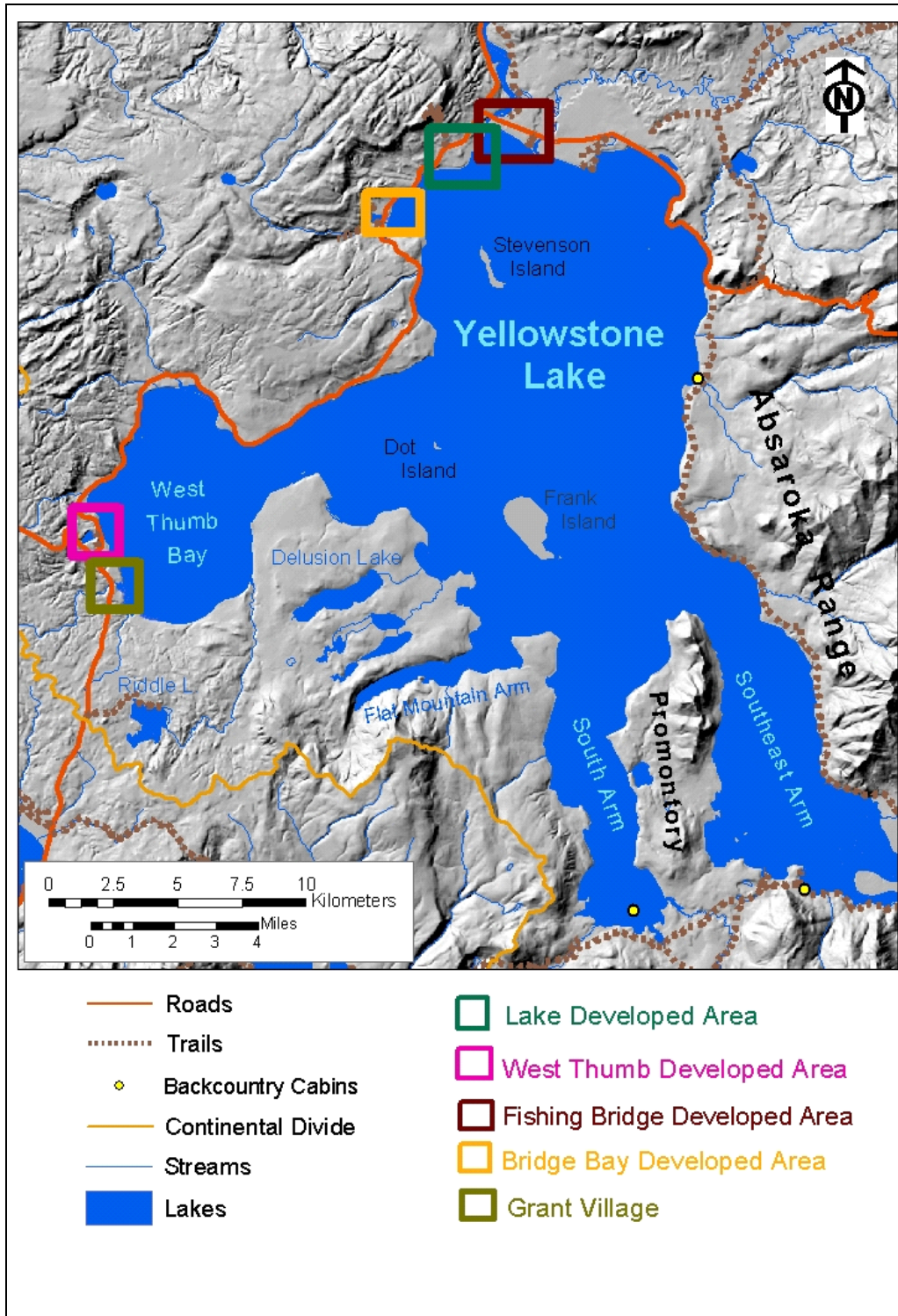
factored into this situation and altered the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake. The chapter is divided into three sections: a discussion of transportation infrastructure, government structures and services, and concessionaire built and maintained facilities at the lake. In addition, each of these sections is further subdivided to reflect changes to the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake between 1933 and 1966. By 1966, Yellowstone Lake had five major developed areas (Figure 65): Fishing Bridge Developed Area, Lake Developed Area, Bridge Bay Developed Area, West Thumb Developed Area, and Grant Village.

Transportation

Transportation in Yellowstone also changed throughout this period. Automobile tourism continued to gain in popularity, both as a form of individual and group (tour) transportation. Railroads were also a continuing part of the transportation geography in the park. However, the routes and methods of transporting tourists from railroad stations into the park shifted; the specially built touring cars of previous eras gave way to buses for the preferred method of transporting tourists from railroad depots into the park.

Many of these bus tours were operated as a subdivision of existing railroad companies and serviced railroad depots that terminated at gateway communities around Yellowstone National Park. For example, a National Park Service brochure from 1939 listed the Burlington Transportation Company as a subsidiary of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad and serving as a transportation agency for bussing visitors from Cody, Wyoming into the park (U.S. Department of the Interior 1939, 21). Similar ventures were listed in the brochure for the Union Pacific Stages Incorporation as a

Figure 65. Yellowstone Lake and Backcountry Cabins, 1966



branch of the Union Pacific Railroad serving West Yellowstone, Montana and the Northland Greyhound Lines working from Livingston and Bozeman, Montana (U.S. Department of the Interior 1939, 21). The brochure also recounts that from “Cody, West Yellowstone, and Bozeman bus passengers use the busses of the Yellowstone Park Co. for their park trip, while from Livingston the trip can be made by train or bus to Gardiner, Montana...at which point to busses of the Yellowstone Park Co. are available” (U.S. Department of the Interior 1939, 21). A park guidebook from 1955 confirmed that these services continued to the later part of this period; the Haynes guide advised visitors that the Yellowstone Park Company operated “the yellow buses within the park to and from all entrances, connecting with the railroads at the north and west boundaries and at the nearest points outside of the park served by other railroad and bus lines” (Haynes 1955, 21).

Air travel also entered the Yellowstone National Park scene during this period. Airplanes began to transport visitors to smaller airports located at gateway communities around the park. The first service started in 1936 at West Yellowstone, Montana.

In the vicinity of Yellowstone Lake, trails and boating routes gained an increasing importance during this period. More park visitors used trails around the lake to ride horses or hike towards the southern arms of the lake. There were no roads built or maintained around the southern arms, so visitors wishing to travel to these areas sought out alternative forms of transportation including walking, boating, and horseback riding. The wilderness movement greatly affected this shift in use patterns. Although the structures built and maintained in the southern areas of the lake were not large or numerous, the affect of these facilities and their use should not be ignored. Wilderness

recreation attracted visitors who increasingly wished for activities to more remote parts of the park. With the increase in motorized travel (particularly after World War I), those areas of the park were far from roadways. Yellowstone Lake offered visitors the chance to hike miles of remote trails, paddle lakeshore routes with decreased motorboat traffic, and see areas that many visitors did not experience. In this sense then, the period between 1933 and 1966 saw an expansion in the spatial pattern of buildings at Yellowstone Lake (towards the south with ranger cabins and boat docks). Thus, a mix of transportation services offered access to Yellowstone Lake by 1966 and included train service, automobiles, airplanes, motorboats, hand-propelled watercraft, and horses.

Trails

Trail construction, maintenance, and use increased during this period around the lake. Trails during this period included long trails around the lake requiring several days travel by horseback or on foot, short trails from developed areas to scenic vistas or features, and foot paths around and between developed area facilities. An example of a foot path between developed area facilities includes the 1936 addition to Fishing Bridge Developed area where “2,000 linear feet of permanent type footpath with rock curb” was built (Rogers 1936, 26). The foot trails around the thermal areas of the West Thumb geyser basin also were upgraded during this period. In 1936, Superintendent Rogers reported the construction of “2,400 linear feet of permanent asphaltic surfaced footpaths over the thermal area and guard rails around numerous hot pools and mud pots” (Rogers 1936, 25). Longer foot trails around the lake also received renewed attention. Guidebooks from this period increasingly referred to and described longer trails around the lakeshore. A 1949 guidebook described a “historic trail from Fishing Bridge

Developed Area along the east side of the Yellowstone River, to the Canyon Developed Area” (Haynes 1949, 111).

References to trails increased in guidebooks and superintendent reports sampled from 1933 to 1966. The increase in trail descriptions may be related to the greater attention that National Park Service superintendents were paying to trail construction and maintenance and the influx of Civilian Conservation Corps labor: Mission 66 plans called for “an adequate road and trail system giving access to important and significant features of the Park” (Haines 1977b, 373). Many of these trails were based on paths used by Native Americans and Euro-Americans in pre-park or early park years, but these trails received renewed use and attention during this period. Although records did not indicate the direct involvement of labor in trail construction projects at Yellowstone Lake, Civilian Conservation Corps completed many trails throughout the park and may have been involved in trails around the southern shore of the lake.

Visitors seeking more remote destinations in the park could use the trails to access the southern reaches of the lake for camping, boating, or scenic trips. A map of the lake from 1957 depicted a “horse trail” that followed the shoreline of Yellowstone Lake and allowed visitors to entirely circumnavigate it (Yellowstone National Park 1957). However, this trail system around the lake was not advertised with all of these paths intact on subsequent maps. A map of the lake in 1965 only depicts a “trail” along the eastern, southern, and part of the northern section of the loop trail displayed in the 1957 map (U.S. Department of the Interior 1965). An interesting feature of the 1965 map is that it portrays several shorter trails to lakes near Yellowstone Lake and to overlooks of Yellowstone Lake. The shift in the trails depicted on maps is a good indicator of

changing trends in park use and management during this period. The trails systems depicted on maps from this period are longer and are gradually marketed in park brochures to both horse and foot traffic. There is also a trend to provide a greater variety of trails during this period; more short, spur trails to lakes and overlooks were built that would appeal to families or those interested in a less demanding trail experience than many hours on a trail would call for. Park guidebooks during this era do not elaborate on specific trails to visit at Yellowstone Lake, but the Howard Eaton Trail was frequently mentioned in these descriptions as being close to the lake.

Roads

Although the major roads around Yellowstone Lake were established by 1933, road projects on a smaller scale were carried out throughout this period. These projects augmented the route of the primary or “Grand Loop” road system established by 1932 at Yellowstone Lake. Three types of road projects between 1933 and 1966 included those that realigned existing roads to and around developed areas, those that maintained secondary roads to scenic lake attractions, and road building and maintenance endeavors that extended the road system to newly developed sites. Private automobile tourist visitation of Yellowstone continued to increase during this period—with the notable exceptions of the years around the Great Depression and World War II—and these visitors provided a strong client base for park concessionaires. A Yellowstone Park Company brochure from 1946 provides an example of the way that Yellowstone National Park roads were projected to a national audience:

If you enjoy motoring on good roads, you’ll like Yellowstone Park. The highways of the Yellowstone are as inviting and pleasant to drive over as any roads in this country. Mountain grades have been leveled, curves and straightaways widened.

Now Yellowstone is ready for the automobile vacationists [*sic*] of the United States, Canada and Mexico. Come this summer. You'll be welcomed" (Yellowstone Park Company 1946, 1).

Although this description of park roads is enthusiastic about their condition, park superintendent reports often noted vast repairs and maintenance projects for park roads. Automobile tourists throughout the postwar years found increasing overnight lodging facilities, dining areas, and interpretive stations at Yellowstone. However, soon the burden of increasing traffic overwhelmed Yellowstone's tourism infrastructure and vast changes and additions were planned for the park with the Mission 66 program.

Examples of road building projects and realignment at established developed areas may be seen by looking at the historical records for Lake, Fishing Bridge, and West Thumb Developed Areas. In 1951, the roads around the housekeeping cabin area at Fishing Bridge Developed and Lake Developed Area were extended. The road at the West Thumb campground was also altered during this time (Rogers 1951, 24). During the early 1940's, Civilian Conservation Corps labor was used on at least one road project at Yellowstone Lake. At the West Thumb Developed Area, plans were made to use Civilian Conservation Corps labor to realign the existing road and build more cabins for overnight visitors (Rogers 1940). Archival research also revealed extending improved roadways to larger areas around government facilities such as the Fishing Bridge museum (Rogers 1936, 26).

A second type of road building enterprise during this period involved maintaining older primary roads as secondary roads to scenic attractions around the lake. For example, in 1949 the road from Bridge Bay to the Natural Bridge was described as a "side spur road, 1.2 miles in length" (Haynes 1949, 101). The same guidebook also

mentions a “side road” that “leads northeast 0.9 mile to a lookout point on Lake Butte where a splendid view may be had of Yellowstone Lake” (Haynes 1949, 109). Also that year an “old road from Turbid Lake” is mentioned as joining the main loop road after passing the northwest edge of Mary Bay (Haynes 1949, 109).

The third type of road project that was completed during this period was perhaps the most dynamic in terms of change to Yellowstone Lake’s cultural landscape. In association with Mission 66 plans, the National Park Service proposed building new developed areas at the lake and roads to access those sites. According to Haines, under the Mission 66 plans modernizing the road system in Yellowstone was “key to the program. The general pattern of the system was satisfactory but many segments required upgrading...” (Haines 1977b, 374). New sites for service, recreation, administrative, and interpretive activities were planned along the north and southwest shores of Yellowstone Lake. Grant Village and Bridge Bay Developed Area were the two major sites at the lake that were constructed through agreements between the National Park Service and concessionaires.

Roads were extended from the main Grand Loop road to and around these planned service areas. In addition to the construction at Grant Village and Bridge Bay, Mission 66 plans also involved “[r]econstruction of part of the lakeshore road between West Thumb and the outlet of Yellowstone Lake” which “made possible an increased recreational use of that enticing locality” (Haines 1977b, 374). The road reconstruction project for the lakeshore road included adding several scenic pullouts, picnic areas, and scenic one-way roads such as the new Gull Point route near Bridge Bay. Park records did not indicate speed limit changes or vista clearing associated with these specific projects.

Bridges

Since the Grand Loop Road around the park was well established by 1933, most of the bridge building projects after this time consisted of upgrading existing structures to accommodate increasing automobile traffic and to accomplish some of the road building goals of Mission 66. A notable bridge alteration took place at Fishing Bridge. In 1937, the bridge (Figure 66) was rebuilt to accommodate increasing vehicle traffic, the demand for another boat dock at the lake, and pedestrian traffic on the bridge (Haynes 1949, 105).

Boating Routes

Boating routes and the number of boats continued to increase throughout this period. Routes around the lake proliferated as more boats were introduced to Yellowstone Lake and visitors continued to be interested in tours around the lake. Both government-and concessionaire-operated boat docks were located at Yellowstone Lake. The Fish and Wildlife Service maintained a government boat dock at the fish hatchery site in the Lake Developed Area. By 1966, the National Park Service built two new marinas—at Bridge Bay Developed Area and Grant Village—and used these areas as docking facilities and points of departure for their patrols around Yellowstone Lake. This period includes the emergence of a “government fleet” of boats that were used to patrol and monitor the lake’s shoreline beginning in 1938 (Haines 1977b, 414).

Concessionaires also purchased, operated, and maintained fleets of boats around Yellowstone Lake (Toll 1934, 23). Boating became a popular recreation as well as a profitable one for park concessionaires who offered a variety of boating services such as rentals, guided tours, scenic tours, and fishing excursions. The Yellowstone Park

Figure 66. Fishing Bridge

In 1937, the Fishing Bridge over the Yellowstone River was rebuilt once again. The latest project for the bridge improved its structure to accommodate increasing automobile traffic, pedestrian walkways across the bridge, and boat access underneath. A notable addition to Yellowstone Lake's transportation geography is a boat rental hut and dock on the west bank of the river (left, center in image). [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]

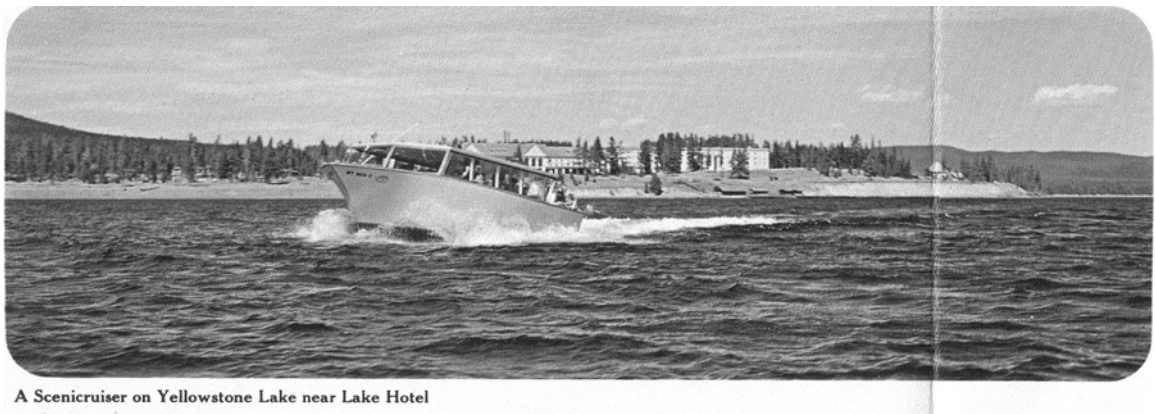


Company started offering a scenic tour around the lake in large motorized touring boats (Figure 67) known as “scenicruisers” (Yellowstone Park Company 1966). By 1966, scenicruisers left the Bridge Bay Marina and West Thumb boat dock for “hour long” cruises on the lake (Yellowstone Park Company 1966). The concessionaire also continued the popular practice of boat and fishing gear rentals from facilities at West Thumb, Lake, Fishing Bridge, and (by early 1966) Bridge Bay docks. Yellowstone Park Company operated a “fleet of sightseeing boats on Yellowstone Lake and a large number

of small boats for fishing” at the West Thumb Developed Area, the Lake Developed Area, and near the Fishing Bridge (Haynes 1955, 21). Each of these locations had boathouses and docks.

Figure 67. Boating on Yellowstone Lake

Boating on Yellowstone Lake between 1933 and 1966 included tours on large motor boats known as “scenicruisers.” These tour boats would whisk passengers across the lake and around its islands while highlighting the lake’s scenic attractions. [Yellowstone Park Company, map. From the collection of William Wyckoff.]



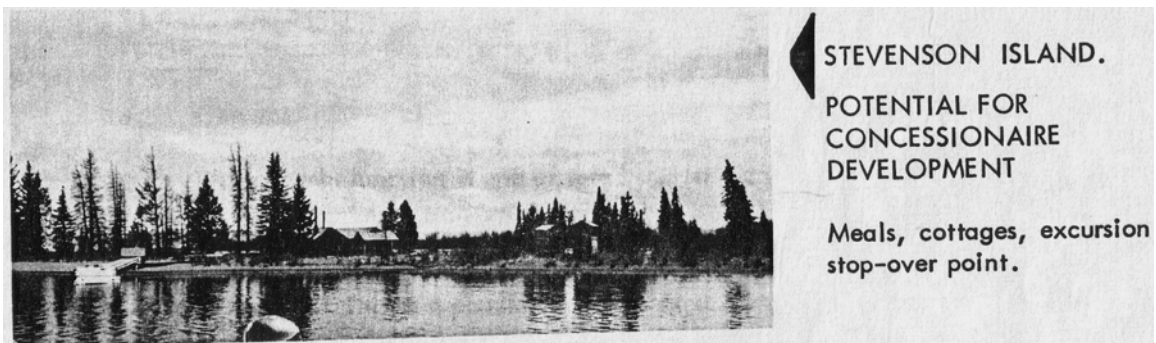
A Scenicruiser on Yellowstone Lake near Lake Hotel

The Yellowstone Park Company also started offering more tours to the islands of Yellowstone Lake than in previous periods. Stevenson Island (Figure 68) was used by the Yellowstone Park Company as a stop-over point where guests could partake in a fish fry after an afternoon of fishing for trout in the lake. An early reference to this activity appears in the superintendent’s report in 1934. In that report, the superintendent discusses the Yellowstone Park Company making a “small addition to the table at Stevenson Island” and that the company was considering building a “roof over this table” (Toll 1934, 23). A later National Park Service brochure also describes the “boat trip, including fishing and fish fry at Stevenson Island” as a “popular feature” of boating on Yellowstone Lake in 1939 (United State Department of the Interior 1939, 26). The tours

were still being offered in 1949 as a Haynes guidebook from that year reported “[s]peedboat excursions for fishing parties are made to Stevenson Island from the boathouse near the road east of the fish hatchery” (Haynes 1949, 102).

Figure 68. Stevenson Island

Stevenson Island, the second largest island at Yellowstone Lake, became a popular stopping point for commercial boat tours of the lake. Groups would stop at the island after a day of fishing for a fish fry and scenic layover. A boat dock and several support buildings on the island represent some of the diversifying cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake throughout the modern period [image printed in Pickering 1958].



As the popularity of boating on Yellowstone Lake increased, more tourists sought destinations in the southern arms of the lake. The Molly Islands (Figure 69), in the Southeast Arm of Yellowstone Lake also attracted concessionaire activity; Yellowstone Park Company offered guided tours (by 1932) of the islands featuring interpretive activities highlighting the white pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*) and California gull (*Larus californicus*) populations that roosted on the islands (Haynes 1949, 103). The proliferation of motor boats on the lake from concessionaire and private boaters certainly contributed to more visitors seeing Yellowstone Lake from a variety of locations. By 1958 around five thousand boats used Yellowstone Lake (Pritchard 1999, 198). Motor boats provided a form of swift transportation and increased the accessibility of this large sub-alpine lake.

Figure 69. Molly Islands

The Molly Islands of Yellowstone Lake's Southeast Arm were the favored site of many avian species and an active rookery. Commercial boat tours of the lake throughout the early 1930's would feature trips to the islands where visitors could view the birds in close proximity. The tours were later discontinued because of heavy visitor use to these fragile ecological areas. [Image printed in Pritchard 1999, 99.]



Yellowstone Park Company also profited from private boat rentals at Yellowstone Lake. Public marinas—where park patrons could rent buoys for their boats, rent small motor or row boats for a day, or rent fishing gear—were operated at the West Thumb Developed Area (Figure 70) and, by 1966, at Bridge Bay Marina (Figure 71). The Lake Developed Area boat docks (Figure 72) also served the public through most of this period as a location for boat rentals and guided tours. Near the Fishing Bridge, a small floating boat rental hut (Figure 73) and fishing equipment station were operated through 1966. Private boating became an increasingly popular attraction for park visitors who could now store their boats on the north shore of the lake within easy motored access to the southern realms of the lake.

Figure 70. West Thumb Developed Area Boat Dock

The boat docks at the West Thumb Developed Area continued to be a site of bustling activity at least until 1966. Once the launching site of steamboat tours across the lake, the West Thumb docks were improved and altered to accommodate motor boats of various sizes. Visitors could rent boats, fishing gear, or guided trips from this lakeshore developed site. A marina (note boats attached to buoys in center of image) also complemented the services available at the docks and provided a point of departure for lake tours by private boaters. [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Photo Archives.]



Finally, boating routes on Yellowstone Lake received new attention from the National Park Service which began to enforce boating restrictions in the southern arms of the lake. By 1961, these regulations called for reduced motor boat speeds in the South and Southeast Arms of the lake and (eventually) non-motorized boating zones in the farthest southerly reaches of these arms (Haines 1977b, 382). These regulations were enforced by National Park Service rangers on patrols of the lake. However, these rules

Figure 71. Bridge Bay Marina

The Bridge Bay Developed Area was a product of the Mission 66 project. By 1966, this developed site included a National Park Service built marina, ranger station, store, boat reservation desk, and campground. Plans from the Mission 66 project (top) called for a new boat dock and marina (bottom) location on Yellowstone Lake as an alternative site to the Lake Developed Area boat docks. [top image Courtesy of Yellowstone Park Photo Archives; bottom photo by author 2003.]

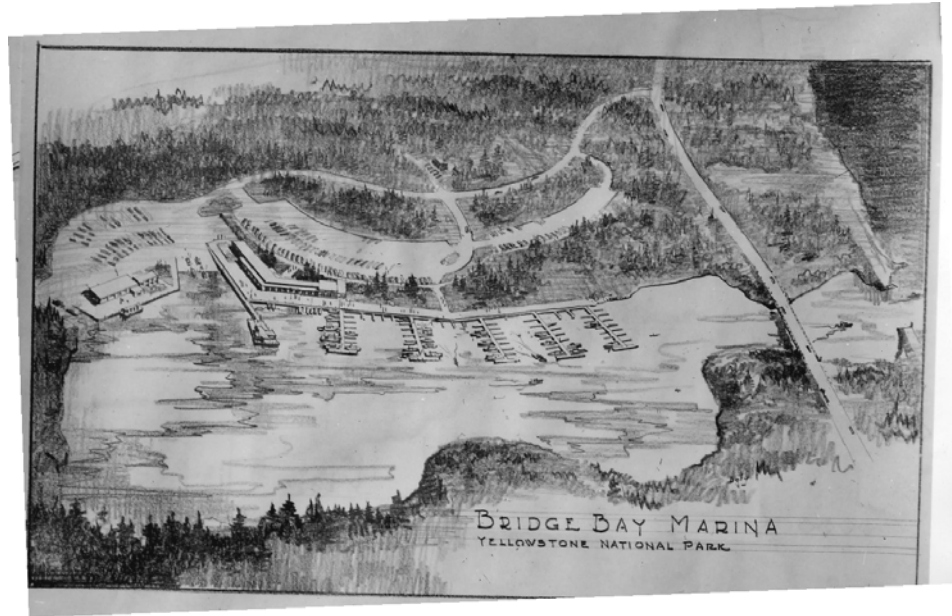


Figure 72. Lake Developed Area Boat Docks

The boat docks in front of the Lake Hotel continued to operate as an important commercial boating area in 1966. As one of the oldest sites of boating activity on Yellowstone Lake, the Lake Developed Area docks evolved from wood plank boardwalks to assist steamboat passengers onto their craft to floating docks which provided pedestrian footing as well as landing areas for rental and private motor boats. [photo printed in Haynes 1955, 115].



did not dissuade tourists from seeking out these more remote regions of Yellowstone Lake. Transported by speed boats and inspired by the drive to explore more wilderness settings in the park, tourists sought out the south arms of the lake to fish, camp, and cruise.

Government Structures

Government agencies operating at Yellowstone Lake between 1933 and 1966 included the National Park Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Civilian Conservation Corps. The National Park Service maintained and built ranger

Figure 73. Fishing Bridge Boat Dock

The boat dock and rental hut built on the west side of the Yellowstone River bank near the Fishing Bridge served as a bustling area of boating activity in 1966. Before the Mission 66 project removed the boat hut, it was a place where fishing enthusiasts could rent boats and fishing gear for an afternoon of trout fishing near the outlet of the Yellowstone River from Yellowstone Lake. [image printed in Whittlesey 1997, 78.]



stations, amphitheaters, museums, backcountry cabins, marinas, and auto campgrounds.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service continued to operate a fish hatchery complex along the north shores of Yellowstone Lake which included a fish hatchery building, a boat dock, a boat storage building, and employee housing. The Civilian Conservation Corps built and briefly maintained a camp near the Lake Developed Area and completed several projects at the lake.

National Park Service Structures

Between 1933 and 1966, the National Park Service built and maintained a variety of interpretive, service, and support structures around Yellowstone Lake. The interpretive facilities supported by the National Park Service during this period included ranger stations, amphitheaters, and a museum. The ranger stations built at the Lake Developed Area in 1923, the West Thumb Developed Area in 1925, and the Fishing Bridge Developed Area in 1930 continued to be operated as points of contact between park rangers and visitors offering interpretive ranger led discussions and park information. In 1936, the National Park Service augmented the interpretive services available at Fishing Bridge by building a 900-person capacity outdoor amphitheater (Figure 74) (Rogers 1936, 12). The station at West Thumb soon followed suit with a 137-person capacity outdoor amphitheater built there in 1937 (Rogers 1937, 5). These amphitheaters were the sites of evening “campfire programs” where National Park Service rangers presented interpretive programs to Yellowstone visitors (Rogers 1951, 18). The amphitheaters consisted of large screens for viewing slides or movies, a stone fire ring, and benches for visitors. Although Civilian Conservation Corps may have assisted with amphitheater projects in other parts of the park, records do not indicate their involvement with similar plans at Yellowstone Lake.

The Fishing Bridge Museum (Figure 75) continued to present interpretive exhibits to tourists at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area throughout this period. Many government structures at Yellowstone Lake were modeled in similar styles as the museum—an architectural form that came to be known as “rustic.” Historian James

Figure 74. Fishing Bridge Amphitheater

The interpretive sites constructed and maintained at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area included this outdoor amphitheater. Located near the Fishing Bridge Museum, this outdoor venue featured a 900-person seating capacity and a place for park rangers to present public talks on lake ecology and history. A similar structure was also constructed at the West Thumb Developed Area [photo by author 2003].



Pritchard describes how the logs, stones and “native...materials” used to construct the Fishing Bridge Museum became important elements in “the rustic style, and their design was widely imitated during the New Deal development of state and local parks throughout the nation” (Pritchard 1999, 264). Finally, by 1964 a fifth ranger station (Figure 76) was established at Yellowstone Lake at the Bridge Bay Developed Area. The station was situated in a large multiple use building also featuring a general store and a boat rental station (U.S. Department of the Interior 1965; Spatial Analysis Center). This building was the center of most marina activities at the Bridge Bay Developed Area.

Figure 75. Fishing Bridge Museum, 1955

The Fishing Bridge Museum was located at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area. This interpretive museum was built in the “rustic” style of architecture that dominated the form of many National Park Service buildings. [image printed in Haynes 1955, 117.]



Service and support structures built and maintained by the National Park Service at Yellowstone Lake between 1933 and 1966 included backcountry cabins, marinas, boat docks, and automobile camps. The National Park Service continued to use the Trail Creek patrol cabin and barn (built in 1933) along the southwestern shore of the Southeast Arm throughout this period (see Figure 65). However, the National Park Service also increased the number of backcountry cabins at Yellowstone Lake during this period by building two additional structures; one was built in 1937 near Clear Creek along the eastern shore of the lake and the other was built in 1942 on Peale Island in the South Arm (see Figure 65). The backcountry cabins were used by National Park Service rangers as housing during their patrols around the lake.

Figure 76. Bridge Bay Developed Area

As part of the Mission 66 program, the Bridge Bay area was developed as a major service area at Yellowstone Lake in the 1960's. An anchor point at the marina was this large complex that featured a ranger station (far left), boat ticketing office, and Hamilton Store (far right with flags). [photo by author 2003.]



Marinas and boat docks were also important features that the National Park Service supported at Yellowstone Lake. The National Park Service shifted more of its attention to the southern arms of the lake, not only with backcountry patrol cabins but with the completion of a boat dock in the Southeast Arm. A 1934 annual superintendent's report notes the completion of "a warehouse and dock" (Figure 77)—under construction since 1933—in the Southeast Arm of the lake (Toll 1934, 20). Another boat launching site was a "government boathouse and dock" (see Figure 58) operated at the Lake Developed Area along the shoreline in front of the U.S. Fish Hatchery until at least 1949 (Haynes 1949, 105). This site was probably used to dock the

Figure 77. Boat Dock at the Southeast Arm of Yellowstone Lake, 1934
 As motor boats became a more common sight on Yellowstone Lake, the National Park Service and concessionaires focused more of their attentions on the southern realms of the lake. This boat dock was located in the Southeast Arm of the lake near Clear Creek. [Courtesy of Yellowstone Park Photo Archives.]



small National Park Service fleet and served as a launching point for park boating patrols until the completion of the marinas at Bridge Bay Developed Area and Grant Village. The National Park Service seemed to struggle during this period to maintain order at Yellowstone Lake; in 1950, the park superintendent's reported that "enforcement of fishing regulations on Yellowstone [Lake]...were hampered by the lack of suitable boats and sufficient personnel for effective protection of fish resources" (Rogers 1950, 30). To augment their patrolling locations and to provide more visitor boating facilities in agreement with the objectives of the Mission 66 project, the National Park Service built two new marinas and boat docks at Yellowstone Lake. The Grant Village Marina

construction was begun in 1961 and completed by 1966 (Haines 1977b, 378). Another marina was built at Bridge Bay Developed Area where dredging of the naturally protected bay was also finished by 1966.

The National Park Service also focused attention on the automobile campgrounds around Yellowstone Lake. The automobile campgrounds were free and open to the public and they continued to grow in popularity for motorists visiting the park and looking for an economical overnight situation. Some campgrounds were relocated, others were expanded, and new campgrounds were constructed at the lake. By 1939, automobile campgrounds were located at the Fishing Bridge, West Thumb, and Lake Developed Areas (United States Department of the Interior 1939, map). The West Thumb campground and Fishing Bridge campground continued to be popular locations for overnight camping parties throughout this period. However, sometime after 1939, the Lake Auto Campground was removed from the Lake Developed Area. Although the archival records sampled for this study did not include an exact date for the removal of the campground, mention of this National Park Service site does not appear after this date. A reference to the Lake Auto Campground in 1939 provides a glimpse into the condition of auto campgrounds at the lake and the short tenure of the site at the Lake Developed Area:

At Fishing Bridge campground it was necessary to clear-cut part of the west end because of the danger to visitors by falling trees....At West Thumb two roadways were built and this campground was extended to take care of 30 additional sites....The vegetative cover at Lake campground has suffered from over-utilization and it is likely that this area will be abandoned as soon as facilities are developed to carry the load elsewhere” (Rogers 1939, 22).

The West Thumb and Fishing Bridge campgrounds (Figure 78), however, continued to operate throughout this period.

Figure 78. Fishing Bridge Automobile Campground, 1963

The Fishing Bridge Automobile campground was constructed and maintained by the National Park Service. The campground was enlarged to accommodate additional private motorists who patronized this popular and free site at Yellowstone Lake. Mission 66 plans proposed to remove the automobile campground and relocate facilities to the Grant Village site on the southwestern shore of the lake. [Courtesy of Yellowstone Park Photo Archives.]



As the National Park Service came to terms with the task of accommodating the projected two million visitors by 1966 (Haines 1977b, 375), the automobile campgrounds became areas targeted for new investment and planning attention. As early as 1951, the Fishing Bridge automobile campground was extended to include more sites (Rogers 1951, 24). A park guidebook from 1955 described the services available at the auto campgrounds and supported concentrated camping; the guide describes the campgrounds as providing “pure water, sanitation facilities, and some equipment are supplied for the

free use of campers...The use of these campgrounds...is encouraged rather than promiscuous camping in outlying areas” (Haynes 1955, 18).

Finally, the later part of this period includes several construction projects for new campgrounds at Yellowstone Lake. Under the auspices of Mission 66 which called for relocating and redistributing park services, a new campground at the Bridge Bay Developed Area provided an alternative site to the removed Lake auto campground. A similar shift in camping areas took place at West Thumb Bay, where the auto campground at the West Thumb Developed Area was relocated to the newly developed Grant Village site a mile to the south (United States Department of the Interior 1965). By this point in park history, the National Park Service and park guidebooks discouraged visitors from camping in open sites in the park and instead suggested using the improved campground areas.

United States Fish and Wildlife Service Structures

The period between 1933 and 1966 brought many changes to the fish hatchery operations at Yellowstone Lake. The United States Fish Commission was combined with the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife to become the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. By 1933, the hatchery complex at the Lake Developed Area included a residence (built in 1932), a South District Office (built in 1930), the hatchery itself (built 1930). A 1933 park guidebook referred to the fish propagation and display operations as the “United States Fish Hatchery and Aquarium”(Northern Pacific Railway 1933, 19). A map insert from the same guidebook also provides a confusing centerfold map that shows a label for only one “U.S. Fish Hatchery” at Yellowstone Lake—along the northern shore of the West Thumb Bay (Northern Pacific Railway 1933, map centerfold). The

description of the lake area in the guidebook does not mention a fish hatchery at the West Thumb Bay, so this map reference may be a displaced notation of the Lake Fish Hatchery or it may be a reference to the older West Thumb Fish Hatchery. The Lake Fish Hatchery ceased to be used as such in 1957 when the United States Fish and Wildlife Service began to focus its attentions on research goals and discontinued its artificial fish propagation program (The Official Website of Yellowstone National Park). The buildings of the Lake Fish Hatchery, the residence, the South District Office all remained standing after their use was discontinued.

Civilian Conservation Corps Camp

As part of the New Deal plans to boost the national economy and provide civilian jobs, the Civilian Conservation Corps built and maintained five camps in Yellowstone National Park. A Civilian Conservation Corps camp was operated at Yellowstone Lake from 1940 to 1943 (Rogers 1943, 16). The approximate location of this camp was near the Lake Developed Area. According to a superintendent's annual report, the camp was located "between Fishing Bridge and Lake" along the north shore of Yellowstone Lake. After the Civilian Conservation Corps left this camp "during World War II," the National Park Service "operated a road maintenance camp" at this site (Haines 1977b, 423). Haines also mentions that "a residential and utility development was added" to the former Civilian Conservation Corps camp at Yellowstone Lake under the Mission 66 project (Haines 1977b, 379). The Civilian Conservation Corps members who resided at the camp performed a number of services around Yellowstone Lake including "the partial completion of one boat dock at Yellowstone Lake" (Rogers 1939, 30), repair and construction work at the cabins at Lake and Fishing Bridge Developed Areas (Rogers

1942, 11), and a road relocation project at the West Thumb Developed Area (Rogers 1940).

Concessionaire Structures

Concessionaries operating at Yellowstone Lake were under great pressure during this period to keep pace with the alternating demands of increasing visitor numbers and economic recessions facing lake businesses. This period begins at a difficult time for concessionaires as the economic hardships of the Great Depression necessitated the closures of most service facilities at Yellowstone Lake. From 1933 to 1935, most overnight accommodations, stores, boat docks, and campgrounds were closed to public use at Yellowstone Lake (Toll 1935, 2). Services at the three major developed areas of the time—Lake, West Thumb, and Fishing Bridge—were temporarily closed due to high operating costs and the difficulty of securing personnel (due to the economic recession of associate with the Great Depression) to operate these business enterprises. Once these areas reopened, the available services received a brief period of repair, refurbishment, and heavy visitor use until the outbreak of World War II.

The war years proved to be another difficult period for the visitor facilities at Yellowstone Lake. Between 1940 and 1947 the Lake Hotel and many adjacent facilities at the Lake, Fishing Bridge, and West Thumb Developed Areas were closed (Rogers 1947, 5). Historian Aubrey Haines argues that “[c]oncessionaires made no effort to improve their facilities during the war years. Beyond the minimal operations...they were content to protect the fleet of buses, the silent hotels, and other equipment from weather damage and theft” (Haines 1977b, 368). However, archival research focusing on

Yellowstone Lake reveals that a different picture was being painted there during the war years of World War II. The Yellowstone Park Company completed several major construction projects during this time including remodeling the tourist cabins at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area, building cabins at the Lake Developed Area, and additions to the West Thumb Developed Area facilities.

The landscape engineering department of the National Park Service played a key role in documenting and regulating these changes to the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake—an increasingly popular location for tourist activity in Yellowstone National Park. An example of the level of National Park Service involvement in architectural design and execution of the building plans may be seen by looking at archival documents. For example, the proposal for rebuilding the West Thumb Developed Area in the early 1940's met with some resistance from this government agency. According to a letter from the Regional Chief of Planning dated October 3, 1941, the plans for the addition of a gas station, repair shop, cafeteria, and boat house did not meet with his approval:

I must admit that I am not too happy about the character of the sketches submitted to Mr. Hamilton as I feel they definitely lack the architectural character that I think would best fit the West Thumb area. I suppose I can say that the most disturbing features in the architectural design now presented are the combination of gable and flat roofs, the use of two different kinds of materials on such a small structure and the introduction of a few modernistic details. I do not object to using concrete as a construction material...although I would want the...general architectural details to be more in conformity with the park character (Baker 1941).

Another letter from the planning division remarked on similar issues with a proposed sketch for the West Thumb Service Station which even included a consideration for landscaping during the short season that Yellowstone Lake was used for concession operations: “The introduction of the boxes for plants is not a very practical detail for

such short seasonal use. We visualize that they would require replanting each year and would more than likely be “rod” [sic] within a few weeks” (Pattson 1947). These examples are helpful to understanding the influences of concessionaires and the National Park Service landscape design department on the evolving cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake. The appearance, placement, size, and use of buildings at the lake were not haphazard; instead they were the results of concessionaire investment, National Park Service planning, and visitor demand for services.

Following World War II, business in the park boomed. This placed concessionaires in an awkward position. According to Haines, “[i]t had been presumed that the return to normalcy after the war would be a gradual one, but that was not the character of the Park’s awakening” (Haines 1977b, 368). Outfitted with postwar affluence and a desire to find a “change of scene,” Americans visited the national parks in record breaking numbers (Haines 1977b, 368). “The wave of visitors,” Haines continues “that inundated Yellowstone Park in the summer of 1946 was nearly one and one-half times greater than the peak visitation before the war” (1977b, 368).

Rising visitor numbers forced concessionaires to expand their guest facilities, renovate dilapidated structures, and build new structures for the increasing number of employees required to operate expanding operations. According to the superintendent’s report for 1951: “In an endeavor to keep pace with the tremendous increase in travel since World War II and to provide additional and more comfortable accommodations for visitors and employees, the Yellowstone Park Company is engaged on a program which will involve the expenditure of over a half million dollars” (Rogers 1951, 8). These projects included building 116 “cottages” at Lake Hotel, the “rearrangement of cabins

and improvements at Lake Lodge,” building a women’s employee housing unit at the Lake Developed Area, “repairing 80 rooms at Lake Hotel,” and improving the boat docks at West Thumb and Lake docks (Rogers 1951, 8). By 1955, the Yellowstone Park Company was the largest concessionaire in Yellowstone National Park, operating all transportation, hotels, lodges, cabins, cottages, cafeterias, and boating docks at Yellowstone Lake (Haynes 1955, 21).

The president of Hamilton Stores found his company in a similar predicament of needing to increase facilities and employee housing to accommodate increasing visitor demands. According to a 1952 letter to the park superintendent from C.A. Hamilton: “The continually increasing numbers of tourists entering Yellowstone has placed us at a great disadvantage in serving the public with our present facilities. This is due to two main reasons: first, we lack the necessary store space for the customers; and secondly, we lack the necessary housing facilities to employ the required number of employees to cope with the increased trade” (Hamilton 1952).

Concessionaires also came under fire for the state of their facilities well past the war years. An example of the complicated relations between the National Park Service, concessionaires, and park visitors may be seen in a letter from a Yellowstone tourist to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior. The author, Paul E. Harris, begins the letter: “At the outset, let me say that I am very pleased with the Mission 66 project, as it has greatly improved general conditions in the Yellowstone area” (Harris 1961). Harris then describes a recent visit to Fishing Bridge and his disapproval of the paucity of heated cabins at the developed site and the way that his reservation was handled by the Yellowstone Park Company. He ends his letter: “I am not suggesting heated cabins for

all, for the average traveler does not require this in a wilderness setting. Rather, these disproportionate prices and the company's antiquated methods of serving the American public are very much in question" (Harris 1961). Concessionaires during the Mission 66 years had to navigate their businesses through the sometimes tumultuous waters of National Park Service expectations, mounting construction costs, outdated infrastructure, and demands for new visitor services.

Overnight Accommodations

Between 1933 and 1966, concessionaires at Yellowstone Lake built and maintained overnight accommodations that included a hotel, a lodge and cabin area, housekeeping cabins, and cottages. Most of these facilities were closed from 1933 to 1935 during the economic recession of the Great Depression. After this period of inactivity, though, all of these overnight facilities were reopened. A National Park Service brochure described the park hotels as "first-class hotels with the charm of a wilderness setting, and the rates are comparable with those that prevail in metropolitan hotels of the same type, though all supplies have to be hauled great distances" (United States Department of the Interior 1939, 25). The National Park Service brochure was appealing to those tourists seeking a "wilderness setting" at a more cosmopolitan price and with the same amenities. During this period, the National Park Service and concessionaires advertised their hotels, cabins, and lodges at Yellowstone Lake with this dual purpose in mind as they appealed to more private automobile tourists seeking a rugged, yet convenient outdoor experience. Visitation from the 1930's to the 1960's changed dramatically; in 1933, there were 161, 938 visitors entering Yellowstone, in 1955 these

numbers soared to 1,368,515 tourists, and by the end of Mission 66 in 1966 there were 2,062,476 people in the park (Haines 1977b, 479-480).

An example of the complicated forces at work between the National Park Service, concessionaires, and tourists in developing Yellowstone Lake during the early part of this period comes from looking at a proposal for the Lake Developed Area in 1940. The Lake Hotel and Lake Lodge were under review in 1940 to change their design and layout. According to a letter from the Yellowstone Park Company president to the park superintendent, the concessionaire intended to eliminate the Lake Hotel completely from the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake. In a letter to the Park Superintendent, the president of the Yellowstone Park Company—W.M. Nichols—discusses extending the Lake Lodge onto the “present Lake Hotel site”:

This site has been chosen after very careful consideration of both the Lodge site and the Hotel site. The Hotel site offers the advantage of much better ground, level, and much more easily developed...It contemplates the gradual tearing down of the Lake Hotel and, this summer, the tearing down of the back bedroom wing of the hotel...The main object is to put cabins in the rear of the hotel and have them made presentable and comfortable...The operation of the hotel as an hotel is out of the question on account of the expense involved and particularly in view of the fact that train Park tours, under the present schedule, do not call for a stop at the Lake. The patronage there will, therefore, be mainly private motorists who, in view of our experience of the last several years, have shown great partiality towards cabins rather than toward hotel rooms (Nichols 1940).

Although the Lake Hotel was not razed, parts of these plans were eventually carried out; cabins were constructed behind the Lake Hotel and additional units placed near the Lake Lodge. The Yellowstone Park Company was struggling against operation costs of the large and unwieldy Lake Hotel which had been closed for several years and recently reopened. Since this type of overnight accommodations attracted tourists on guided tours without independent means of travel, the fact that tour companies did not visit the hotel was a difficult hurdle to overcome for the Yellowstone Park Company to

overcome. In 1940, the largest park concessionaire was struggling to meet the demands of increasing private motorist traffic at Yellowstone Lake. The concessionaire's economic troubles became exacerbated after the war as demands increased on already overtaxed structures.

Other concessionaire construction and relocation plans carried out during the years of World War II were focused on the West Thumb Developed Area. A 1940 letter from Nichols to Park Superintendent Edmund Rogers details planned adjustments to the cabins at the West Thumb Developed Area. In connection with a road project that intended to relocate part of the road through the West Thumb Developed Area and an expansion of cabins available at Yellowstone Lake, the Yellowstone Park Company intended to temporarily relocate cabins. According to a park report, the relocation would include

all cabins within the existing area affected by the road development. These cabins are to be assigned a temporary site for two years...It is further understood that preliminary plans for the ultimate cabin development at West Thumb will be prepared this winter so that construction of the cabin road can be started next summer if C.C.C. labor is available. This will permit moving all cabins to their ultimate sites at the end of a two year period... (Rogers 1940).

However, the plans for the "ultimate cabin development" met resistance from the concessionaire over design considerations and were postponed. During negotiations over the proposed cabin development project, the president of Yellowstone Park Company wrote to the park superintendent in 1941: "Regarding the Thumb lay-out...It has never been our intention to build all cabins with bath in this particular area, as it was to be primarily a housekeeping site. Possible we had better let this whole matter go until we can get together in the Park and really have the plat interpreted to us" (Nichols 1941). Nichols also expressed interest in "the possibility of facing...[the] cabins onto a central

plot rather than as shown on the print—that is, I think they are shown that way, I am not quite sure about it” (Nichols 1941). Hurdles for the concessionaire during this period included negotiating with the National Park Service over design plans as well as finding an economically feasible way to increase the number of lodging units it could rent to tourists.

By the end of World War II, the Yellowstone Park Company had constructed additional cabins around the Lake Lodge which catered to private automobile tourists. In 1946, the concessionaire advertised “guest lodges” at the Lake Developed Area (Figure 79) (Yellowstone Park Company 1946, 4). These small cabins or cottages were

Figure 79. Overnight Accommodations - Lodges

Guest Lodges provided an affordable overnight accommodation at Yellowstone Lake that catered to automobile tourists looking for less rugged experience than the automobile campgrounds afforded. [image printed in Yellowstone Park Company 1946.]



strategically located around a central lodge building that served as a housing unit for a variety of guest services such as eating, souvenirs, photo stores, and guest lounge areas. The 1946 Yellowstone Park Company brochure described their lodges in the park as “huge rustic log and stone buildings, containing attractive dancing, stores, soda fountains and rest rooms. Nearby are compact cottages for one, two, three, and four guests”

(Yellowstone Park Company 1946, 4). The company described access to the cabins serviced by the lodge: “You can drive your car alongside your cottage, unpack and there you are” (Yellowstone Park Company 1946, 4). The nearby dining facilities in the lodges were a place where “you take your meals in the Main Lodge, Dining Room or Coffee Shop, with college girls to wait on you” (Yellowstone Park Company 1946, 4). The guest lodges included a “comfortable bed, fresh linen, electric light, heating stove and the price includes maid and bellboy service. Every morning a fire will be built in a cabin if desired...Telephone, laundry service, beauty, barber shops, and soda fountains at all lodges” (Yellowstone Park Company 1946, 4).

The Yellowstone Park Company also continued after the war to offer cabins for rent to private automobile tourists at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area. By 1946, the “housekeeping cabins” of previous years were now advertised as “rustic tourist cabins” (Yellowstone Park Company 1946, 5). The tourist cabins at Fishing Bridge were scattered units around a “headquarters building” where guests could register and rent bedding materials (Yellowstone Park Company 1946, 5). The cabins could accommodate up to four people and were partially furnished to include beds, “stoves, washstand, table, bench, mirror, slop jar, wash basin, pitcher, [and] teakettle” (Yellowstone Park Company 1946, 5). In 1946, the Yellowstone Park Company also offered “canvas and frame cabins” or cabins with “sinks and running water in kitchens” for an additional cost (Yellowstone Park Company 1946, 5).

The cabin style overnight accommodations gained in popularity and the concessionaire met this demand by providing additional cabins for tourists. By 1949, cabins were offered at the three major developed areas of the lake with a “group of

cabins” at the West Thumb Developed Area, “cottages” behind the Lake Hotel at the Lake Developed Area, and cabins at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area (Haynes 1949, 100 and 105). In 1950, sixty four additional cottages were built and opened to the public behind the Lake Hotel (Rogers 1951, 7). The Yellowstone Park Company increased its overnight accommodations again in 1953; the concessionaire constructed “47 additional cottage rooms with bath in connection with the Lake Hotel” and moved “40 additional cabins from Mammoth to the West Thumb Cabin area” as well as moving forty more cabins that fall from Mammoth to the West Thumb Developed Area because there was a “greater demand for them at that area” (Rogers 1953).

The 1950’s brought continued high use of the overnight accommodations at Yellowstone Lake and an initial study of these facilities in preparation for Mission 66 projects. By 1955, Yellowstone Park Company offered visitors at the Lake Developed Area the Lake Hotel (Figure 80) and cottages and the Lake Lodge (Figure 81) and cabins. The West Thumb and Fishing Bridge Developed Areas also included Yellowstone Park Company cabins for overnight rentals (Haynes 1955, 110 and 116). In 1958, a “Survey of Facilities and Operations for Yellowstone Park Company” was completed that assessed the “personnel, equipment, operating methods, building layouts, sources of income, advertising and other phases of operations – together with recommendations of items for immediate action and items deserving further analysis and study for future action” by Orr Pickering and Associates, a Billings, Montana architecture and engineering firm (Pickering 1958). This study—launched to assess facilities in the park in conjunction with the Mission 66 program—provides a useful source of data about the number and condition of concessionaire structures at Yellowstone Lake.

Figure 80. Lake Hotel, 1955

The Lake Hotel, one of the oldest standing hotels in Yellowstone National Park, underwent several remodeling stages and renovations from the 1930's to the 1960's. Although this structure was also closed to business for several years in this period, it still attracted visitors seeking a more catered overnight accommodation situation than what was offered at the adjacent Lake Lodge or cottages behind the Lake Hotel. [image printed in Haynes 1955, 114.]



Figure 81. Lake Lodge, 1955

The Lake Lodge, operated by the Yellowstone Park Company, expanded its operations to include more cabins to the north and west of the main lodge building (seen below). The cabins were situated around the lodge which offered overnight visitors a central dining area, shops, and other visitor services. [image printed in Haynes 1955, 115.]



The 1958 survey evaluated concessionaire operations at the three major developed areas at Yellowstone Lake. At the Lake Developed Area, the survey documents “approximately 200 rooms” at the Lake Hotel and 111 “cottages” behind the hotel (Pickering 1958, 30). The study found that the Lake Lodge was situated at a “desirable location near the lake” and that it was “not lacking in potential for increased revenue” (Pickering 1958, 34). However, the Lake Lodge was also described as “deteriorating” and the cabins (located north and south of the lodge) were “typically old log structures of questionable value” (Pickering 1958, 34). At the Fishing Bridge Developed Area, the survey counted 330 cabins that were available to overnight guests.

The survey authors did not find these cabins to be sufficient for the current visitor needs: “There is a serious shortage of cabins for this area. The cabin office and cafeteria are also inadequate to handle the large crowds” (Pickering 1958, 25 and 27). The West Thumb Developed Area also came in short of meeting the survey’s assessment: The two hundred cabins at West Thumb and many of the structures at that site were deemed “old but in fair condition” (Pickering 1958, 41). Given these grim reviews it is interesting that the survey found redeeming qualities in the West Thumb Developed Area to the point of opposing the Mission 66 plans to eliminate all services from the site; the survey suggested that “eventual and complete abandonment of this area may not be appropriate” (Pickering 1958, 44).

By 1966, concessionaire facilities remained concentrated at the Fishing Bridge, Lake, and West Thumb Developed Areas. Although Mission 66 called for a relocation of facilities from Fishing Bridge Developed Area and West Thumb Developed Area, the Yellowstone Park Company was slow to move these facilities on account of financial as

well as political problems the concessionaire encountered with the National Park Service. While private automobile tourists in 1966 had an expanded selection of four automobile campgrounds (included the latest editions at Bridge Bay and Grant Village built by the National Park Service), visitors seeking a more permanent shelter for the night had a range of hotel, cabin, and lodge buildings to choose from around the lake. By 1966, the Lake Hotel's "charm of a wilderness setting" had shifted to a hotel "with the hospitality of a great Southern plantation, [that] graces the north shore of Yellowstone Lake" while offering guests "traditional and restful, but not fancy" rooms (Yellowstone Park Company 1966). All these rooms were advertised as including steam heat and a few included a private bathroom. The Lake Hotel complex also included "guest cabins" located behind it offering "the outdoor type of lodging for the more informal traveler" and included showers and wood burning stoves but prohibited cooking (Yellowstone Park Company 1966). The Yellowstone Park Company also maintained cabins at the West Thumb Developed Area (Figure 82). Called "camper cabins" a description of these cabins almost reads as a warning against their use; a 1966 brochure described these "rugged" cabins as offering "a wood-burning stove for cooking, but no utensils are furnished. Cabin furnishings include bed, table, and benches. Bedding, towels, and fuel are furnished in almost all cabins. Lighting fixtures are not wired for appliances. The cabins do not have running water; however, water taps and restrooms area in the area" (Yellowstone Park Company 1966).

The Fishing Bridge Developed Area, in 1966, offered a slightly different variation on overnight guest accommodations from the other developed areas at Yellowstone Lake.

Figure 82. West Thumb Cabins, 1966

The bustling West Thumb Developed Area included many visitor services including overnight accommodations such as these cabins which were advertised as an enticing option for private motor tourists which to park close to their own “rugged” shelter. [image printed in Yellowstone Park Company 1966.]



A large cabin complex—expanded throughout this period by additional cabins—was present at the sites near the Yellowstone River (Figure 83). The cabins at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area sounded only slightly more appealing than those at the West Thumb Developed Area: the Fishing Bridge cabins included “wood burning stoves...for heating and cooking,” and a “bed, table, benches, and a sink with cold running water” (Yellowstone Park Company 1966). In addition, guests were warned that some of the cabins had “toilets, but most do not” (Yellowstone Park Company 1966). The Lake Lodge was still present with two choices of cabins associated with the lodge—“standard cabins” that included “showers, baths, toilets, and individual gas heaters” and “rustic cabins” that offered “wood burning stoves and no running water” although there were “water taps, community restrooms, and shower facilities” located nearby (Yellowstone Park Company 1966). Another concessionaire at the lake—Hamilton Stores—operated

Figure 83. Fishing Bridge Cabins, 1966

The Fishing Bridge Developed Area along with the West Thumb and Lake Developed Areas, offered visitors at Yellowstone Lake the option of renting a small cabin for overnight accommodations. The cabin complex at the Fishing Bridge site was located to the east of the Yellowstone River. Settlement at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area was concentrated around the cabin complex which was also complemented by a general store, picture shop, ranger station, museum, gas station, and repair station as well as employee quarters. Mission 66 plans proposed to relocate the cabin complex to Grant Village, although controversy surrounding the proposed project caused delays until the 1980's when the structures were removed. [image printed in Yellowstone Park Company, map 1966].



an overnight facility like none other at Yellowstone Lake. By 1966, the concessionaire managed “a large trailer village nestled snugly in the pines near Yellowstone Lake” (Figure 84) (Yellowstone Park Company 1966). Camping at this site—located on the north side of the road across from the automobile campground—was limited to hard sided vehicles.

Dining Facilities

From 1933 to 1966 the cafeterias at the West Thumb Developed Area and Fishing Bridge Area continued their operations. At the Lake Developed Area, dining areas were integrated into hotel and lodge building designs. During the 1960's—as the Bridge Bay

Figure 84. Fishing Bridge Developed Area Trailer Campground, 1966

The Fishing Bridge Developed Area included a recreational vehicle campground by 1966 operated by Hamilton Stores. [image printed in Yellowstone Park Company, map 1966.]



Developed Area and Grant Village sites emerged—camping parties could shop for groceries at nearby Hamilton Stores.

Support and Service Structures

Other prominent structures present on the Yellowstone Lake cultural landscape between 1933 and 1966 were boat docks and a hospital. At the beginning of this period, the major docks at the lake were located at the Lake Developed Area in front of the Lake Hotel (see Figure 71) and at the West Thumb Developed Area near the thermal basin (see Figure 70). In 1935, two additions were made to this landscape: a boat dock at Fishing Bridge and another on Stevenson Island. Although Fishing Bridge had, over the years, floating boat rental huts near its base, the one built in 1935 (see Figure 72) was a more permanent structure built on the west bank of the Yellowstone River near the bridge (Whittlesey 1997, 78). The boat landing at Stevenson Island (see Figure 68) was also constructed in 1935 for tour boats from the Yellowstone Park Company. According to the park superintendent annual report for 1935, the concessionaire built a “fish fry pavilion...on Stevenson Island and a landing dock 4 ft. wide by 50ft. long” (Toll 1935,

23). Stevenson Island became a regular part of boat tours leaving the Lake Developed Area commercial docks and the site was present until 1958. A 1949 park guidebook mentions that “speedboat excursions for fishing parties are made to Stevenson Island from the boathouse near the road east of fish hatchery” (Haynes 1949, 102). The archival record after 1958 did not include additional references to the Stevenson Island dock site.

Two other boat landing areas worth mentioning during the 1930’s were located in the Southeast Arm of Yellowstone Lake. During the early 1930’s commercial tours to the Molly Islands (see Figure 69) were offered to those tourists interested the bird rookery there. Based on archival photos, a small boat dock appears to have been present on one of the islands. The Molly Island tours were discontinued because of their disturbance to the avian populations breeding there (Pritchard 1999, 99). Archival research also revealed a photograph (see Figure 76) of a boat dock being extended in 1934. Based on field research in the Southeast Arm of the lake, this boat dock was probably near the Clear Creek backcountry patrol cabin which was maintained by the National Park Service. However, the agency that built this dock and the term of this site were not revealed in the archives.

A survey of concessionaire’s infrastructure completed in 1958 is a useful tool for assessing the number, condition, and location of boat docks and associated structures at Yellowstone Lake during this period. By 1958, there were three public boat docks (and one government dock) located on Yellowstone Lake. The survey completed that year found all of these docks to be “inadequate” and the Lake Hotel site as additionally “impractical” (Pickering 1958, 37). The report suggested a number of recommendations to improve the facilities at Yellowstone Lake: “The boat division at present develops only

a fraction of the available business. It needs promotion and enlargement of all present services and installations. New services should be added” (Pickering 1958, 37).

The report cited environmental as well as aesthetic reasons to renovate and enlarge the dock areas. The recommendations reflect the vast spatial variability at Yellowstone Lake from one area to another. For example, the West Thumb boat dock was “open and not crowded, with plenty of room for expansion; however, the terrain is not good for boat launching. Thermal activity minimizes winter ice conditions. [The] Beach is fairly well protected from rough weather” (Pickering 1958, 38). The overnight accommodations and guest services at the West Thumb Developed Area were deemed “old but in fair condition” by the survey but the “boat dock and office” were found to be in “poor shape” and “inadequate for the seasonal demands” (Pickering 1958, 41). Quite a different situation was assessed at the docks in front of the Lake Hotel in the Lake Developed Area:

This site is most impractical both from the standpoint of present operations and/or future expansion. Unprotected waters forces loss of boating business for as many as 25 afternoons in one month. Construction of a breakwater has been discussed but such a project would be almost prohibitive in cost. Steep slope at this site, lack of parking, poor approach and rough weather all combine to make this site unsuitable for further development (Pickering 1958, 38).

The 1958 survey made recommendations for all the commercial boat docks (Fishing Bridge, West Thumb, Lake Developed Area, Stevenson Island) present at Yellowstone Lake that year and called for increasing facilities in the southern bays of the lake. For example, the recommendations included adding “large excursion boats” offering “various terminal points designed to offer lodging and meals for overnite [*sic*] guests. Such plans could envision small lodge buildings located at [the] lake arms and on islands” (Pickering 1958, 40). Archival records did not reveal why these plans were not

pursued. The survey supported the Mission 66 plans to relocate the Lake Developed Area boat docks to the proposed Bridge Bay Marina: “Development of a major Marina at Bridge Bay regardless of what is planned at Thumb or Grant Village. This Marina would serve the Lake Hotel and Lodge particularly and also serve as one of many terminals for lakeshore boat traffic. It would not detract from a similar future Marina at Grant Village but rather increase its value, each Marina complementing the other for trip terminal points” (Pickering 1958, 39).

By 1966, some of the recommendations of the 1958 survey and the Mission 66 project were completed for Yellowstone Lake’s boating infrastructure. By the close of this period, the boat docks at the Lake Developed Area were relocated and the Bridge Bay and Grant Village marinas were completed. In 1966 boating facilities were available at the Fishing Bridge, Bridge Bay marina, Grant Village marina, and West Thumb boat dock (Yellowstone Park Company 1966; Haines 1977b, 378).

Another service facility that was constructed by the close of this period was a hospital. A fourteen bed hospital was built at the Lake Developed Area in 1962 (Spatial Analysis Center). This medical structure was located near the Lake Fish Hatchery building and was still standing in 1966. References to the services and staff of this hospital included that it cared for park visitors and personnel who suffered from hypothermia from the lake waters, near drowning, fishing accidents (hooks in unpleasant places), wildlife encounters (bison, bears, elk), and car accidents (Whittlesey 1995).

Stores

Hamilton Stores operated stores selling consumer goods and groceries at Yellowstone Lake. Hamilton Stores continued to operate its retail enterprises at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area (Figure 85), Lake Developed Area, and West Thumb

Figure 85. Hamilton Stores at Yellowstone Lake

Hamilton Stores operated concessions at Yellowstone Lake selling groceries, fishing supplies, souvenirs, clothing, and camping gear. The Lake Hamilton store (top) in 1950 with knotted lodgepole pine framework was located on the north shore at the Lake Developed Area. The Fishing Bridge store (bottom), pictured here in 1957, was located near the outlet of the Yellowstone River at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area. [top image printed in Whittlesey 1997, 76; bottom image printed in Haynes 1957, 118.]



Developed Area throughout this period (Haynes 1957, 110; U.S. Department of the Interior 1965, map). Hamilton Stores advertised in 1966 that their customers would “enjoy browsing through the relaxed, Western atmosphere of a Hamilton General Store” (Yellowstone Park Company 1966). The same brochure also detailed the variety of merchandise sold at the stores: “Many an Eastern visitor has outfitted himself smartly with a pair of cowboy boots from Hamilton Stores. Western souvenirs, curios, and other gifts are found at all the stores” (Yellowstone Park Company 1966). By 1966, a Hamilton Store was also located at the Bridge Bay Developed Area.

Gas stations and repair shops were also maintained throughout this time at Yellowstone Lake. A gas station and an automobile repair shop were located at the Fishing Bridge Developed Area (Figure 86). At the West Thumb Developed Area and Lake Developed Area, gas stations were also operated from 1933 to 1966. By the end of this period, the Yellowstone Park Service Stations offered tourists “clean, convenient service stations” so that a “motorist need never worry about lack of gasoline and other automobile service facilities when touring Yellowstone” (Yellowstone Park Company 1966).

Haynes Picture Shops were also operated at Yellowstone Lake. These stores were located at Fishing Bridge Developed Area and the West Thumb Developed Area from 1933 to 1966 (Haynes 1949, 96; Haynes 1955, 105; U.S. Department of the Interior 1965). The Lake Developed Area also had a Haynes Picture Shop, but it was located in the lobby of the Lake Hotel. These stores sold “a wide assortment of pictorial souvenirs, photographs, post cards, films, photographic supplies, lithographs, etchings, paintings,

Figure 86. Fishing Bridge Gas Station

The Fishing Bridge gas station was built in the rustic style architecture prevalent throughout Yellowstone, featuring native lodgepole pine beams. The station was part of a number of services for automobile tourists at Fishing Bridge including a cabin complex, automobile campground, recreational vehicle campground, and nearby repair station. [Courtesy of Yellowstone National Park Archives.]



stationary, the Haynes Guide Book and other publications” (Yellowstone Park Company 1966).

Employee Housing

Employee housing increased during this period. Although housing units were present at all of the developed areas at the beginning of this period, the number of quarters available for employee housing and the condition of these structures increased and improved over time. As concessionaires struggled to keep pace with tourism at Yellowstone Lake through two multiple year closing periods and subsequent business booms, they also worked to provide enough housing for their growing numbers of employees. After World War II, efforts were made to create more housing units. For

example, in 1951 Superintendent Rogers noted that the Yellowstone Park Company built a “new girls dormitory at Lake” and Hamilton Stores converted an “Old bathhouse” into employee housing (Rogers 1952, 15).

Employee quarters in Yellowstone National Park were an integral part of the Mission 66 project. According to Haines, a “target for the Mission 66 effort was the improvement of employee facilities. Much of the year round housing available to government employees were old buildings inherited from the army past, unsuited to modern living and uneconomical to heat and maintain” (Haines 1977b, 380). The description fit for National Park Service and concessionaire housing where “seasonal quarters...were flimsy, hardly satisfactory for pre- and post-season use....Also, increasing staffing proposed under Mission 66 meant additional quarters for both permanent and seasonal employees” (Haines 1977b, 380). Staff housing by the end of this period took the form of one or two level buildings with rooms for groups of employees. These structures were present at the Lake Developed Area, Fishing Bridge Developed Area, and West Thumb Developed Area.

Conclusion

By the close of this period in 1966, the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake had experienced changes unlike those of any other time. The transportation networks and structures around the lake were expanded and multiplied to meet the demands of more Americans who wished to visit the lake. The north shore of the lake was a site of continued growth and development. The five major developed areas by 1966 included the Lake Developed Area (Figure 87), the West Thumb Developed Area (Figure 88), the

Figure 87. Lake Developed Area, 1966

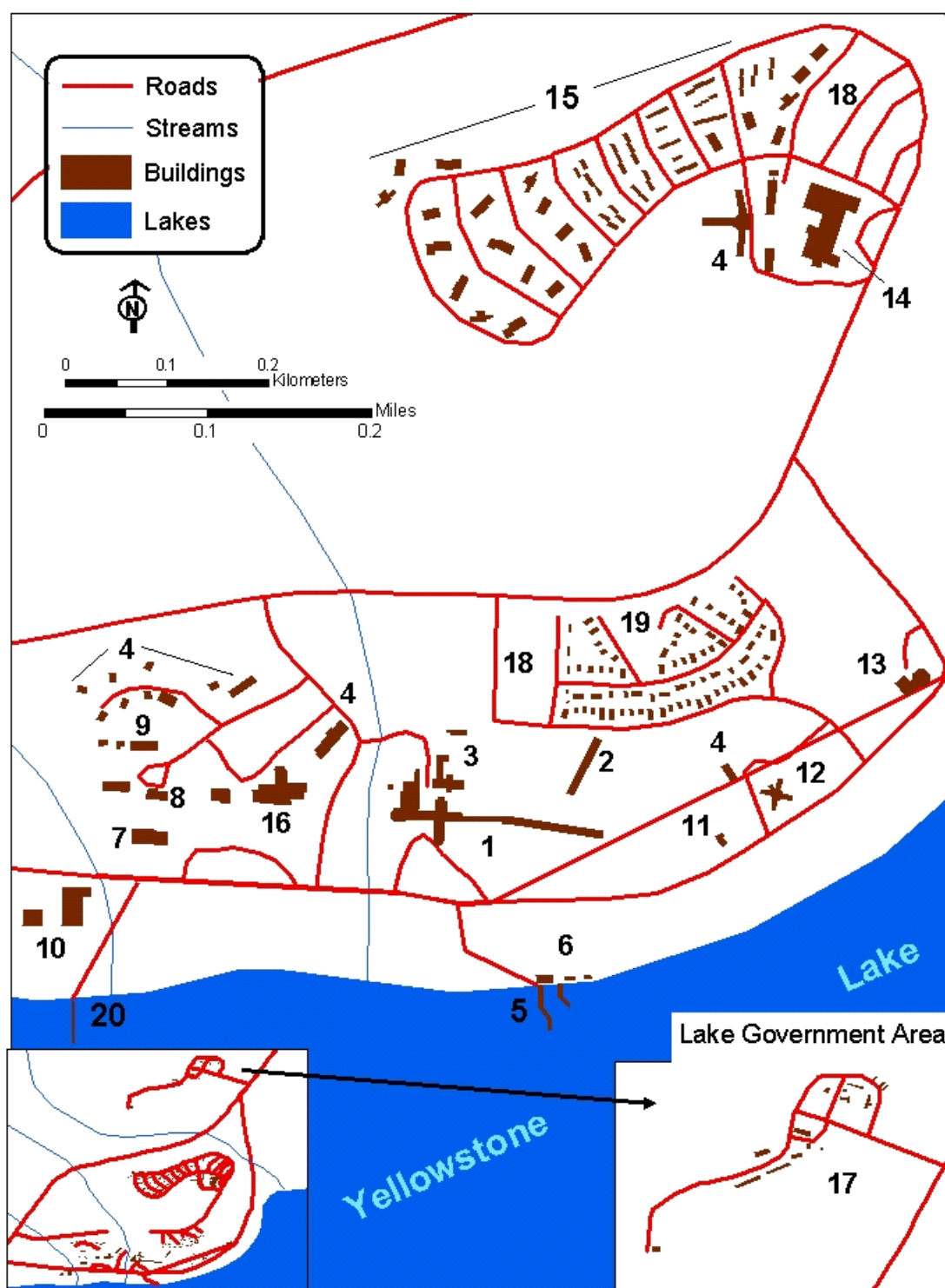


Table. 3. Key to Features on Lake Developed Area Map, 1966

1	Lake Hotel
2	Lake Hotel Annex
3	Service Buildings
4	Employee Housing
5	Boat Docks
6	Boathouses
7	Fish Hatchery
8	Fish Hatchery South District Office
9	Garage
10	Boathouse – Concessionaire (left), National Park Service (right)
11	Gas Station
12	Hamilton Store
13	Lake Ranger Station
14	Lake Lodge
15	Lodge Complex (Guest Lodges)
16	Hospital
17	Lake Government Area (National Park Service and Concessionaire Storage Buildings and Employee Housing)
18	Parking Areas
19	Cottage Complex (Guest Cottages)
20	Government Boat Dock

Fishing Bridge Developed Area (Figure 89), the Bridge Bay Developed Area (Figure 90), and Grant Village (Figure 91).

The Fishing Bridge, Lake, and West Thumb Developed Areas all remained intact after the lake-wide closures from the economic recession after the Great Depression and the subsequent surge in use afterwards. These service, lodging, and interpretive locations also weathered the storms of World War II closures and the subsequent tremendous surge in visitor use after this event. The landscape planning at the lake catered more to private automobile tourists when concessionaires increased overnight cabins, cottages, recreational vehicle campgrounds and when the National Park Service expanded its auto campgrounds. The road along the north shore of the lake was realigned to provide more

Figure 88. West Thumb Developed Area, 1966

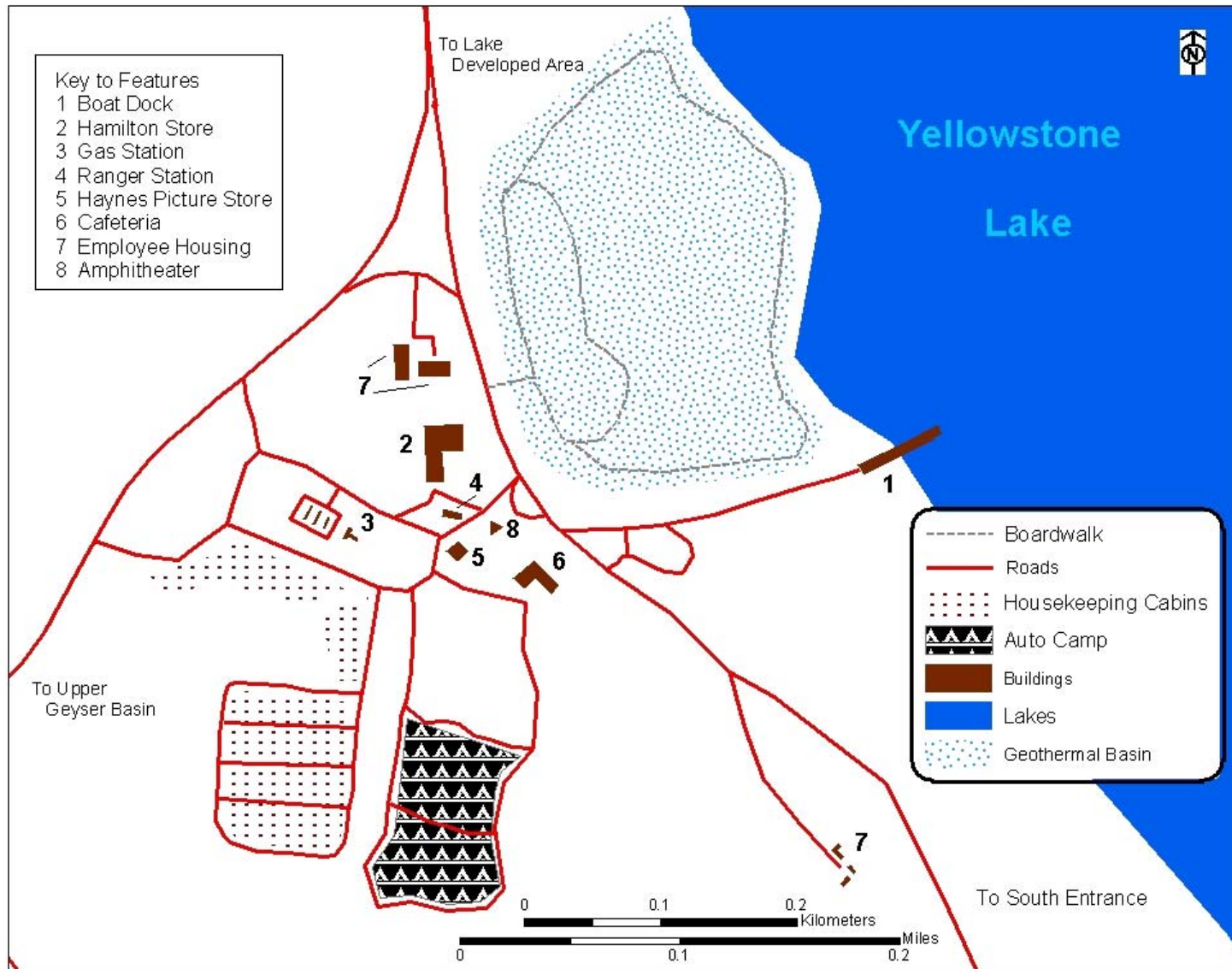


Figure 89. Fishing Bridge Developed Area, 1966

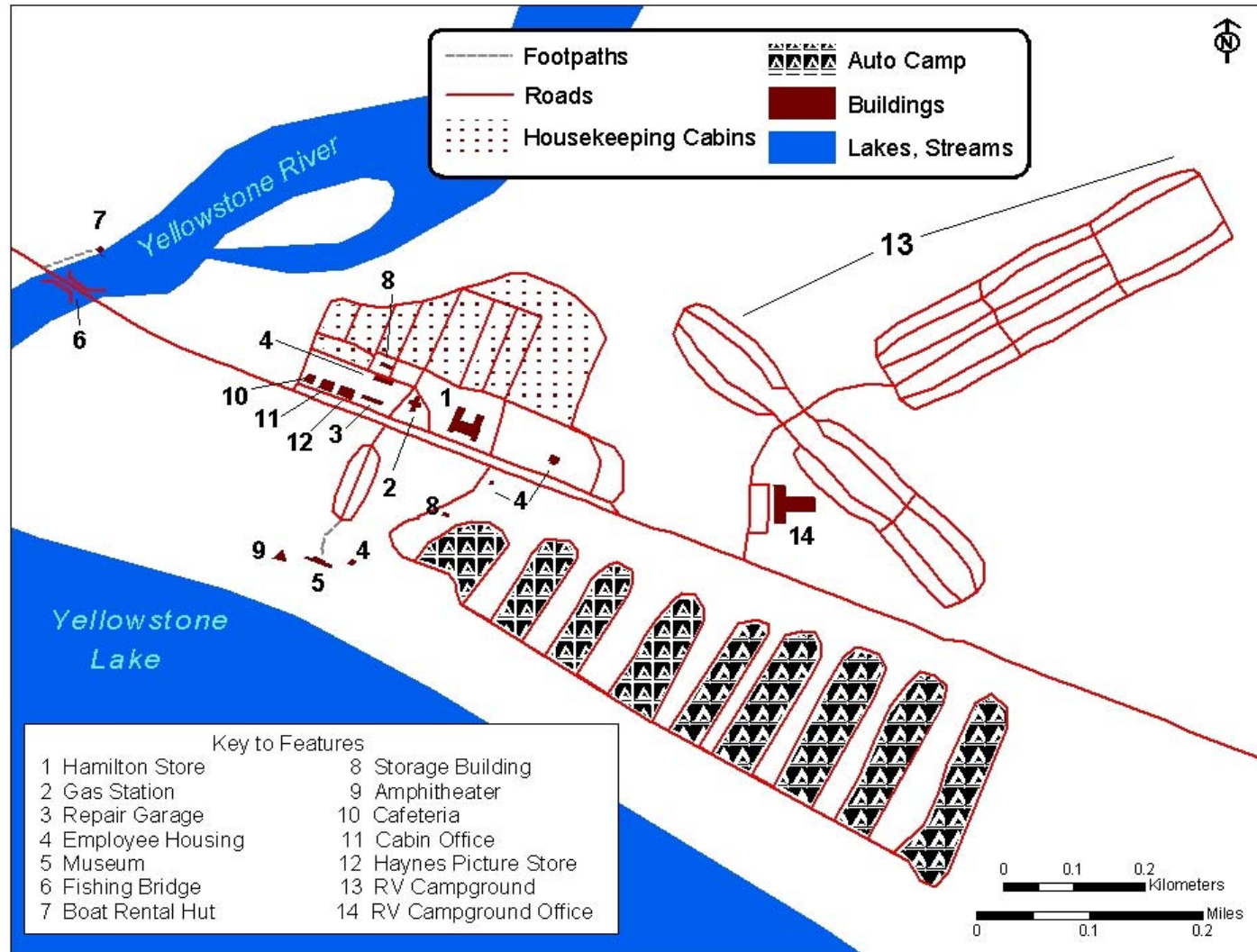


Figure 90. Bridge Bay Developed Area, 1966

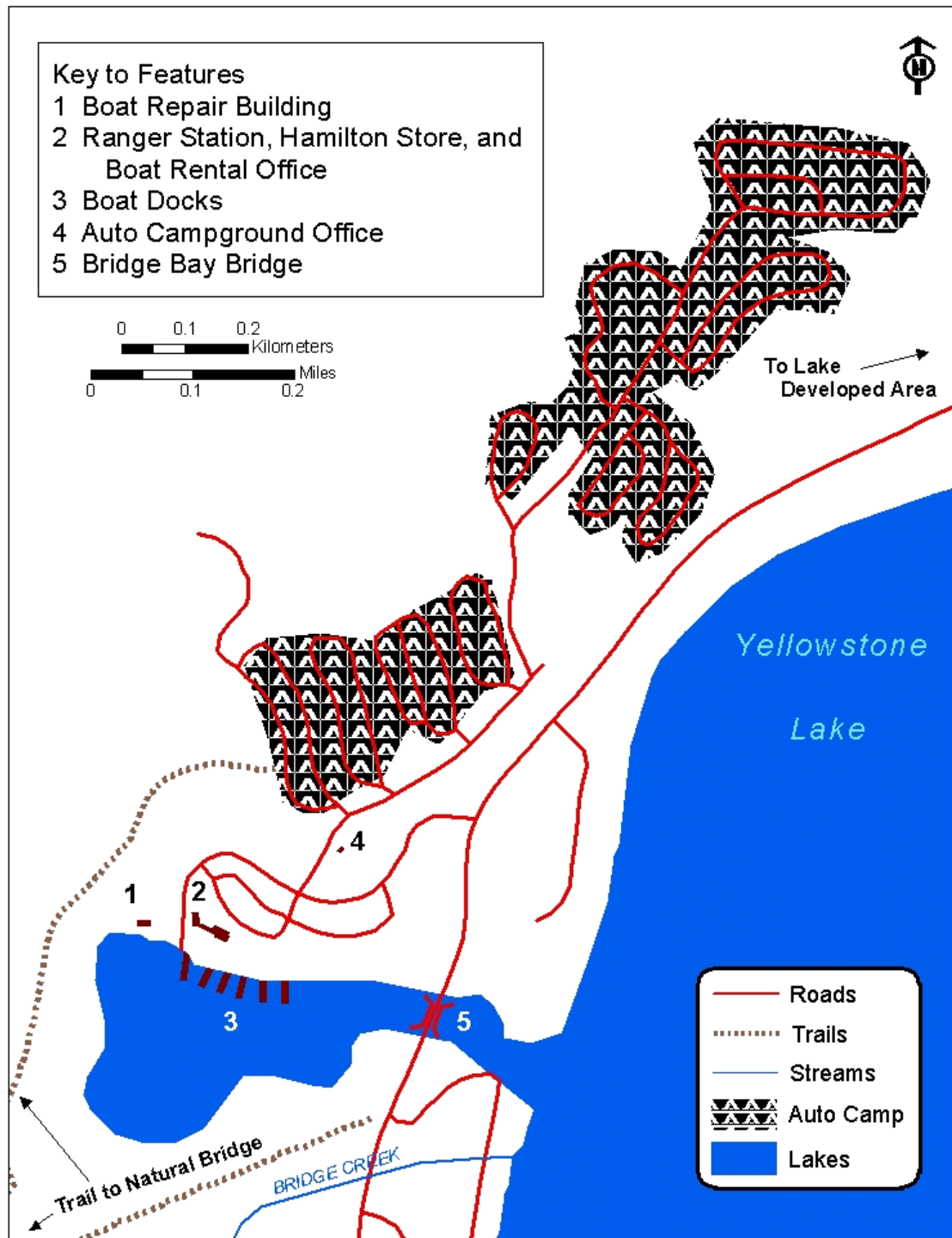
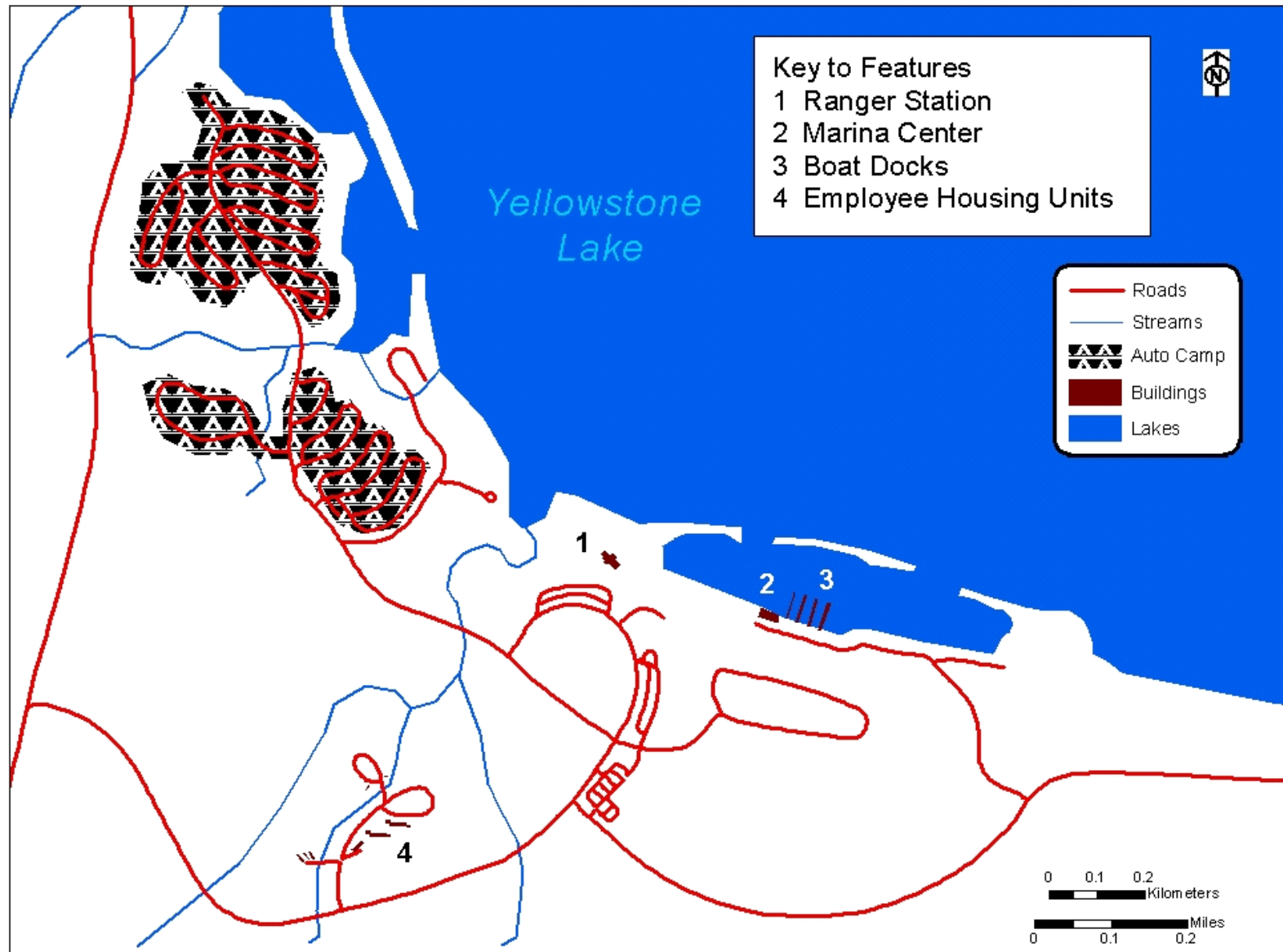


Figure 91. Grant Village, 1966



picnic and scenic pullouts for motor visitors. But perhaps the greatest alteration of the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake came with the Mission 66 era and the effects of the wilderness movement. Because of Mission 66, the boat docks at the Lake Developed Area—one of the oldest continuous boating sites at Yellowstone Lake—were relocated a little over a mile to the west at the newly developed Bridge Bay marina. Two entirely new areas were added to the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake—Grant Village and Bridge Bay Developed Area. The wilderness movement persuaded more visitors to seek remote regions of the lake for their recreating needs. The National Park Service began to maintain more extensive trails around the lake, particularly in the southern arms. Private and commercial boaters also sought out the islands and shoreline of the South and Southeast Arms for fishing, camping, and sightseeing. The National Park Service built and maintained more backcountry cabins for ranger patrols of these areas and enforced speed zones and watercraft laws for the southern arms of the lake. An uneven distribution of development emerged across Yellowstone Lake, favoring permanent settlements and roadways along the northern shores with trails and few permanent structures at the southern realms of the lake.

A striking pattern that emerges from this period is that infrastructure at Yellowstone Lake seemed to peak in 1966. By that year, there were more boat docks (five) at Yellowstone Lake than in times since or before, there were multiple overnight accommodations available for tourists in cabins at Lake, Fishing Bridge, and West Thumb Developed Areas and in the plush Lake Hotel, and the automobile camps offered visitors even more opportunities to spend the night. The traffic around the lake may have peaked during this period also; during the late 1950's there were up to five thousand

boats on Yellowstone Lake and a similar number of cars and recreational vehicles traveling around the lake's roads. Compared to other developed areas in Yellowstone National Park, Yellowstone Lake had a large number of lodging, dining, and recreational structures for park visitors.

CONCLUSION

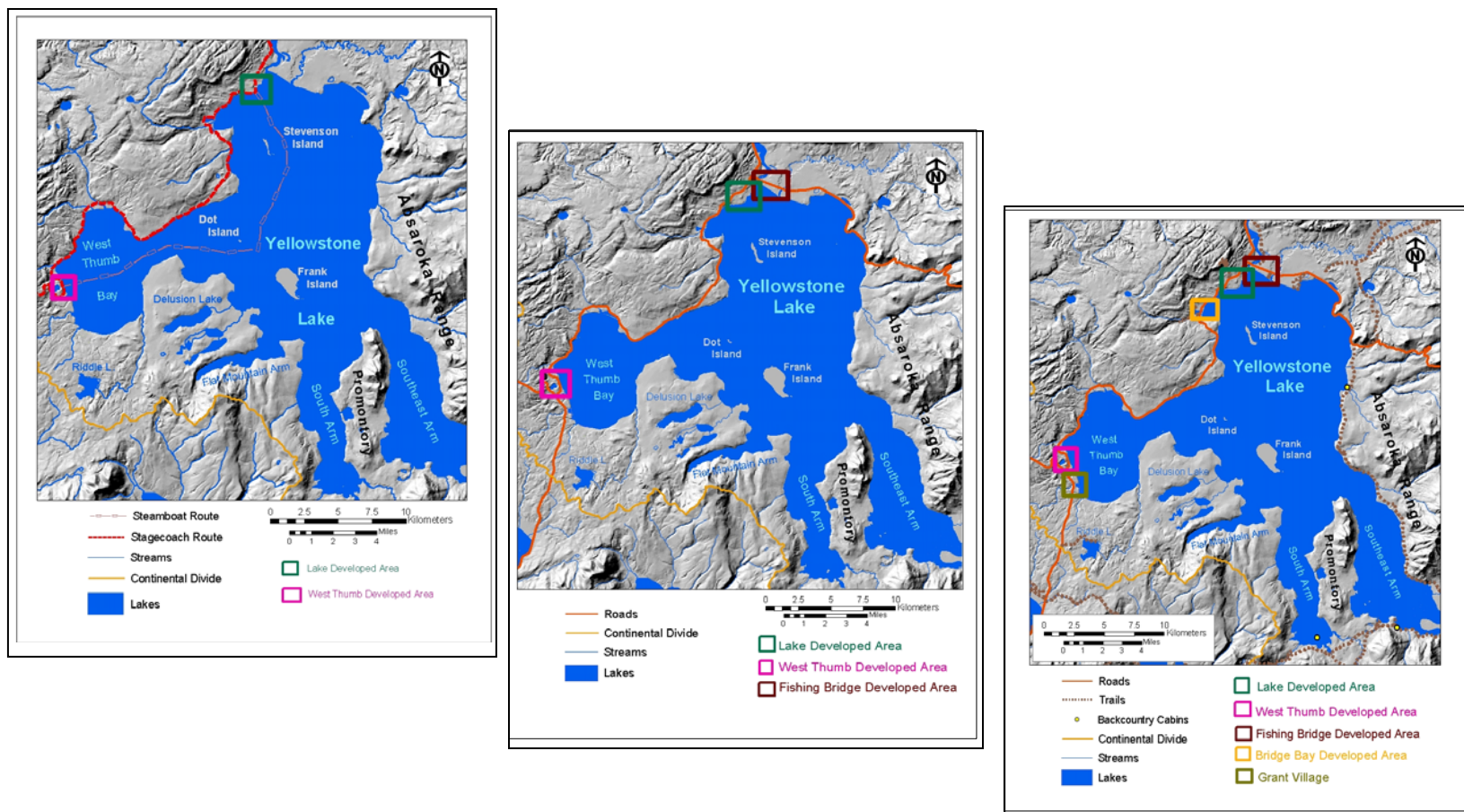
The Yellowstone Lake is larger than that of Geneya or Constance.... It is an incomparable enchanted solitude, where winter's snow and summer's sunshine battle with each other. Here is the pleasure ground for the future. Here the overworked will come for rest, the feeble to build up their strength, the old to take a measure of renewed existence, the young and vigorous to enjoy. The studious will find here the book of nature opened at its brightest pages. The artistic and poetic will find here Inspiration, Genius, and expansion of ideas (Gustavus Doane, 1889).

A visitor to Yellowstone National Park in 2004—an era of cell-phones, high-speed internet connections, and jet planes—may decide to book their trip to Wonderland via an internet-based travel website. I priced a ticket from Chicago, Illinois to Bozeman, Montana and found—along with the price and itinerary for the ticket—a link from my travel itinerary to a short description of my destination. The sparing sketch of Yellowstone included mention of Old Faithful, Mammoth Hot Springs, Grand Canyon, grizzly bears, weather, volcanoes, intact temperate zone ecosystems, and where I could call for shuttle service from the nearest airport—Bozeman, Montana—to the park. But where was the mention of Yellowstone Lake?

The Changing Visitor Experience at Yellowstone Lake

In 1891 (Figure 92), Yellowstone Lake was a stop on the stagecoach tour of the recently created national park. As an early tourist to Yellowstone National Park, you may have traveled many miles to explore and experience the nation's first national park. Perhaps your journey started in Boston, Massachusetts. If so, you would have taken a long transcontinental train trek across the Great Plains to the looming Rocky Mountains.

Figure 92. Comparison Maps for Yellowstone Lake in 1891 (bottom), 1932 (middle), and 1966 (top)



Reaching the train station just outside of the park's borders, you would have then met with a stagecoach and joined the other members of your touring party around the park. After a long, dusty trip around the park's attractions from Mammoth Hot Springs (the U.S. Army's park headquarters) to the Upper Geyser Basin, your stagecoach arrives at the West Thumb (Figure 93) Bay of Yellowstone Lake. Here you see geothermal pools of brilliant colors, boiling mud, and a vast mountain lake stirred by the afternoon's wind. After a lunch at this stop, you have a choice—travel to your next destination by the stagecoach that has borne you across the rutted, dirt roads of the park or climb aboard the Yellowstone Lake Boat Company's steamboat and journey across the lake.

You choose to spend the afternoon boating and shorten your trip considerably from your companions who decided to see the lake from the shoreline road. As the steamer leaves the dock and travels across the wave-studded lake, you see the Absaroka Mountains to your east and pass by two islands— Dot Island and Stevenson Island— before arriving at the dock in front of your hotel. As the only overnight accommodation at the time, your choices are limited to this recent addition to the lake financed by the Northern Pacific Railroad—the same company whose train you rode to the park. The facilities at the lake (Figure 94) are few at this point—a hotel, the boat dock, and a road to the Lake Developed Area. The dynamic landscape before you has been shaped by Native Americans, U.S. Army park superintendents, concessionaire investment, and visitors such as yourself. There are no other developed areas at the lake at this point, but the view across the lake from the northern shore is fantastic and you enjoy the evening trying to make out the distant shoreline and forested ridges of the lake to the south. In the

Figure 93. West Thumb Developed Area in 1891 (top), 1932 (middle), and 1966 (bottom)

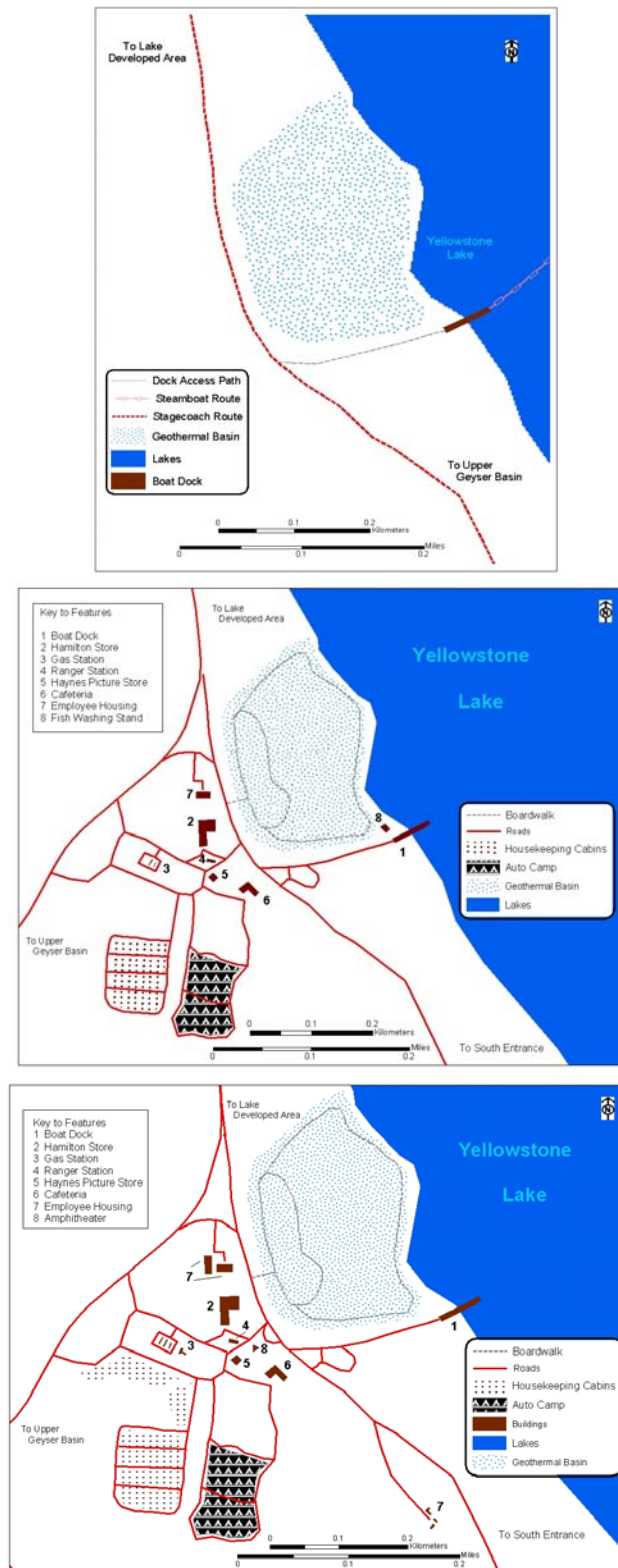
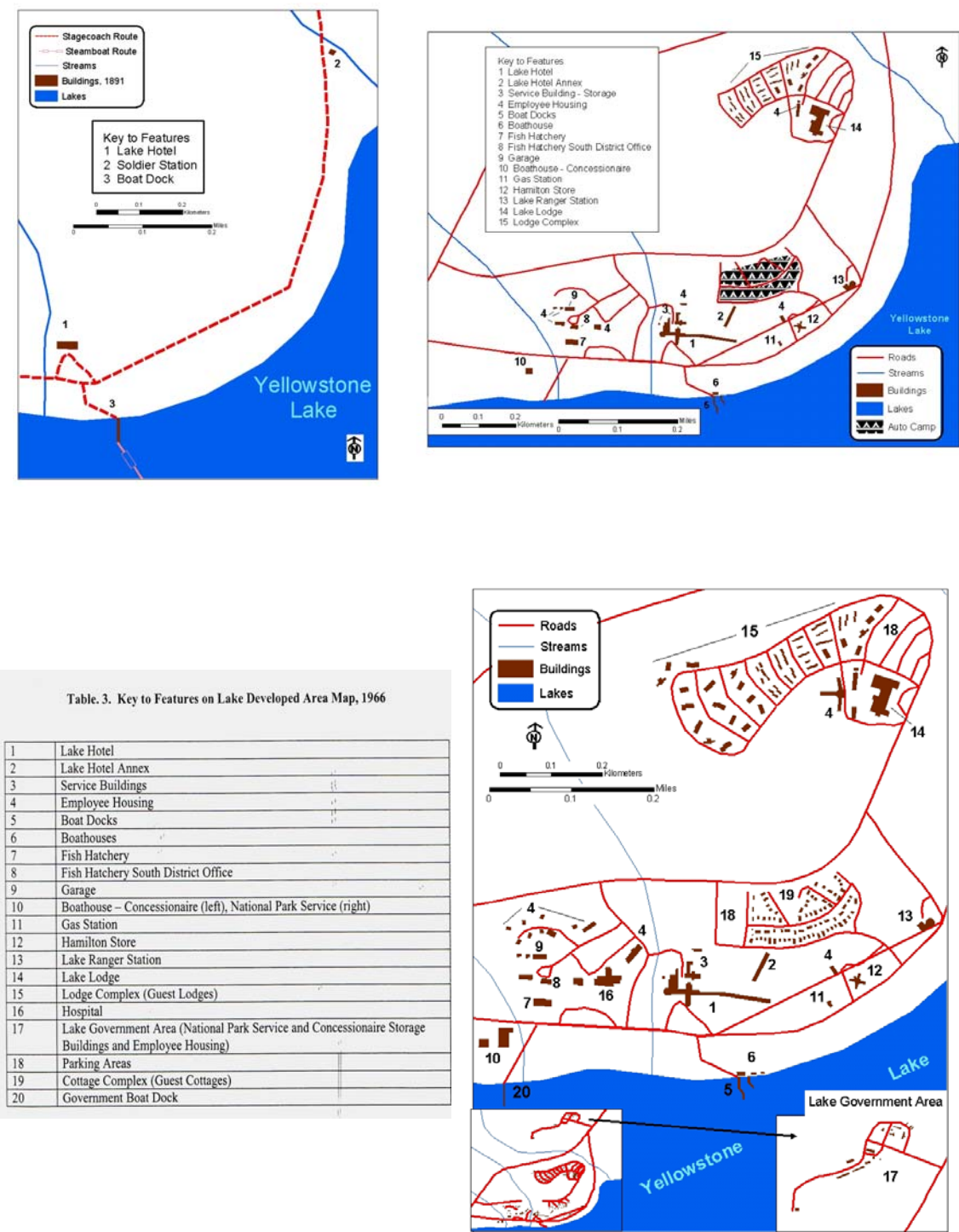


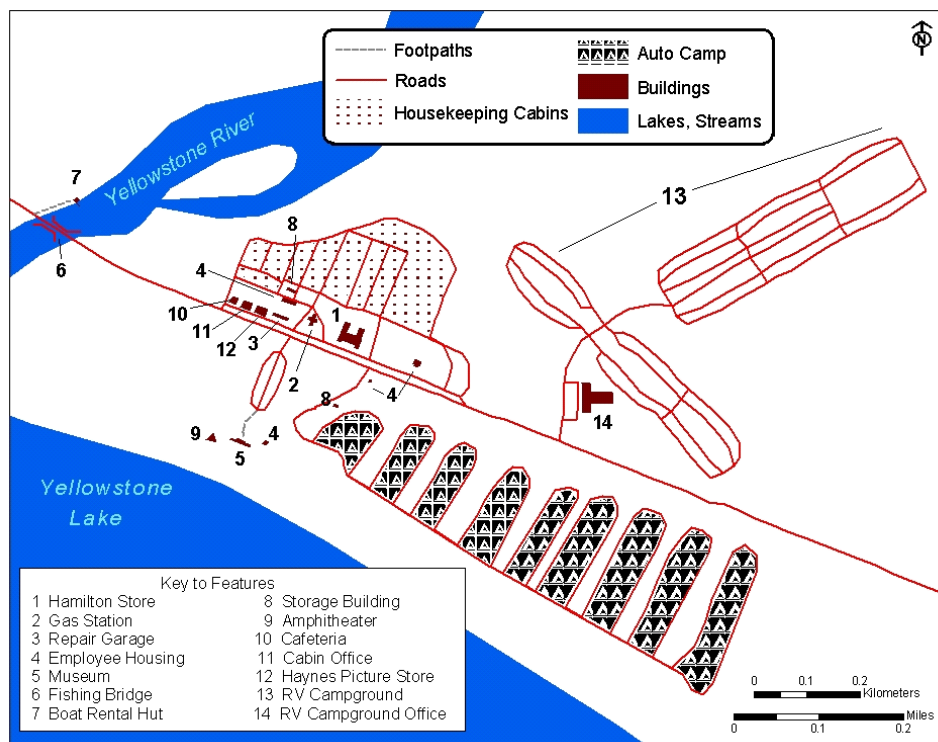
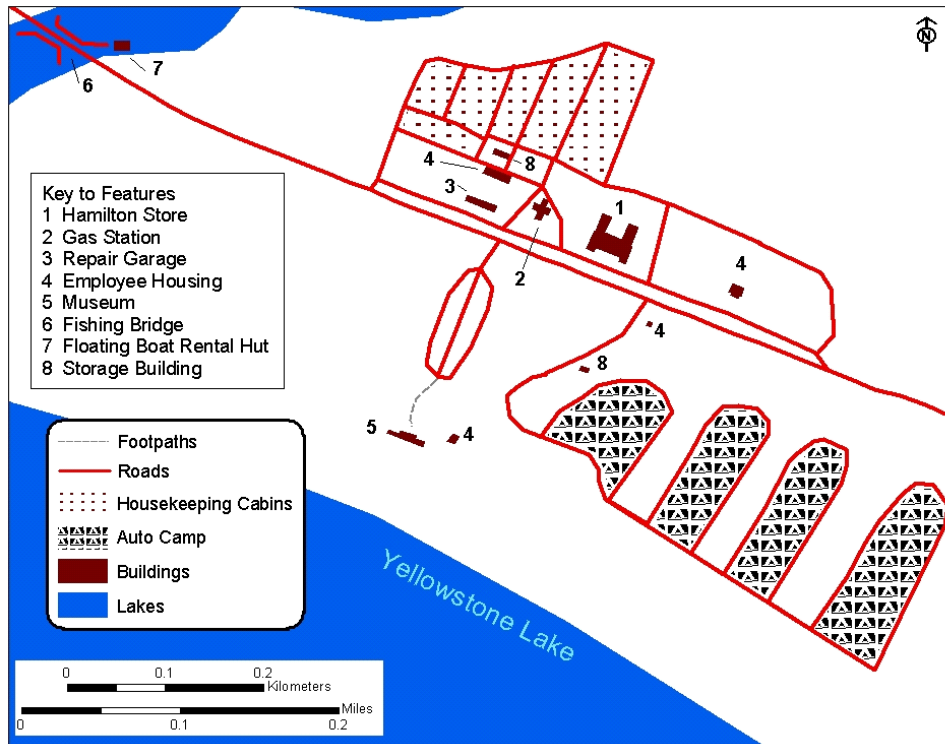
Figure 94. Lake Developed Area in 1891 (top-left), 1932 (top-right), and 1966 (bottom-right)



morning, you may board your stagecoach again and follow the Yellowstone River from its outlet at the lake north to that day's destination at the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone River. You may also choose to prolong your stay at Yellowstone Lake for a few days; a longer stay at the lake would offer you the chance to rest and relax after a long stagecoach journey to the park. Although there are not many developed services or scheduled activities at the lake in 1891, you could find pleasure in long walks along the shoreline, picking wildflowers around the hotel, or trying your hand at fishing for trout in the afternoon.

As a Yellowstone National Park traveler in 1932 (see Figure 92), you would find a very different experience at Yellowstone Lake. Perhaps you choose to ride a train across the country to the park and then join an organized automobile tour. However, at this time more visitors to the park are making the journey by their private automobile. A national system of highways connecting Yellowstone's Grand Loop road to points north, south, east and west of the park and the growing popularity of automobiles is making travel to Yellowstone more accessible for many new car owners. Yellowstone Lake would be a stop on your tour, particularly if you are with an organized park tour. At the lake, there are now three developed areas—West Thumb (see Figure 93), Lake (see Figure 94), and Fishing Bridge (Figure 95). At each of these areas along the northern shore of the lake there are overnight accommodations, National Park Service ranger stations, general stores, dining facilities, boat docks, automobile campgrounds, and service stations for autos. However, there are some notable variations between these areas. West Thumb offers a geothermal basin to walk around, cabins, an automobile campground, a general store, a cafeteria, and a boat dock. The Lake Developed Area has

Figure 95. Fishing Bridge Developed Area in 1932 (top) and 1966 (bottom)



a hotel, a lodge, an automobile campground, boat docks, a U.S. Fish Commission fish hatchery, and bear feeding grounds behind the hotel. The Fishing Bridge site offers fishing from the famous bridge, a museum, cabins, an auto campground, a general store, a gas station, and a repair shop for vehicles. Your stay at the lake could include a few nights or a week. You could take scenic boat rides across the lake, fish from a rental boat or the shoreline, visit the museum, walk along the beach, or just relax at your cabin, tent, or hotel room with all the creature comforts at your disposal.

By 1966 (see Figure 92), your activities and experiences available to you at Yellowstone Lake would have changed noticeably from previous eras. Overnight accommodations, dining, interpretive, and recreational activities are located at an increasing number of developed areas— Bridge Bay (see Figure 90), and Grant Village (see Figure 91), West Thumb (see Figure 93), Lake (see Figure 94), and Fishing Bridge (see Figure 95). These five developed areas offer you and other park visitors boat docks, general stores, and a National Park Service ranger station. At Yellowstone Lake in 1966 you could choose from a variety of overnight accommodations; you could stay in a cabin at Fishing Bridge, Lake, or the West Thumb Developed Area, at a the lodge complex in the Lake Developed Area, or in a tent at one of the automobile campgrounds located at each site around the lake (except for at the Lake Developed Area). With five boat docks and over five thousand boaters on the lake each year, Yellowstone Lake is a good place to have a memorable fishing or boating holiday. You would have joined thousands of other park visitors in a bustling scene of water recreation, auto touring, and camping at the lake.

As popular of a location as Yellowstone Lake was to visit in 1966, you might have noticed an uneven availability of services at the lake developed areas. In an effort to prepare for the over two million visitors expected in the park by 1966, the National Park Service recently initiated a plan to expand and relocate visitor facilities with the cooperation of park concessionaires. However, the main park concessionaire—the Yellowstone Park Company—did not match the federal investment in all of the proposed new developments; Yellowstone Lake has become a showcase for these shortcomings. Grant Village and Bridge Bay are the latest additions to this landscape and offered only limited services. At the Grant Village you could stay at the auto campground, visit the National Park Service ranger station, or launch a boat at the marina. Although the National Park Service has completed the roads and these services for you at Grant Village, the lodging and dining facilities are difficult for you to find. Most of the concessionaire facilities for this part of the lake are still located a mile and a half to the northwest at the West Thumb Developed Area. Another site at the lake that draws your attention is the recently completed Bridge Bay Developed Area. This is another site, similar to Grant Village, with a disproportionately large investment of National Park Service funds and construction compared to the few concessionaire services that you find at this north shore development. At Bridge Bay you could catch a scenic boat tour across the lake, visit the ranger station, buy fishing tackle and groceries at the general store, and stay the night at the vast automobile campground. If you are traveling in a recreational vehicle, you could stay another night at the lake in the Fishing Bridge RV campground—the only campground for that type of vehicle at Yellowstone Lake. You may leave the lake already looking forward to your next visit but, if your visit was delayed for a few

years, you would find that the developed areas around the lake changed vastly since your visit in 1966. In the next few decades, the number and locations of services around the lake—particularly at the Fishing Bridge, Lake, and West Thumb Developed Areas—will be considerably reduced and relocated.

Value of the Yellowstone Lake Study

This study of Yellowstone Lake provides insight into future developments at the lake as well as a detailed reconstruction of one of Yellowstone National Park's most significant cultural landscapes. Following these changes over time is a valuable addition to our understanding of cultural landscape evolution within Yellowstone as well as in other western national parks. This study offers a template and methodology for reconstructing cultural landscapes in national parks as well as a detailed narrative of cultural change in this portion of Yellowstone. By tracing these changes over time, we can see that Yellowstone Lake was a key location of concessionaire investment and park manager interest since the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1872. This study also reveals where those developments took place and therefore adds to a better understanding of changing visitor experiences at Yellowstone Lake.

By looking at the evolution of park management and concessionaires' decisions, we can also get a better idea of how those institutions approached planning issues in Yellowstone over time. It was a complex process that began with the task of initial exploration and mapping of the lake region. From that information, decisions were made on where to place buildings and infrastructure. Special issues also faced lake developers. These included the geothermal areas of the lake as well as the high winds, erosive waves,

and fluctuating lake levels present along the shore. Over time, concessionaires and park managers came to understand the opportunities and hurdles presented by these environmental factors. In some cases, such as with lake roadways, developments were moved farther away from the lake's shoreline. For example, the road around the north shore of the lake was moved back from the shoreline to avoid the erosion and soft sands near the mouth of Arnica Creek.

A Yellowstone Lake study also reveals an interesting geographic history of wildlife management in Yellowstone National Park. Yellowstone Lake was the scene of diverse interactions between humans and wildlife that resulted in situations which were endemic to the lake's landscape. Animals and fish were a constant and important part of the physical environment at Yellowstone Lake. The U.S. Fish Hatchery at the Lake Developed Area and at West Thumb Bay (early in the timeline) were centers of fish hatching, management, and recreation. The fish hatcheries were early lake developments that continued throughout the time period of this study. They were constant features whose activities had a lasting affects on the lake's environment; the fish hatcheries increased the number and types of fish released into the lake, impacted recreational fishing at the lake, and other animals at the lake—such as pelicans and bears—that relied on the fish as a food source.

Yellowstone Lake's wildlife also included a diverse array of animals and birds. Bears were an important part of the Yellowstone Lake story. These large animals were the focus of a government built and maintained bear feeding ground in the Lake Developed Area. The avian population of the lake, specifically birds that use the lake as a breeding ground and a niche environment in Yellowstone National Park, was also the

focus of human-environment interactions. The Molly Islands were the breeding grounds for white pelicans, California gulls, and other lake birds. These islands became a destination for scenic boat rides and tourism on the lake as concessionaires highlighted the bird population for the visiting public. The National Park Service also focused on the Molly Islands as a management location; the federal agency monitored the effect of avian feeding behavior and tourist angling on the lake's fish population. Originally, the National Park Service's management policies privileged fishing enthusiasts' success over the health of the bird rookeries at Molly Islands but later came to protect and encourage interpretation of these island environments (Pritchard 1999). Bison and elk use the lake on a seasonal basis and were early on an explicit part of development at Yellowstone Lake. The Dot Island Game Corrals of the late 1890's and early 1900's included bison, elk, and coyotes fenced into areas as wildlife exhibits for steamboat passengers on the lake. Finally, the Fishing Bridge Museum highlighted the lake's wildlife in interpretive exhibits developed to describe the natural history of Yellowstone Lake. All of these examples suggest that Yellowstone Lake was a scene of evolving interactions between wildlife and humans in Yellowstone National Park and a location for some unique habitats and situations for Yellowstone's biogeography.

This study of Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape can also help us understand other national parks. This case study offers future researchers archival and field-research methods as well as mapping techniques for reconstructing cultural landscapes in other national parks. For this study, the archival records served as an important source of information but also one that had to be supplemented with other visual, verbal, and field-based information. Piecing together the history of this cultural landscape has involved

archival research in the national park archives as well as the Special Collections at Montana State University. Through a combination of written archival materials, historic photographs, guidebook descriptions, historic maps from concessionaire files, national park service files, and aerial photographs, I assembled the story of this cultural landscape evolution. This study also called for several day-long fieldwork sessions where I visited the developed areas around the lake and walked beyond the paved parking lots into the woods around the shoreline looking for clues on the landscape that might help me understand the location and chronology of landscape change. These experiences were an invaluable part of the data used in this study; I visited the lake many times over the summer with copies of historic maps of the lake and took many pictures of the shoreline while also keeping my eyes open to subtle cultural clues still visible on the land. These field experiences helped me piece together the gaps in archival materials as I analyzed my data for this study. Because of additions and relocations of many buildings and roads at the lake, there are few clues that remain about the locations of these features.

While some of these locations are approximate, the verbal descriptions and maps that this study provides will hopefully inspire future researchers to go out into the field and retrieve more precise information about these features. For example, a good future project for the lake would combine the findings of this study with additional archival materials and the locations of past landscape features using a Global Positioning System unit. In that way, the locations of relocated features, such as the Fishing Bridge auto camp could be entered into a database and aligned precisely with current National Park Service spatial information for a GIS database. Yellowstone National Park GIS databases are well endowed with physical features but they lack important coordinates for

cultural features, particularly those recovered through a historical cultural landscape study.

This study also highlights some of the challenges in reconciling conflicting data within the archives as well as data in the field. Others who are interested in pursuing a similar study of national park landscapes should appreciate the investment of time and energy involved with this analysis. Only by consulting a variety of archival sources and then taking the time to repeatedly visit the field site can this type of work be completed. The frustration of encountering numerous conflicting sources or finding a paucity of evidence for past landscape features must be balanced with perseverance and an eagerness to explore past landscapes.

Accumulating data about the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake is also important for national park management. It provides a valuable source of concentrated material for park managers and concessionaire who must make decisions about how this landscape will be managed and used over time. This study is helpful since much of this information about Yellowstone Lake has not been gathered together previously and presented in a verbal and cartographic format. With this study in hand, park managers can better understand what areas of the lake have been historically important for this national park and make cultural resource protection decisions about this area. Looking at the decisions made in the past can reveal what worked and what did not work and apply that information to future decisions.

Broader Implications

Tracing Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape evolution also provides insight into the broader discussion of the lake in Yellowstone National Park's history. By

collecting and analyzing data about the placement and timing of developments around the lake, we can see that Yellowstone Lake has been a constant and central feature of Yellowstone National Park's history. Yellowstone Lake was included in early maps of the region. Probing into the materials used for the congressional debate over the creation of Yellowstone National Park is also important. This part of the study found that the lake was geographically important to lawmakers who used the lake to establish the park boundaries according to the Yellowstone Park Act. From the establishment of the Lake Hotel in 1891 to the multiple sites of cabins, auto campgrounds, and a hotel in the late 1960's, Yellowstone Lake was a place of concessionaire investment and National Park Service planning. Indeed, by 1966 Yellowstone Lake may have been at its peak of development and visitor use. By that year, there were five boat docks at the lake, up to five thousand boats on the lake in a summer, and cabins or auto camps at all five of the lake developed areas. Just thinking about this distribution of park facilities in terms of the number of beds available to park visitors is revealing. By 1966, thousands of visitors in Yellowstone were staying each night at Yellowstone Lake. During the day, these tourists were fishing, hiking, boating, and driving around this large, subalpine lake.

This study also has implications for better understanding national park tourism and western tourism generally. The types and locations of facilities that park managers and concessionaires provided and that park tourists demanded, reveal the changing course of tourism in the western United States. From stagecoach tours in the early park period, to the advent of auto tourism, to the wilderness movement with an emphasis on natural landscapes—the facilities and locations of developments in the park have changed over

time. These shifting patterns and activities found at Yellowstone can also be compared to other national parks and western landscape settings.

The impact of transcontinental transportation networks such as railroads, highways, and airplane routes opened up the West to new forms of tourism and recreation. These technological changes shifted the way that the parks were developed and decisions about which areas of the parks were set aside from development. With the advent of the wilderness movement, motorized activity and development were restricted from many western landscapes. We see this movement's influence in the restriction of motorized boats from Yellowstone Lake's arms and in the proposed relocation of facilities at the lake in conjunction with Mission 66 projects. By restricting the use of motor boats in the arms of the lake and by moving auto campgrounds, cabins, and other service facilities from the Fishing Bridge, Lake, and West Thumb Developed Areas to the newly developed areas at Grant Village and Bridge Bay, the National Park Service made a lasting impact on this landscape. The areas of the lake with the longest historic boating use—Lake and West Thumb—were removed from the cultural landscape as centers of boat-related activities. In addition, the new developments at Bridge Bay and Grant Village attracted heated criticism from nearby communities, environmentalists, and national audiences concerned about the health of ecosystems and the use of natural resources.

This study of Yellowstone Lake is helpful to projects involving other large western lakes. Comparative research between western lakes is a promising area for future research. This study could be used to identify research questions and strategies for comparing the cultural landscape histories of Lake Tahoe, Flathead Lake, Great Salt

Lake, and Jackson Lake. Each of these lakes shares a common history of recreation, development, and management that is varied by local physical and cultural influences.

This Yellowstone Lake thesis also describes the effects of national and international events and processes in a national park setting over time. During the pre-park era, Yellowstone Lake was a contested landscape. Native Americans and Euro-Americans often clashed on their perspectives on the use and occupation of the lake. Often Native American people living in the area—Bannock, Crow, Sheep Eater, and Shoshone peoples—during the time of Euro-American exploration would relate their knowledge of the landscape to Euro-American explorers seeking routes of travel or information for mapping purposes. Although Native Americans and Euro-Americans shared geographic information about the lake, the geopolitical relationships that evolved between the two groups were highly unequal. Native Americans possessed extensive geographic knowledge of the lake, but their contributions to early mapping are often overlooked. Native American knowledge was used to guide Europeans and was integrated into the standard maps produced and distributed during the early settlement of North America. By the time Euro-Americans began formal mapping and surveys of Yellowstone in the early 19th century, there were many non-European groups who lived near Yellowstone Lake and seasonally used its resources. Native Americans had a system of mapping the lake and understanding its location; however, these native systems of mapping were reinscribed by Euro-Americans in an effort to colonize the area and eventually develop it. Members of exploration parties recorded encounters with Indians in part of their journals, yet discussed an Indian presence in the park as if it was a historic element of the landscape. Yellowstone Lake first appeared on a Euro-American maps as

a product of the transcontinental Lewis and Clark Expedition. The lake continue to be included and mapped in more detail as increasing numbers of Euro-Americans traveled to the Yellowstone Plateau and produced their versions of its physical dimensions.

Between 1870 and 1891, Yellowstone Lake became a scene of tourism development and national attention. With the creation of Yellowstone National Park in 1872, the nation looked to the American West to see the national park idea emerge and begin to flourish. Although various tourist attractions were established throughout the country by the late nineteenth century (Sears 1989), none of them carried the moniker and identity of a national park. Once the Park was created, the regulations and vision for this new type of land use slowly adapted to changing conditions within the Park. Since early experiences and mapping efforts by Euro-American explorers and surveyors included Yellowstone Lake, it was a logical move to include the lake as one of the major attractions to visit in Yellowstone. The evidence for this lies in the early building of roads to the lake, the early establishment of a hotel there, and park service personnel being stationed there. Also, the lake area developed a unique form of transportation in the park: the steamboat.

Political and cultural tensions throughout the United States were present in Yellowstone National Park during this early period. Native Americans continued to use the lake as a location for seasonal hunting activities and clashes between Native Americans and Euro-American tourists made for uncomfortable and dangerous situations for all groups involved. The United States Army served as the prime manager of the park during this time and the role of this agency in park development includes establishing a soldier station at Yellowstone Lake as well as frequent patrols around the lake. This

period also reveals the emergence of Indian Reservations and the Native American dispossession of national park landscapes.

Between 1892 and 1932, several national and international events affected Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape development: the entrance of automobiles into Yellowstone National Park, the creation of the National Park Service, World War I, and the Great Depression. The arrival of the first automobile in Yellowstone in 1915 increased the number of people who came to the park, the way that they moved around the park, and the timing and spatial organization of park development. The 1916 creation of the National Park Service also transformed the cultural landscape of Yellowstone National Park by forcing concessionaire consolidations and by regulating the construction of all buildings constructed in the park. With the creation of the National Park Service in 1916, the U.S. Army was relieved of its administrative duties in Yellowstone National Park. With this shift came a major reorganization of the concessionaire structure in the park. A goal for the newly established National Park Service included Stephen Mather's vision for increasing the number of visitors to the parks. The first director wanted to "persuade Americans to visit the national parks" by providing as many opportunities as possible for the greatest number of people to enter the parks (Bartlett 1985, 87). In the process, Mather hoped to expand national awareness and support for the national parks. An ideal vehicle for increasing the speed and number of people who could visit the parks was the automobile. Mather encouraged auto travel to Yellowstone.

The National Park Service also effectively marketed national parks in conjunction with the See America First movement. The See America First campaign urged Americans to explore their homeland scenic areas instead of the attractions offered by a

European vacation. Another event of great consequence during this period was the outbreak of international hostilities during World War I. Although the efforts of the See America First campaign were in full swing, visitor numbers in the park declined during the war years and many facilities at Yellowstone Lake were closed. This trend reversed after the war. More than a decade later, the Great Depression also dramatically affected park visitation. For Yellowstone National Park, it was difficult to secure personnel and resources to support the park and visitation dwindled during these economically difficult years.

Between 1933 and 1966, Yellowstone Lake experienced a tremendous amount of change to its cultural landscape. Major events that affected the lake during this time included the Great Depression, the New Deal, World War II, the wilderness movement, and Mission 66. Concessionaires with operations at Yellowstone Lake were hit hard by the economic recession associated with the Great Depression. Most concessionaires closed their operations from 1933 to 1935 at Yellowstone Lake (Toll 1935, 2). By 1935, visitor numbers recovered and lake businesses opened their doors once again. A boost in business after the recession funded a brief spell of renovations and improvements for structures around Yellowstone Lake. In response to the economic recession from the Great Depression, the New Deal implemented nation-wide measures to provide employment and business activity. Part of the New Deal measures included creating the Civilian Conservation Corps. The labor from the Civilian Conservation Corps had a direct impact in Yellowstone Lake with a camp and labor to complete several projects around the lake.

The outbreak of World War II caused another slump in park activity and lake businesses. Because of this lack of patronage as well as a paucity of personnel to operate businesses, park concessionaires decided to close many of their Yellowstone Lake facilities from 1940 to 1947 (Rogers 1947, 5). Many structures at developed areas around Yellowstone Lake suffered from neglect during this period, but some concessionaires took advantage of the slackening of business to make long overdue repairs and adjustments to their facilities.

The post World War II years brought a tremendous surge in visitation to Yellowstone National Park and a park-wide response to increasing visitor demands. With more leisure time, income, and the desire to explore new places, Americans traveled to their national parks in record-breaking numbers. Many of these postwar tourists traveled to their national parks in automobiles. Private automobile travel in the Yellowstone became the transportation method of choice; park superintendents and concessionaires struggled to accommodate growing visitor use and impact on existing structures. The passage of the Wilderness Act in 1964 had a tremendous impact on National Park Service policies and management tactics. Examples of this impact at Yellowstone Lake included shifts in the management of lake recreation and the planning of developed areas. The Mission 66 project also shaped the lake's cultural landscapes. This government-initiated program called for massive projects to relocate, upgrade, and modernize park structures while being sensitive to ecological resources and human impact on the park's natural features. Mission 66 changed the spatial organization of numerous park facilities as well as how those facilities were managed, improved, allocated, and designed. Highlights from the original plans that involved Yellowstone

Lake included altering the lakeshore road around the north section of the Yellowstone Lake, constructing two new developed areas (Grant Village along the West Thumb Bay and Bridge Bay near the Lake Developed Area), massive relocation of structures from the Fishing Bridge Developed Area, West Thumb Developed Area, and—to a lesser extent—the Lake Developed Area. However, these plans ultimately met with controversy from gateway communities, environmental organizations, and other federal agencies. The contentious relationship between concessionaires and the National Park Service played out well past 1966; however a look at the beginning of Mission 66 projects and concessionaire responses to the plans provides a useful portal into which we may explore some of the planning issues that faced Yellowstone Lake throughout this period.

Value of a Historical Geographic Approach

This historical geographic study of a national park landscape draws on the literature of many authors. Many of the questions posed in the introduction to this study may be used to understand the evolving cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake. Schein's (1997) work draws attention to the many discourses that became tangible pieces of the lake's cultural landscape and subsequently shaped how people viewed and experienced their travels in the park. His framework helps illuminate the distinctive roles that concessionaires, government agencies, and visitors had in shaping the cultural landscape at Yellowstone Lake. Through a combination of all of these forces the lake was transformed over time from a minor resort location with a single hotel and few roads to a bustling center of tourism within Yellowstone. Concessionaires and government agencies built the infrastructure at Yellowstone Lake and visitor demands influenced the type and location of many facilities. These discourses changed over time as technology,

national political events, and economic processes affected the visitation at the park and the availability of funds to finance new infrastructure.

This thesis also explores visual data sources and suggests that a careful interpretation of such sources can offer important insights into how people experience places. As with Schwartz and Ryan's (2003) work, the Yellowstone Lake study uses photographs as important sources of data for geographic inquiry. For example, the landscape photography of William Jackson was influential in the creation of Yellowstone National Park and the widespread dissemination of information about Yellowstone Lake. Western image analysis is also the focus of a study by Wyckoff and Dilsaver (1997). As with Wyckoff and Dilsaver's study, this work uses a variety of promotional materials as data sources. The appearance of the lake in guidebooks and brochures emphasizes the importance of visual representations in portraying national park experiences to a broader national audience.

The Yellowstone Lake study revealed several of the western landscape types explored by Vale and Vale (1989) in their transect of the American West. Specifically, Yellowstone Lake was seen as an "empty quarter" by early Euro-American mapping and exploration parties who—despite their frequent interactions with Native Americans in the area—depicted the Yellowstone Plateau and Yellowstone Lake as unsettled and unexplored areas. Yellowstone Lake was also a frontier inhabited by Native Americans, fur-trappers, and "trail-blazers" (Vale and Vale 1989, 7). The developed areas around Yellowstone Lake contributed to the lake's image as a middle landscape where "[w]ild nature and civilized culture remain distinct but in close juxtaposition to one another" (Vale and Vale 1989, 8). As a national park landscape, Yellowstone Lake was also a

landscape of protected wild nature where the lake's undeveloped areas were valued for their scenic and natural qualities. Finally, Yellowstone Lake was a playground where boating, camping, hiking, and fishing were popular forms of recreation.

This study also looks at role that romantic writers and artists played in depicting western landscapes. As Allen (1992) noted for the early nineteenth century West in general, my study found that the literature and art produced by Euro-American fur trappers and explorers depicted Yellowstone Lake as a place of romance. These images of the lake did not “depend upon European tradition but upon American experience and upon the invention of tradition” (Allen 1992, 28). Early accounts of the lake from explorers ranged from second-hand reports of a large lake at the headwaters of the Yellowstone River to the direct experiences reported by travelers such as David Folsom. Folsom described Yellowstone Lake as a “beautiful sheet of water” that included “gently sloping mountains, bold promontories, low necks, or level prairies” (Haines 1974, 53). Such accounts of the lake were based on American experiences at the lake that were informed by the European romantic tradition. Written descriptions of the lake from nineteenth century accounts portrayed the lake as a romanticized western landscape and an important location in the West.

This study also explores the role of tourism in shaping western landscapes. Athearn (1986) explores the development of the American West as a mythic landscape in the twentieth century. As Athearn related in his study of the West, ignorance was a key ingredient in depictions of Yellowstone Lake as a mythic western location of unreal proportions. Many early reports of the lake were exaggerated from second-hand information but they were the only sources of information about the lake; these

descriptions of the lake were often copied and referenced as factual accounts of Yellowstone Lake. An example of this myth creation process at Yellowstone Lake may be found in an 1868 account of the lake that described it as “the largest and strangest mountain lake in the world” which was full of “fish half as large as a man, some of which have a mouth and horns and skin like a catfish and legs like a lizard” (Haines 1974, 39). Similar descriptions of the lake were repeated in park guidebooks and brochures which became the trusted source of information about the park tour.

This study parallels MacCannell’s (1976) conclusions because visitor experiences at Yellowstone Lake changed over time to reflect shifting social values and ideas. In particular, a study of the cultural landscape evolution at Yellowstone Lake provides examples of the “empirical and ideological expansion of modern society” through the experiences of the “modern leisure class” (MacCannell 1976, 3). For example, as transportation technology and networks developed around Yellowstone Lake, park concessionaires and the National Park Service catered more to tourists seeking convenient lodging and services that accommodated their automobiles. Experiencing Yellowstone Lake also became institutionalized as an “authentic attraction” by “modern society” that participated in its “ceremonial ratification” (MacCannell 1976, 14) by including early explorers reports of the lake in guidebooks and visiting the lake to fish, boat, and stroll along its shores.

This study also connects to Young’s (2002) work in exploring national park landscapes in historical contexts. As Young found for Cascades Cove, Yellowstone Lake is a “palimpsest of land uses and structures” and it did not always appear as it does today (2002, 178). A historical geographic approach is particularly helpful here for

illuminating the development, relocation, and removal of cultural landscape features at the lake over time. The impressions around the lake's shoreline from the extensive Wylie camps, housekeeping cabin areas, and auto campgrounds at West Thumb and Fishing Bridge Developed Areas are only visible on aerial photographs and recognizable to a trained eye while walking along the lake. These overnight facility areas may have dominated the lakeshore landscape in 1932 or 1966 but they are removed from our current view of the lake. Although Yellowstone Lake is not interpreted as a settled area such as Cascades Cove, the lake did host regular residents such as Crow, Bannock, and Shoshone people; these groups are not actively interpreted as being residents at the lake and evidence of their structures are not easily discernible on today's lake landscape.

Tourism and its promotion are central research areas for many writers. Hal Rothman (1998) explores the cultural meaning and representations of a diversity of tourist landscapes in American culture. This study fits well with Rothman's in that it exposes Yellowstone Lake as a diverse site for tourism. Lake developments included improved roads, auto campgrounds, and accessible cabins. The lake was also publicized for its natural features. Guidebooks and National Park Service brochures depicted Yellowstone Lake as a wild landscape with trails, remote bays for boating, and vast expanses of calming views. The lake was particularly highlighted as a natural and scenic location in the park during the latter years of this study as the effects of the wilderness movement made impressions of park managers, visitors, and concessionaires. The Yellowstone Lake study adds to a better understanding of how a western tourist landscape and a national park location evolved over time to accommodate visitors.

Schaffer (1996) also centers her attention on the role of promotion in expanding tourism. Applying her general discussion of the See America First movement, we see from the Yellowstone Lake study that railroads and promoters invested time and money in developing Yellowstone Lake into an accessible and desirable resort destination to compete with European resorts. Building the Lake Hotel and advertising stagecoach travel throughout the park and to the lake adds another case study to Schaffer's depiction of western promotion and development.

Similar to Magoc's (1999) work, the Yellowstone Lake study looks at the creation of Yellowstone National Park and how park landscapes were promoted to tourists. However, instead of focusing broadly on the whole park the Yellowstone Lake study is a more detailed account of the cultural landscape developments at a specific region of the park. This study can enrich Magoc's analysis by providing examples of how the Northern Pacific Railroad promoted Yellowstone Lake in its brochures and built overnight facilities at the lake such as the Lake Hotel. In addition, this thesis provides examples of how the U.S. Army managed this part of Yellowstone National Park by establishing a soldier station at the Lake Developed Area and sending regular patrols around the lake.

This thesis also adds to a growing body of literature documenting changing park management policies in Yellowstone National Park. Paul Schullery (1997) examines the evolution of National Park Service policy in Yellowstone. A Yellowstone Lake study supports many of his findings in greater detail than his work records; the additions and removal of cultural landscape features such as cabins, tents, and support structures is included in Schullery's study but this thesis more specifically explores these

developments and finds a more exact date for their evolution through the efforts of concessionaires and government agencies. Pritchard's (1999) work, while focusing on some aspects of Yellowstone Lake's management such as fisheries policies and wildlife interpretation, differs from this case study which documents boating policies, fisheries management, and visitor experiences at the lake over time and space. This study will also add to Chase's (1987) critical look at National Park Service policies. The Yellowstone Lake thesis provides insights into the degree that changing park policies affected developments at Yellowstone Lake and includes specific examples of contentious development projects in the park such as the Grant Village development.

Finally, this study adds to the increasing number of geographic research papers about Yellowstone National Park. Although Meyer (1996) and Smith (1999) focus their works on the broader subject of Yellowstone National Park, this study will strengthen their findings by focusing on a region within the park and adding another case example of changes they document for the whole park as taking place at the lake over time. Byrand (1995) completed a similar cultural landscape reconstruction for the Upper Geyser Basin using his geographic training. The Yellowstone Lake study increases the number of historical geographic studies for Yellowstone National Park and expands on the techniques and methods employed in these studies by using a regional approach and a GIS component. Although many historians and geologists have focused their work on Yellowstone National Park, more geographic studies of this federal reserve are needed to improve our understanding of this dynamic area.

Beyond 1966

During a recent visit to Montana State University, historian William Cronon discussed environmentalism and dual meanings of “nature” (Cronon 2004). His lecture included a discussion of a “nature that is us” and a “nature that is not us” (Cronon 2004). Although Cronon argued that we may frequently feel tempted to make decisions about wilderness areas based on our perceptions of a nature as being separate from our existence, this is a dangerous proposition. Cronon urged his audience to consider the “nature-culture boundary not as a wall but as a bridge” (Cronon 2004). By this he suggested that cultural landscapes and natural landscapes should not be separate in our minds, but linked together so that we can make decisions about our use of the earth that we live upon. We must include our “working landscapes” (Cronon 2004) such as Yellowstone Lake’s developed areas in our discussions of the lake’s wilderness areas if we are to make balanced decisions about growth and natural resource allocation.

Geographer Judy Meyer (1996) also argues for a balanced park management plan that considers management values and park landscapes. Meyer’s rationalization is that each unit in the national park system presents managers with “constraints and opportunities” that are intrinsically woven into the sense of place that we cherish about these different locations. The task before park administration is balancing management goals for “science, economics, and ecological restoration” with management ideals such as “change and permanence, science and history” that inevitable unfold in each park in a different and unique way (Meyer 1996, 112-113). By tracing the temporal and spatial changes in cultural landscapes we can better assess the values and planning strategies that have gone into creating these areas. Cultural landscapes are a corollary of natural

landscapes; including the whole lake—with cultural and physical attributes in mind—will help park managers, concessionaires, and visitors make better decisions about this pleasure ground for the future.

In 1966, Yellowstone Lake was at what was perhaps the apex of its use and development. At the close of this study, the cultural landscape of Yellowstone Lake included five major boating areas. In the course of only a few summer months—the season of peak activity at this high altitude lake environment—at least five thousand boaters were fishing, boating, and exploring the lake's 110 miles of shoreline. During these same months, thousands of park visitors were staying at Yellowstone Lake each night. With major cabin and auto campground areas at the Fishing Bridge, Lake, Bridge Bay, West Thumb, and Grant Village Developed Areas, there were thousands of beds available each night for visitors. Change was on the horizon for Yellowstone Lake, however. Now many of these developments are gone from the landscape.

Striking examples of these landscape alterations are at the former sites of the West Thumb Developed Area and Fishing Bridge Developed Area. As of 2004, the West Thumb Developed Area is all but removed. A ranger station and boardwalk around the geothermal pools is all that remains. Only thirty-eight years before, this location buzzed with activity as park visitors stayed at the cabins or auto campground, rented a fishing boat at the docks, or launched their own personal boat on the shore. Visitors could also stop at a cafeteria for lunch, fill up their gas tanks at the service station, stop by the ranger station for park information, or buy souvenirs at the Hamilton Store. The Fishing Bridge area has also changed since the late 1960's. The site of one of the earliest developments at Yellowstone Lake, now this area offers a recreational vehicle campground, a service

station, general store, museum, and amphitheater. The large auto campground and cabin complex was removed from this site. So too, the boat rental hut at the Fishing Bridge was removed.

Yellowstone Lake visitors in 2004 have far fewer opportunities to recreate and stay at the lake than tourists in previous eras. There are fewer boats docks at the lake now. From five boat docks in 1966, now there are only two marinas at the lake and one of them—the Grant Village Marina—is unusable because of lake erosion. A visitor to Yellowstone Lake today has far fewer options for where to stay at the lake. Instead of a selection of cabins and auto campgrounds around the lake's five major developed areas, the lake now has overnight accommodations at Grant Village and the Lake Developed Area in the form of lodges and a hotel. At Fishing Bridge, only hard-sided recreational vehicles may stay, and Bridge Bay and Grant Village offer the lone auto campgrounds available at the lake. In the middle of July—the peak of the tourist season for Yellowstone—the campground and lodges at Grant Village are often vacant and it resembles more of a ghost town than a thriving visitor service area. Why do the millions of Yellowstone visitors choose to visit other areas of the park? Is it the design and placement of the facilities at Grant Village? One commentator of this developed area called it something between “a curious mixture of Cap Cod and Star Wars” also noting that it felt like “a wilderness ghetto” (Chase 1987, 198). Park employees often refer to the now defunct National Park Service built marina at Grant Village as the “mistake on the lake.” Is it the lack of boating facilities at Yellowstone Lake that discourages people from visiting the area? With only one working marina at the lake (Bridge Bay), there are dramatically fewer options available to a potential fishing enthusiast in 2004 than in

1966. Future studies of Yellowstone Lake may reveal some very interesting results with these questions in mind. This study can provide a base to begin such future research projects and an idea of the changing face of Yellowstone National Park's developed areas.

The course of this study traces the history of Yellowstone Lake from an emerging wilderness setting to a highly developed national park cultural landscape by the late 1960's. From that point to the present the pendulum has swung back to less concentrated development at the lake and more of an emphasis on wilderness recreation. Perhaps the future will bring a balance between these two extremes. If Yellowstone Lake is to become that "pleasure ground for the future" that Gustavus Doane spoke of in 1889, it will take a balanced view on the park from park administration, concessionaires, and visitors to make that happen. A Yellowstone concessionaire brochures hints at this more balanced view that takes into account the multiple perspectives on use, development, and recreation at Yellowstone Lake: "The excitement of this great lake calls to its shore visitors in a variety of ways. The response from the visitor is always the same—enthusiasm and delight" (Yellowstone Park Company 1973).

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APPENDIX
Visitor Statistics for Yellowstone National Park, 1872-1966
Note: Chart based on Haines 1977b, 478-480

