

FROM THE OLD TO NEW WEST:
CHANGES IN LANDOWNERSHIP AND LAND USE
IN THE CRAZY MOUNTAINS, MONTANA FROM 1900 TO 2000.

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	1
Research Objectives	3
Regional and Historical Setting	6
Conceptual Framework	12
Methods and Sources	26
2. LANDSCAPES OF THE OLD WEST, 1900-1950.....	33
Pre-1900 Setting	33
Broader Context of Settlement, 1900-1950	46
Case Studies	77
Site Descriptions	77
Landownership Chronology, 1900-1950	80
Site 1	80
Site 2	82
Site 3	84
Evolving Landscapes and Land Use Patterns, 1900-1950	86
Site 1	87
Site 2	93
Site 3	96
3. LANDSCAPES IN TRANSITION, 1951-1980	100
Broader Context of New West Settlement	100
Driving forces	102
Enabling forces	113
Shaping forces	115
Case Studies	129
Landownership Chronology, 1951-1980	130
Site 1	130
Site 2	133
Site 3	135
Evolving Landscapes and Land Use Patterns, 1951-1980	136
Site 1	137
Site 2	144
Site 3	147
4. LANDSCAPES OF THE NEW WEST, 1981-2000	151

Broader Context of Modernity	151
TABLE OF CONTENTS- CONTINUED	
Case Studies	187
Landownership Chronology, 1981-2000	188
Site 1	188
Site 2	188
Site 3	191
Evolving Landscapes and Land Use Patterns, 1981-2000	192
Site 1	193
Site 2	203
Site 3	206
 5. PLACE PERCEPTIONS IN THE CRAZY MOUNTAINS.....	 219
Questions and Responses	224
 6. CONCLUSION	 237
Case Studies	239
Site 1	239
Site 2	242
Site 3	243
The Crazy Mountains in the Twenty-First Century	245
 REFERENCES CITED	 249

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Crazy Mountains, Gallatin National Forest, Montana.....	1
2. Site Areas 1, 2, and 3 locator map, Crazy Mountains	4
3. Crazy Peak, Gallatin National Forest	7
4. Crazy Mountain region reference map	8
5. Early migrations into Crazy Mountain region	10
6. Chief Plenty-Coup, Absaroka tribal leader	11
7. Early mining in Big Timber Canyon	35
8. Map of early communities and main railroad lines, late 1870s-1910	37
9. Big Timber woolen mills, Sweet Grass County, 1900	38
10. First Northern Pacific Railroad depot, Livingston, 1898	39
11. Early Livingston, 1898	40
12. Checkerboard forest resulting from Northern Pacific Land Grant, 1864	41
13. Distribution of early landownership, Crazy Mountains, 1900	43
14. U.S. Geological Survey, Yellowstone National Park, 1878	44
15. Sweet Grass drainage, circa: early 1900s	45
16. Homestead entries in Montana, 1885-1920	50
17. Logging in the Sweet Grass drainage, 1909	52
18. Relative value of sheep and cattle prices, per head, 1900-1950	54
19. Sheep population for Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-1950	55
20. Cattle population for Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-1950	56

LIST OF FIGURES CONTINUED

Figure	Page
21. Distribution of grazing allotments, 1906	61
22. Sheep herder in Big Timber Canyon, Big Timber Allotment, circa: 1930s	62
23. Northern Pacific Railroad promotional material, circa: 1920s	65
24. Dude ranching promotional photo, Dot S Dot Ranch, circa: 1920s	66
25. Value of wheat in Montana, price per bushel, 1900-1950	67
26. Amount of federal relief money received by Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1930-1940	71
27. Population of Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-1950	74
28. Location of Site Areas and primary features in southern Crazy Mountains	79
29. Distribution of landownership in Site 1, 1900-1950	81
30. Distribution of landownership in Site 2, 1900-1950	83
31. Distribution of landownership in Site 3, 1900-1950	85
32. Transhumance grazing, Crazy Mountains, circa: 1930s	87
33. Grazing allotments included in Site 1	88
34. Big Timber drainage, located in Site 1, 1921	91
35. Lazy K Bar, Site 1, early 1920s	91
36. Horseback riding, Lazy K Bar	92
37. Calf roping, Lazy K Bar	92
38. Grazing allotments included in Site 2	95
39. Haying operations near Site 2, early 1900s	96

LIST OF FIGURES CONTINUED

Figure	Page
40. Traditional ranching landscape in Site 3	97
41. Grazing allotments located in and near Site 3	98
42. Montana's population, 1900-1980	103
43. Population in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-1980	104
44. Employment by industry in Park County, 1950-1980	107
45. Last Northern Pacific Railroad train to leave Livingston, 1970	108
46. Employment by industry in Sweet Grass County, 1950-1980	110
47. Average farmland values in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1950-1980	118
48. Average size of farms in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1920-1980	119
49. Average number of farms in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1910-1980	120
50. Number of well permits granted within Crazy Mountain region, 1910-1980	121
51. Distribution of landownership in Site 1, 1950-1980	131
52. Historical land exchanges in Crazy Mountains, 1940-1975	133
53. Distribution of landownership in Site 2, 1950-1980	134
54. Distribution of landownership in Site 3, 1950-1980	136
55. Common noxious weeds in Site 1 and in Crazy Mountain region	139
56. Horseback riding to Twin Lakes, Big Timber Canyon, 1970s	142
57. Map of main trail systems and campgrounds in Crazy Mountains	144
58. Aerial photograph of logged areas in Site 2, 1960-1970	147
59. Cattle grazing in Site 3, 1976	148

LIST OF FIGURES CONTINUED

Figure	Page
60. Population growth by region and state, 1990-2000	153
61. Montana's population, 1900-2000	154
62. Population in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-2000	156
63. Number of well permits granted within Crazy Mountain region, 1910-2000	158
64. Commodified viewshed in the Mountainous West, 1990s	160
65. Employment by industry in Park County, 1950-2000	162
66. Employment by industry in Sweet Grass County, 1950-2000	163
67. Comparison of federal land base to total state land in the Mountainous West ...	165
68. New West development bordering public lands in southwest Montana	166
69. Percentage of landownership in Crazy Mountain region	167
70. Real estate promotion reflecting a gentrified range ownership.....	172
71. Landownership typology for Park County, 1991-2000	174
72. Landownership typology for Sweet Grass County, 1991-2000	175
73. Amount of land in farms in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-2000	178
74. Average number of farms in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1910-2000	179
75. Average farmland values in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1950-2000	180
76. Popular films made in Montana	182
77. Distribution of landownership in Site 1, 1980-2000	189
78. Distribution of landownership in Site 2, 1980-2000	190
79. Distribution of landownership in Site 3, 1980-2000	192

LIST OF FIGURES CONTINUED

Figure	Page
80. Daily life at the Lazy K Bar Ranch	194
81. Big Timber Falls	196
82. Invasive plant and noxious weed inventory for Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1950-2000	201
83. Aerial photograph of logged areas in Site 1, 1980-2000	202
84. Entry way into an amenity ranch, Site 2	204
85. Aerial photograph of logged areas in Site 2	207
86. Replicated buildings of the Old West, Dead Rock Ranch	209
87. Crazy Mountain Ranch sign	210
88. Popular Marlboro cigarette ads during the 1980s and 1990s	211
89. Philip Morris and Marlboro Country	212
90. Crazy Mountain Ranch	214
91. Low-density rural development located near Site 3	217
92. Definition of landownership types.....	221
93. Distribution of landowners included in the interview process	222

ABSTRACT

Land and life across the Mountainous West are changing rapidly. Traditionally, mountain localities of the western United States have been centers of natural resource extraction and production. Many of these settings however, are being redefined as part of an amenity-oriented, economy and lifestyle. Whereas Old West landscapes reflect industries of mining, farming, ranching, and logging, the New West has become a spatial arena for recreation, tourism, and second-home development. Consequently, different land use ethos and land management practices between residents have led to conflict over resources.

This study reconstructs settlement patterns and land use histories for southwest Montana's Crazy Mountains between 1900 and 2000 to illustrate some of the ways in which the dichotomous interplay of Old and New West economies has quietly reshaped the region's human geography and cultural landscape. In addition, interview data with local residents allowed an examination of the complex mosaic of changing cultural values that accompany the transformation between the Old and New West. Changes in the landscape evolution of the Crazy Mountains are reflective of broader transformations that have taken place at the regional and national level.

Keywords: amenity-migration, Mountainous West, landscape change, Montana-southwest, landownership

INTRODUCTION

An isolated mountain range, the Crazy Mountains rise abruptly from a seemingly flat horizon (Figure 1). Situated twenty-five miles north of Livingston, Montana, the Crazy Mountains stand out as one of the state's highest and most majestic mountain ranges. Since the process of Euro-American settlement began in the late nineteenth century, shifting patterns of land ownership and land use in the region have produced a complex and often contradictory cultural landscape.



Figure 1. Crazy Mountains, Gallatin National Forest. Montana. Source: Montana Government, Photo Gallery (2008).

Rich in natural scenery and wildlife, the Crazy Mountains are emblematic of some of the country's most spectacular settings. It is the presence of these natural amenities, as well as clean air, open space, and other "quality of life" factors that steadily draws people to what is collectively referred to as the New West. Unlike the extractive orientation of the Old West, the natural resources of the New West are valued as scenic and recreational amenities, fundamentally redefining the region's human and economic geography. Often in such settings, a shifting land management ethos has created a

changing landscape in which traditional extractive industries are increasingly marginalized by the arrival of New West resources and services.

Over the course of the century, both Old and New West geographies have influenced the historical and geographical development of the Crazy Mountains. During much of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the region supported agrarian traditions of ranching and farming. After World War II however, numerous forces, such as improvements in transportation and new technologies, converged to redirect development toward formerly sparsely populated mountainous settings, such as the Crazy Mountains. During this period, the widespread reevaluation of rural settings as places of high amenities and outdoor opportunities restructured many local and regional economies across the Mountainous West. Furthermore, broad changes in the agricultural sector reflected and reinforced new development patterns in the region. Market instability, generational turnover, and financial uncertainties in ranching and farming jeopardized many traditional landscapes in southwest Montana.

Since the late 1960s, influences of the New West have quietly reshaped the Crazy Mountains. The gentrification of the surrounding landscape has been a relatively gradual process compared to many other high-amenity settings. However recent movement into the region by large corporations and second homeowners suggests a significant trend in development patterns. As more amenity buyers move into the area, land is increasingly removed from agricultural use and reoriented around recreational purposes. In addition, the legal landscape of the Crazy Mountains creates a complex and potentially problematic pattern of private and public ownership. Laws determining use of the land reflect the

complexity and close relationship between the federal government, private landowners, and the public. The evolution of the landscape in turn, is indicative of larger processes that have played out in the national and global arena. By reconstructing historical settlement patterns and land use practices, this study examines the geographical forces that shape the evolving cultural landscape of Mountainous West localities and suggests how those areas may develop in the future.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to understand landscape changes in the Crazy Mountains by reconstructing historical landownership and land use patterns in the region. The shift from a traditional extractive landscape to an amenity-oriented landscape has produced both visible and non-visible changes in the Crazy Mountains. Closer examination of these transformations will provide a better understanding of the processes influencing and shaping rural communities and environments in the Mountainous West.

The first objective of this study was to reconstruct landownership patterns in the Crazy Mountain region for 1900, 1950, 1980, and 2000. Changes in these patterns were related to larger economic, social, cultural, and political forces at work. This analysis of landownership focused on three study sites within the Gallatin National Forest portion of the Crazy Mountains. Each study area reflected distinctive historical and spatial patterns that are indicative of larger processes shaping the Crazy Mountains and other similar settings. Site 1 is located in the southeast section of the range (Figure 2). Still exhibiting elements of the traditional ranching landscape, this type of landownership pattern was

found in many settings in southwest Montana between 1910 and 1960, and can still be found in some areas of the West today. Site 2 is located in the northwest part of the Crazy Mountains and illustrates a different pattern of land ownership than Site 1. It was selected because it reveals how post-1950 trends in recreation and amenity-driven

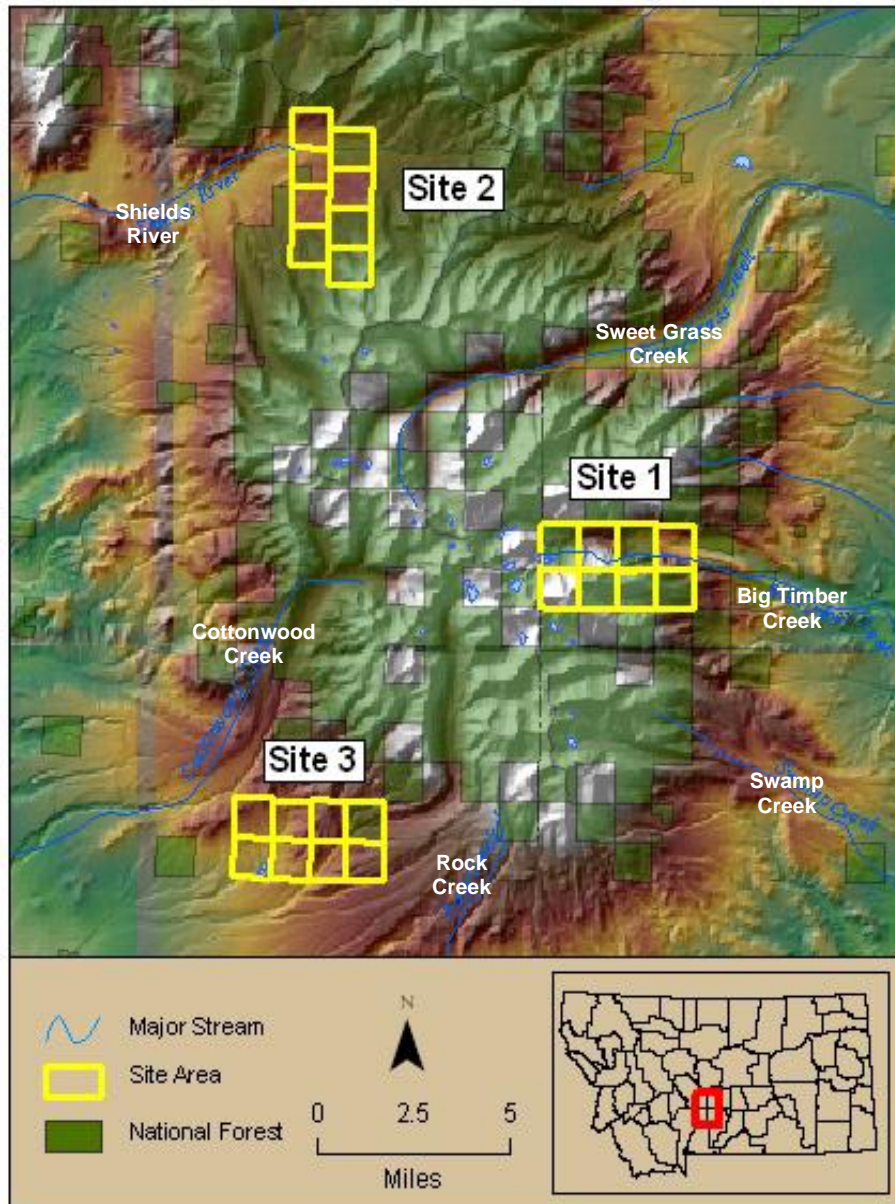


Figure 2. Site Areas 1, 2, and 3 locator map. Crazy Mountains. Source: NRIS. Created by: Author (2008).

ownership have selectively transformed many areas in the Mountainous West. The corporate retreat in Site 3 demonstrates a different example of an amenity-oriented landscape and is the most recent type of landownership in the area.

The second objective of this study was to reconstruct land use patterns in each site area for 1900, 1950, 1980 and 2000. Since the arrival of the first Europeans, the Crazy Mountains have been alternatively claimed by railroad companies, homesteaders, the federal government, ranchers, and most recently corporations. Each of these players has facilitated the process of landscape evolution, modifying the area in ways that reflect the socioeconomic values of the time. Visible measurements of land use include livestock numbers, timber harvesting, irrigation patterns, grazing allotments, well sites, and road and trail traffic. Collectively, these practices produce an elaborate, yet indicative pattern of human activities historically active in the Crazy Mountain region. Supporting this part of the research are photographs, maps, and figures created with the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and local and regional database systems.

The final objective of this study was to explore the contemporary relationship between the Crazy Mountains and its residents. I approached this topic by considering the non-visible changes to the landscape. This area of analysis considers individual and community values regarding the Crazy Mountains as a place. By conducting a series of interviews, a narrative framework was established that interprets how non-visible historical geographical forces continue to shape and influence landscape changes in the region.

Part of the interview process involved eliciting personal views and opinions over current issues of land management and land use in the Crazies. In particular, participants were asked what significant changes they had seen in the area and subsequently, how did these changes shape their views of the Crazy Mountains. By transcribing the interviews and analyzing the responses, I was able to identify the main processes and themes that local residents consider influential in the region's development. This in turn, provided a basic assessment of common perceptions and shared values among Crazy Mountain residents, that when collectively considered, may help steer future growth in the area. In addition to identifying major processes that have shaped the Crazy Mountains, the interviews were intended to identify the types of landowners in the region. Over time, the cultural landscape of the Crazy Mountains has developed into a complex mosaic of longtime traditional residents and newer amenity-oriented owners. Consequently, different types of landowners may affect how the land and its resources are being managed and used. Establishing a working typology of landowners is a useful guide in better understanding diverse and sometimes conflicting land use practices and land management techniques.

Regional and Historical Setting

Constituting the northern perimeter of the Upper Yellowstone Valley, the Crazy Mountains are an island mountain range in southwest Montana. Formed over fifty million years ago, the Crazies are a geological matrix of uplifted and exposed igneous rock (Alt and Hyndman 1986). Shaped by glaciers during the last Ice Age, the physical geography of the Crazy Mountains is characterized by arête ridges, tarns, cirques,

hanging valleys, waterfalls, and rocky spires. With Crazy Peak at 11,200 feet, and more than twenty other peaks reaching above 10,000 feet, the Crazy Mountains are Montana's third highest mountain range (Strong 1995; Graetz and Graetz 2003) (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Crazy Peak. Gallatin National Forest. Image Source: U.S. Dept of Interior. National Park Service (2008).

The Crazy Mountains are separated from their closest neighboring mountain range by more than twenty-five miles. The insular geography of the area has yielded some of the state's healthiest wildlife populations, such as mountain goats and wolverines, while simultaneously housing rarer species, such as grizzly bears and wolves (Strong 1995; U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005). For many of the residents living in the surrounding valleys, including the Musselshell, Upper Yellowstone, and the Shields Valley, the mountains are a reservoir of resources. Federal administration of the mountain range is divided between the Lewis and Clark National Forest in the north, located in Meagher and Wheatland counties, and the Gallatin National Forest in the

south, included in Park and Sweet Grass counties (Figure 4). The latter of these administrative regions is the focus of this research and subsequent analysis.

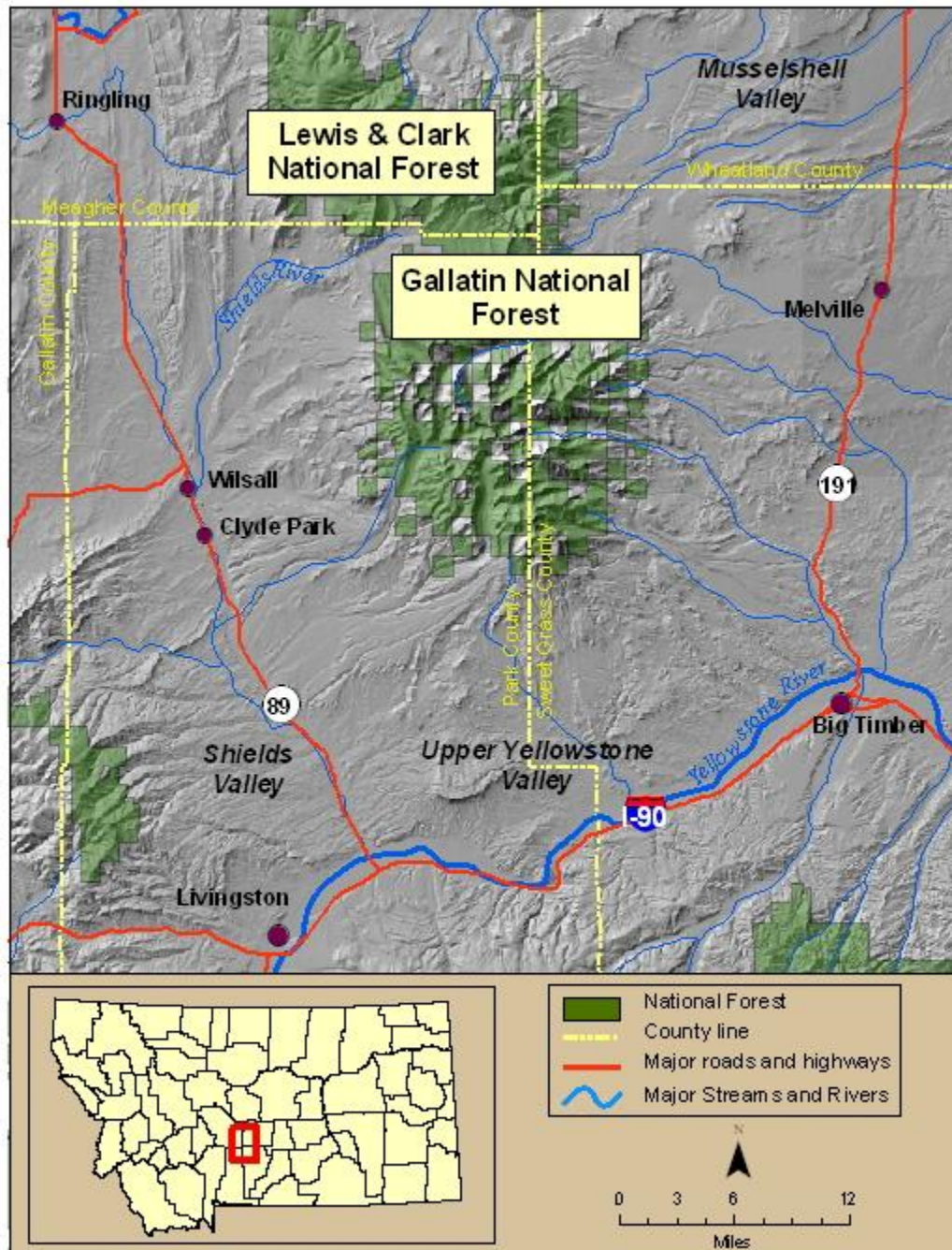


Figure 4. Crazy Mountain region reference map. Source: NRIS. Created by: Author (2008).

The location of the Crazy Mountains was conducive to early human activity. As early as 13,000 years ago, North America's earliest documented inhabitants, the Clovis culture, traversed the Shields Valley and the foothills of the Crazy Mountains (Jones 1996). The north to south orientation of the range and nearby valleys guided the Clovis from the cooler northern climate to warmer southern latitudes. Centuries later, around 1600, the Awatixa Hidasta Indians camped along the range's southern periphery during their seasonal migrations up the Yellowstone River (Figure 5). By the middle of the seventeenth century, the Awatixa had permanently settled in the Yellowstone River Valley, where they resided relatively undisturbed for nearly two centuries (Hoxie 1989; Ballard 2007, pers. communication, 17 July). By the time William Clark led his half of the Corps of Discovery along the southern fringe of the Crazies in 1806, the Awatixa Indians were commonly referred to as the Absaroka or the Crow.

Absaroka tribal members continue to have a deep respect for the Crazy Mountains. Located on the western fringe of Crow country, the Crazies are viewed as the "holiest of holy places," and "the mountain of mountains" (Strong 1995, 5; Sweeney 2007, pers. communication, 1 August). Elder tribal members named the range *Awaxwatia*, or "ominous mountains," spurring the possible mistranslation of the Crazy Mountain namesake (Doyle 2007, pers. communication, 1 August). Personified as being their "Helper" and "sanctuary of safety" against enemies, the Crazy Mountains were influential in shaping the spiritual traditions and cultural mores of the Absaroka Crow peoples. For many tribal members, the Crazy Mountains were a religious setting where brave warriors were rewarded with visions. If attained, a vision bestowed charisma and

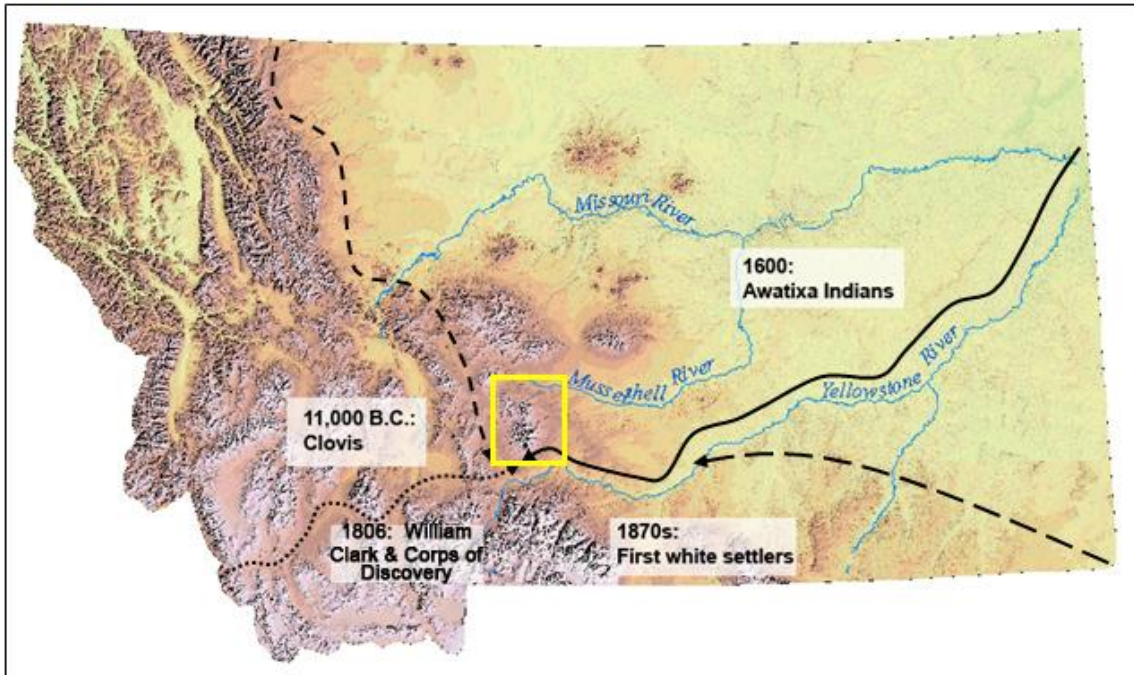


Figure 5. Early migrations into Crazy Mountain region, 11,000 B.C.-1870s. Source: Hoxie (1989); Strong (1995).

political power to wield within the tribe (Hoxie 1989; Doyle 2007, pers. communication, 1 August). The prophetic power of the Crazy Mountains is often recounted with the story of Plenty-Coup, who as a young man summited Crazy Peak and foresaw the demise of his people. Plenty-Coup eventually became a wise leader for his people and is considered by many tribal members as the last great chief of the Crow nation (Linderman 1930) (Figure 6).

By the late nineteenth century, Montana's Native Americans were confronted with an increasingly expansive white population. Although non-Indian settlers were not uncommon in the Upper Yellowstone River Valley, their previous numbers were small and their dominance limited. Initial land exploration began shortly after the passage of Lewis and Clark in 1806 and by 1825, American fur traders and explorers frequently

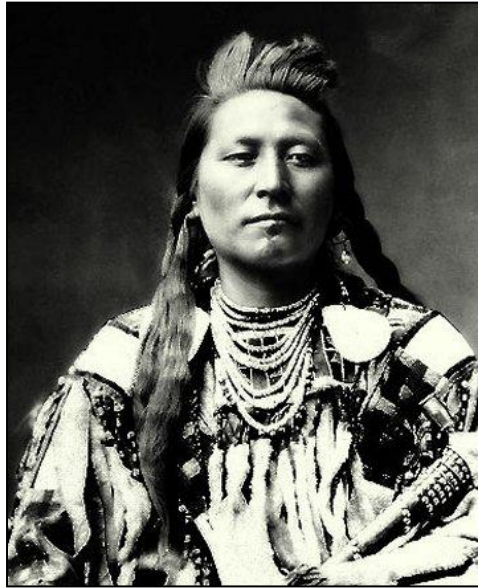


Figure 6. Chief Plenty-Coup, Absaroka tribal leader. circa: late 1920s. Source: Linderman, (1930; 2003).

traveled through the region (Hoxie 1989). Fearing the forced cession of their lands, tribal leaders were prompted to sign the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851, which acknowledged the inclusion of the Crazy Mountains as part of Crow territory. However in 1868, just seventeen years after Fort Laramie, a new treaty was signed that further reduced the Crow territory and gave jurisdiction of the Crazy Mountains to the federal government (Linderman 1930; Hoxie 1989). The continual corralling of Native Americans and the imperial destruction of their traditional livelihoods signaled the emergence of the Mountainous West as a distinctive Euro-American subregion (Wyckoff and Dilsaver 1995).

In 1864 President Lincoln signed a railroad land grant act that was instrumental in shaping the later legal landscape of the Crazy Mountains. Intended to facilitate the creation of a transcontinental railroad, the land grant conditionally allocated public lands to the Northern Pacific Railroad (Jensen and Draffan 1995). Known as “indemnity

strips,” these lands were distributed in alternating square sections that resulted in a “checkerboard pattern” of public and private landownership. In the Crazies, this led to the transferring of more than 50,000 acres of public lands to private ownership (General Land Office 2002; Graetz and Graetz 2003). By the 1890s, the Northern Pacific was actively selling these lands to investors, homesteaders, and other private individuals. Consequently, the positioning of private lands within the public domain would prove significant in the historical development and management of the Crazy Mountains.

Conceptual Framework

Over time, scholars have noted the political, economic, sociocultural, and physical characteristics associated with mountainous settings in the American West. Its inclusion within a historical geographical narrative sheds light on the multifaceted relationship between people and their environment. Both traditional historical geography studies and New Western histories have focused on this complex interplay and the influential forces that shape life and land in the Mountainous West.

The transition in landownership taking place in the Mountainous West is largely associated with the broad shift from the Old to New West. Whereas paradigms of the Old West centered on the extractive industries of agriculture, mining, and logging, geographies of the New West are reoriented around the region’s recreational opportunities and scenic value. Also recognized as part of an amenity-driven landscape, the New West is increasingly reconfiguring Old West economies, politics, and community relations.

Recent home development in remote, mountainous settings in the West has led many geographers and historians to believe that another settlement movement is underway. As Hal Rothman (1998) and others have argued, there has been a “reopening” of the American West. Philip Jackson and Robert Kuhlken (2006) have likened the New West settlement process to a “rediscovery” of the rural American frontier. According to these authors and many others, innovations in technology, transportation, and telecommunications have removed many barriers that previously limited development (Limerick 1997; McGranahan 1999; Meinig 2004; Jackson and Kuhlken 2006; Travis 2007). In addition, changing attitudes toward nature and the environment have encouraged the reevaluation and settlement of western rural landscapes (Worster 1991; 1993; Rudzitis 1996; 1999; Robbins 1999; Rasker and Glick 1994; Rasker and Hansen 2000).

Lawrence Moss is a leading scholar on amenity-migration. He describes the process as “people moving into the mountains to reside year-round or intermittently, principally because of their actual and perceived greater environmental quality and cultural differentiation” (2004, 19; Loeffler and Steinicke 2007). Geographer William Travis adds that, “income growth and corporate mobility, employment flexibility, retirement trends, and communications, transportation, and construction improvements enables the new western homesteading, especially its exurban and rural arms” (2007, 45). As a result, small communities in high-amenity settings are struggling with the often conflicting goals of finding their place in an increasingly internationalized economic system while simultaneously maintaining a high quality of life in the face of demographic

change (Cromartie and Wardwell 1999). Such changes have contributed to escalating social and political strife in some western rural communities (Smutny 2002, 438).

There are a number of themes that characterize the Mountainous West and help to explain the region's evolving settlement geography. In their book, *The Mountainous West*, William Wyckoff and Lary Dilsaver (1995) discuss these processes and the contribution each has played in shaping the region's cultural, economic, and political landscape. According to the authors, defining the boundaries of the Mountainous West varies with historiographic interpretation. The areal definition of the West usually locates the region between the Missouri River and the Pacific Coast. As a subregion of the larger West, the Mountainous West includes the mountainous areas and ranges such as the Cascades, Sierras, and Rockies that are situated within this framework. In addition, a number of distinctive features, such as the presence of large concentrations of natural resources, the widespread distribution of public lands, and the region's traditional appeal as a restorative sanctuary define the Mountainous West. Each theme has been further addressed by a number of scholars and their work provides a contextual framework to examine similar processes that have shaped the evolving landscape of the Crazy Mountains.

Natural resources have played an important role in the historical development of the Crazy Mountains. This was particularly evident in the region's early ranching and livestock industry. Like many areas containing national forests and public lands, the Crazy Mountains were heavily grazed during the first half of the twentieth century. Providing fundamental knowledge of the ecological and historical components of grazing

on public lands is Debra Donahue's book, *The Western Range Revisited* (1999). In it, Donahue reviews the cultural processes and environmental consequences associated with grazing in rangeland ecosystems, such as national forests. Donahue persuasively argues that extended grazing in an area can create dramatic and often irreparable changes to sensitive ecosystems. She concludes that only through aggressive land management techniques that reduce the overall ecological impacts of grazing can rangeland use be sustained.

Similarly, William Rowley writes exclusively about livestock grazing on federal lands in, *U.S. Forest Service Grazing and Rangelands: A History* (1985). In his book, Rowley addresses the federal government's role in regulating and controlling, or lack thereof, livestock grazing in the country's national forests. Rowley acknowledges that a federal grazing system was necessary, though he argues the implementation of grazing policies have been historically hindered by the public's willingness to largely ignore federal regulations and controls. Accordingly states Rowley, managing people, not stock has been the basic problem of range management.

Discussing the larger implications of livestock grazing are several scholars writing about the ranch. Richard Knight, Wendell Gilgert, and Ed Marston collectively edit *Ranching West of the 100th Meridian* (2002), in which they discuss the economics, politics, and cultural characteristics of ranching in the American West. In addition, the authors discuss the history, ecology, and future of the ranching landscape and the symbolic importance of the ranch in American popular culture. Charles Wilkinson has also explored themes of the ranch in his books, *The Eagle Bird* (1992a) and, *Crossing the*

Next Meridian: Land, Water, and the Future of the West (1992b). In the latter, Wilkinson examines the emergence of the open range and the federal grazing policies that resulted from its overuse. Wilkinson argues following a period of heavy livestock grazing, a series of legislative acts were passed that reinforced the presence of the government in many areas in the West. The involvement of various federal agencies in the management of western lands and resources has influenced the region's cultural and environmental landscape.

Paul Starrs further explains the ranching culture in a number of his works (1998; 2002; 2003). Starrs states that the historically dominant livelihoods of farming and ranching are both ubiquitous across the region and iconic western landscapes. Stemming from a long tradition of production and stewardship, the ranch evokes images that are a part of both the Old and New West. To Starrs, the ranch is a "territory of the imagination" that continues to capture the interest and attention of popular culture (1998; 2003, 64). Starrs joins other scholars in arguing perceptions of independence, fortitude, ruggedness, and courage characterize the western ranch and play a continuing role in influencing development in these traditional settings (Wilkinson 1992a; 1992b; Starrs 1998; 2003; Power and Barrett 2001; Knight et al. 2002).

More appropriate to the Crazy Mountain region are studies focusing on southwest Montana. William Wyckoff and Kathy Hansen (1999) evaluate environmental change in a case study of ranching in the Madison Valley. In their study, Wyckoff and Hansen look at a post-1965 era of recreational and amenity transformations of a traditional ranching landscape. According to the authors, broad shifts in the management of southwest

Montana's ranchlands were often the result of compounding economic, cultural, and political forces. External influences operating from outside the region have therefore been significant in shaping local and regional ranching landscapes.

Julia Haggerty (2005) similarly reconstructed ranchland ownerships in southwest Montana. In her study of Paradise Valley, located in Park County, Montana, Haggerty notes changes in the agricultural sector and family dynamics largely account for ranchland turnover in the Paradise Valley and other parts of the West. As a result, former agricultural lands in the region are increasingly developed into low-density rural housing patterns that have widespread ecological, economic, and cultural consequences to the surrounding area. This pattern of development is subsequently characterizing the New West landscape.

The presence of public lands in the Mountainous West makes the region a unique entity of government control. Richard Jackson (1995) and John Wright (1993; 2003) discuss the role of the government as the dominant landlord in the West. Various federal agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management, the National Forest Service, and the National Park Service own on average 54 percent of the lands in the West. Consequently, writes Jackson, the large presence of the government in the region ensures controversy over the area's land management and disposal (1995, 253). The arrival of private land interest during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries further complicated the situation.

The federal government was also important in shaping the spatial configuration of the West. In his analysis of western land tenure, John Wright explores the various

legislative acts that have since established the geographical framework for modern settlement patterns (1993; 2003). According to Wright, the assemblage of homesteading acts, land grants, and resource management legislation has largely determined patterns of land tenure and land use in the region. Consequently, the structural framework of the West is based on converging multiparty interests, such as federal agencies, public institutions, and private residents. This has essentially created a cultural “pressure cooker,” where competing interests are fighting for control of the land and its resources.

Specifically addressing the development and consequences of early land legislation is Derrick Jensen and George Draffan (1995). In their analysis of the Northern Pacific Land Grant (1864), Jensen and Draffan reconstruct the relationship between the railroad and the historical management of forestlands in the northwest. According to the authors, checkerboarded forests like the Crazy Mountains, were the destructive result of dubious policymaking and inadequate foresight. Consequently, federal legislation, like the Northern Pacific Land Grant, is responsible for the ecological, political, and cultural complications that later arose as a result of the alternating pattern of private and public landownership.

Other scholars have also examined the contemporary relationship between public and private lands. Some scholars believe the presence of public lands is a major catalyst driving modern settlement patterns in the Mountainous West (Robbins 1996; Rasker and Hansen 2000; Travis 2007). As Gundars Rudzitis (Rudzitis and Johansen 1989; 1996; 1999) argues, since the 1970s, counties with large areas of public lands have been some of the fastest growing areas in the country, at times growing two to three times more than

counties with little or no public lands (1999; Wilkinson 1997). According to Rudzitis, the presence of national forests, wilderness areas, and other public lands is a main attraction luring people to the region. Consequently, the wide-open space, environmental quality, and relatively high-scenic amenities of many public lands encourage development in the peripheral area. Settings located adjacent to public lands often occur on the urban/wildland interface and the increasing development of these places signifies broad environmental changes in the surrounding landscape.

Demographic patterns during the late 1960s and 1970s supported the idea that more Americans were moving to the country's high-amenity, rural settings. Studies by Calvin Beale and Kenneth Johnson (1975; 1998) for example, illustrated that when given the choice, more people wanted to live in remote rural areas rather than high-density urban centers. Since the 1970s, both scholars have exhaustively examined the country's changing migration trends. The research of Beale, Johnson, and others suggests that since the 1970s, and particularly during the 1990s, population growth was directed toward the West's more rural, non-metropolitan counties (Johnson and Beale 1994; Beale and Johnson 1998; Beyers 1999; Cromartie and Wardwell 1999; Nelson 1999; Jobes 2000; Swanson 2001)

Preference for the country's more remote, high-amenity settings was further supported by migration trends in and around the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE). The GYE includes approximately 2.5 million acres located in and near Yellowstone National Park and Grand Teton National Park. The region spreads over the southwest corner of Montana, the northwest portion of Wyoming and parts of southeast Idaho. In

studies by Ray Rasker, Andrew Hansen, and others (2000; 2003; Gude et al. 2006), the development patterns in the GYE are examined between 1970 and 1999. Their research found that over that time, the GYE experienced rapid growth that largely centered around the region's natural amenities. Furthermore, they support the idea that the presence of these natural amenities are drawing people to settle nearby private lands, thereby altering traditional landownership patterns and local geographies.

In a particularly relevant study to the Crazy Mountains, William Travis, Hannah Gosnell, and Julia Haggerty (2002a; 2002b; 2003) look at current landownership patterns in the GYE. In their inventory and assessment of the region's landowners, they conclude that most new landownerships were purchased by non-traditional, amenity owners. The transition from traditional ranchlands to amenity-oriented ownerships has potentially significant implications for biodiversity, resource management, and other issues related to land use and ecosystem function (Gosnell et al. 2006). The authors additionally argue that because ranchlands represent the largest parcels of privately owned land and the most intact pieces of land, the management of these landscapes is of special interest to ecologists, conservationists, policy makers, and local residents.

Maestras, Knight, and Gilgert (2001) further discuss the environmental integrity of ranchland landscapes in their work. Their research supports ranchland conservation by arguing that ranches provide for higher levels of biodiversity than exurban rural residences and other subdivided developments. Similarly, rural subdivision studies done by biologist Andrew Hansen and his colleagues at Montana State University (Hansen et

al. 2003) concluded that increased human presence and disturbance on subdivided ranches appear to reduce biodiversity levels compared to working ranches.

A final characteristic of the Mountainous West is its traditional appeal as a restorative sanctuary (Wyckoff and Dilsaver 1995). Central to this theme is the agrarian myth, which Donald Worster defines as “the celebration of the West as a great, good place where human nature is supposed to rise above contaminating influences; an extraordinary land where a peaceful, productive life can commence without the burdens of an overcivilized society” (1991, 7-8; 1993). Likewise, historian William Cronon (1997) states that for many Americans, the West and specifically its inclusive mountainous regions, is a step closer to wilderness or a return to nature. More recently, the Mountainous West has been perceived as a recreational, medicinal and therapeutic milieu to challenge the regimentation and standardization of mass society (Limerick 1997).

The western ranch, perhaps more so than most other settings in the region, is appropriately symbolic of the idealism represented by the American West. Its appeal as a restorative retreat is a topic discussed at length by Paul Starrs (1998), William Travis (1999; 2007), and others (Ghose 1998; Duane 1999; Gentner and Tanaka 2002). In particular, Travis writes that since the 1970s, the western ranch has become one of the most coveted living quarters among new migrants in the region (2007). Patricia Limerick argues that urban refugees, attracted by the mythic grandeur of the western range, including its vast open spaces, cowboy culture, and cattle production, purchase traditional western ranches in hopes of recreating the pastoral dream of ranch life (1997). This

change in landownership is in effect, “gentrifying” the range. Consequently, rangeland gentrification is profoundly transforming the politics, economics, and culture of the region’s western rural areas (Travis 2007, 42).

Another manifestation of the New West, and similarly representational of the restorative appeal of the ranching landscape, is the development of “hobby ranches” and “ranchettes.” Smaller than gentrified ranches, hobby ranches and ranchette-style developments are characterized as low-density developments occurring on lots of 5 to 100 acres (Rasker and Hansen 2000; Jackson and Kuhlken 2006). One study suggested that roughly half of the West’s ranches are now hobby operations, owned primarily for their landscape and investment rather than for livestock production (Gentner and Tanaka 2002; Travis 2007). Ranchettes offer many of the same amenities and restorative qualities as gentrified ranches, yet at a smaller scale and at a cheaper price. Both types of development patterns therefore, draw on similar perceptions of the West as a place of rejuvenation, isolation, and rurality.

Land use planners Philip Jackson and Robert Kuhlken (2006) write about the cultural attraction of ranchettes and hobby ranches as well as the implications caused by recent rural residential developments. According to the authors, “Nothing symbolizes the New West more than a mountain valley formerly used for livestock pasture and/or irrigated hay production, now punctuated with massive log homes perched on the upper hillsides on parcels ranging anywhere between 10 and 160 acres” (2006, 29). Jackson and Kuhlken further note the ecological, economic, and cultural consequences resulting from the rapid growth of ranchettes and other agricultural subdivisions.

Scholars Matthew Shumway and Samuel Otterstrom (2001) argue rural development is associated with larger changes at the local, regional, and even global scale. In particular, the authors note, development in formerly sparsely populated lands, such as in many mountainous localities and other amenity-driven landscapes, represents a wide shift in cultural lifestyle preferences. In many areas of the Mountainous West, this has led to a transition from traditional “working landscapes” into new “leisure landscapes.”

Paralleling the larger shift from the Old to New West are changes in industry and employment. Several scholars have detailed this transformation and its affects on local and regional economies. In their book, *Post-Cowboy Economics: Pay and Prosperity in the New American West* (2001), Michael Power and Richard Barrett trace the transition from an extractive resource-based economy into a market favoring non-traditional industries, such as services, retail trade, and professional employment. In their assessment, Powers and Barrett argue that the shift away from extractive industries and toward amenity services can create employment opportunities, stabilize economies, and diversify the local resource base.

Work by Alexander Vias (1999), Ed Marston (1999), and Ray Rasker and Andrew Hansen (2000) further explored the economic restructuring of rural communities in the West. According to these scholars, New West industries, such as tourism and recreation, create financial opportunities in markets that promise to be more enduring than the extractive industries of the Old West. Their research proves that most people are willing to sacrifice a better paying job in the city for a job with less pay but in an areas

with higher environmental quality (Nelson 1999; Rasker and Hansen 2000). It is argued therefore, that by conserving the natural amenities that initially draw people to the region, jobs and economic growth will follow.

While the arrival of new migrants into the rural West has stimulated and diversified local economies, it has also socially polarized many communities. Exemplified by the spread of real estate developments, the building of large, opulent homes, and the sprawl of expansive suburban communities, many newcomers often come with a different set of land use values (Limerick 1998; Duane 1999; Booth 2002). Timothy Duane (1999) looked at New West development patterns in the Sierra Nevadas and argues that the conflicts arising in many parts of the rural West are associated with inherent differences that exist between rural residents and urban refugees. As extractive economies of the Old West produce landscapes oriented around ranching, farming, mining, and logging, amenity-migrants of the New West try to reshape those landscapes toward tourism, recreation, and second-home leisure activities. Duane and others argue therefore, that traditional land ethics of many longtime rural residents and the land values of more-urban-oriented newcomers ensure that disputes over environmental issues, land use, and resource management are nearly certain (Alm and Witt 1996; Limerick 1998; Duane 1999; Smutny 2002; Travis 2007).

How different landowners view and value a particular locale can also affect how the region's land and resources are managed. Central to this concept are themes of sense of place. In what geographer Kent Ryden (1993) has termed the invisible landscape, certain values to a place develop as an individual attaches and identifies particular

meanings to a geographic space. Human geographer Yi Fu Tuan (1974; 1977; 1979) adds that over time, familiarity and knowledge of a place encourages the development of memories, histories, and experiences, thus reinforcing feelings of attachment. These emotions in turn, can affect how one views the physical and visible changes of certain landscapes. Consequently, how developed one's sense of place is varies from person to person and from place to place.

Donald Meinig and other contributing authors in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes* (1979), write that everyday scenes are illuminating windows into the simple relationships between people and the landscape. How a place evolves is a combination of biological, environmental, cultural, and psychological influences. Through careful evaluations of a particular setting, meaning and purpose can be implied regarding how a culture functions and interacts with the environment (1979). Sequential landscape changes in the Crazy Mountains are therefore suggestive of larger main processes historically active in the region, and can provide valuable knowledge pertaining to the region's changing cultural and economic geography.

A number of researchers argue that certain places encourage higher levels of attachment and identity than other areas (Kaplan and Kaplan 1989). According to this view, sense of place is influenced by cultural and individualistic predispositions for particular environments. Studies using this argument suggest that natural environments with few human impacts permit psychological rejuvenation, thus generating a positive attachment to such places (Ulrich et al. 1991; Williams et al. 1992; Herzog et al. 2003). Expanding on this logic, Gundar Rudzitis argues areas with wilderness and scenic

amenities can create a more developed sense of place because of the closeness and interplay with nature (Rudzitis 1996). From this view, pristine environmental quality, clean air and water, wildlife, and open spaces such as the Crazy Mountains, promote a strong sense of place.

Research on the role of sense of place in resource management and land policymaking is still emerging. In one study by Jennifer Farnum and colleagues at the United States Department of Agriculture (2005), understanding individual sense of place values in a community can help identify key themes regarding the development of a particular setting. Identifying these main concerns and shared values can be useful in establishing a framework for future land management. In addition, by understanding how different people view and perceive the same landscape, future potential conflicts can be better anticipated, if not entirely avoided (Cheng and Daniels 2003).

Methods and Sources

This study reconstructs settlement patterns and land use histories for the Crazy Mountains between 1900 and 2000, dividing the century into three periods; 1900 to 1950, 1951 to 1980, and 1981 to 2000. Landscape change and land use patterns in the region are situated within this historical framework. In addition, particular patterns of landownership are discussed for three separate site areas located in the range. Much of the historical material for this research was gathered from local and regional archives, while fieldwork sought to supplement the work with personal interviews and photographs. Additionally, geographic information systems (GIS) applications and

software databases were used to illustrate and analyze dominant patterns of land use and property trends within the Crazy Mountain region.

I began my research by reconstructing landownership patterns for Site 1, 2, and 3 from 1900 to 2000. Tracing landownerships for individual parcels located in the areas to the original landholder involved looking up land titles at the Livingston and Big Timber County Clerk and Records offices. Land parcel purchases that transpired previous to 1970 are noted in logbooks and are categorized by year and by the grantor's surname. Once the year of purchase is known or the seller's name identified, it is possible to trace ownership back to the original grantee and the year of land certification. Land transactions that have occurred after 1970 are stored on microfilms and provide similar information. Lastly, cadastral data from the Natural Resources Information System (NRIS) and the General Land Office (GLO) database were helpful in supplying current landownership details and parcel information. Collectively, these resources produced a sequential record of landownership for each site.

Establishing land use patterns for the Crazy Mountains was an involved and lengthy process. I initially focused on the period from 1900 to 1950. An extensive literature review and historical research provided valuable background information and scholarly context for this era, particularly during the early 1900s. A number of facilities including the Montana Historical Society, the Crazy Mountain Museum, the Yellowstone Gateway Museum, and the Park County Library contained multitudes of documents regarding early land development in the Crazy Mountain region. In addition, Forest

Service offices in Big Timber, Livingston, and Bozeman provided land maps and agricultural records relevant to the Crazies.

The Renne Library at Montana State University was especially helpful in reconstructing the period from 1920 to 1950. In their Special Collections section, government records, livestock statistics, forest ranger logbooks, and family journals are housed. These documents provided important quantitative and qualitative data on early working landscapes in the Crazy Mountain region. Further supplementing this period of research were old newspaper stories from the *Livingston Enterprise*, *Billings Gazette*, and the *Big Timber Pioneer*, as well as early maps, photographs, and brochures all of which were stored in the library. These primary and secondary resources were important because they included detailed information at the local and county level.

Government census records were a significant contribution in establishing land use patterns from 1900 to 2000. In particular, the Census of Agriculture provided key aggregate data related to livestock figures, farm numbers, farmland values, and other ranching and farming statistics. The Census of Population was also used to measure changing demographics in the Crazy Mountain region. This census provided information on county employment and the number of workers employed by each industry. By examining records over succeeding decades, I was able to establish a chronological history for each major industry in Park and Sweet Grass counties.

Reconstructing land use patterns from 1950 to 2000 was made easier by the use of software databases and personal narratives. For instance, the Invasive Species Database is an interactive webpage that provides information on plant species in Montana. By

selecting a county, the database displays the name and distribution of both noxious weeds and exotic plants. The Bureau of Economic Analysis also has an online database. The user is able to collect individual employment statistics at a county or state level. The database can be queried by year, geographic area, or industry. Both of these online resources were helpful in gathering quantifiable data regarding land use change in the Crazy Mountain region.

The use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) was important in providing both visual and analytical support for this research. GIS software allows for the overlay of multiple data layers, thus illustrating the spatial and temporal coincidences between features. For Montana, data layers are primarily provided by the Natural Resources Information System (NRIS), and can be downloaded online. For this research, data layers included transportation routes, land use, hydrological features, aerial photographs and other major geographical land features.

GIS was also useful in analyzing the more quantifiable aspects of land use within the Crazy Mountain region. General land use classifications, property values, demographic information, well sites, and soils composition were examined using GIS applications. The GIS Analysis Extension tools allow a user to query for specific attributes and features on a particular geographic area. By defining locations in the Crazy Mountains, I was able to evaluate measurable changes in land use in the region.

Field observations and personal interviews provided the most recent information on landscape change in the Crazies. By visiting each study area, as well as many of the trailheads and campgrounds, I was able to assess current land use conditions. While I

was in the field, I noted the existing land use patterns, such as logging practices, agricultural operations, and livestock grazing. I also identified features indicative of historical land uses, such as clear-cuts, burned areas, and irrigation ditches. My fieldwork often validated information I had read or heard through local histories, personal narratives, and archival literature.

Speaking with local residents personalized the research and afforded an exclusive insight into the intimate relationship between people and the land. In total, thirty interviews were conducted using a snowball sampling technique. The snowball sampling method of interviewing relies on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects (Knowles 2008). The interview process began with participants I was both formally and informally acquainted with. At the conclusion of every interview, I asked respondents who else would be a useful contact to speak with. In this manner, I was able to compile a sample of local residents from a variety of backgrounds, professions, and interests. Although the snowball sampling technique is a nonprobability method, implying there is a degree of introduced bias with the sampling, it is a technique that effectively represents small group populations, such as in the Crazy Mountains (Weinberg 2002).

Approximately half of the interviews were conducted over the telephone, and half took place in person. Although five standard questions were asked of every participant, the answers were open-ended and unstructured. The intention of the questions was to probe for specific answers regarding individual perspectives and values of place. Each participant was asked the following questions: Why are you living in the region? What

makes the Crazy Mountains important to you? What issues do you view as significant in the region's management? What major processes do you believe are presently shaping the Crazies? What issues do you believe are important in the future development of the Crazies?

After transcribing each interview, I was able to inventory and analyze the responses according to each question. Consequently, a number of identifiable themes resurfaced regarding the changing cultural and environmental geography of the Crazy Mountain region. By further extrapolating these responses and themes, a working typology of landowners was established for the region. Understanding how different groups of people view the Crazy Mountains may help in the future management of the region's land and resources.

The organization of this research is structured around the twentieth century evolution of the Crazy Mountains. Chapter two begins with a brief description of the pre-1900 landscape and establishes the historical context for developments that take place after the turn of the century. In this chapter, the processes and influences that created the traditional ranching orientation of the Crazy Mountain region are discussed. Chapter three begins with 1950 and the beginning of the post-war, post-industrial era. This chapter examines the various forces that drove, enabled, and shaped the geography of rural mountainous settings between 1950 and 1980. Chapter four completes the twentieth century period and explores the arrival and effects of the New West. This chapter looks at the interplay between the Old and New West and how this relationship may be changing the region's evolving landscape. Chapter five discusses how local residents

view the Crazy Mountains and provides an intimate examination of common perceptions and shared values in the region. Finally, Chapter six includes site area updates from 2000 to 2008, as well as concluding thoughts on the landscape evolution of the Crazy Mountains.

LANDSCAPES OF THE OLD WEST, 1900-1950

The twentieth century brought unprecedented change to the Crazy Mountains. Technological innovations in industry and production opened the region to prospective settlers and enterprising capitalists. In the Crazies and other similar settings across the West, natural resources sparked initiatives in ranching, farming, logging and other extractive activities. From 1900 to 1950, these activities increasingly shaped and defined the region's evolving landscape. Over this time, patterns in land use and resource management reflected traditional geographies oriented around the region's extractive resources.

Pre-1900 Setting

During the late 1880s and 1890s, a number of cultural, economic, and political forces opened the West to large groups of settlers. With the systematic removal of the Native Americans largely complete, a new era of federal land disposal and Euro-American land ownership was introduced into the region. At this time, the government actively promoted the American West as a settlement frontier. Political efforts to encourage movement into the region led to a series of homesteading acts. These homesteading acts and other settlement legislation were instrumental in the private acquisition and settlement of western lands.

In 1862, the first Homestead Act was passed. This legislation made available 160-acre parcels of undeveloped land to settlers in exchange for their settlement and improvement of the property (Allin 1982; Jackson 1995). The Homestead Act of 1862

was particularly germane to the historical settlement of the Crazy Mountains. Under this legislation, more than 4,000 acres located immediately around the Crazies were granted to settlers by 1900 (General Land Office 2002). Many of these private parcels were situated in the southwest corner of the range where the region's first communities were beginning to develop.

The Desert Land Act also supported early settlement of the Crazy Mountain region. Passed in 1877, the Desert Land Act authorized the entry of a full section, 640 acres, at twenty-five cents per acre. If the land was successfully irrigated, full title could be obtained by the payment of an additional dollar per acre (Allin 1982). In the Crazies, no land titles were granted under the Desert Land Act until after 1900. Together however, the Homestead Act (1862) and the Desert Land Act (1877) would prove to be influential legislation in twentieth century settlement.

In addition, the natural geographic attributes of the Crazy Mountain region were conducive for settlement. The range was an island of moisture and a zone of concentrated resources for land proximate to the Shields and Upper Yellowstone valleys (Wyckoff and Dilsaver 1995). A reliable snowpack in the mountains supported early settlement efforts by providing water for irrigation and farm production. In addition, the region's heavily timbered forests provided the necessary wood for building homes, fences, and other residential structures. In 1873, the first home in Sweet Grass County was built by Horatio Gage near Duck Creek, in the southern end of the Crazy Mountains (Goosey 1940). Three years later, in 1876, Gage pioneered the region's first irrigation efforts by constructing an irrigation ditch at his homestead.

Miners were also interested in the Crazy Mountains. Located near the mineral-rich Little Belt Mountains and the Castle Mountains, miners assumed the Crazies would similarly yield high amounts of precious minerals and ores. A silver boom in the late 1860s and 1880s led to the establishment of nearby mining towns, such as Diamond City and Castle, and encouraged the first prospecting efforts in the Crazies (Tri-County Atlas 1903; History of Park County 1984) (Figure 7). As early as 1864, settlers began to search the region for gold, silver, and other valuable minerals, yet it was not until 1894 that any mining efforts met with success. That year, two brothers from Meagher County discovered small amounts of gold and copper in the northern Crazy Mountains (Tri-County Atlas 1903). Soon thereafter, a number of mining claims were developed in the southern half of the range, north of the town of Big Timber. Due to the geologic composition of the Crazies however, no significant discoveries have ever been made in



Figure 7. Early mining in Big Timber Canyon, circa: mid- 1890s. Source: Special Collections, Renne Library, Montana State University.

the area. Consequently, the range has historically been more important to settlers for stock-raising purposes and agricultural production than for mining.

In the early 1870s, ranchers began running cattle in the Musselshell Valley, located north of the Crazy Mountains. Soon after, in 1874, a rancher named Green Blakely brought cattle to the east side of the range, and in 1878, he went to Minnesota with the first herd of cattle ever shipped from Montana (Tri-County Atlas 1903; Sweet Grass County Records 1964). By 1877, cattle were being raised on the west side in the Shields Valley. At this time, sheep were also being introduced and by 1880, sheep surpassed cattle as the preferred type of livestock, a trend that would continue for decades to come. (Pioneer Society 1980). In Park County for example, between 1891 and 1900, the number of sheep increased by 10 percent each year, totaling over 127,000 animals by the turn of the century (Williams 1900). In Big Timber and the surrounding area, there were more than a million sheep by 1900, making it the fifth largest county in the state in terms of sheep population (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1900; Sweet Grass County Records 1964). By the close of the nineteenth century, sheep outnumbered cattle by more than six to one in the Crazy Mountain region.

During the late 1870s and early 1880s, the first communities were established around the Crazy Mountains (Figure 8). In 1877, the Norwegian community of Melville was created. Located fifteen miles east of the Crazy Mountains, Melville was primarily supported by the region's cattle and sheep industry. By 1900, the town contained over 200 people and was the second largest settlement on the east side (Tri-County Atlas 1903).

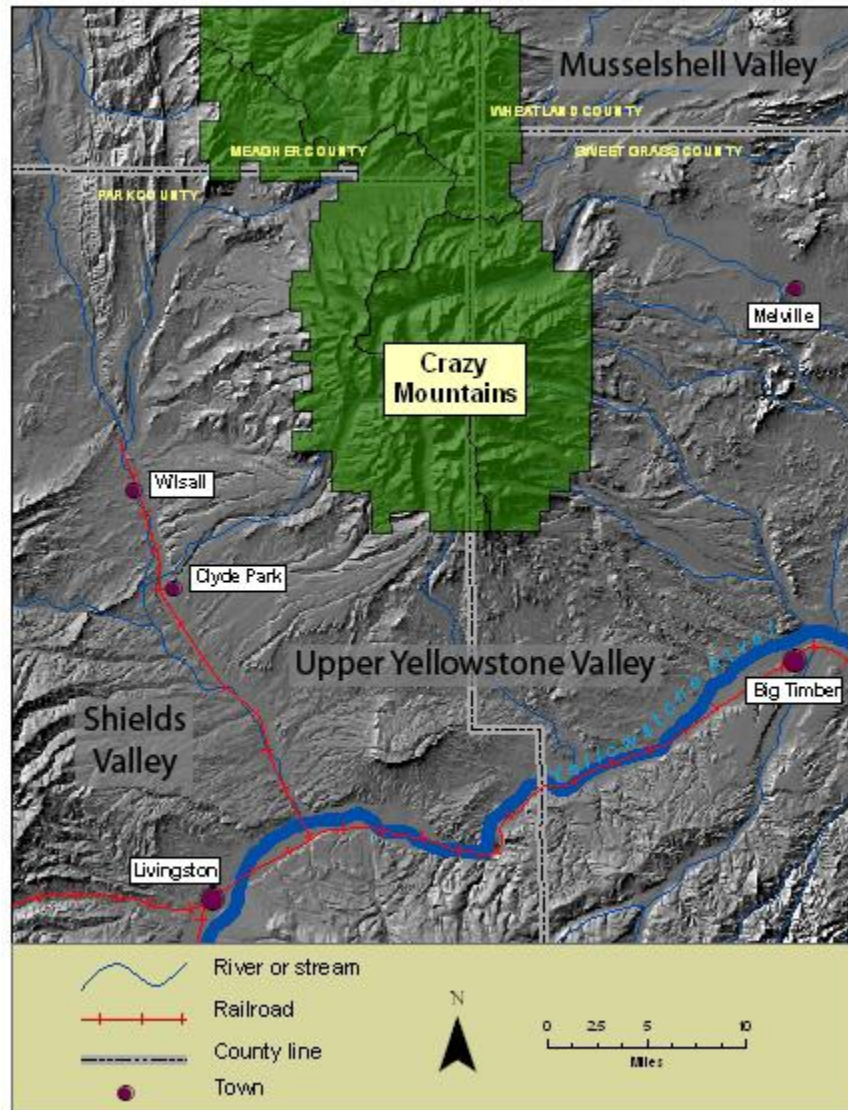


Figure 8. Map of early communities and main railroad lines, Crazy Mountain region, late 1870s-1910. Source: NRIS, 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

In 1882, the town of Dornix was established at the confluence of the Big Timber Creek and the Yellowstone River. Also situated on the east side of the Crazy Mountains, Dornix was built around a sawmill that produced lumber from logs transported nearly twenty miles by the Big Timber Creek (Taylor 1940). In 1883, the entire town of Dornix was moved a short distance uphill in order to accommodate a train depot for the Northern

Pacific Railroad. The new location, named Big Timber, became the region's largest agricultural center, specializing in the production and manufacturing of woolen goods (Sweet Grass County Records 1964) (Figure 9). Indeed, by 1895, Big Timber received and exported more than five million pounds of wool, making it the leading wool producer in the nation (Pioneer Society 1960). In the same year, Sweet Grass County was established with Big Timber as the county seat.

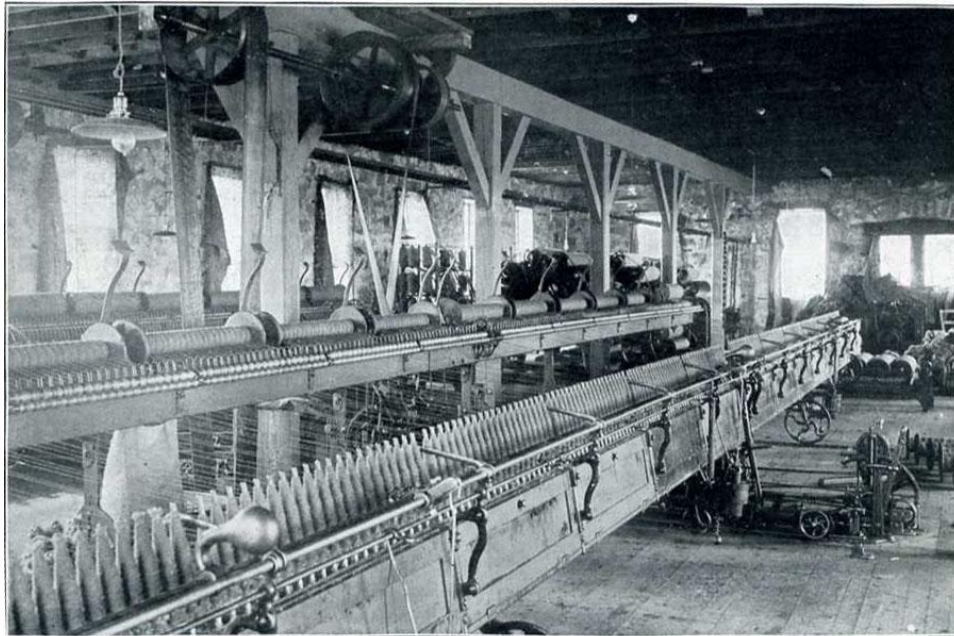


Figure 9. Big Timber woolen mills, Sweet Grass County, 1900. Source: Tri-County Atlas (1903).

Situated twenty-five miles southwest of the Crazy Mountains is Livingston. Founded in July of 1882, Livingston was originally named Clark City after Herman Clark, a well-known builder and contractor for the Northern Pacific Railroad. However, when construction of the Northern Pacific reached Clark City in November of 1883, the town was renamed Livingston after the director of the Northern Pacific (History of Park

County 1984) (Figure 10). In 1883, the railroad constructed a spur line connecting Livingston to Yellowstone National Park. As a result, the town of Livingston served as the main access point into Yellowstone National Park and developed early as a tourist destination.

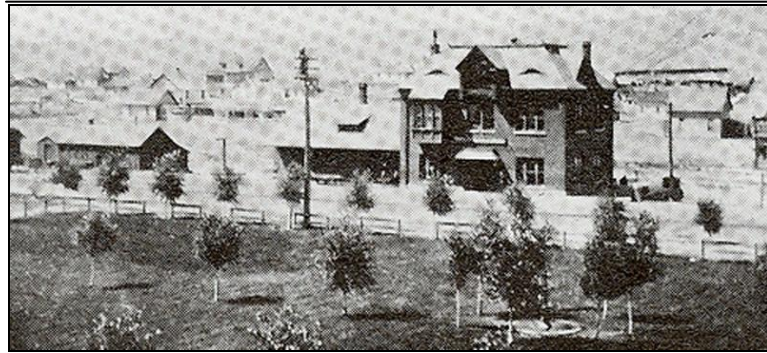


Figure 10. First Northern Pacific Railroad Depot, Livingston, 1898.
Source: History of Park County (1984).

Logging and mining were also important in the historical development of Livingston. As early as 1860, timbering efforts were reported in Mill Creek, south of town in the Paradise Valley. The discovery of gold nearby in 1864, and later coal in 1883, further fostered the growth of Livingston. By 1883, the town had a population of over 2,500 and hosted several manufacturing plants, numerous hotels, and over fifty small businesses (History of Park County 1984). With a population nearing 7,000, Livingston became the seat of Park County when it was created in 1889 (Figure 11).

The towns of Clyde Park and Wilsall were established in the Shields Valley, on the west side of the Crazy Mountains. Although the town site of Clyde Park was created in the early 1880s, the first community building was not constructed until 1901 (History of Park County 1984). For many residents in the Shields Valley, Clyde Park operated as

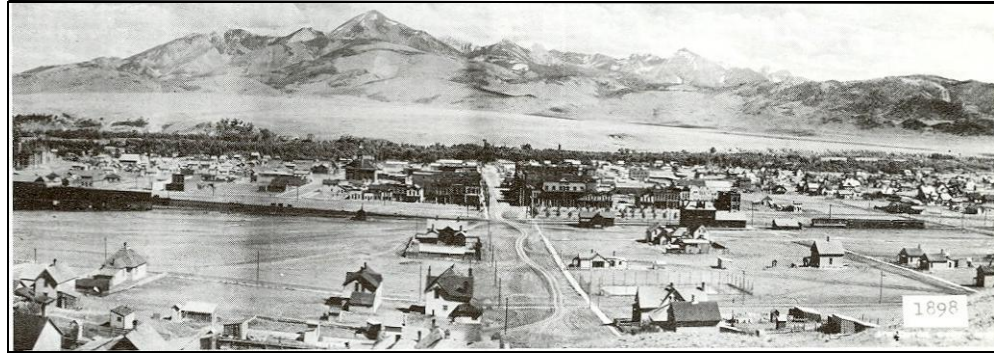


Figure 11. Early Livingston, 1898. Source: History of Park County (1984).

a shipping point for goods sent to the markets of Livingston and beyond. The production of wheat and other grains was particularly important in the early establishment of the town. Also known for its Clydesdale horses, Clyde Park was incorporated into Park County in 1912 (History of Park County 1984).

Located eight miles north of Clyde Park was Wilsall. Established around 1900, Wilsall was originally a settlement of five ranches situated near the head of the Shields River. The town was named after Will and Sally Jordan, whose father Walter Jordan owned the townsite the community was located on (History of Park County 1984; Railroads of Montana 2008). In the early 1900s, a saloon, post office, and a number of small homes were added to the community. In 1909, the Northern Pacific Railroad constructed a rail line connecting Wilsall to Livingston and the community began to gradually grow as a result (History of Park County 1984).

In addition to spurring regional development, the Northern Pacific Railroad was instrumental in promoting private land ownership in the Crazy Mountains. The Northern Pacific Railroad Land Grant (1864) yielded enormous amounts of land to the railroad,

collectively accounting for forty-seven million acres from Lake Superior to Puget Sound (Mickelson 1993). Granted in alternating square sections on each side of the track's right-of-way, the land grant was the largest of its kind in American history (Jensen and Draffan 1995). Lands that were not granted to the railroad remained in the public domain or were reserved for homesteading, thus creating a checkerboard pattern of private and public landownership (Figure 12). Of the forty-seven million acres granted to the railroad, seventeen million acres were in the Montana Territory. Consequently, by the end of the nineteenth century, the Northern Pacific Railroad was the largest and most influential private landholder in Montana (Malone and Roeder 1976).

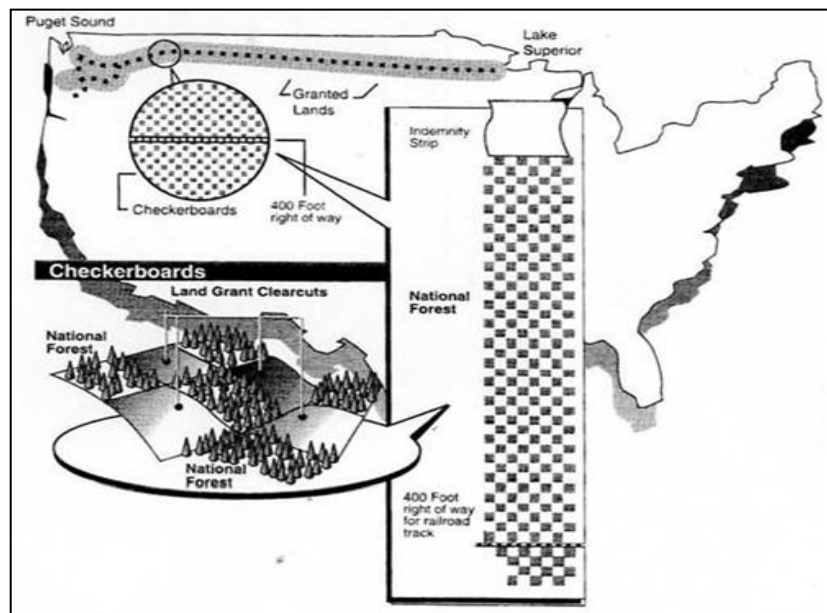


Figure 12. Checkerboard forest resulting from the Northern Pacific Land Grant. Source: Jensen and Draffan (1995).

Generally the Northern Pacific received alternating square sections within a forty-mile stretch of land north and south of the line. However, this statute applied to states

and not territories such as Montana, which was not awarded statehood until 1889. For territories, the Northern Pacific was able to double the right-of-way to an eighty-mile stretch, rather than the customary forty-miles allowed in states (Jensen and Draffan 1995). In this manner, 50,000 acres in the Crazy Mountains were granted to the Northern Pacific under the auspices of the Land Grant Act of 1864. As a result, by the time the railroad arrived in Livingston in 1883, the lands within the Crazy Mountains were already in the characteristic checkerboard pattern of private and public ownership (Figure 13). Although most of the land patents in the Crazy Mountains were not filed until after 1900, the positioning of railroad lands within the public domain was a pivotal feature in the early development of the region's legal landscape.

Exploration of the Crazy Mountains began with the preliminary surveys of nearby areas in southwestern Montana. In 1865, Walter DeLacey was the first white explorer to mention the Crazy Mountains in a geological report submitted to Congress. In a map published later that year, DeLacey refers to the range as the Belt Mountains. In 1870 and 1871, United States Geological surveyor Ferdinand Hayden mentions the Crazy Mountains in his survey of the Yellowstone Basin. In his report, Hayden writes, "...there is a beautiful group of conical peaks, 9,000 to 10,000 feet high, occupying an area of not more than fifteen miles square, called Crazy Woman Mountains; [the range] is entirely separate, and independent of any other, and surrounded by sedimentary formations which incline from their sides at various angles" (Shurtliff 1993) (Figure 14).

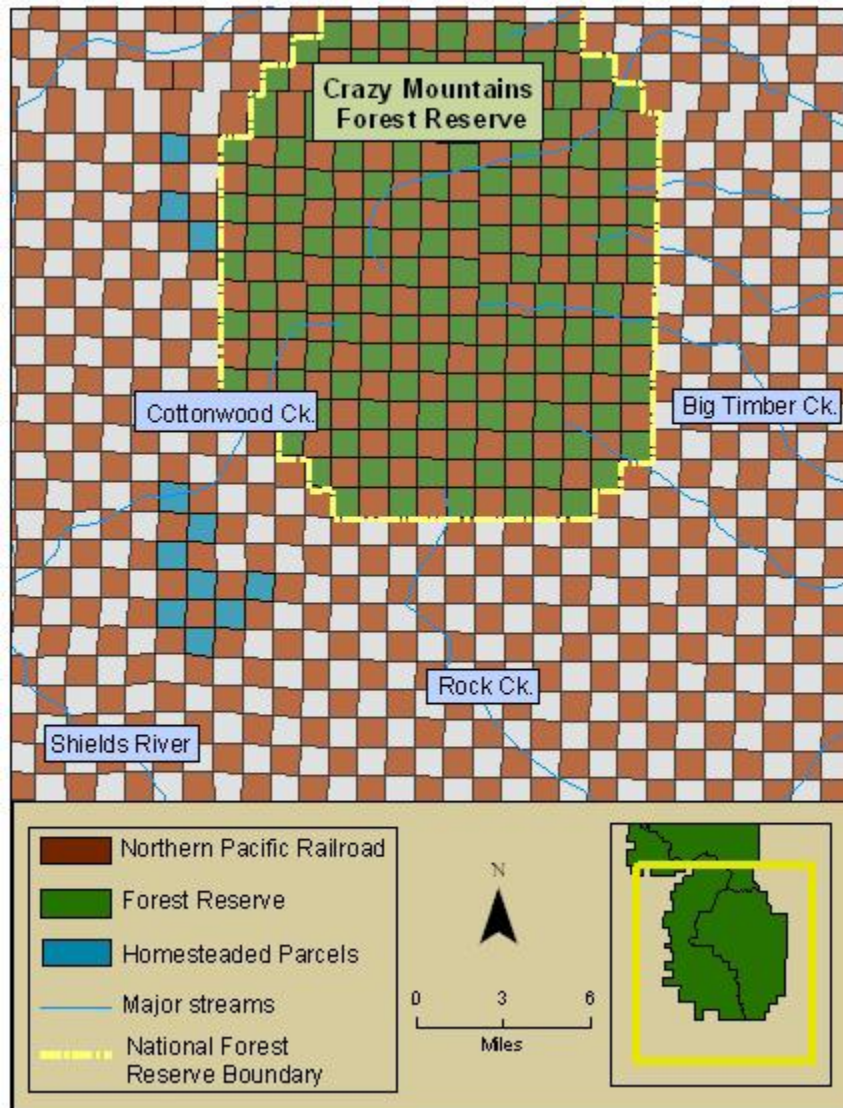


Figure 13. Distribution of early landownership, Crazy Mountains, 1900. Source: NRIS 2008; GLO 2002. Created by: Author (2008)

In 1873, the Crazy Mountains were surveyed into the rectangular land grid system (General Land Office 2002). However, the most extensive investigation of the region did not occur until 1883. That year, the northern transcontinental railroad survey included the Crazies in their evaluation of feasible railroad routes and future transportation

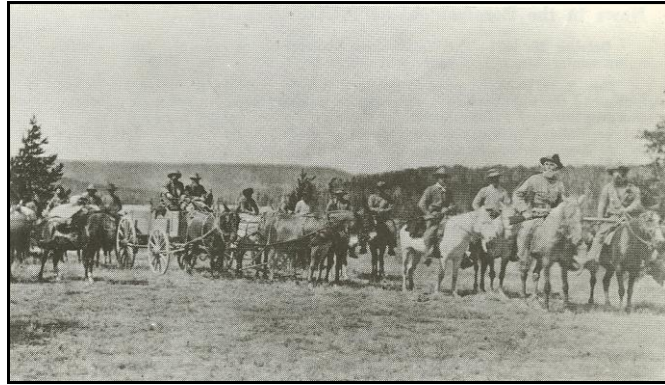


Figure 14. U.S. Geological survey party in Yellowstone National Park, 1878.
Source: Whithorne, B. (1969).

networks in the northwest region of the country (Nolan 1971; U.S. Dept. of Interior 2008a). The enormous undertaking was financed by the Northern Pacific and the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company and was directed to assess the development potential of the region through which the railroad received right-of-way privileges (Mickelson 1993). The team was additionally told to evaluate the regional resource base of the lands they were surveying. J.E. Wolff, one of the group's geologists, wrote about the Crazies, "They are one of the most interesting localities in the world...scenically I have never seen in such small compass, beautiful waterfalls and cascades and peaks" (Meloy 1986, 100). Fellow geologist Ranney Lyman added, "The preeminent feature of this ruggedness is Crazy Peak...The birdseye panorama was of surprising grandeur. Billowy clouds floated over the landscape; the changing lights and shadows emphasized the rugged detail of the rough terrain, and alternately concealed and exposed in flashing brilliance, the many lakes like deep set gems" (Meloy 1986, 101) (Figure 15).

In 1891, Congress formally recognized the resource value of the nation's timbered lands by passing the Forest Reserve Act. This legislation authorized the President to set



Figure 15. Sweet Grass Drainage, Crazy Mountains, circa: early 1900s.
Source: Special Collections, Renne Library, Montana State University.

aside forest reserves from the unreserved public domain, nominally closing these lands to both settlers and resource use. That year, the Crazy Mountains and other forested areas in Montana were incorporated into the forest reserve system. Historian William Rowley (1985) argues that the Forest Reserve Act was a major legislative breakthrough as it was one of the first steps in government intervention in the control of western lands and resources. Essentially reversing a longstanding policy of liberal land disposal in the region, the act established the government's role as perpetual landowner of the West's prime forestlands. Furthermore, the act legally acknowledged the importance of the Crazy Mountains and other forest reserves as principal resources in the country's expansion and development in the West.

Broader Context of Settlement, 1900-1950

The first two decades of the twentieth century were some of Montana's most dramatic years of settlement. During the early 1900s, a mammoth promotional campaign for the West was underway (Malone and Roeder 1976; Athearn 1986; Wyckoff and Nash 1994). Orchestrated by politicians, town boosters, and business interests, promotional efforts praised the agricultural and natural resource potential of the region. In addition, the railroad companies were particularly influential in the marketing of the West. Railroads in the region, such as the Northern Pacific and the Great Northern, nurtured the course of the western settlement campaign by producing leaflets, brochures, and other advertisements emphasizing the development viability of the region. Furthermore, by making the West and its inclusive settings appear more accessible to people, the railroad companies opened the region's vast and largely uninhabited terrain to settlement (Mickelson 1993).

The availability of large, unoccupied tracts of land encouraged growth in the American West (Malone and Roeder 1976). The first attempt by Congress to endorse movement into the region had been in the form of the Homestead Act of 1862. Federal officials soon realized however, that the 160-acre, quarter sections of land were insufficient for even small working farms and ranches, particularly in the West. Consequently, the Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909 and the Stock Raising Act of 1916 increased the maximum acreage of allotted lands to 320 and 640 acres respectively. Even then, 640 acres was rarely enough to satisfy the requirements of western ranching and farming. In total, nearly thirty two million acres of land in Montana passed from the

public to private sector under the Homestead Acts of 1862, 1909, and 1916 (Malone and Roeder 1976). In the Crazy Mountain region, over 27,000 acres were granted to settlers under various pieces of homesteading legislation (General Land Office 2002).

By 1910, a majority of the private landholdings in and around the Crazies were claimed by either the Northern Pacific Railroad or by homesteaders. By 1884, the Northern Pacific had been officially granted all of their lands within the mountains, however the first land patents for these parcels were not filed until after 1895. Most of the land patents received by the Northern Pacific in the Crazy Mountains were secured between 1910 and 1920, though some were filed as late as the 1930s (General Land Office 2002). Generally, the railroad owned the sections for a brief period, sometimes less than one year, before selling them to individual investors, private banking companies, and homesteaders.

Coinciding with the Northern Pacific's first land patents in the late 1890s, were the first real estate transactions between the railroad company and private individuals. Beginning in May of 1893, railroad sections in the Upper Yellowstone region, including the Crazy Mountains, went for sale for \$1 to \$10 per acre (History of Park County 1984; Haggerty 2005). Thereafter, sales steadily increased through the late 1890s and peaked between 1910 and 1920. By 1940, the Northern Pacific had sold all of its landholdings in and around the Crazies to private individuals or investment firms (General Land Office 2002; Park County 2007). The course of the Northern Pacific's land sales in the Crazy Mountains reflected the general decline in railroad ownership across the state. Overall, railroad lands in Montana accounted for over thirteen million acres in 1900, but by 1917,

only three million acres of the lands remained under railroad control (Malone and Roeder 1976, 238).

Other factors encouraged settlement in Montana during the early twentieth century. During this period, ample rainfall created favorable conditions for agriculture across the region. In addition, from 1874 to the early 1890s, above average wheat prices offered farmers a high return and stable agricultural markets. Despite a brief lull during the late 1890s, wheat prices increased during the early 1900s and peaked in 1919, when the average yearly selling price of wheat was \$2.34 per bushel (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1978). Consequently, state and local agricultural industries expanded and became more effectively incorporated into larger systems of supply and demand.

Finally, the development of regional irrigation projects permitted the settlement of peripheral lands around the Crazy Mountains. Reflecting the optimism of the region's irrigation potential, an 1898 government promotion announced in the *Big Timber Express*, "There is still an abundance of government land open for settlement and railroad land can be bought at a very low rate. Irrigation schemes of large proportions are under consideration and these will open for settlement many thousands of acres of choice lands" (Taylor 1940). By the early 1900s, Big Timber residents had established the Sweet Grass Canal and Reservoir Company, a mutual operation maintained by landowners and responsible for irrigating 4,000 acres around the community (Harris and Cross 1912). According to early records, over 25,000 acres were irrigated by water supplied from nearby creeks coming from the Crazy Mountains (Sweet Grass County

Records 1964). By 1920, Big Timber residents had built an extensive gravity flow system for the surrounding area's agricultural lands.

Large tracts of available land, high wheat prices, fortuitous weather, and new irrigation techniques collectively transformed southwest Montana and helped to open the region to rapid settlement. Similar to other settings in the West, Montana experienced its homestead boom in the early decades of the twentieth century. Prior to 1900, fewer than 7,000 homesteads were filed in the state (U.S. Dept of Interior 1962). Between 1900 and 1910 the number of homesteads filed increased to 14,412 and between 1910 and 1920 the number escalated to 86,581 (U.S. Dept of Interior 1962). The peak of Montana's homesteading boom was in 1917, with nearly fifteen thousand homestead claims filed within that year (Figure 16). The state's population topped out at 770,000, the highest it would be for decades to come.

Likewise, the early 1900s was a period of rapid growth for the region around the Crazy Mountains. Mirroring trends throughout the West, white settlement in the valleys and foothills of the Crazies increased greatly after 1900. Between 1900 and 1910, Park County's population grew from 7,341 to 10,731. During the same period, Sweet Grass County's population increased from 3,086 to 4,092 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1990). In turn, farmland values for Sweet Grass County increased by 24 percent between 1900 and 1910 (Sweet Grass County Records 1964). By 1920, Park County had 11,330 people and Sweet Grass County's population reached nearly 5,000 people, the highest it would be for the remainder of the century (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1930).

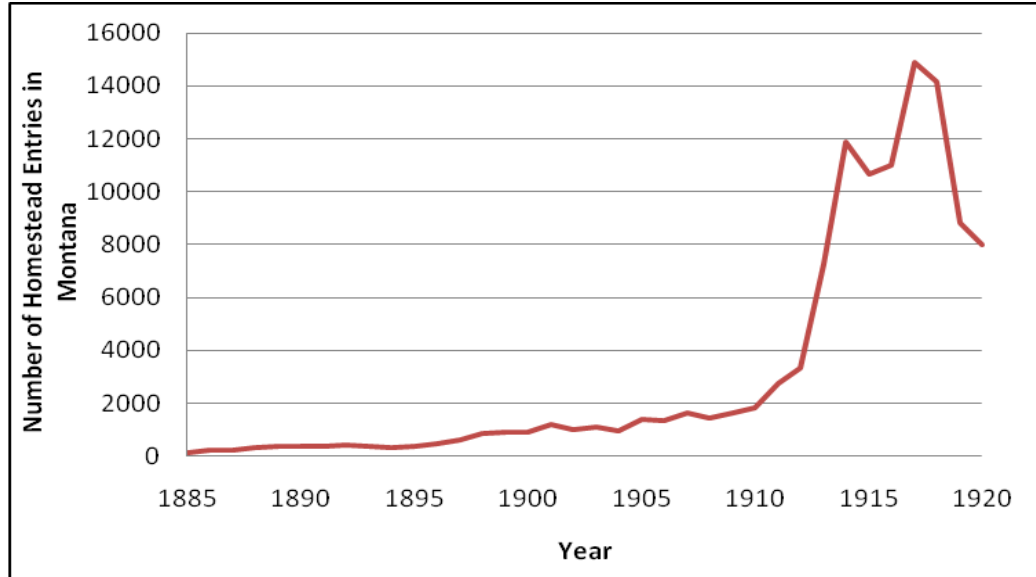


Figure 16. Homestead entries in Montana, 1885-1920. Source: U.S. Department of Interior. Bureau of Land Management (1962).

The Crazy Mountains were an important resource for the region's expanding population. Like many timbered areas in Montana, the Crazy Mountains were federally protected as a Forest Reserve in 1891. In 1905, the National Forest Service was established and administration of the forest reserves was transferred from the General Land Office to the Bureau of Forestry within the Department of Agriculture. One year later, President Roosevelt established the Crazy Mountains National Forest, and administration of the range was incorporated into the larger Absaroka National Forest (Shurtliff 1993). Later, in 1945, the Absaroka National Forest was absorbed by the Gallatin National Forest. At this time, the Crazy Mountains were separated into two national forests, the northern portion was transferred to the Lewis and Clark National Forest and the southern portion was included in the Gallatin National Forest. Uniform protection of the Crazies as public lands was problematic however, due to the railroad

lands and other private landholdings existent within national forest boundaries. National forest designation included only the non-private sections within the range. Consequently, resource management of the Crazy Mountains was complicated by alternating landownerships and the transboundary nature of some early land use practices.

Logging marked one of the first visible effects of settlement and resource extraction in the Crazy Mountains. Following failed efforts to find minerals in the range during the late 1800s, many prospective settlers turned to the lumber industry for income. Improvements in transportation routes and the existence of a railroad depot in Big Timber encouraged the first logging efforts on the east side of the Crazies in the early 1880s (Sweet Grass County Records 1964) (Figure 17). At this time, a number of sawmills were constructed in the region that produced logs for fencing, posts, ranching structures, and railroad ties. However, steep terrain and limited water resources, particularly on the west side of the range, often hindered many early logging efforts (Avey 2007). Consequently, the Sweet Grass and Big Timber Creek sawmills, constructed in 1881 and 1888, were the primary log producers in the region (Pioneer Society 1960; Sweet Grass County Records 1964).

Forest management policies in the Crazy Mountains initially favored liberal use of the region's timber reserve. During the early 1900s, a person could pay 75 cents for every thousand logs taken from the mountains, with no limitations on the number of logs harvested (Harris and Cross 1912). Railroad companies and land investors viewed such a policy as an economic opportunity. For example, in a 1912 real estate promotion by the

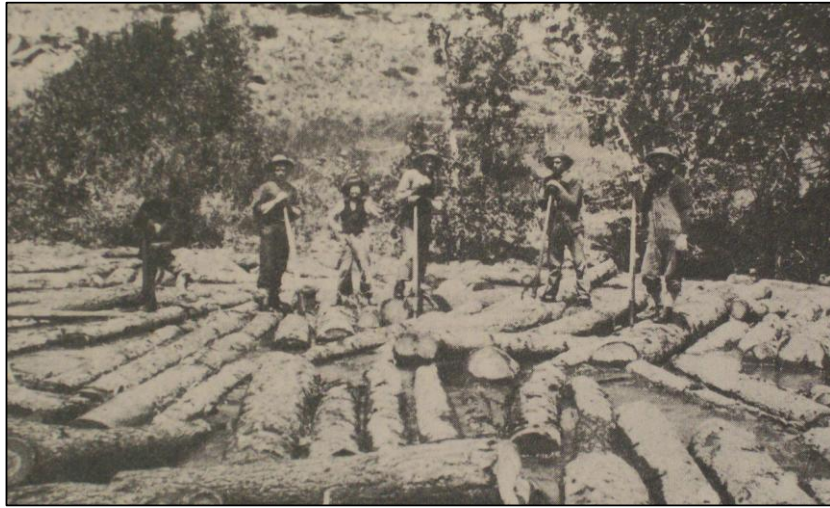


Figure 17. Logging in the Sweet Grass Drainage, 1909. Source: Pioneer Memories (1964).

Minneapolis Trust Company, an investment firm, the Crazy Mountains were marketed for their timber resources:

These [Crazy] mountains are embraced in a national forest reserve. They are heavily timbered with fir, pine, and spruce. Sawmills furnish lumber from the reserve at very reasonable prices.

(Harris and Cross, A Sacrifice Sale of Valuable Lands, 1912)

However, logging in the Crazy Mountains was more difficult than the real estate promotions often articulated. Although transportation of the logs was made easier once the lumber reached the sawmills, retrieving the logs from the interior of the mountains was very challenging. Steep canyons, narrow valleys and other geographical features repeatedly frustrated productive logging efforts. Consequently, most of the timber during this period was harvested from the periphery of the forests where it could be easily removed (Avey 2007). Not until after 1950, when technologies made it possible, would the interior of the Crazies be logged, and even these harvests remained minimal.

In lieu of the relative lack of minerals and timber, other geographic attributes of the Crazy Mountains were promoted by federal officials and real estate developers in the early 1900s. In particular, the year-round moisture supply was endorsed in marketing promotions. In 1906, a local Montana newspaper article states:

The lumber operations on the [Crazy Mountains] are not extensive, and the mills are not large. Since only the larger trees are taken, lumbering would be beneficial if forest fires did not almost invariably follow. There are no mines of importance, and the timber is used for ties, fuel and ranch buildings. The greatest importance of the forest then is as a protective cover to conserve the heavy snow and rainfall since the Crazy Mountains form a natural water supply for a growing and prosperous farming country in the foothill region around them.

(The Butte Miner, 1906)

Montana's open range and largely unoccupied lands created opportunities in livestock ranching. Between 1900 and 1950, broad shifts in the agriculture sector were reflected in the state's changing sheep and cattle industry. For instance, demand for sheep products steadily increased from 1912 to 1920, and reached peak levels from 1918 through 1920; a sheep valued in Montana at \$3.90 in 1908 was worth \$12.60 in 1918 (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1978) (Figure 18). However, during the 1920s and 1930s, a changing economy favored cattle products over sheep and wool products. By 1933, the value of sheep had plummeted to \$3 per head. Wool prices in turn, reflected sheep values, falling from fifty-seven cents per pound in 1918 and 1919 to barely ten cents per pound in 1932 (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1978). Although the cattle market had experienced similar fluctuations, demand for beef products was consistently higher.

Consequently, the overall number of sheep in Montana fell from over five million in 1910, to roughly 1.5 million in 1950.

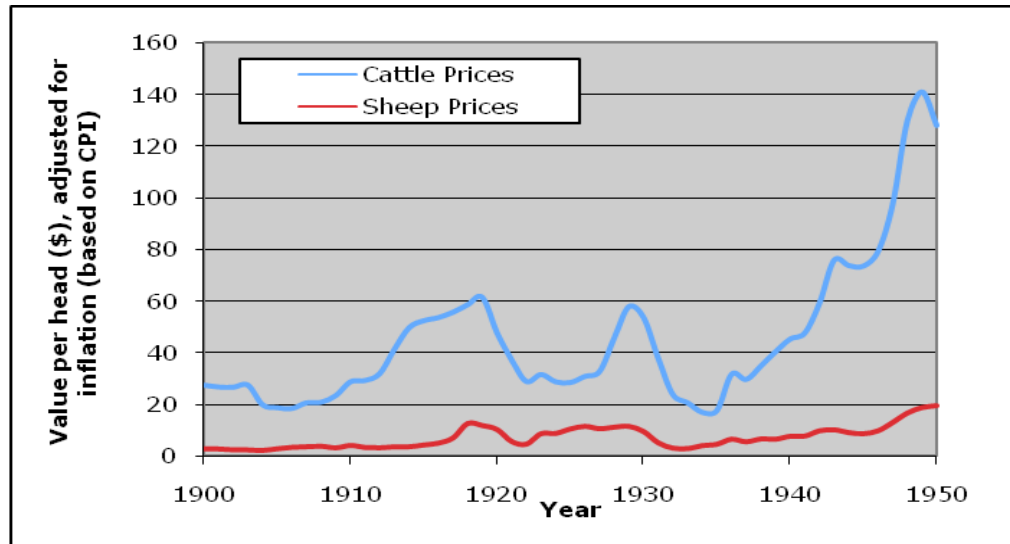


Figure 18. Relative value of cattle and sheep prices, per head, 1900-1950. Source: U.S. Agricultural Census (1978)

Livestock figures in the Crazy Mountain region similarly adjusted to changes in the agriculture industry. In 1900, Park County reported more than 127,000 sheep and 19,700 cattle in the county (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1900). By 1920, the sheep population had decreased to approximately 82,000, and the cattle population had risen to more than 25,500. Between 1940 and 1950, cattle numbers surpassed sheep numbers and by 1950, Park County reported only 30,800 sheep and nearly 39,000 cattle (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1930; 1950) (Figure 19).

Early livestock trends in Sweet Grass County also traditionally favored sheep over cattle. Indeed, Big Timber and the surrounding area had some of the highest sheep

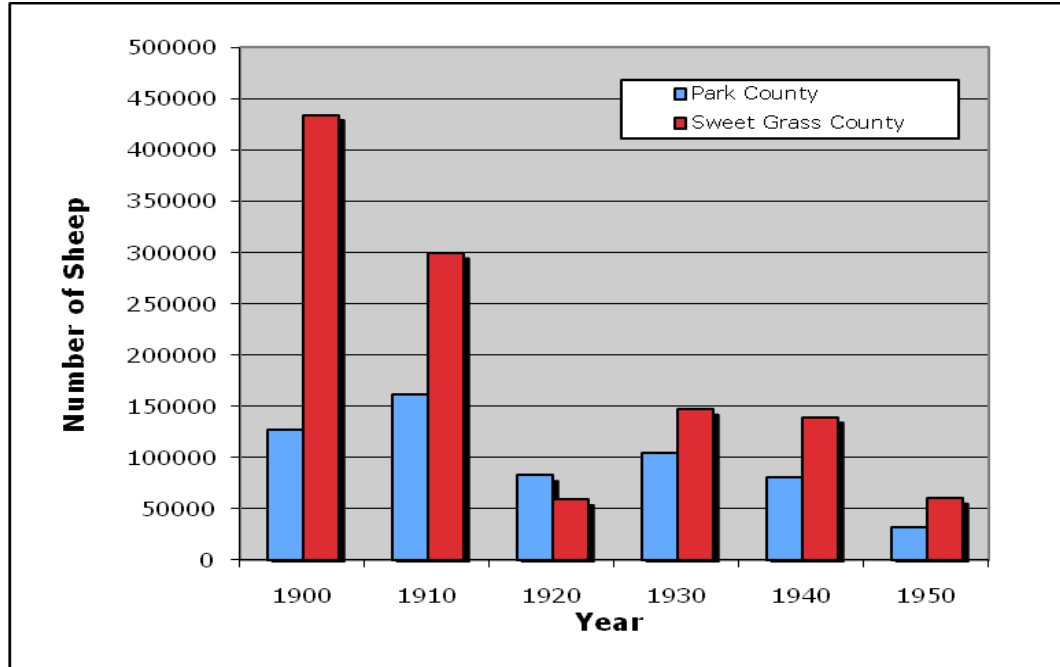


Figure 19. Sheep Population for Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-1950. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, County-Level Series.

populations in the state, with nearly 434,000 reported in 1900 (Sweet Grass County Records 1964; U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1900). The average ranch in Sweet Grass County contained 500 to 1000 sheep, with larger ranches owning up to 8,000 sheep at any one time (Harris and Cross 1912; Taylor 1940). Throughout much of the early 1900s therefore, sheep numbers were consistently higher than cattle numbers in Sweet Grass County. After 1920 however, there was a dramatic decline in the region's sheep population and by 1930, Sweet Grass County only reported 146,600 sheep and 25,000 cattle. By 1950, there was less than 60,000 sheep and close to 37,000 cattle in Sweet Grass County (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1920; 1930; 1950) (Figure 20).

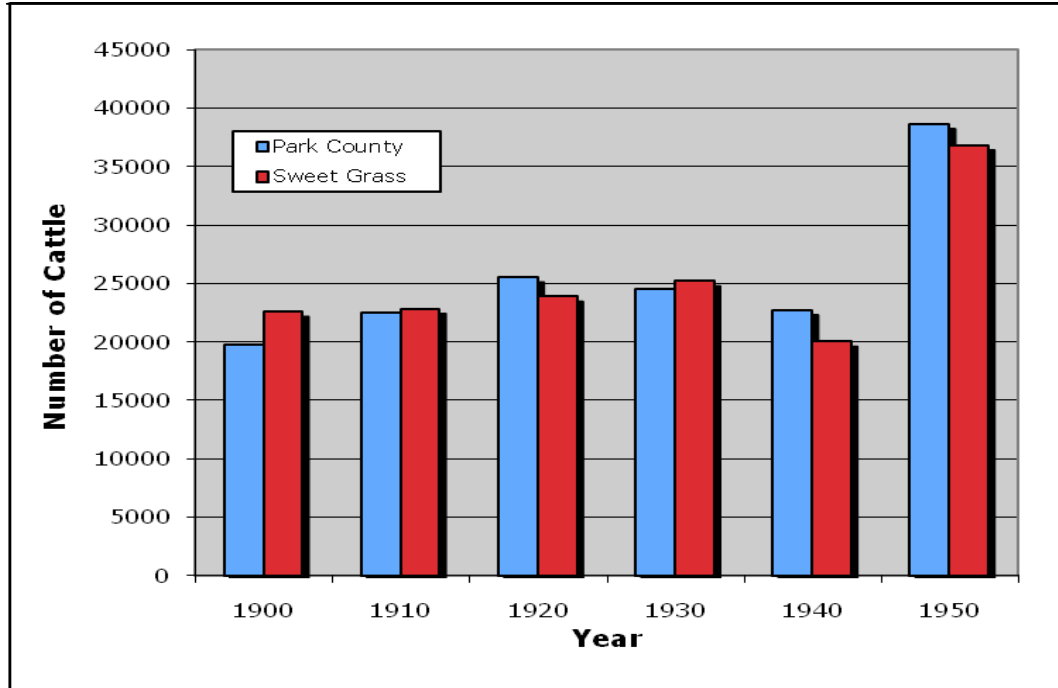


Figure 20. Cattle Population for Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-1950. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, County-Level Series.

Very quickly, the rangelands of the West began to visibly reflect the effects of sheep and cattle grazing. Geographer Paul Starrs notes, all over the West, livestock besieged the rangelands with “unparalleled rapine voraciousness” (1998, 21), leaving a dramatic signature on the landscape. Although the open range was advantageous for many ranchers and farmers, a system of unregulated grazing was unsustainable because it overlooked critical environmental and climatic factors (Fletcher 1960; Haggerty 2005). The dewatering of streams, enabling the spread of invasive species, and the rampant defoliation of grasslands were among the many deleterious impacts livestock overgrazing had on rangeland ecosystems (Donahue 1999).

The depletion of grasslands by overgrazing erased many favorable notions of the open range. By the close of the nineteenth century, many feared that a system of free

access threatened the survival of rangeland resources and the health of the nation's forest reserves (Rowley 1985). However, it would take time before aggressive federal regulatory grazing procedures were implemented. Due to the depletion of surrounding rangeland and lack of alternative grazing grounds, federal officials continued to favor, and even encourage stockmen to use public lands such as the national forest reserves. Moreover, most forest reserves were important grazing grounds during the summer months, when the cooler temperatures of higher elevations were a relief for both ranchers and livestock (Rowley 1985). For some ranchers, the summer range largely determined the health and productivity of their herds (Barnes 1913). In view of this, federal officials were initially reluctant to enforce grazing controls in the nation's forested rangelands.

In the early 1900s, federal concerns over the conditions of forest rangelands gained momentum. In 1901, Chief Forester Gifford Pinchot regarded grazing as one of the most important problems in the management of public lands (Rowley 1985). In response, the government implemented a permit system in 1902, restricting livestock access on forest reserves. Preference was given to nearby landowners, followed by longtime users, and lastly to itinerant land herders. Outlined in a book authored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1905 entitled, *Use of the National Forest Reserves*, the objective of grazing regulations was to protect both the settler and the land through proper care and improvement of the reserves (1905; Rowley 1985). One year later, after administration of the forest reserves had been transferred to the Forest Service, the first federal grazing fees were imposed (Starrs 1998). In addition to requiring a permit, the grazing fee program enforced a payment of \$.05 per animal unit month (AUM). An

AUM was measured as one cow or horse or five sheep or goats, amounting to about 800 pounds of grass per month (Wilkinson 1992b).

The enforcement of a federal grazing system was a way for the government to strengthen its authority over the public domain. In 1934, the Taylor Grazing Act was passed, further defining the regulatory role of the U.S. Department of the Interior in the management of western rangelands. On all unreserved federal lands, the act authorized the government to create grazing districts, formulate rules and regulations to restore the ranges, set grazing seasons, authorize range improvements, and to continue charging fees for grazing privileges (Knight 2002, 125). Although the Taylor Grazing Act intended to be a compromise between the needs of western stockmen and the federal government, many ranchers in the region opposed developing restrictions on public lands.

Representing the concerns of local ranchers were regional stockgrowers' associations. For example, the Montana Wool Growers Association became a leading advocate of rancher's rights in the face of mounting public concern. According to many members of the association, public interests and government concerns over the welfare of public lands often came into direct conflict with the needs and purposes of stock-raising efforts. In 1937, at the association's annual meeting in Billings, opening statements by member Glen Smith blamed the increasing frustrations over grazing permits on an ineffectual government administration. According to Smith, "the problems with the National Forest Service of today are so wide and varied that a full grasp of them can only be had by a detailed study of [their] social and economic influence" (Smith 1937).

Other interest groups were cited by the Wool Growers Association for their participation in controlling use of public lands. In 1940, an article published in the organization's monthly newsletter argues, "Today, as never before, it is imperative that the stockman take cool cognizance of what is happening... Since the formation two years ago of the National Wild Life Federation, there has been a sharp revival of the anti-livestock sentiment" (Fitzgerald 1940, 1). The article further cautions, "Cut out national forest summer grazing and the housewife will [have to] pay more...to stop summer livestock grazing on the forests would be almost a death blow to a big and vital industry" (1940, 8).

Annual meetings for the Sweet Grass County Wool Growers Association similarly focused on grazing policies though often with less opposition than statewide functions. These local gatherings provided an opportunity for members to discuss developments in the agricultural sector and to become more informed about recent administrative policies (Wool Growers Association 1937; 1938; 1940). The meetings often included various speakers, such as Forest Service officials and other government employees who addressed the various functions and revisions in public land management. Although many association members were opposed to "policies removing stock from national forests and other public lands," other members were willing to cooperate with government procedures that they viewed appropriate in the sustained use of rangelands (1940, 4).

Like many other forest reserves at the time, grazing management of the Crazy Mountains was restructured with the establishment of the Forest Service in 1905. Revising the system of free grazing access was a priority for the new agency. Consequently, new management controls dictated when, where, class of livestock and how many livestock could be in the mountains at one time, thus reversing a traditional trend of unregulated use. In 1906, an article publicizing the creation of the Crazy Mountain National Forest reaffirmed the government's administrative intentions:

Within the limits of the reserve sheep grazing is the most important industry...it [grazing] will be the largest problem with which the administration of the new reserve will have to deal. Perhaps one hundred thousand sheep are ranged there ...and possibly five thousand cattle. The rough cooperation of stock owners there will be definitely established and thoroughly understood regulations as to the duration of the grazing season, distribution of stock and number grazed will be made...there will be government control of the range, assuring both sheep and cattlemen in well defined rights.

(The Butte Miner, August 19, 1906)

Controlling livestock grazing in the Crazy Mountains was complicated by the region's physical and political landscape. The alternating pattern of public and private landownership as well as the relatively small size of the range influenced the size and distribution of the grazing allotments. Twenty allotments were proposed for the Crazy Mountains (Figure 21). The allotments allowed both cattle and sheep to graze on private and public lands (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005) (Figure 22). At first, the allotments were unfenced, thus permitting livestock to freely roam between national forest lands and private property. Consequently, controlling livestock numbers on the allotments was hindered by the absence of fence lines demarcating landownership. Although officials

could impose a carrying capacity on the forest reserves, they were not able to limit livestock numbers on private lands.

In the Crazy Mountains, and other national forests, the checkerboard distribution of private and public lands required innovative grazing management policies. What the Forest Service developed became known as Term On/Off allotments. This type of

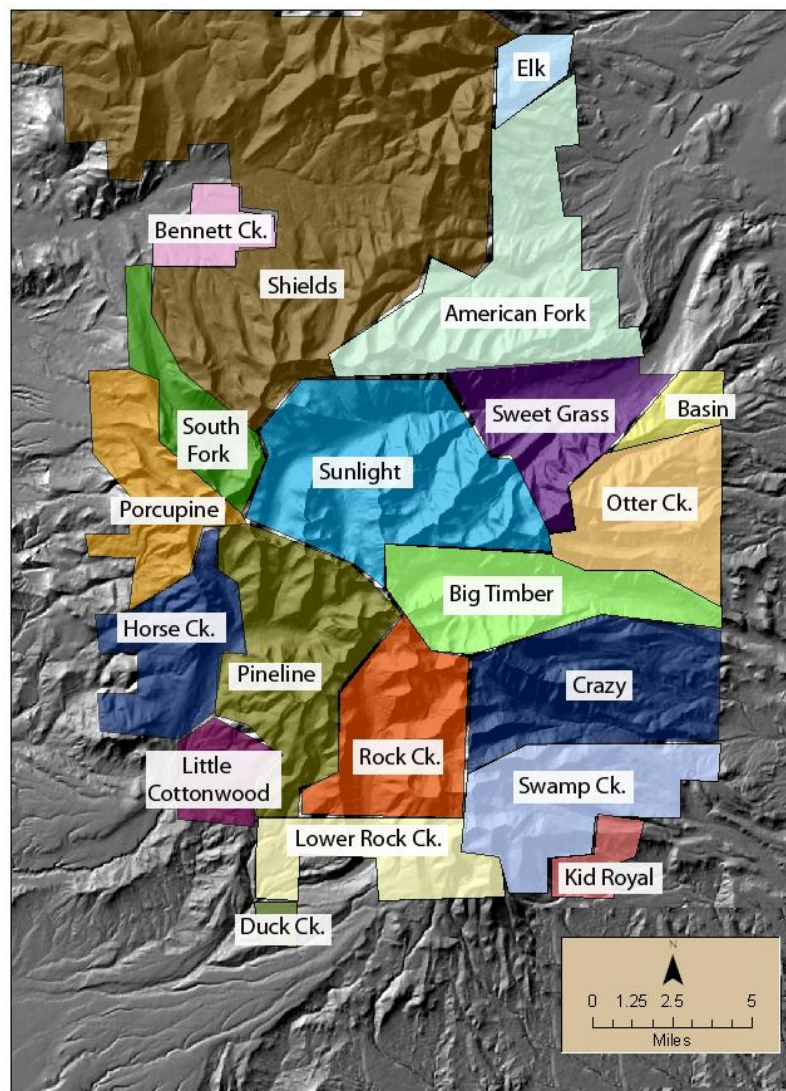


Figure 21. Distribution of federal grazing allotments, 1950. Source: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, 2007. Created by: Author (2008).

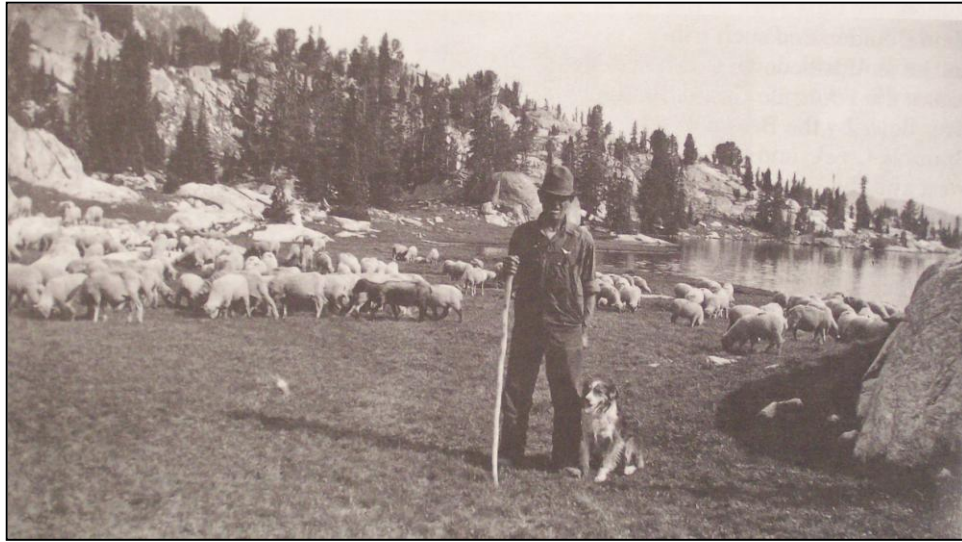


Figure 22. Sheep herder in Big Timber Canyon, Big Timber Allotment, circa 1930s. Source: Crazy Mountain Museum, 1930.

allotment system contained grazing districts comprised of both national forest lands and private property. In order to make a logical grazing unit, the public land is combined with other isolated ownership units to make up a single allotment. The privately owned portion of the allotment is called the “off” land because livestock are “off” national forest land (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005). Although the Forest Service administers grazing only on the public (“on”) lands, the grazing capacity of the “off” lands is subject to review by federal officials. Furthermore, by defining the season of use, combined grazing area (for both “on” and “off” lands), and the overall carrying capacity federal officials were able to control grazing throughout the allotment (Ruffling 2005).

In addition to other specifications on the allotment, the Forest Service determined what type of livestock was permitted in the area. Over time, grazing allotments in the Crazy Mountains gradually restricted use to cattle only. Although each allotment originally supported both sheep and cattle, by the 1920s, the Forest Service increased

cattle numbers at the expense of sheep numbers. In the late 1930s and 1940s, cattle had nearly replaced sheep altogether, and by 1950, almost all of the allotments in the Crazies were cattle-use only. For example, during the early 1900s, the Smith Creek Allotment originally supported twenty thousand sheep for a sixty-day period. However, by 1950, the carrying capacity had been reduced to four thousand head and soon thereafter, no sheep were permitted within the allotment (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b).

Despite public opposition to destructive rangeland practices, it was the presence of the ranching culture that increasingly attracted outside interest. Tourism in the West rapidly gained momentum throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Many visitors were drawn both to the agrarian landscape as well as to the region's scenic amenities. During the early 1920s, the dude ranch emerged as a unique union between tourism and ranching. Described by Paul Starrs as "characteristically American," the dude ranch was a way for guests to "recognize a way of life distinctly different from their own" (1998, 151). Dude ranches varied according to the activities offered, accommodations provided, and duration of stay. Whereas some establishments specialized in cattle drives, others included horseback riding, cattle branding, and other ranching duties.

Collectively, dude ranches promoted what Starrs and others have referred to as "ranch fundamentalism" (Smith and Martin 1972; Starrs 1998, 76). Ranch fundamentalism is a shared attitude among traditional and dude ranchers stressing the rural ideals of ranching culture. Ranch fundamentalism broadly encompasses the simplicity and non-economic gains of working intimately with the land. For many

guests, life on the dude ranch was an enjoyable respite to the bustle of urban society and a way to reconnect with nature and the outdoors. Furthermore, dude ranching diversified the economic resource base of rural communities. With dude ranching, Mountainous West localities were valued beyond their commercial extractive resources as places to recreate and play. Consequently, western dude ranches merged the traditional and agricultural base of an area with its tourism and recreational potential.

Dude ranches also gained from broader campaigns promoting the American West. During the years before and leading up to the World War I, marketing efforts dramatically influenced and reinforced common cultural perceptions of the country's western landscapes. Primitive and remote mountainous settings, such as Montana, were commonly promoted as quiet restorative sanctuaries (Worster 1991; Wyckoff and Dilsaver 1995). By spending time in the rural West, one could be removed from the burdens and responsibilities of a larger overcivilized society.

Particularly influential in the marketing process of the American West were the railroads (Figure 23). As Margueritte Shaffer states, "tracing the evolution of the railroad promotional campaign exposes a larger dialogue concerning national identity and national unity that centered on the role and image of the West" (Shaffer 1998). What resulted from the zealous promotional efforts of the railroads was a repackaging of a reimagined West. The West, especially its mountainous locations, became fabricated settings where one could encounter wilderness, Indians, and cowboys from the leisure afforded by modernity (Hyde 1993; Wyckoff and Nash 1994). The mythic imagery of

the West has been a reoccurring theme throughout the region's settlement history and plays a continuing role in its development.

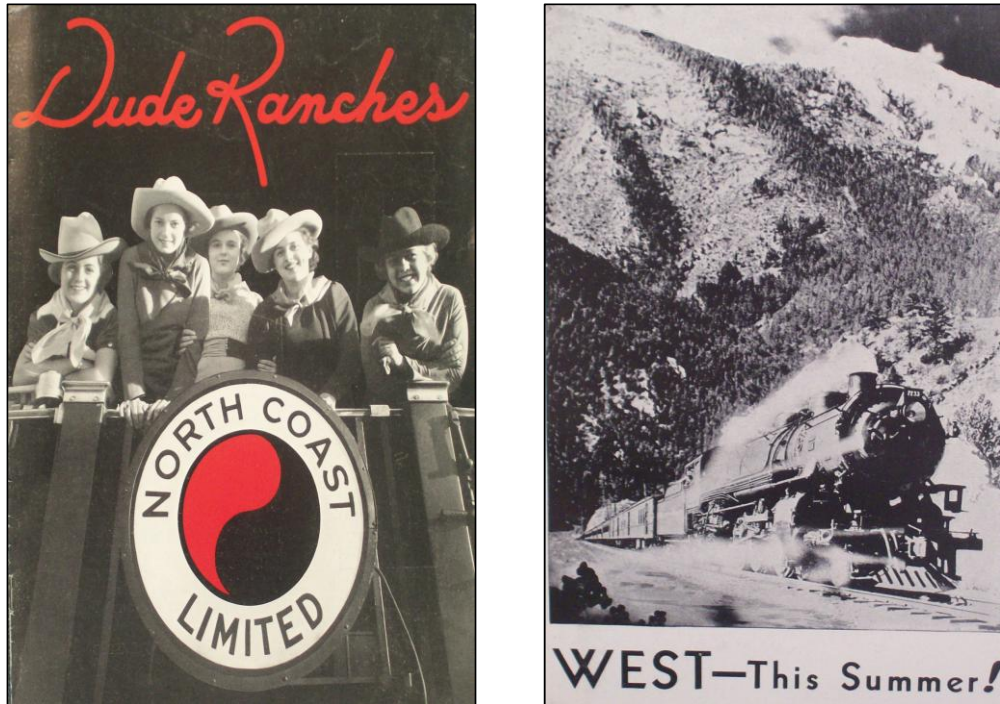


Figure 23. Northern Pacific Railroad promotional material, circa: 1920s. Source: Special Collections, Renne Library, Montana State University

The first dude ranches appeared in the Crazy Mountain region in the 1920s. In 1922, the Lazy K Bar Ranch was established in Big Timber Canyon, on the east side of the range. The Lazy K Bar was not only the first dude ranch in the Crazies but one of the five founding establishments of the Dude Ranching Association of America (Kirby 2007, pers. communication, 10 July). Another dude ranch, the Dot S Dot, was located near Melville on the northern end of the Crazies. It had accommodated travelers since the 1880s, but did not fully operate as a dude ranch until the 1920s (Hart 1934). Both dude

ranches advertised their establishments with postcards and promotional images illustrating the idealism of western ranch life (Figure 24).



Figure 24. Dude ranching promotional photo, Dot S Dot Ranch, located in Crazy Mountains, circa 1920s. Source: Special Collections, Renne Library, Montana State University.

The years following World War I were difficult for many communities in Montana. Many western agriculturalists were hit with drought and other natural calamities, such as forest fires and locusts (Malone and Roeder 1976; Athearn 1986). Detrimental to western ranchers and farmers was the global decline in agriculture prices. Renewed European production as well as the removal of governmental price controls resulted in the dramatic decline in the value of agricultural goods. In Montana, a bushel of wheat worth \$2.34 in 1919 was worth \$0.89 in 1922, and reached a historic low at \$0.32 per bushel in 1932 (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1978) (Figure 25).

Due to Montana's agricultural economy, the depression hit harder and lasted longer than it did in most other states (Malone and Roeder 1976, 251; Hargreaves 1993).

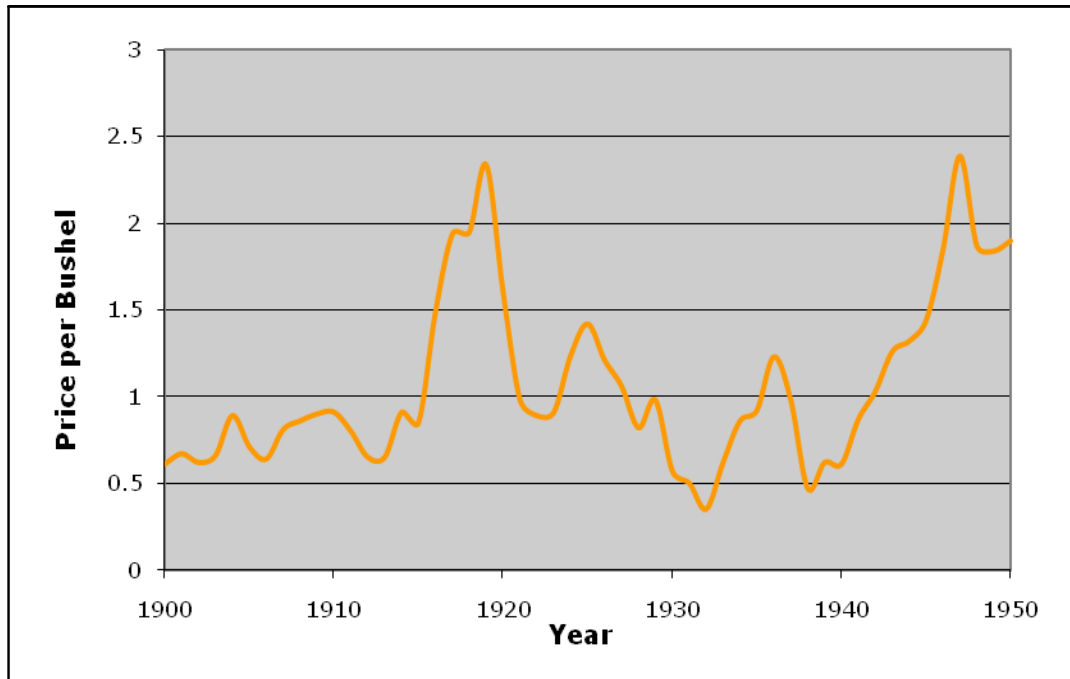


Figure 25. Value of wheat in Montana, price per bushel, 1900-1950. Source: U.S. Agricultural Census (1950).

Between 1920 and 1926, over one-half of the state's commercial banks failed and thousands of farms were foreclosed (Malone and Roeder 1976, 283). Montana soon led the country in bankruptcies as the number of insolvent institutions and defunct businesses continued to rise. Despite the brief economic resurgence during the late 1920s, the depression strengthened its grip on most families in the early 1930s. The drought that permeated much of the country's prime farmland in 1929 reached disastrous proportions by 1931.

The communities nestled around the Crazy Mountains were equally affected by the events of the 1920s and 1930s. Within the initial years of the depression, the number of farms dropped sharply. In the Big Timber area alone, more than two hundred farms

were foreclosed between 1920 and 1925 (Sweet Grass County Records 1964). Farmland values in Sweet Grass County also fell by half, from nearly \$25 an acre in 1920 to less than \$12 an acre in 1925 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1920; 1930). Financial prospects were similarly grim in Park County, where an acre of farmland valued at nearly \$30 in 1920 was worth only \$15.63 in 1925.

The failure of local banks additionally reflected the detrimental effects of the depression. For example, in Park County there were ten operating banks in 1920 but by 1936, only one remained (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation 2008). During the same years, Sweet Grass County lost two of its three banks. The economic failure of financial institutions augmented the financial troubles of many ranchers and farmers. Consequently, families had to increasingly rely on the government for financial aid. In Park County, the number of families receiving federal relief increased from 316 in 1938 to 342 by 1939 (Home Owner's Loan Coalition 1938). In Sweet Grass County, 715 families were receiving federal aid in 1938 and one year later, nearly 750 families were on government relief.

The Depression had other long-term effects. Between 1920 and 1930, the number of farms in the Park and Sweet Grass counties precipitously declined. In Park County, the number of farms dropped from 604 in 1920 to 397 in 1940 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950). The situation was even more severe in Sweet Grass County, where the number of farms decreased from 739 in 1920 to 324 by 1940. The drop in farm numbers affected property values in both counties. For example, in 1918, the taxable valuation of Park County was over \$12 million, but by 1938, this had decreased to \$6,670,000 (Montana

Board of Equalization 1938). The same was true in Sweet Grass County where the taxable valuation of the county dropped by more than half from \$7.5 million in 1918 to \$3.1 million in 1938.

The New Deal incentives set forth by President Roosevelt brought much needed financial relief to Montana. Important programs for the state included the Agricultural Adjustment Act (1933), National Industrial Recovery Act (1933), the Farm Credit Act (1933), and the Rural Electrification Act (1936) (Malone and Roeder 1976; Phillips 2007). Congressional legislation passed during this time solidified federal involvement in the economic and cultural evolution of the West (Jackson 1995). By assuming a larger role in state and local policies, the New Deal era redefined the relationship between private citizens, the government and western lands and resources.

Due to the extremity of the situation in Montana, it was among the top states on a per capita basis to receive federal aid from the New Deal programs. From 1933 to 1939, the federal government spent \$381,582,693 in Montana and made an additional \$141,835,952 available in loans (Malone and Roeder 1976, 296). Distributed on a per capita basis, the aid equaled over \$700 per person and another \$264 per person in loans, making Montana second in the nation in per capita New Deal investments (Malone and Roeder 1976, 296-297).

The creation of programs such as the Public Works Administration (1933) and the Rural Electrification Administration (1935) were also a means of revitalizing the state's economy via the establishment of large-scale operations. For most places, relief came in the form of employment opportunities. By hiring large numbers of people in the building

and maintenance of facilities across the state, such as water and electrical projects, local economies were stimulated. In addition, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, created in 1933, provided relief by offering federal government matching funds to the states. By 1935, more than twenty-two percent of Montana households were on some kind of relief.

In Park and Sweet Grass counties, federal aid often came in large financial loans, grants, and allotments. Although repayable, loans accounted for a substantial amount of money received. One of the largest federal programs in Park and Sweet Grass counties at this time was the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC). The RFC was a federally-chartered agency authorized to give loans to banks, farm mortgage associations, railroads, and businesses (Rauchway 2008). Between 1933 and 1938, the RFC gave \$14,000 to Park County and \$117,000 to Sweet Grass County (National Emergency Council 1938). Additional loans came from the Federal Land Bank, Land Bank Commissioner, Farm Security Administration (FSA), and the Home Owner's Loan Corporation. Together, these agencies gave over \$500,000 to Park County and \$376,000 to Sweet Grass County. In total, loans accounted for \$650,503 of Park County's federal relief and \$627,238 of Sweet Grass County's federal relief (National Emergency Council 1938) (Figure 26).

In addition to loans, Park and Sweet Grass counties received large amounts of relief money from federal grants and allotments. Of the multiple agencies and programs involved, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), Public Works Administration (PWA), and Works Progress Administration (WPA) provided considerable expenditures to the two counties.

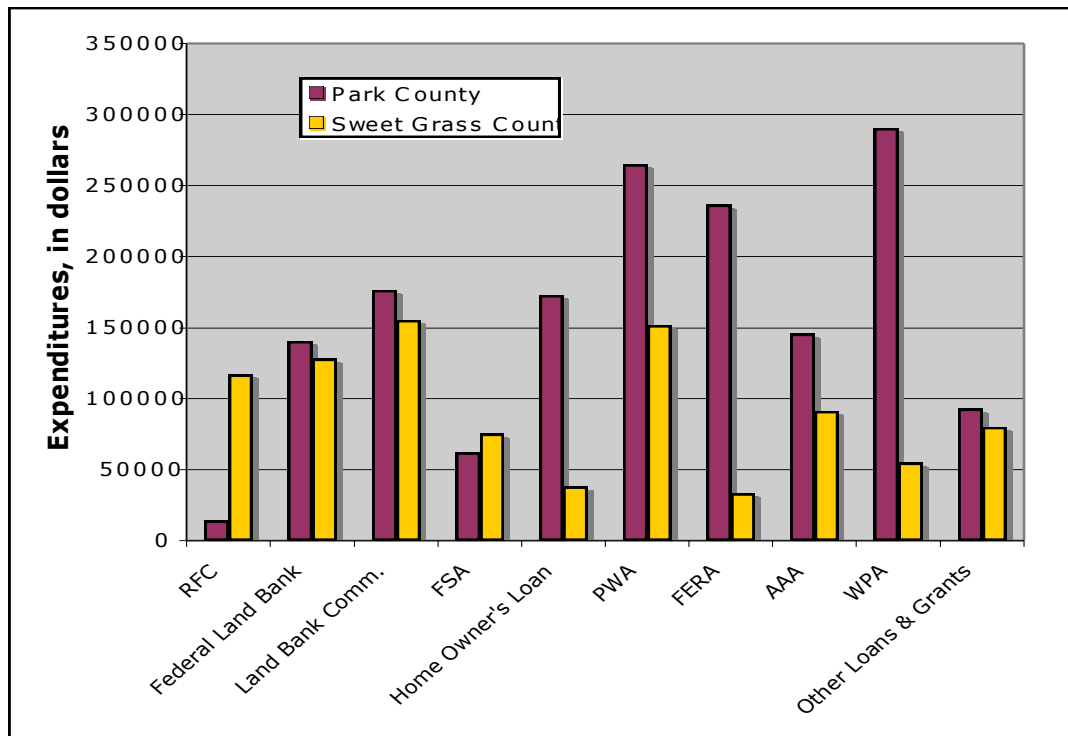


Figure 26. Amount of federal relief money received by Park and Sweet Grass counties , 1930-1940. Source: WPA Records (1930-1940). Special Collections, Renne Library, Montana State University.

Supplementing the federal loan money, Park County received \$946,016 in grant money, and over \$1,600,000 in total federal relief benefits. When distributed on a per capita basis, each family received \$575 (National Emergency Council 1938). Sweet Grass County was given \$297,840 in non-repayable allotments, totaling nearly \$940,000 in relief money (National Emergency Council 1938). Due to the county's small population, each family in Sweet Grass County received the equivalent of \$950.

Non-monetary programs were also implemented to improve county conditions during and after the Depression. In 1937, Congress passed the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act. According to the government, "the depression years through

which agriculture has been passing has brought forth the need of sound agriculture planning and agriculture conservation projects as well as the need for improved marketing facilities” (Hart 1938). In an effort to conserve soil, prevent erosion, and actively maintain water resources, the government purchased county crop and livestock surpluses. Furthermore, local committees were established in the towns of Big Timber and Livingston, with the objective of encouraging residents to practice efficient farming and ranching techniques. For example, farmers and ranchers in Park County were urged to remove 15 percent of their current farmland from use, to restore grass cover, and to plant remaining land with livestock feed crops that would conserve the soil (Agricultural Economics Dept. Records 1937). By improving local land use conditions, the federal government hoped to provide a more sustainable economic resource base.

Another federal employment program influential in western Montana was the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC). Created in 1933, the CCC was involved in the early management and improvement of the Crazy Mountains. The CCC was a work and relief program that employed young men in conservation projects around the country, particularly in national forests and parks (Allen 2007, pers. communication, 20 July; Maher 2008). In southwest Montana, the CCC established camps in the Squaw Creek and the Boulder River areas. The closest camp to the Crazy Mountains was Company 1293. Established in 1937, Company 1293 was posted at a CCC camp at the Natural Bridge, an area south of Big Timber (Sharp 1985). From 1937 to 1940, Company 1293 and other CCC camps in Helena and White Sulphur Springs periodically worked in the Crazy Mountain region. During this time, the group worked on trail systems, widened

forest roads, and improved the general health of the forests. On occasion, CCC crews were also assigned fire duties. For example, in the summer of 1936, CCC crews from White Sulphur Springs responded to fires engulfing the west side of the Crazies (Sharp 1985). By the time the CCC was dissolved in 1940, workers had helped build a network of trail systems within the Crazy Mountains (Allen 2007, pers. communication, 20 July).

America's entry into World War II helped to reinvigorate rural economies throughout Montana. In addition to the New Deal programs, a growing national and global demand for agricultural products generated economic growth. Though still volatile, rising prices for livestock products and grains encouraged local ranchers and farmers to produce more goods. By 1943, cattle were valued at \$76 per head, over four times what they were valued ten years earlier (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1978). Likewise, sheep valued at \$3 per head in 1933 were worth \$10.20 per head in 1943. Wheat prices had also increased to \$1.44 per bushel, the highest they had been since before 1920 (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1978). Montana's population grew to nearly 600,000 by 1950, partly reflecting the nation's renewed interests in the region's agricultural viability.

Despite rejuvenated agricultural markets and federal financial relief, some counties were unable to economically rebound as effectively as others. State demographics at this time reflected the depopulation of many central and eastern counties and the stability, and even growth, of resource-rich western counties. For example, between 1920 and 1940, the population of Sweet Grass County decreased from 5,000 to 3,600, yet the population of Park County remained steady at approximately 11,500

people (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000) (Figure 27). Like other central and eastern counties, Sweet Grass County experienced a net loss of people after the 1920s. The reason for the area's declining population was largely a result of the county's dependence on an unpredictable agricultural market and economy. By contrast, areas with a broader economic base, such as Park County, were able to absorb the impacts of the depression more effectively.

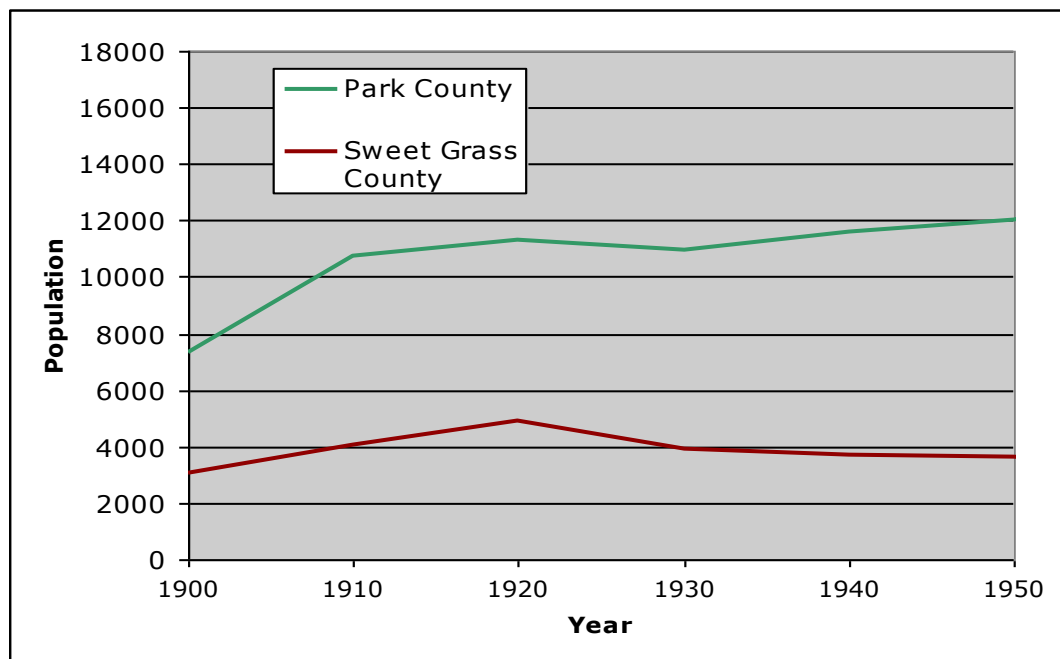


Figure 27. Population of Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-1950. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce. County-Level Series.

With a diversified economic resource base, Park County continued to grow in the years following World War II. By 1950, the county population stood at nearly 12,000, compared to 11,000 in 1930 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950). In addition to ranching and farming, Park County residents were employed in logging, transportation, mining, and service industries. In 1919, Livingston was home to 46 manufacturing establishments,

primarily related to the production of lumber and wood products (U.S. Bureau of Manufacturers 1919). Manufacturing operations employed 741 workers, generating over \$1 million annually for Park County's economy. Although the number of establishments significantly decreased over the years, totaling eleven by 1940, early manufacturing operations provided a significant source of revenue for Park County.

The transportation and trade sector provided an additional resource base for Park County residents. The Northern Pacific Railroad was particularly influential in Livingston, where up to 500 people worked at the depot, maintenance yards, and administrative offices (History of Park County 1984). Many residents were also involved in wholesale trade, construction, and retail. By 1950, close to 42 percent of Park County's workforce was in transportation or trade. In comparison, 30 percent of the combined employee base involved agriculture, manufacturing, mining, and construction. The service sector, including finance, food, and entertainment services, constituted 24 percent of the workforce, and the remaining 4 percent was involved in government jobs (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1930; 1940; 1950).

For rural communities in Sweet Grass County, the years during and after the depression were times of major economic readjustment. Smaller agricultural operations often lacked the capital and financial resources to counter the deleterious effects of a poor economy. As a result, smaller land parcels were often integrated into larger agricultural operations. The foreclosure and sale of small farming units allowed larger, more economically stable ranching outfits to consolidate viable land parcels. Consequently,

land consolidation in southwestern Montana during this period was a defining force that significantly shaped the local ranching landscape (Haggerty 2005).

In addition to land consolidation, local ranchers and farmers had to adjust to an increasingly uncertain agricultural economy. As one of the largest sheep producers in Montana, Big Timber and other communities in Sweet Grass County were economically hard hit by broad changes in the livestock industry. Markets favoring beef products over sheep and wool goods, as well as other shifts in the agricultural sector, resulted in a dramatic decline in Sweet Grass County's sheep population. From 1930 to 1950, sheep numbers in the county dropped by 60 percent (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950).

Lamenting the change, a Sweet Grass county publication announced that by 1940, "the day of the large sheep producer was gone" (Sweet Grass County Records 1964).

After 1920, Sweet Grass County steadily lost people and by 1950, only 3,621 people lived in the county (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950). With nearly half of those living in the town of Big Timber, residents in the region lacked the economic and employment opportunities of larger towns and cities. In 1950, 60 percent of Sweet Grass County's workforce was involved with agriculture, mining, or manufacturing. The transportation industry included 16 percent of the employment base, while only 22 percent of employees were in the service sector. Government jobs involved the remaining 2 percent of Sweet Grass County's workforce (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1930; 1940; 1950).

Case Studies

The three case studies addressed in this section provide an intimate portrait of life in the Crazy Mountains and illustrate how conditions evolved in the region between 1900 and 1950. For each of the site areas, a chronology of landownership was reconstructed using historical records, online resources, interactive database systems, personal narratives, GIS and cadastral data. Each site contains eight sections of land totaling 5,120 acres. Original ownership of all of the private lands located in and around the Crazy Mountains can be traced back to Northern Pacific Railroad and the United States Government. The alternating pattern of private and public landownership provides the spatial context from which much of the cultural and legal landscape has evolved.

Site Descriptions:

Site 1 is located on the eastern edge of the Crazy Mountains. The study area includes sections 3 through 10 in Township 3 North, Range 12 East. Site 1 is primarily located in the Big Timber Creek drainage and extends from the edge of the foothills to the steeply-sloped uppermost peaks. Nearly half of the land cover in Site 1 is forest, including Lodgepole pine, Douglas fir, and spruce. Approximately 33 percent of the study area is grasslands, including wheatgrass, timothy, and bluegrass. Sagebrush and other shrubs can be found in the lower elevations, and covers about 7 percent of the study area. The remaining 17 percent of land cover contains rocky slopes and riparian environments (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1987; Natural Resource Information System 2008). Site 1 is an example of a checkerboard ownership pattern that includes both

private and federal lands. This location was chosen because some of the most popular and heavily used areas in the Crazies are contained within the study area boundaries, including Crazy Peak, Big Timber Peak, the Upper Big Timber Falls, and the Twin Lakes. In addition, the Half Moon campground and trailhead are situated within the site perimeter as well as the residence of a long-time landowner (Figure 28).

Site 2 is situated in the northern part of the Crazy Mountains. The location of this study area is in Township 5 North, Range 10 East, sections 13, 24, 25, and 36 and Township 5 North, Range 11 East, sections 18, 19, 30, and 31. The terrain of the northern Crazies is more moderate than the southern part of the range. In comparison to Site 1, this study area is less mountainous and is at a lower elevation. Nearly 60 percent of the land cover in Site 2 is grasslands and meadows. Forests containing mostly Douglas fir and Lodgepole pine covers about 33 percent of the study area. Aspen and spruce can also be found within area boundaries. The remaining 7 percent of land cover is rocky terrain and riparian environments (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1987; Natural Resource Information System 2008). Like Site 1, this study area is comprised of both public and private lands. In addition, Site 2 contains one of the major trailheads in the northern Crazies as well as a private residence. The locality of this site is remote and the Shields River Road provides the only accessible transportation.

Site 3 is in the southwest corner of the mountain range. This study area is located in Township 2 North, Range 10 East and includes sections 11 through 14 and sections 7, 8, 17, and 18 in Township 2 North, Range 11 East. Site 3 is situated along the Rock Creek drainage and includes one section of public land. The area's land cover is

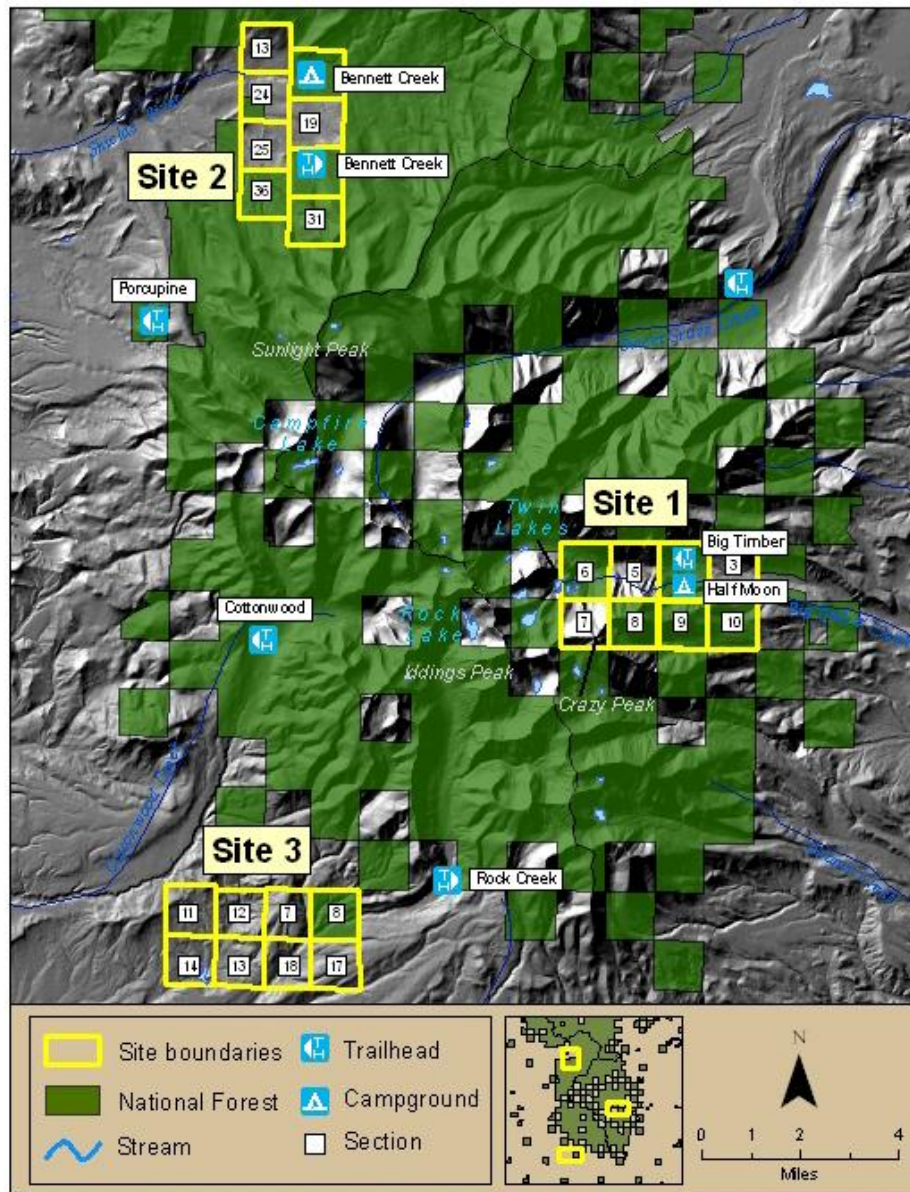


Figure 28. Location of Site Areas and primary features in southern Crazy Mountains. Source: NRIS, 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

predominantly grasslands and meadows, including mostly timothy and native tall-grasses. Broadleaf forests of aspen and cottonwood characterize the mid to lower elevations, and pine forests, including Douglas fir and Lodgepole pine, cover the higher elevations.

Together, broadleaf and pine forest covers nearly 30 percent of Site 3. Approximately 7 percent of the area's land cover is shrubs and sagebrush. The remaining 5 percent is rocky terrain and riparian environments (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1987).

Landownership Chronology, 1900-1950

Site 1:

Private sections located within Site 1 were granted to the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1864 (General Land Office 2002; Sweet Grass County 2007). Therefore, Site 1 was originally composed of alternating sections of private and public lands (Figure 29). Site 1 was initially settled by the Mjelde family in the late 1890s (Sweet Grass County 2007). The Mjeldes built their homestead on property abutting the study area boundaries.

The General Land Office (GLO) did not officially issue a land patent to Frederick Mjelde until 1920. By this time, the Mjeldes had been living in the Big Timber drainage for over twenty years. The same year a land patent was issued to the Mjeldes, the property was sold to Paul Van Cleve. The Van Cleves had previously been living in the nearby community of Melville and wanted to establish a cattle operation within the Crazy Mountains (Pioneer Society 1960). In order to accommodate a ranching outfit, the Van Cleves quickly expanded their property to include all of the private lands located in and around Site 1.

Initially, sections 3, 5, 7, and 9 within Site 1 were under a single ownership and therefore experienced a similar course of events. All four sections were granted to the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1864, though land patents were not certified until 1919.

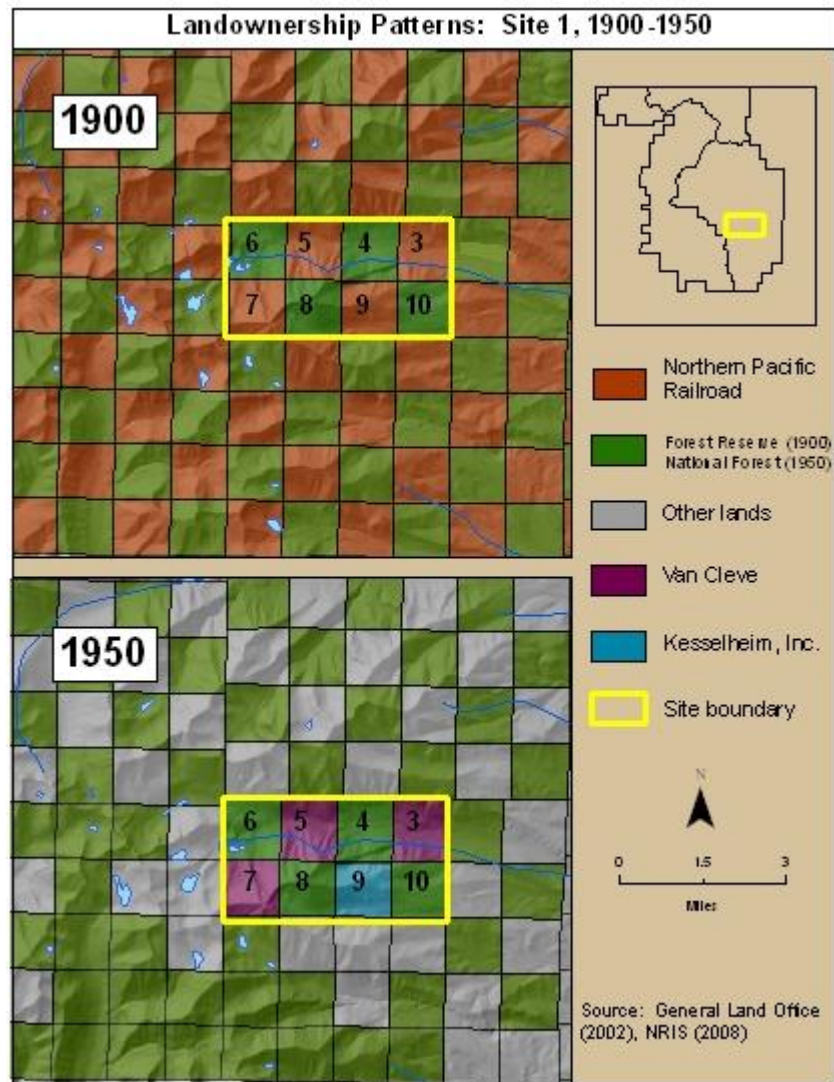


Figure 29. Distribution of landownership in Site 1, 1900-1950. Source: NRIS, 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

From about the late 1890s and into the early 1930s, it was common practice for the railroad to sell their private real estate holdings to a variety of investment firms and holding companies (Sweet Grass County 2007). For example, in many land-grant forests in the Northwest, the Northern Pacific Railroad sold hundreds of thousands of acres to mining and logging companies (Jensen and Draffan 1995). However, due to the relative

lack of both valuable minerals and large timber exports in the Crazyes, most companies held onto the land as a long-term financial asset or occasionally leased the land to ranchers for grazing.

In Site 1, sections 3, 5, 7, and 9 were sold to a private investor, Albert Nortz, in 1936. Over the next five years, Nortz shared ownership of the sections with a business associate, Charles Lundquist. In 1941, ownership was transferred to Kesselheim Incorporated, a private investment company. Kesselheim Inc. owned the sections for a brief period of time before selling section 3 in 1942 and sections 5 and 7 in 1943 to Paul Van Cleve; Kesselheim Inc. retained ownership of section 9 until after 1950. Consequently, by the middle of the century, Paul Van Cleve was the dominant private landowner of Site 1. The remaining parcels of land, sections 4, 6, 8, and 10, are original sections of national forest.

Site 2:

The Northern Pacific Railroad sold sections of land within Site 2 to both individual homesteaders and private investment firms (Figure 30). In 1906, section 13 was purchased by Harry Lowther and shortly after, in 1909, the same parcel was sold to the Healy family (General Land Office 2002; Park County 2007). Ten years later, the Healy family sold the land to the Hill Cattle Corporation, an expanding ranching operation based out of Livingston. In 1933, section 13 was sold to the Interstate Holding Company, an out-of-state mortgage company.

In Site 2, section 24 was homesteaded by multiple families in the early 1900s. A

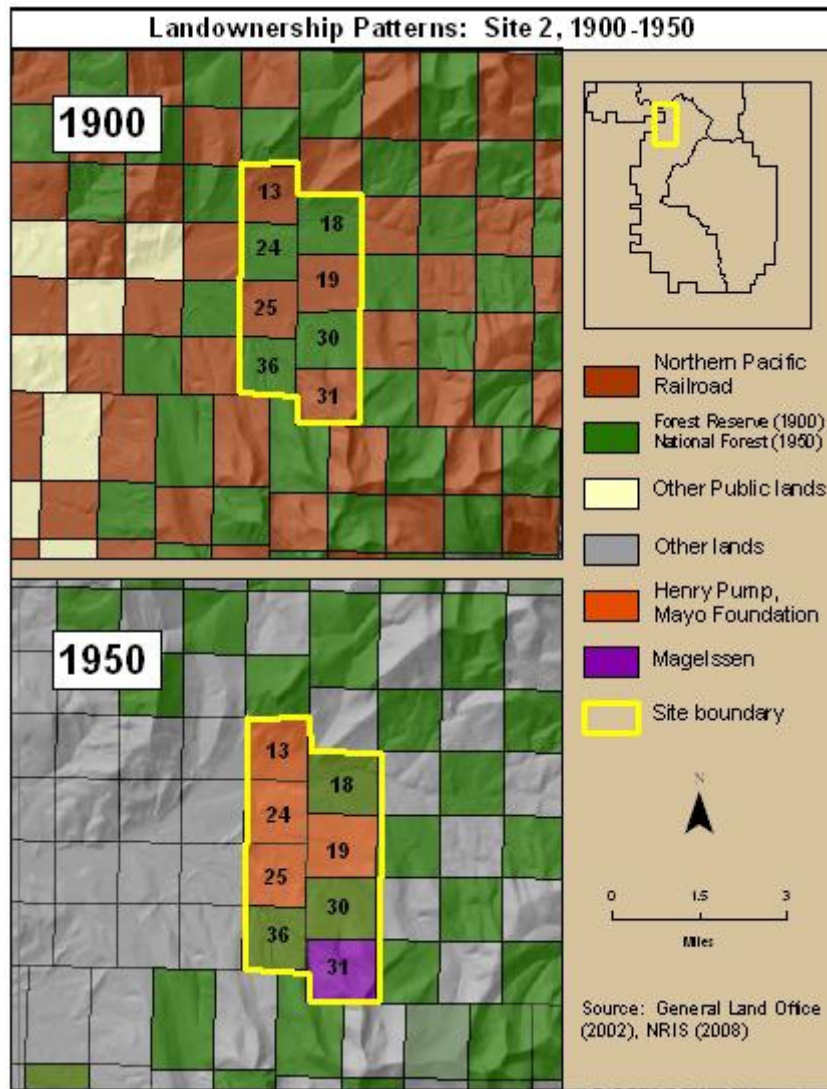


Figure 30. Distribution of Landownership in Site 2, 1900-1950. Source: NRIS, 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

land patent for 160 acres was issued to Ernest Bradley in 1917, followed by another land patent issued for the same amount to Shaderick Lawellin in 1919. In addition to the 160 acres in section 24, Lawellin purchased all of Section 19 at this time. The remaining 320-acre parcel in the section was bought by John Bleth in 1921, but by 1922, all of section

24 was collectively purchased by the Hill Cattle Corporation. Shortly after, in 1933, the Hill Cattle Corporation transferred all of its landholdings, including sections 13, 19, and 24, to the Interstate Holding Company.

Unlike the other private lands in Site 2, section 25 was a direct real estate transaction between the Northern Pacific Railroad and the Interstate Holding Company. In 1907, the Northern Pacific received a land patent for section 25 and in 1933 the parcel was purchased by the Interstate Holding Company. Consequently, by the early 1930s, the Interstate Holding Company was the largest private landholder in Site 2, owning sections 13, 19, 24, and 25. In 1942, the Interstate Holding Company sold their sections to Henry Pump, a private investor and president of an out-of-state charitable trust.

Finally, section 31 was deeded to the Northern Pacific in 1923, and sold to the Magelssen family in 1907, who owned the parcel until after 1950. Alternating with the private parcels of land are sections 18, 30, and 36. These sections have historically been part of the national forest and are public lands.

Site 3:

In Site 3, section 7 was homesteaded by L.M. Miles in 1892 (Park County 2007) (Figure 31). Miles owned the land until 1922, at which time the section was sold to Homer Criswell. Together with the Van Cleve family, the Criswells were one of the largest private landholders in the southern Crazy Mountains during the early 1900s. In addition to section 7, the Criswells owned nearly 10,000 acres in and around Site 3. Arriving in the Crazy Mountains in 1899, the Criswells homesteaded section 24, (located south of and adjacent to Site 3), before purchasing section 12 in 1903. Over the next

twenty years, the Criswells incorporated the surrounding private lands into their ranch, including section 14 (1912), sections 17 and 18 (1929), and section 13 (1942). While many of these sections were formerly divided between two or sometimes three individual ranchers, the Criswells had by the 1950s consolidated the area under a single ownership.

In comparison, Section 11 in Site 3 was owned by one family throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Originally homesteaded in 1893 by John and Lucetta

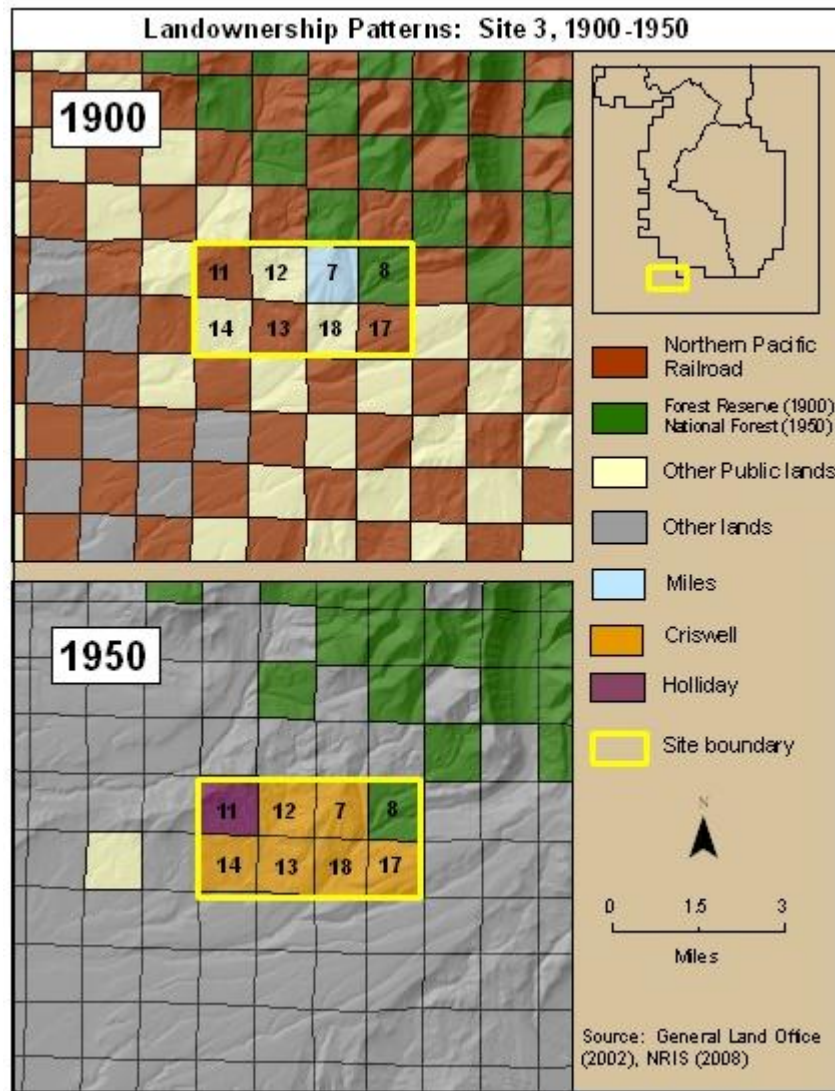


Figure 31. Distribution of Landownership in Site 3, 1900-1950. Source: NRIS, 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

Holliday, Section 11 remained within the Holliday family until it was repurchased in the latter half of the century. Section 8 constitutes the only section of public land in Site 3 and is part of the national forest.

Land exchanges have played a major role in landownership patterns in the Crazy Mountains. In 1922, Congress passed the General Land Exchange Act, permitting the acquisition of privately-owned lands by the government if such lands were determined “chiefly valuable for national-forest purposes” (Estill 1993). Lands were “exchanged” for other properties in the region or for a monetary compensation. The first significant land exchanges in the Crazies occurred during the 1940s (General Land Office 2002; Park County 2007; Sweet Grass County 2007). In 1940 and 1946, the Forest Service and the Northern Pacific Railroad exchanged nine sections of land located in the southern Crazies. However the first significant land exchange to take place involving a private resident was in 1950, when the Criswell family transferred six sections to the Forest Service. These parcels were distributed throughout the southwest corner of the range and totaled 3,840 acres. Collectively, the Northern Pacific and Criswell land exchanges accounted for nearly 10,000 acres of newly incorporated national forest. As a result, by 1950, large portions of the interior southern Crazy Mountains were public lands.

Evolving Landscapes and Land Use Patterns, 1900-1950

Ranching and logging were both widespread land use patterns in the Crazy Mountains during the first half of the twentieth century. Over time, landowners in the region adjusted their land use practices according to changing federal administrative

policies. Land management of the Crazies has traditionally been complicated by the alternating pattern of landownership. Many landscape changes and land use practices in the region were not confined by boundaries but rather occurred on both private and public lands. Managing this complex environment has been a defining feature in the evolution of the range.

Site 1:

Between 1900 and 1950, livestock grazing was a main land use trend across Site 1. In the study area and elsewhere in the Crazies, it was common for local ranchers to use the mountains for summer grazing (Figure 32). Known as transhumance grazing, livestock were pastured in the mountains during summer and moved to the valley floor during winter. Federal permits in the Crazies reflected a pattern of seasonal use, initially



Figure 32. Transhumance grazing. Crazy Mountains, circa: 1930s.
Source: Special Collections, Renne Library, Montana State University

allowing grazing from as early as June 1 to as late as October 31 (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005). After all twenty allotments in the Crazies were converted to cattle-use only in the 1950s, the season commonly began July 1 and ended September 15.

Portions of the Big Timber and Crazy allotments were included in Site 1. The Big Timber Allotment comprised a majority of the study area, including sections 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8, and the Crazy Allotment including sections 9 and 10 (Figure 33). While the Van Cleves were the main permittees on the Big Timber Allotment, Louis Grosfield, another rancher and neighbor of the Van Cleves used the Crazy Allotment. Other allotments

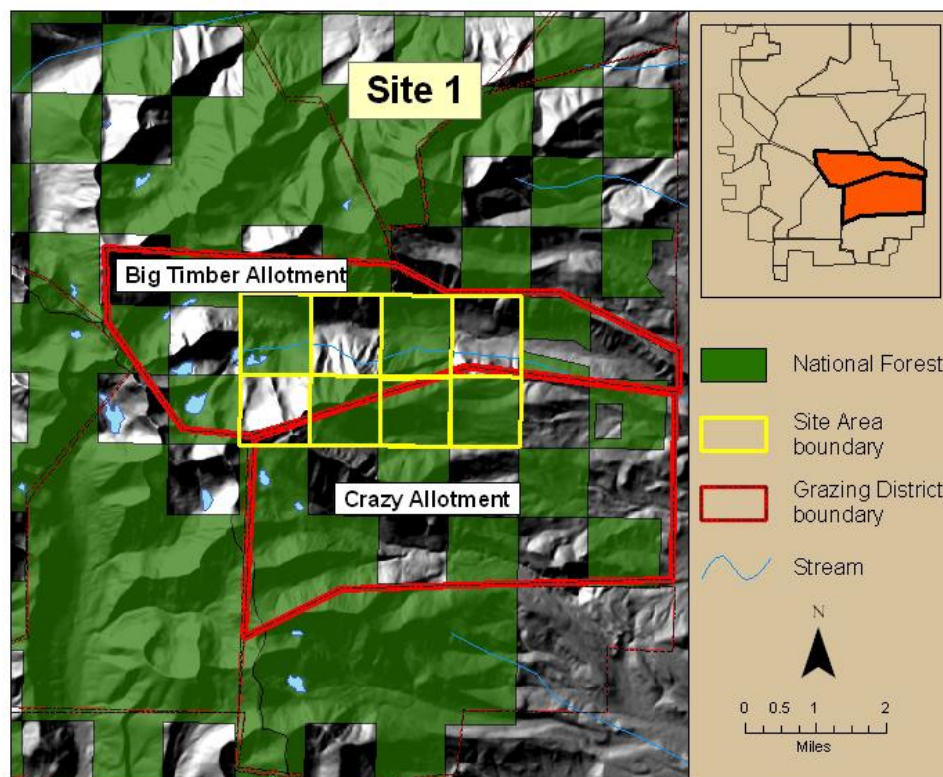


Figure 33. Grazing allotments included in Site 1, 1900-1950. Source: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005; 2007b; NRIS 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

situated nearby included the Otter Creek, Swamp Creek, and Sunlight allotments (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005; 2007b).

Over the years, grazing policies for the allotments located in and near Site 1 reflected larger trends in federal land management in the region. For example, the Crazy Allotment was comparable in size and layout to other allotments in the range. Containing 8,430 acres altogether, nearly half of the allotment was located on private lands and half was situated on national forest. Yet, only 1,680 acres of the allotment were considered suitable range. Steep and rocky terrain inhibited livestock from grazing the additional 6,575 acres (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005).

During the early 1900s, both sheep and cattle were liberally grazed on the Crazy Allotment. Although no detailed records exist prior to 1945, Forest Service officials estimate that over 3,000 sheep and 1,000 cattle were grazed on the allotment until the 1940s (Or 2007, pers. communication, 15 July). Furthermore, the allotment boundaries were unenclosed, allowing livestock to travel from private to public lands. It was not until the 1940s and 1950s, when the fence lines were built between public and private lands that livestock were kept off certain areas of national forest (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005). During this period, the Forest Service increased its management of the region and many of the allotments were reduced and transferred to cattle-use only. By 1950, the Crazy Allotment was a cattle-use only permit and allowed 800 head to graze the allotment for two months each year.

The Van Cleves also used Site 1 to raise sheep and cattle. In addition to the public lands, the Van Cleves historically grazed their livestock on the surrounding private

lands, situated directly outside the national forest boundary. In 1940, the family owned 1,000 head of cattle, 3,000 head of sheep, and 250 horses (Goosey 1940). Many of the cattle were purchased from the Greene Cattle Company in Arizona and shipped north to the Crazy Mountains (Pioneer Society 1960). In accordance with Forest Service regulations, the Van Cleves were allowed to graze approximately 350 cow/calf pairs in the Big Timber Allotment for two months each year (Or 2007, pers. communication, 15 July). When the season was over, the cattle were moved from Site 1 to lower elevations.

Logging also impacted land use in Site 1. Although logging records do not exist for the Crazy Mountains prior to 1950, local forest rangers agree that timber harvests in the region were more frequent during the first half of the twentieth century (Avey 2007; U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007e). One of the earliest sawmills constructed in the Crazy Mountains was located in the Big Timber Drainage. Used first by the Mjelde family, the sawmill was important in the early logging of Site 1. Big Timber Creek, along with Sweet Grass and Otter Creek, offered a direct means of log transportation to the town of Big Timber and beyond (Figure 34). However, the difficult terrain of the mountains largely determined where logging could occur and the yield of each harvest. Consequently, timber activities were generally limited to patches of forest or single stands of trees. Over the course of the first half of the century, less than 2,000 acres were harvested within Site 1 (Avey 2007; U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007e).

In 1920, the first dude ranch in the Crazy Mountains was established in Site 1. That year, Paul Van Cleve began to charge guests to experience life on a western Montana ranch. Named the Lazy K Bar, activities on the ranch included calf roping,



Figure 34. Big Timber drainage, located in Site 1, 1921. Source: U.S. Geological Survey (1980).

horseback riding, going on picnics, fishing, camping, storytelling, rodeos, and a myriad of other pursuits tailored toward the guest's interests (Figure 35, 36, 37). The ranch accommodated up to thirty people at one time between June and October. By integrating the traditional functions of a working ranch with ranch tourism, the Van Cleves were able to supplement their income and rely less on an increasingly unstable agricultural economy.



Figure 35. Lazy K Bar Ranch, early 1920s. Source: Special Collections, Renne Library, Montana State University.



Figure 36. Horseback riding, Lazy K Bar. Source: Special Collections, Renne Library, Montana State University.



Figure 37. Calf roping, Lazy K Bar. Source: Special Collections, Renne Library, Montana State University

Similar to other dude ranches that emerged in the West during this time, the Lazy K Bar catered toward a particular clientele. Guests visiting the Lazy K Bar were often seeking a respite from urban life. A stay at the dude ranch provided a change of pace from metropolitan living and offered a place of high-country restoration. The original promotional brochure suggested the following:

If you like crowds and the purring cacophonous thumps of a jazz band and dancing floor, then it is doubtful if ever you would be happy spending a month at the Lazy K Bar in the Crazy Mountains. For the Ranch of the Van Cleves is not a place of large gatherings. People don't come here to meet other people or eat *pate de foie gras*. They come for freedom and rest.
(Van Cleve 1920, Lazy K Bar Promotional Brochure)

Beyond appealing to the exhausted urbanite, the Lazy K Bar tempted those with a more romantic notion of the West. For many, living with the “ranch people” offered a momentary reunion with nature and a return to an agrarian lifestyle (Van Cleve 1920; Worster 1991). Endorsing the pastoral charm of the Lazy K Bar, the brochure continues:

The [Lazy K Bar] Ranch is opened to those people who want to spend a primitive vacation... you'll ride with the cowboys out on the open range. And don't forget your cameras... you'll want a record of a most enjoyable and wonderful country so that back in town, you'll be able to live again the joys of the open land, the freedom of mountains streams, the deep quiet of cool mountain lakes and the high repose of solid and substantial mountains.

(Van Cleve 1920, Lazy K Bar Promotional Brochure)

By combining a western ranching experience with the amenities and opportunities of the Crazy Mountains, the Lazy K Bar developed as one of the region's premier dude ranching establishments. Although other dude ranches emerged in the Crazies after 1920, few offered the services and experiences of the Lazy K Bar.

Site 2:

Site 2 was also primarily used for livestock grazing between 1900 and 1950.

Located in the more remote northern part of the Crazy Mountains, the terrain was

relatively gentle and therefore particularly conducive to grazing. The Bennett Creek Allotment was situated in Site 2 and contained over 1,300 acres. Nearly all of the allotment, 96 percent, was on private lands while the remaining four percent was within the national forest (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b). In addition to the Bennett Creek Allotment, the Shields River Allotment was included in Site 2 (Figure 37). Larger than most allotments in the range, the Shields River Allotment contained 18 sections, or 11,520 acres.

During the early 1900s, the northern portion of the Crazy Mountains was heavily grazed by sheep and cattle (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b). At first, federal officials favored grazing in the national forests, and their policies did little to reduce livestock numbers. Over time however, these policies shifted as officials reconsidered what sustainable levels of use were. In 1910, the Bennett Creek Allotment was limited to 1,000 head of sheep with a grazing season of sixty days (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b). Then in the 1930s, the allotment number was reduced to 500 head of sheep and 300 head of cattle. By 1944, the Bennett Creek Allotment was transferred to cattle-use only, with a carrying capacity of 500 head. Larger allotments such as the Shields River Allotment, allowed up to 20,000 head of sheep for a sixty-day period through most of the 1920s. By the 1930s, this figure had dropped by half to 10,000 sheep and by 1950, less than 4,000 head were allowed to graze the Shields River Allotment (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b).

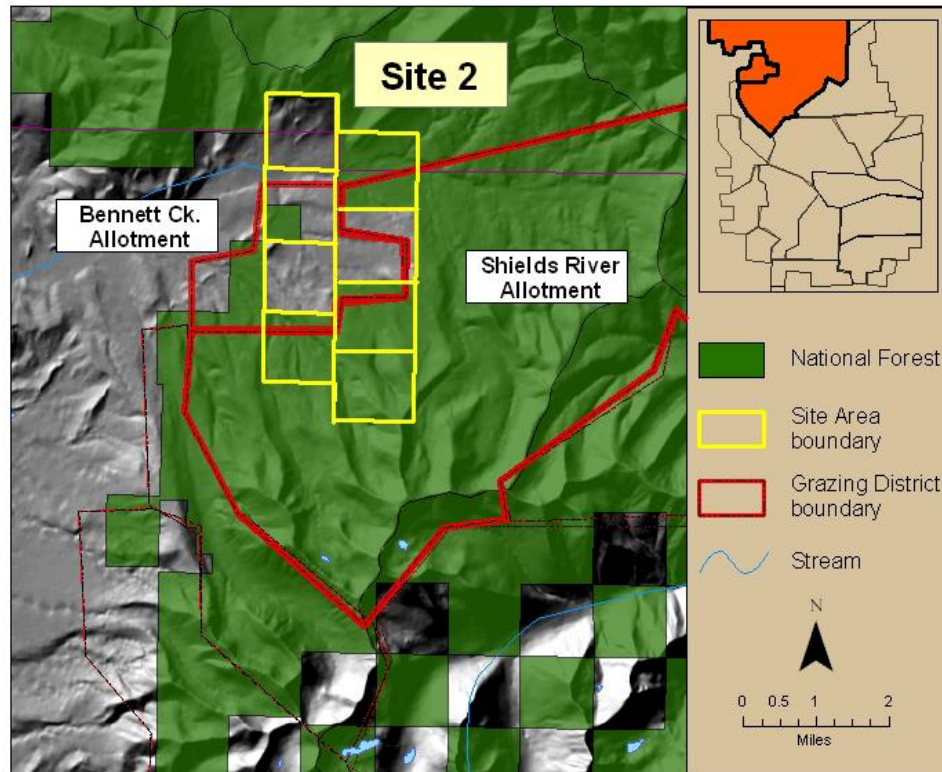


Figure 38. Grazing allotments included in Site 2. 1900-1950. Source: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b; NRIS 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

In addition to livestock grazing on the range, landowners in Site 2 conducted extensive haying operations. Commonly a mixture of alfalfa, barley, and other grains, hay was especially important in sustaining livestock herds through the winter. Also used in the mixture was timothy-grass (*Phleum Pratense*). Timothy was introduced into the Crazy Mountains during the early white settlement of the region. Although a foreign species, timothy quickly adapted to the foothill environment and was soon widespread throughout the base of the range (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005). In Site 2, hay was planted on the lower elevations where the terrain was flatter and more conducive for farming (Figure 39).

The presence of hay fields and grasslands around the Crazy Mountains made the region vulnerable to wildfires. Although the savanna-like landscape was ideal for agricultural activities, fires easily spread from the lower elevations into the mountains. Major fires in the region occurred in ten to fifteen year intervals, with an average fire return of eleven years (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2000). Between 1900 and 1950, five major fires took place in and around Site 2. Three fires burned areas around Billie Butte, situated slight north of the study area, and two fires occurred in Sunlight Basin, located south of Site 2. However, these fires were relatively small and tended to be spotty burns instead of widespread events. Each of these fires consumed less than 1,000 acres (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2000; 2007e).



Figure 39. Haying operations, near Site 2, circa: early 1900s. Source: Special Collections, Renne Library, Montana State University.

Site 3:

Like the other study areas, land use trends in Site 3 from 1900 to 1950 were characterized by traditional ranching activities (Figure 40). As one of the largest

landholders in the Crazy Mountains, the Criswells owned over 10,000 acres in the southwest corner of the range (General Land Office 2002; Park County 2007). Situated in and around the Criswell's land were several grazing allotments. In comparison to allotments on the east side of the Crazies, grazing allotments on the west side were smaller and carried a fewer number of livestock.



Figure 40. Traditional ranching landscape in Site 3, circa: 1930s. Source: Special Collections, Renne Library, Montana State University

The Little Cottonwood, Duck Creek and Lower Rock Creek allotments were situated in and near Site 3 (Figure 41). Since the permit system began, these allotments have been mostly used by cattle only. The first of these allotments, Little Cottonwood, was located north of the study area and contained approximately 3,200 acres (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b). There are no records for this allotment prior to 1950. However, based on its comparable size and geography to other allotments in the region, forest officials estimate that at least 100 cattle grazed this area during the summer months (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b).

The Duck Creek Allotment includes all of section 17, 640 acres, in Site 3. This allotment includes only private lands and grazing use of the allotment was issued under a Term Private Land Grazing Permit. Between 1900 and 1950, approximately 20 to 50 head of cattle grazed this section for two months a year (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005; 2007b). Finally, the Lower Rock Creek Allotment is located north of the Duck Creek Allotment and includes section 8 in Site 3. This allotment contains 8 sections of land, or 5,120 acres. Between the early 1900s and 1940s, cattle numbers for this allotment ranged between 75 and 150 head. By 1950, approximately 78 head were permitted on the Lower Rock Creek Allotment (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b).

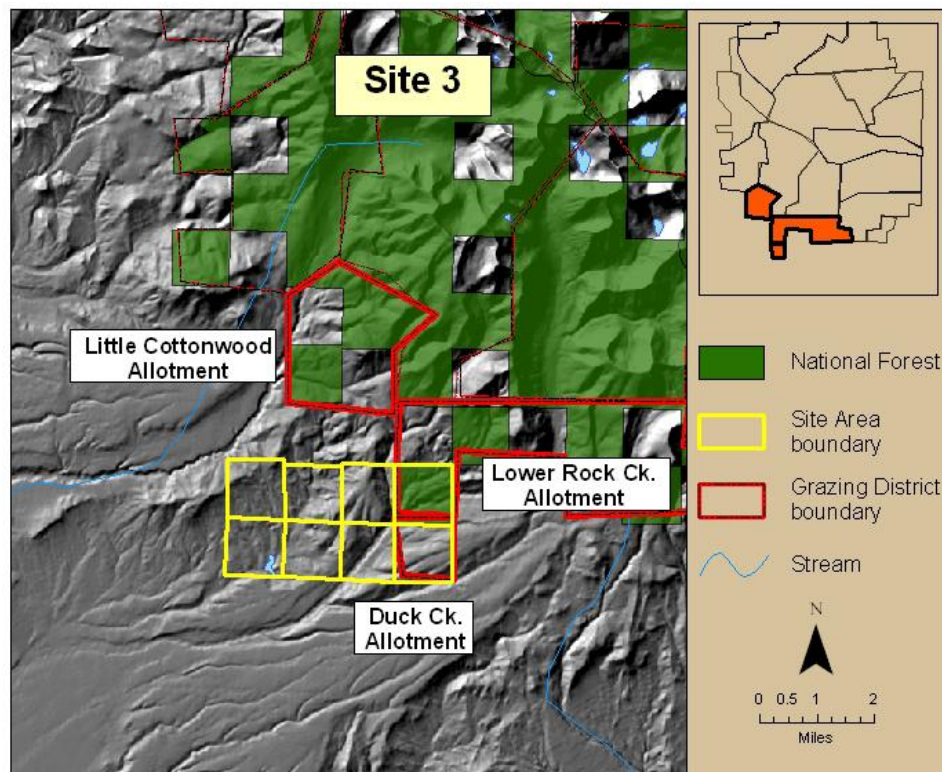


Figure 41. Grazing allotments located in and near Site 3, 1900-1950. Source: U.S. Dept of Agriculture 2007b; NRIS 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

Private timber harvests also occurred in Site 3 during the early 1900s, although with less frequency compared to other places in the Crazy Mountains. Like many locations in the range, steep terrain and high elevations hindered extensive logging efforts. Less than 500 acres were privately logged in and around Site 3 during the first half of the twentieth century (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007e). Logging efforts by the Forest Service were slightly higher for this time period, yet were minimal compared to other portions in the Gallatin National Forest. According to early Forest Service estimates, up to 1,000 acres of public lands were harvested in Site 3 during the first part of the century (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007e).

LANDSCAPES IN TRANSITION, 1951-1980

A number of geographic forces converged in the second half of the twentieth century to dramatically transform the cultural landscape and economic resource base of the Crazy Mountains. During the post-war era, advances in communications technologies, changing global economies, and new attitudes toward the environment collectively reshaped many Mountainous West localities. In addition, transportation improvements, growing American affluence, and a prosperous national economy encouraged new settlement and investment within the West. Between 1951 and 1980, these emerging forces redefined local geographies in the Crazy Mountains.

Broader Context of New West Settlement

External influences have been instrumental in the development of the Mountainous West. The existence of concentrated zones of natural resources and large amounts of federal lands wedded political, socioeconomic, and cultural interests to the development of the region (Wyckoff and Dilsaver 1995). Early on, extractive industries in agriculture, mining, and logging integrated local economies into national and global markets. A momentous campaign effort financed by the federal government, the railroads, and local politicians further facilitated the rapid settlement of the American West.

Following World War II, public perception increasingly reconsidered western landscapes for their non-economic value. In comparison to traditional paradigms based on resource extraction, post-war value systems focused on the scenic amenities and

recreational opportunities of the West. As a result, previous landscapes oriented around activities of extractive production were redirected toward newer landscapes of consumption (Wyckoff 1995, 488-489; Riebsame 1997; Robbins 1999; Travis 2007). Scholars have described this broad reevaluation as a shift from the Old to New West.

Whereas more traditional industries of mining, logging, ranching and farming characterize the Old West, the New West is structured around activities centered on outdoor pursuits, recreation, and tourism. During the late 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s, changing attitudes toward the environment and nature transformed rural mountainous settings. People were increasingly drawn to these areas because of their relatively high scenic amenities and other “quality of life” considerations (Cromartie and Wardwell 1999; Nelson 1999; Meinig 2004). Unlike the Old West, most migrants moving to the New West were largely motivated by non-economic goals and personal lifestyle preferences.

Identifiable forces emerged in the post-war era that influenced the development of the New West. According to geographer William Travis (2007), three distinct processes facilitated change within the region, which he categorized into driving, enabling, and shaping forces. These influences are largely interrelated and help to explain the western rural rebound movement during the late 1960s and 1970s. Although these forces were both long-standing and recent in the area, their convergence during the post-war era contributed to the formation of new local and regional geographies.

Driving Forces

During the late 1960s and 1970s, there were a number of social, economic, and political processes that fueled growth in the New West. Population growth, economic development and employment opportunities were primary driving forces that influenced new settlement patterns in the region. Changing lifestyle preferences also played an important role in people's decision to relocate in the West. Finally, the increasing value placed upon outdoor and scenic amenities was largely responsible for driving regional growth trends at this time.

Population shifts during the post-war era were directed toward the West's Mountain states (Masnick 2001). During the 1960s and 1970s, the eight-state region, including Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming, grew at a rate that far exceeded the rest of the country. For instance, during the 1960s, the population in the Mountainous West grew by 21 percent, while the nation's average growth rate was 13 percent (Shumway 2003). During the 1970s, the Mountainous West increased its population by 37 percent, compared to only 12 percent for the rest of the United States (Shumway 2003, 96).

During the demographic shifts of the 1960s and 1970s, researchers were surprised to note that more people were moving to the West's sparsely populated, non-metropolitan counties (Beale 1975; Cromartie and Wardwell 1999). For the first time, traditional models favoring urbanization were reversed suggesting a "decentralization" of metropolitan areas was underway (Johnson and Beale 1994; Shumway 2003). In contrast to earlier in the century, when natural resource extraction was a main force driving

growth patterns, New West migration was encouraged by the region's rural setting and natural amenities (Beyers and Nelson 2000; Rasker and Hansen 2000).

Like the other Mountain states, Montana experienced a period of population adjustment between 1950 and 1980 (Figure 42). From 1950 to 1980, nearly 200,000 people were added to the state, totaling 786,690 by 1980 (Jobes 2000; U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000). When growth occurred in the state, it was selective and favored the areas with relatively high scenic value. In particular, western counties with mountainous settings experienced rapid periods of growth. For example, the populations of Gallatin, Missoula, and Flathead counties doubled between 1950 and 1980 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000). In contrast, the populations of many counties located in eastern Montana remained stable or decreased during this time (Wyckoff 1991).

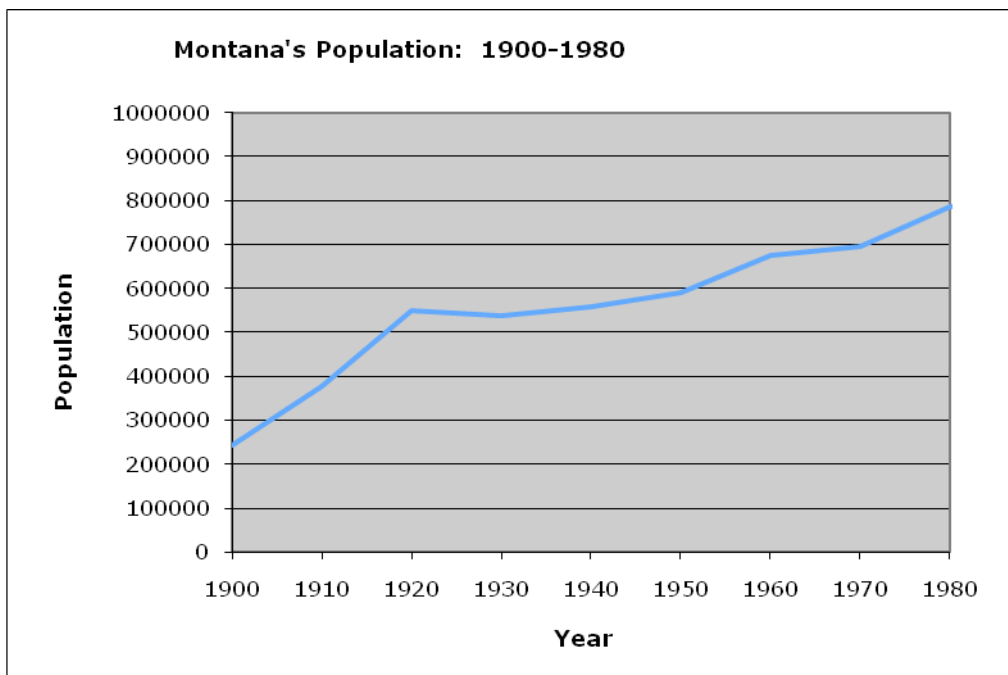


Figure 42. Montana's Population, 1900-1980. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce. State-level Series.

For areas like Park and Sweet Grass counties, the increased value of scenic amenities helped to stabilize the fluctuating economy. Unlike some western counties, neither Park nor Sweet Grass County gained a significant number of people, nor did they lose a dramatic portion of their populations like some eastern counties. Overall, Park County's population slightly increased from 1950 to 1980 (Figure 43). In 1950, approximately 12,000 people lived in the area. By 1960, Park County's population increased to 13,168, but by 1980 this slightly dropped to 12,869 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1980). In comparison, the population of Sweet Grass County remained relatively stagnant between 1950 and 1980. Between 1950 and 1970, the county population gradually declined from 3,621 to 2,980. Over the next decade, Sweet

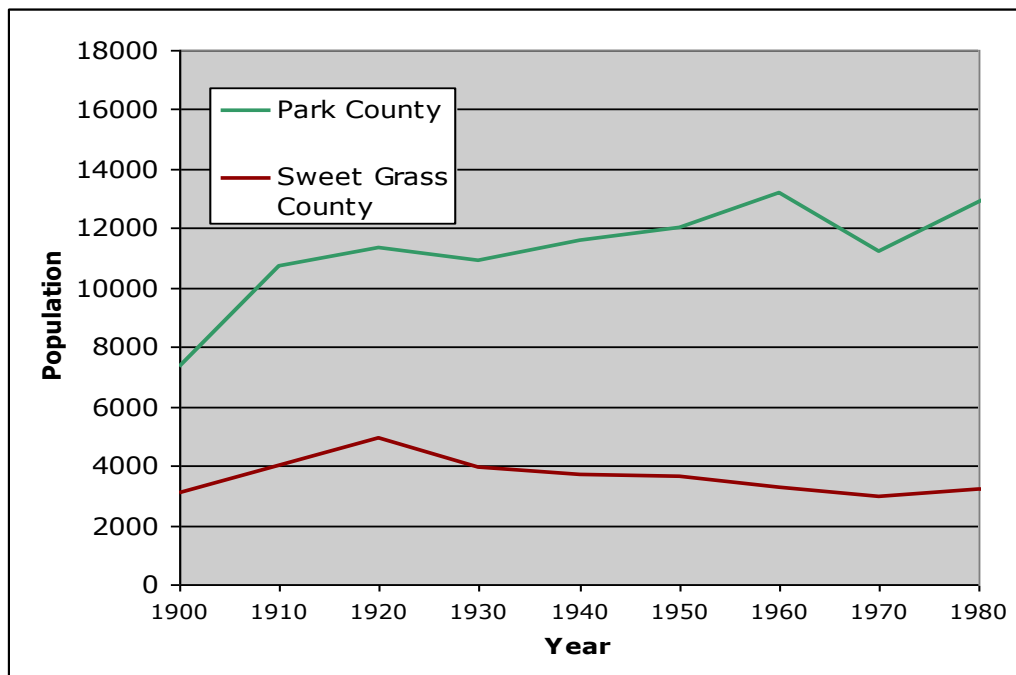


Figure 43. Population in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-1980. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce. County-Level Series.

Grass County's population slightly rebounded and by 1980, 3,216 people were living in the county (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1980).

In Park County, the growth that occurred between 1950 and 1980 was directed toward the county's non-urban areas. Districts in Park County located outside the city limits of Livingston were considered non-urban. In 1950, only 36 percent of the county residents were rural. In 1960, the non-urban county population slightly increased to 37.5 percent (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1960). By 1970, Park County's non-urban population was 38.5 percent and by 1980, nearly 45 percent of the population lived beyond city boundaries (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1970; 1980). Growth in Park County's non-urban areas was a trend reflected across Montana, where the state's rural population increased from 36.3 percent in 1960 to 47.4 percent by 1980 (Jobes 2000).

Rural county population growth implied widespread changes were occurring in local and regional economies. Writing extensively about Montana's migration patterns, Patrick Jobes argued rural county growth in the post-war era was a result of development in non-traditional sectors of the economy (Jobes et al. 1991; Jobes 2000, 46). During this period, employment in the extractive industries remained stagnant or rose very little, while the recreation, leisure, and construction industries steadily grew. Development in the state's rural communities led to an increase in other sectors of the economy as well, such as the health, food, business, and professional services.

Since the 1950s, communities able to diversify their economic resource base have fared better than those areas dependent on traditional industries. A more diversified economy was often less vulnerable to fluctuations in any single industry (Duane 1999;

Power and Barrett 2001). In addition, an economy consisting of multiple industries provided more employment options, larger financial revenue, and more local opportunities for economic development.

The shift from extractive industries to service businesses was often generated by an area's scenic amenities (Nelson 1999; Beyers and Nelson 2000; Power and Barrett 2001). Montana's areas with high natural amenities became increasingly important destinations for tourists, hunters, fishing enthusiasts, retirees, and residents who valued the accessibility to outdoor activities and a high quality of life (Wyckoff 1991, 31). Consequently, the rise in visitors, seasonal residents, and migrants led to an increasing demand for certain services, such as lodging, food and drink, retail, and entertainment. Growth in the non-traditional sectors of the economy expanded the local employment and resource base, despite a decline in the extractive industries.

Similar to other settings in western Montana, Park County's comparatively high scenic value buoyed the local economy during the post-war era. In 1950, over one third of the population was employed in agriculture and various traditional extractive industries (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950). At the same time, 26 percent of the population worked in the transportation and utility industry. More than 10 percent of the workforce was employed in construction and manufacturing and nearly 8 percent of the population was involved in government-related work. The remaining portion of the population worked in services, trade, and finance (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1970).

By the late 1960s and 1970s, there was a noticeable rise in the non-traditional sector of Park County's economy. For example in 1970, extractive industries like

agriculture and mining decreased to 24 percent of the workforce (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis 2008) (Figure 44). Likewise, employment in the transportation and utility sector dropped from previous years to comprise 16 percent of the population, while jobs in construction and manufacturing declined to 9 percent of the workforce. During this time period, government-related work increased to 12 percent of the employment base, and jobs in the services, trade, and finance sector increased to nearly half of the employed population.

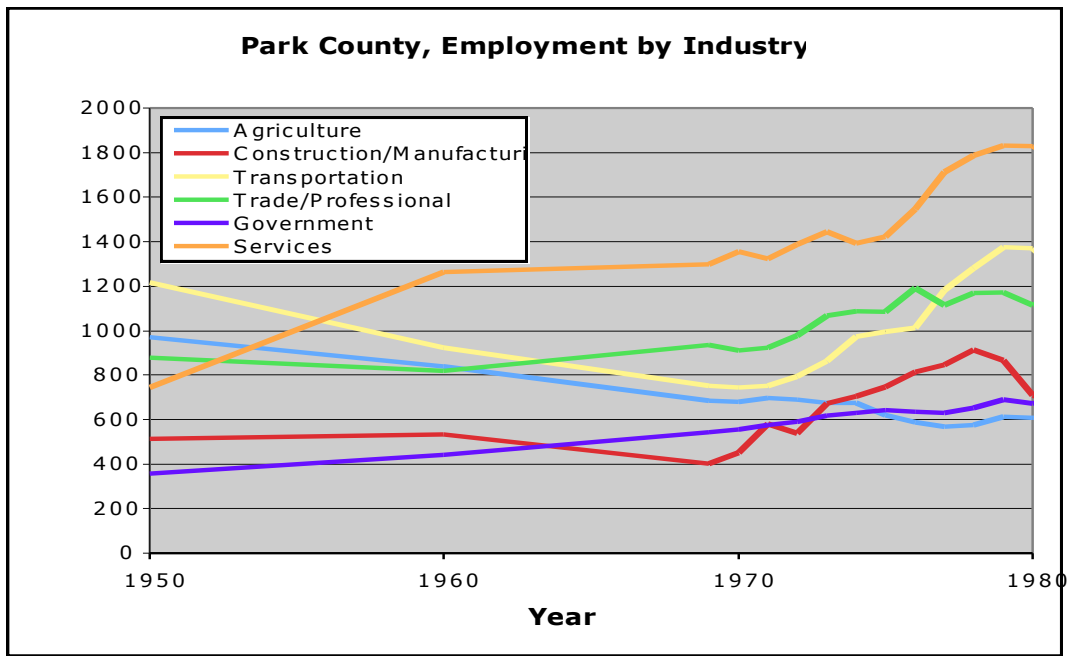


Figure 44. Employment by industry in Park County, 1950-1980. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis Data, County-Level Series.

During the 1970s, the decrease in Park County’s transportation sector was largely a result of rescaling in the nation’s railroad industry. For almost a century, the Northern Pacific Railroad served as a key employer in Park County to staff its depot, shipping and maintenance and overhaul yards, and administrative offices. Beginning in the 1950s and

into the 1960s however, a combination of factors, such as decreasing freight traffic and increasing automobile ownership, led to the widespread consolidation of the railroad industry. As a result, in 1970, the Northern Pacific merged with the Burlington Railroad to create the Burlington Northern Railroad. Employment at the railroad's facilities in Livingston slightly increased after the merger. However this proved temporary and in 1979, the railroad closed its depot and maintenance yards. Although Burlington Northern maintained administrative offices in the town until after 1980, nearly 500 people were laid off by the company's closure (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 1971; History of Park County 1984) (Figure 45). By this time, passenger train service in the West was declining as other forms of transportation grew, such as automobile and air travel.



Figure 45. Last Northern Pacific Railroad train to leave Livingston, 1970. Source: History of Park County, 1984.

Despite decreases in the transportation industry, Park County's construction industry did well during the 1970s. A high demand for commercial and residential building in the area spurred growth in this sector. Manufacturing also increased at this time, peaking in 1977 and 1978, when there were four lumber mills and lumber-related

businesses in Livingston (History of Park County 1984). A moderate rise in the services sector during the 1970s paralleled the region's expansion into other forms of employment. Jobs in retail, entertainment, real estate, consulting, insurance, and dining provided opportunities beyond the region's traditional staples.

Many Park County residents viewed the integration of non-traditional industries as a key process in determining the direction of the county's economic future. Concerns over the consolidation of the Northern Pacific Railroad, a declining agricultural sector, and limited job opportunities for young people generated entrepreneurial activities in tourism and recreation (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1971). According to a county publication printed in 1971, the growing popularity of fishing, hiking, hunting, and other outdoor activities within the area presented viable economic opportunities (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1971). The report stated, "Park County has a high potential for development of vacation cabins, cottages, and homesites... for recreational and sport activities." Furthermore, "The availability of excellent hunting and fishing opportunities is a great feature for development... the availability of outstanding scenery and opportunities for hiking and pack trips make Park County almost ideal [for development]" (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1971, 12).

Similar to many places in central and eastern Montana, Sweet Grass County remained economically dependent on the agricultural sector. In 1950, over 60 percent of the county's population was involved in agriculture or other related traditional industries (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950). Less than 5 percent of the workforce was involved in transportation and utility and 7 percent of the population was in construction and

manufacturing. Less than 8 percent of the employment base was involved in government-related work and the remaining 20 percent of the workforce was in the services, trade, and finance sector (Figure 46).

Employment figures for Sweet Grass County’s major industries slightly varied over the next twenty years. By 1970, nearly 40 percent of the county was still involved in agriculture and other extractive industries (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis 2008). Jobs in transportation comprised 3 percent of the total employment base and the construction and manufacturing employed a little over 5 percent of the population. Government related-work constituted 15 percent of the workforce and employment in the services, trade, and finance sector increased to 37 percent of the working population.

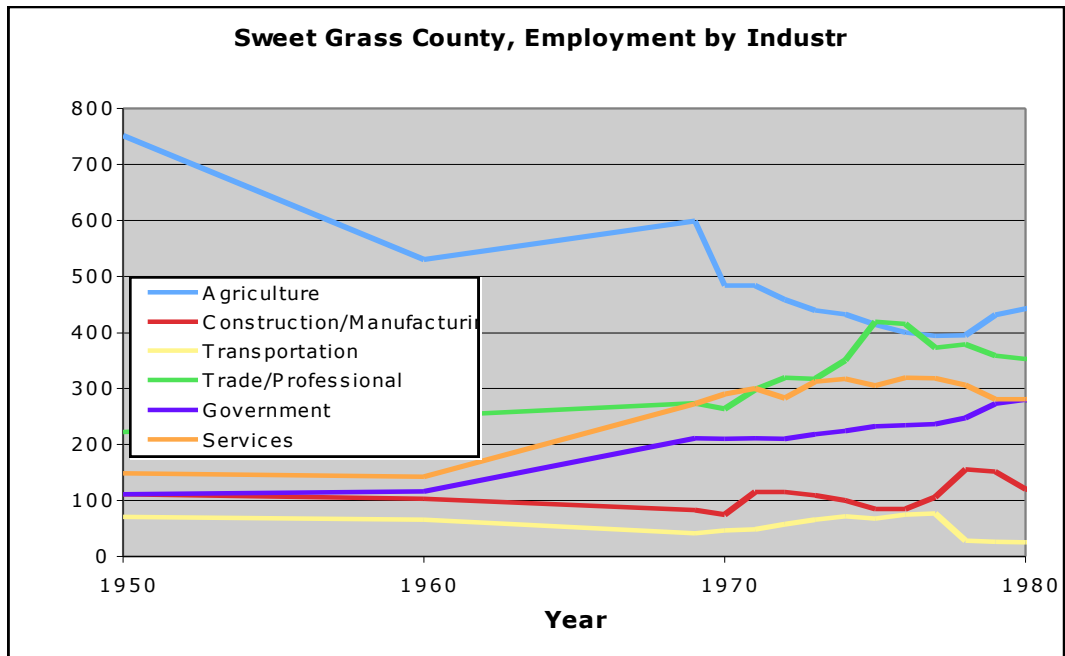


Figure 46. Employment by industry in Sweet Grass County, 1950-1980. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis Data, County-Level Series.

In Sweet Grass County, like many areas in southwest and central Montana, the decline in the agricultural sector suggested broad changes within the industry. Improvements in mechanization dramatically reduced the time and labor traditionally required on the ranch and farm. Tractors, harvesters, and trucks made work on the ranch faster, easier, and in many ways more efficient. In 1950, it took approximately 6 ½ hours to produce 100 pounds of wheat, but by 1980, it took less than 3 hours to produce the same amount of crop (Economic Research Service 2000). Consequently, fewer workers were needed.

Many ranchers in Sweet Grass County continued to shift from sheep to cattle raising. This transition in management paralleled a larger decline in the demand for sheep products during the post-war era. By contrast, the demand for beef products continued to rise after 1950 (Wyckoff and Hansen 1999, 350). Between 1950 and 1980, cattle prices reached historic records, first in 1952 at \$205 per head and later in 1974 at \$325 per head (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1978). In Sweet Grass County, livestock populations reflected trends within the market. In 1950, the county reported 59,982 sheep and 36,827 cattle and by 1964, sheep numbers had dropped to 38,575 and cattle numbers had increased to over 47,500. By 1978 however, cattle outnumbered sheep nearly two to one with 43,114 cattle and 20,679 sheep in the county (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950; 1970; 1980).

Generational turnover also explained the decrease in the agricultural sector during the post-war era. With more employment opportunities emerging in non-traditional sectors of the economy, many children of ranchers opted to work off the ranch (Haggerty

2005). Consequently, there were fewer young people to replace the ranchers retiring or working part-time. In Sweet Grass County, a significant portion of the population included retired residents (Big Timber Planning Board 1978, 7). According to census records, 17 percent of the county's population was retired, compared to a state average of 10 percent (Economic Demographic Study 1976). A majority of the retirees were former local ranchers or agriculturalists. With fewer ranchers entering the business than leaving, Sweet Grass County officials were paying higher annual expenses in services for the retired community and receiving less revenue from agriculture.

Many city officials viewed Sweet Grass County's reliance on agriculture as problematic. According to one county publication, "Continued dependence on agriculture for [economic] support during this period of pressure on ranchers may lead to some degree of economic stagnation for the community, fewer year-round, full-time jobs, less spending and investments, and... a smaller number of people that the local economy could support at a given level of familial prosperity" (Big Timber Planning Board 1978, 10). County officials therefore encouraged the expansion and diversification of the local employment base. They concluded, "enhancing the overall economic conditions [of the county]... will result, should supplementary stimuli and economic resource development occur" (Big Timber Planning Board 1978, 10).

Like Park County, economic development in Sweet Grass County would largely result from increasing value on the area's outdoor and recreational amenities. Though gradual at first, growth in both counties was steadily encouraged by changing lifestyle preferences that affected where people were choosing to reside. High environmental

quality and pace of life were key variables in people's decisions to move to western rural areas, like the Crazy Mountain region (Rudzitis 1996; 1999). Other factors, such as climate, low crime rate, less congestion, less traffic, and air quality increasingly influenced development within the region (Swanson 2001). Collectively, these variables redirected growth to rural mountainous settings such as the Crazies.

Enabling Forces

In addition to driving forces, other changes facilitated movement to the New West. Travis (2007) notes how changes in communication and information technologies fundamentally redefined spatial relationships in many portions of the region. Following World War II, the flow of information, people, and services was less determined by physical constraints as new technologies reduced the friction of distance (Gude et al. 2006). Consequently, location became negotiable as more people opted for longer commutes or to work from home. The boundaries between urban and rural areas became increasingly porous as more people moved out of the cities and into the periphery.

During the post-war era, a rise in personal automobile ownership reflected the country's growing affluence and mobility. A stable American economy and the availability of affordable vehicles resulted in a sharp rise in vehicle ownership (Meinig 2004). In 1955, eight and a half million vehicles were annually sold in the country. By 1975, more than eleven million vehicles were annually sold, suggesting that four out of five Americans owned a car (Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association 1988). By 1980, America's entry into the motorized age and the versatility it allowed was broadly restructuring the country's economic and population geography (Meinig 2004, 103).

Government investments also largely explained settlement patterns of the New West. Indeed, much of the enabling of western development comes directly from national, state, and local governments (Markusen, 1987; Travis 2007, 37). Often in the form of public facilities, water supply systems, and other services, government subsidies made it possible for people to move to areas outside the traditional confines of urban boundaries. Utility poles, water projects, telephone lines and most importantly, new transportation routes allowed people to decide where they wanted to live and work in the New West. Each new technology was revolutionary in its own way and worked enormous unforeseen changes in shaping the country's developing landscape (Meinig 2004, 33).

After the 1950s, government investments in highways and roads reconfigured development patterns in many areas in the Mountainous West. In 1956, the Interstate Highway System Act was passed, authorizing federal and state governments to construct more than 42,000 miles of limited access highways across the country (Malone and Roeder 1976). In addition, the government improved and expanded existing roads and routes. In Montana, more than 1,000 miles of paved road were built under the Interstate Highway System (U.S. Dept. of Transportation 2006). Improvements in the state's transportation network also encouraged travel away from the main traffic corridors and into more localized areas.

Similar to other areas in Montana, the construction and completion of several major transportation routes near the Crazy Mountains enabled travel within the region. Situated on the east side of the Crazies, connecting Harlowton to Big Timber was State

Route 19. In 1963, this road was paved and expanded north to Malta, and became U.S. Highway 191 (U.S. Road Atlas 1954; 1961; 1963). Paralleling the west side of the Crazy Mountains was U.S. Highway 89. This north-south route connected Great Falls and White Sulphur Springs to Livingston and points south. U.S. Highway 89 originally replaced U.S. Highway 87W in 1934. This highway was improved during the late 1950s to better facilitate travel through the Shields Valley (Droz 2003).

One of the largest transportation projects in Montana, and the one with the most impact on the Crazy Mountains, was the construction of Interstate 90. Running east-to-west along Montana's southern periphery, Interstate 90 covered the length of the state and measured over 550 miles (U.S. Dept. of Transportation 2006). In 1958, I-90 began to replace Highway 10, a smaller two-lane road that went directly through both Big Timber and Livingston. In comparison, I-90 by passed Big Timber by a half mile to the south. By 1960, highway development on the east, west, and south side of the Crazies was largely complete and allowed better access into the mountains from distant locales.

Shaping Forces

A number of additional forces emerged in the post-war era that affected how the New West was developed. According to William Travis (2007), forces shaping development in the region included the objectives of individual property owners, a changing agricultural sector, growing pressures for land use planning, and changing cultural values towards public lands. These processes collectively impacted the visible and cultural landscape of the New West.

One of the most visual manifestations of the New West was in rural residential housing patterns (Jackson and Kuhlken 2006). Beginning in the 1950s, housing developments gradually spread beyond the metropolitan fringe and into the non-urban periphery. Recognized as an extension of suburbanization, scholars referred to this type of movement as exurbanization (Irving 1966; Duane 1999; Travis 2007). Exurban developments were characterized by their dispersed, low-density housing near the rural/urban interface (Carruthers and Vias 2005). Also known as exurbs, the developments commonly relied on the infrastructure of nearby cities, if not for daily work, then for urban services such as airports, hospitals, entertainment, and banking. Geographer Timothy Duane (1999) notes that exurbanization was associated with an ongoing shift of rural economies from a commodities-oriented, natural resource-extractive industrial base to a service-oriented, amenity-driven base.

First described by sociological journalist A.C. Spector (1955), exurbanites were often seeking an escape from urban ennui by moving to idyllic rural settings. The growing popularity of exurban developments during the post-war era was therefore indicative of broad social and cultural changes at the national, regional, and local levels. Exurban developments attracted people who wanted to live in areas with high environmental quality, yet remain within the proximity of urban conveniences. Exurbanites were often young, wealthy professionals with a different background from local residents and landowners. The complex interplay between new migrants and longtime residents was a defining feature of the exurban landscape.

In the Mountainous West, exurban developments were commonly represented in ranch-style residential subdivisions. Also known as agricultural subdivisions or ranchettes, this type of housing pattern often consisted of subdivided lands formerly used for ranching or farming (Gude et al. 2006). Ranchette developments were characterized by low-density residential lots of 5 to 20 acres. Rural residential developments of more than 100 acres were often referred to as hobby ranches because they were sizeable enough to accommodate a few horses and a small head of cattle (Jackson and Kuhlken 2006). Although hobby ranchers frequently maintained part-time working operations, the productivity and economic viability of the ranch was not a primary concern (Travis 2007).

Subdivided agricultural developments reflected the increasing value of amenity-oriented rural landscapes. Lured by what Paul Starrs and others have referred to as “ranching fundamentalism,” ranchette owners and hobby ranchers were attracted to the rural idyll of the ranching culture and landscape (Starrs 1998, 78). Although ranching rarely afforded a profitable return, it was the philosophy and aesthetics of rural living that appealed most to the amenity owner. This type of landowner was often not economically dependent on the land nor its resources as a source of income. Consequently, newcomers brought a different set of land management practices and “rural politics” to an area and these frequently clashed with the traditional views of longtime residents (Travis 2007, 118). As a result, a culturally polarized landscape commonly emerged between traditional working ranches and newer, exurban agricultural developments.

During the late 1960s and 1970s, the presence of amenity ranches in Park and Sweet Grass counties influenced the local and regional economy. At this time, increasing farm values in the region reflected real estate trends favoring rural scenic settings. In Park County, the price of the average farm increased from \$71,428 in 1959 to nearly \$160,000 by 1969. In 1978, the average value per farm in Park County was over \$580,000 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1980). The price per acre paralleled this rising trend, increasing from \$52 in 1964 to nearly \$270 in 1978. During this time land values increased in Sweet Grass County as well. In 1959, the average farm was valued at \$78,507 and by 1969, this increased to \$163,515. By 1978, the average value per farm in Sweet Grass County was \$447,405 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1980) (Figure 47). The price per acre in the county also rose, from \$38 in 1964 to over \$150 in 1978.

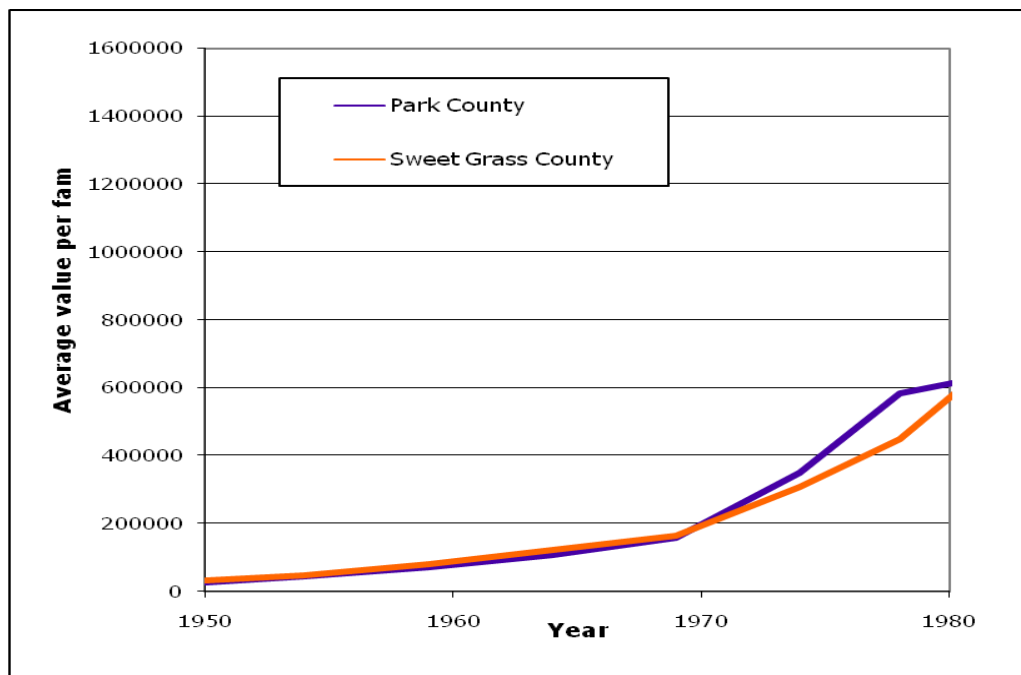


Figure 47. Average farmland values in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1950-1980. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, County-Level Series.

Paralleling rising farm values was an increase in the size of the average farm in Park and Sweet Grass counties. After 1950, the increase in average farm size implied the consolidation of smaller agricultural operations by larger ranches and farms (Haggerty 2003). In Park County, the average farm was 1,490 acres in 1950 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950). By 1964, the county's average farm contained slightly more than 2,000 acres. Between 1970 and 1980, the average farm size ranged from 2,000 to 2,300 acres (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950; 1970; 1980). Though less dramatic, the size of the average farm in Sweet Grass County also grew during this time. In 1950, the average farm in the county contained 2,226 acres. In 1964, the average farm size increased to 3,183 acres. Between 1970 and 1980, the size of the average farm in Sweet Grass County ranged from 2,900 acres to 3,100 acres (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950; 1970; 1980) (Figure 48).

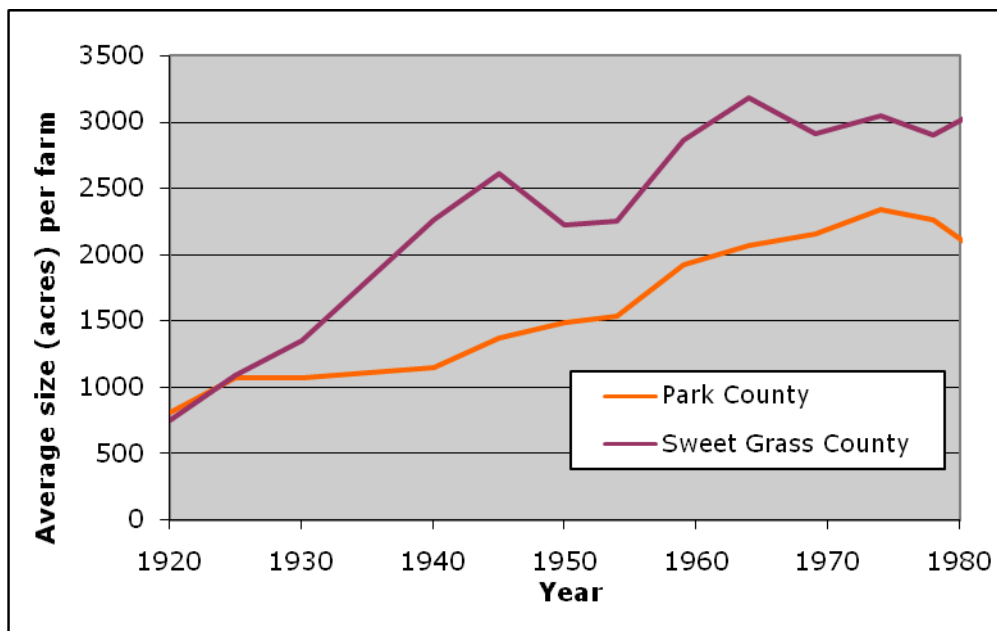


Figure 48. Average size of farms in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1920-1980. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, County-Level Series.

In contrast to the increasing value and size of each farm was a decline in the numbers of farms in Park and Sweet Grass counties. For example in Park County, the number of farms decreased from 564 in 1950 to 376 in 1978 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950; 1980). During the same time, the number of farms in Sweet Grass County dropped from 384 farms to 284 farms (Figure 49). The drop in farm numbers despite an increase in farm size strongly suggested that land consolidation was a major force shaping the region's ranching landscape (Haggerty 2005). During the post-war period, large agricultural outfits generally operated on company contract sales. It was often difficult for small farms and ranches to compete with larger outfits that specialized in a single crop or product. It was common therefore for smaller agricultural operations to be absorbed into larger ranching businesses.

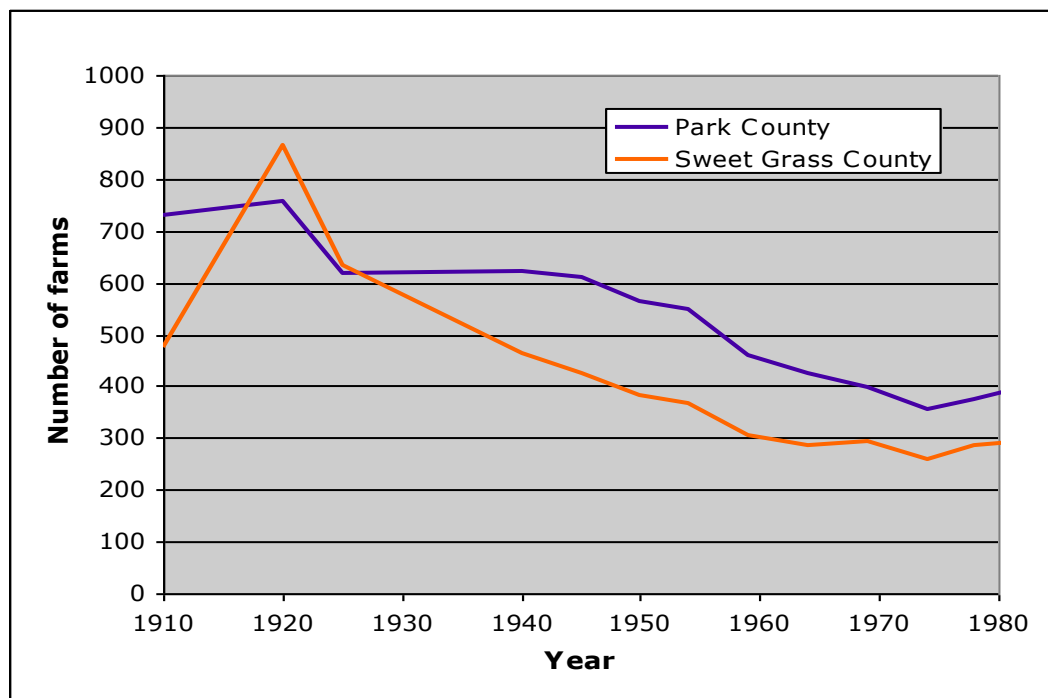


Figure 49. Average number of farms, Park and Sweet Grass County, 1910-1980. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, County-Level Series.

An increase in the number of exurban developments around the Crazy Mountains also reflected development trends in the region. An inventory of the region's well site permits is illustrative of changes in residential growth patterns. According to Montana's Groundwater Information Center (GWIC), the number of well sites excavated in the immediate vicinity of the Crazy Mountains significantly increased after 1960 (Figure 50). Collectively, between 1900 and 1959, roughly 91 permits were issued for residential wells sites within ten miles of the national forest boundaries (Groundwater Information Center 2007). By comparison, between 1960 and 1970, 33 permits were issued, and between 1971 and 1980, 57 well sites were permitted within the immediate area. Most of the development that occurred during this time was in the Shields and Upper Yellowstone valleys, located along the western and southern periphery of the range.

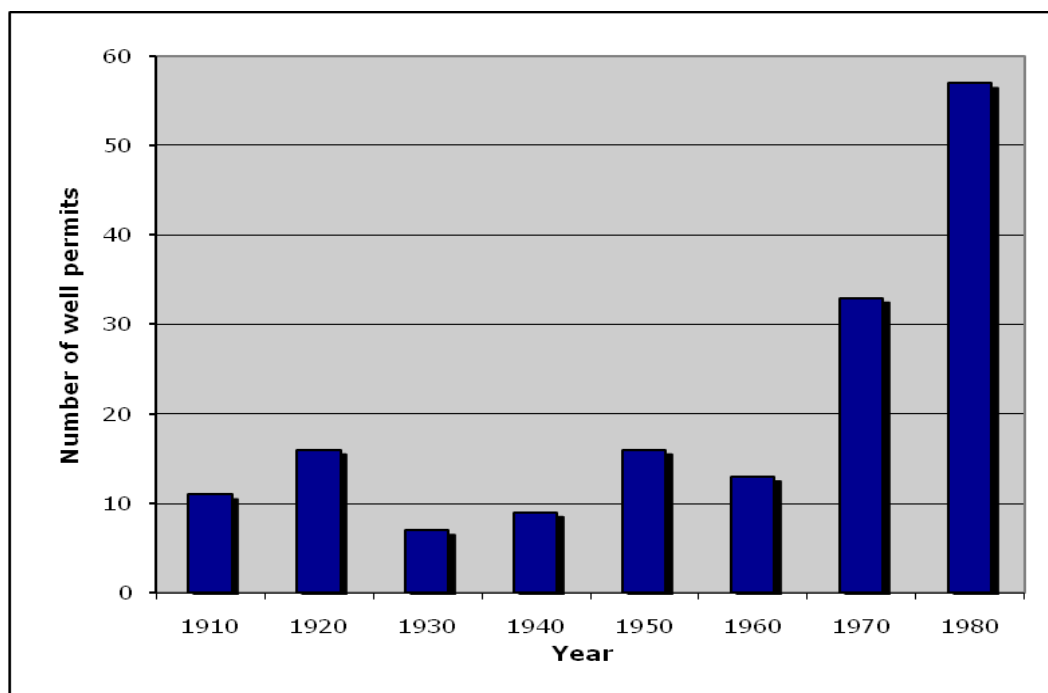


Figure 50. Number of well permits granted within Crazy Mountain region, (Park and Sweet Grass counties), 1910-1980. Source: Author (2008).

Beyond the restructuring of the local agricultural sector, there were other forces that shaped development of the New West. The financial uncertainties of farming and ranching encouraged shifts to other land uses. Volatile markets and rising operating expenditures resulted in increased losses for many farmers and ranchers. For instance, during the 1960s, national agricultural prices were stable at around \$1.50 per bushel of wheat (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1978). By 1973, exports to countries like Russia increased average yearly selling wheat prices to \$4.24 per bushel. Yet, during the late 1970s and 1980s, agriculture surpluses and increased competition from abroad dropped grain prices to as low as \$2.50 per bushel.

For many of Montana's smaller ranchers and farmers, it was becoming increasingly difficult to make a living on agriculture alone. According to an article published in 1971, agriculturalists statewide were being "pressed out" by rising costs, bigger operations, and low returns (Ripley 1971). One farmer lamented, "It just gets tougher every year. Expenses go up and incomes goes down... We're losing money, every year we go deeper... and nobody, nowhere, is doing nothing" (Ripley 1971, 16). In an effort to avoid debt or worse, bankruptcy, many ranchers sold their property to other ranching businesses, developers, or amenity owners.

Another catalyst contributing to ranchland turnover during the post-war era involved family dynamics. When given the choice, many children of ranchers chose to work off the ranch and pursue other careers. Furthermore, the financial opportunities and modern lifestyle of more urban areas increasingly drew succeeding generations away from the ranch (Starrs 1998). Researchers who have studied the evolution of ranching

families conclude that the point of inheritance is especially vulnerable to sale (Haggerty 2005; Travis 2007). Surviving family members unable or unwilling to pay off the ranch's debt are forced to liquidate the property and its assets. Frequently, it is the third and fourth generations that decide to sell the ranchland to developers, other ranchers, or out-of-state amenity purchasers.

Common cultural perceptions of western rural geographies largely influenced the region's development. Strongly developed personal predispositions toward rural settings shaped the landscape in new and often contradictory ways (Jobes 2000). Newcomers attracted to the scenic qualities of rural settings wanted open space, wildlife, and panoramic views, yet when they arrived they often expressed a disdain for the rurality to which they were attracted (Travis 2007, 188). Consequently, new migrants incurred the hostility of many longtime residents, particularly with respect to land use and land management practices.

For many traditional residents of Montana and the West, the importation of new ideas threatened to fundamentally redefine their way of life. This was especially evident in areas historically dependent on extractive industries. In Big Timber and Livingston for example, most longtime residents were opposed to change and feared too much external influence would disrupt community relations. According to the Big Timber Planning Board (1978),

[There] is a deep-seated sense of “natives” and “outsiders.” There has followed in turn a concern that the “outsiders”, whether recent immigrants to Big Timber or people living outside the community, will exert undue pressure to effect too much change to the local lifestyle, something many “natives” dread above all else... conformity to the community’s values is an important feature of Big Timber. This involves not only personal conformity to what is perceived to be the values and expectations of others, but also an imposition on others of strictly conventional behavior based on one’s own mores.

(Big Timber Planning Board, 1978)

In the Crazy Mountain region and in other similar settings, the contrast between older ‘native’ residents and newer ‘outside’ migrants rested on inherent cultural and economic differences. For many locals, hobby ranches polarized community relations by removing the agricultural viability and traditional purpose of ranchlands. Many newcomers were less reliant on the land’s productivity for income and were more interested in the environmental amenities of the property. Consequently, amenity ranches tended to center around recreation and outdoor activities, such as horseback riding, fly-fishing, and hiking rather than traditional ranch activities.

The uneven distribution of capital further strained relations between Old and New West residents. This was best exemplified with the exploitation of the local labor force. Many amenity ranches hired local residents as ranch managers, wranglers, and ranch hands. As a longtime rancher in Montana, William Fairhurst stated to the *New York Times*, “The small ones [ranches] are having to sell out. The money’s gone and they have to hire out to the big operators. Ranching’s all they know... The corporation is the land baron and the little man is a serf...it is a cold thing- kind of a cruel thing. Some of them look on their hired hands about like they do their livestock” (Ripley 1971, 16).

Another issue that affected the development of amenity settings like the Crazy Mountains was land use planning. During the 1970s, both longtime locals and newly arrived migrants viewed growth in Montana as reaching a point of “unrestrained hysteria” (Schneider 1974). As one article noted, “The big news, that Montana is still undeveloped, has leaked out. Now, the rush to develop land for homesites is off and running- too far, too fast and in the wrong direction” (Schneider 1974, 26). Indeed, one study by Montana Department of Intergovernmental Relations indicated that only one-third of subdivision developments in the state’s western counties were in compliance with current regulations (Richards 1975).

Public concern over western Montana’s rampant development led to state legislative action. In 1973, the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act passed, requiring each local government to adopt and enforce development regulations that complied with the new state law. According to the new law, certain subdivisions and developments had to prepare an environmental assessment report on the impacted area, including anticipated affects on the physical environment and surrounding community. According to Montana’s Planning Board, it was necessary to consider the “intelligent utilization” of land resources and the future development patterns of a community (Richards 1975).

Despite the concerns of local citizens and state officials, the Subdivision Act of 1974 did little to deter overall development. More often than not, proposed developments were approved quickly and with few added stipulations. Enabled by local ‘growth machines,’ construction projects were often supported if not outright encouraged. Moreover, there were exemptions for certain developments and building projects. For

example, parcels that contained more than 20 acres were exempt from both local and state review (Maxwell 1993). By maximizing the size or location of developments, subdividers avoided compliance with state and county building controls. In addition, there was rarely enough time to hear public comments and grievances. As one developer noted, the development is usually already in its later planning stages before anyone is asked to comment on the impact of building (Schneider 1974, 28).

In the late 1970s, Park and Sweet Grass counties published comprehensive growth plans to manage future development. In accordance with Montana's Subdivision law, the plans were intended to guide county growth over the course of the next three decades. Included within the Park and Sweet Grass county plans were community objectives and countywide goals. One of the key concerns expressed in both plans was the conservation of the region's productive agricultural lands. Proposed developments and other construction activities were still encouraged, yet projects were to maintain the land's productive viability (Big Timber Planning Board 1978). According to the county officials, planning for building projects and other developments had to consider the area's distinctive rural character. Although the growth policies for Park and Sweet Grass counties were generally directed toward development within the city, regulations emphasized the countywide agricultural landscape.

How the New West was shaped and developed during the post-war period is additionally explained by changing attitudes toward nature and the environment. During the 1950s, but particularly during the 1960s and 1970s, the environmental movement reached momentous proportions in America. Numerous factors contributed to this, such

as Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962), the growing presence of environmental advocacy groups like the Sierra Club, and the creation of Earth Day (1970). Reflecting popular cultural values at the time, Congress passed several pieces of important legislation. Between 1955 and 1980, the Clean Air Act (1955, 1963), Wilderness Act (1964), the Clean Water Act (1972), Endangered Species Act (1973), and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (1976) were passed by Congress (Allin 1982; Douglass 2000). Most importantly, in 1970, environmental advocacy efforts by government officials, lobbyists, and activists culminated with the establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

A number of acts passed during this period of environmental legislation were directly applicable to the management and use of the Crazy Mountains and other national forests in Montana. The first of these was the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act (MUSY), passed in 1960 (Douglass 2000). MUSY was significant in the management of the Crazy Mountains because in addition to identifying the various types of land use, MUSY specified which type was allowed on the public lands. The legislation stated, "the national forests shall be administered for outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, and wildlife and fish purposes" and "that no single use can predominate" (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1960). Additionally, Congress passed the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act in 1974 and the National Forest Management Act in 1976, both of which called for revised federal resource management of public forestlands (Douglass 2000).

The legislation passed during this period of environmental advocacy helped establish a framework for the future management of the Crazy Mountains. Over the years, the Forest Service developed a variety of administrative plans and proposals conducive to the sustainable use of the range (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1979; 1987; 1991; 2007a; 2007c). The first of these management plans was the roadless designation of certain areas of national forest. In 1972, and again in 1977, the Forest Service inventoried roadless areas in the Crazies as part of their assessment of the nation's "pristine" areas (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1979). Altogether, more than 70,000 acres in the southern half of the range were included in the roadless designation.

Designated roadless areas were some of the country's most intact natural settings. Roadless areas showed minimum signs of human impact and were thus closed off to future development. As such, roadless areas were also frequent precursors to a wilderness area designation. Wilderness areas have specific limitations on certain types of land uses and prohibit motorized vehicles, mining, logging, and some other activities (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1987). Consequently, many local landowners and land users in the Crazy Mountains were increasingly concerned that a wilderness designation of the range would limit their activities in the region.

To the relief of some local residents, wilderness designation of the Crazy Mountains was a complicated process. The presence of the checkerboard pattern of private and public ownership proved enormously problematic to federal officials. As demonstrated with national forest boundaries and the area's roadless system, federal designations of wilderness would need to accommodate the alternating sections of private

land. As one Forest Service employee summarized in an agency report, “The chief impediment to the area’s manageability as wilderness is the presence of private land within the boundaries... This land is owned by many different individuals and its plurality of ownership would render any future efforts for land exchange very difficult” (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1987). Consequently, the Forest Service did not advance a wilderness area proposal for the Crazy Mountains at this time.

Between 1950 and 1980, government policies, regulations, and management plans reworked the political and legal landscape of the Crazy Mountains. Collectively, federal controls and procedures reflected changing patterns in the region’s land use and resource management. Moreover, shifting value systems reconsidered the Crazy Mountains as an amenity landscape rather than a venue for resource extraction. Within the context of land management, the needs of ranchers, agriculturalists, and the extractive industries were frequently challenged by the recognized demands of outdoor enthusiasts and recreationalists. The relationship between different types of landowners in the Crazies reflected larger conflicts between the Old and New West and began to increasingly define the region’s emerging cultural landscape.

Case Studies

During the post-war era, longtime landowners in the Crazy Mountain region were acutely aware of the transition into the New West. Similar to many settings in the Mountainous West, the rural rebound of the 1960s and 1970s infused residents of the Crazy Mountain region with new social, political, economic, and cultural values. New

migrants, attracted to the rurality and amenity landscape of the Crazies, arrived with environmental values that were frequently at odds with longtime residents. The convergence of different value systems was a main force shaping landownership and land use patterns in the Crazy Mountains between 1950 and 1980.

Landownership Chronology, 1951-1980

Site 1:

By 1950, the Van Cleve family had been living near Big Timber Creek for nearly thirty years. As traditional ranchers, the Van Cleves had purchased large amounts of land in the southern Crazies to raise sheep and cattle. In Site 1, the Van Cleves were the only private landholders by 1980. Previously, in 1942 and 1943, the Van Cleves purchased sections 3,5, and 7 from Kesselheim Incorporated (Figure 51). The remaining section of private land in Site 1, section 9, was not included in the Van Cleve property. Kesselheim Inc. retained ownership of section 9 until 1959, when it was sold to Robert Horatio Burns, an individual investor. In 1972, Burns sold section 9 to Venture Limited, a limited partnership company, who owned it briefly before transferring it to the Nature Conservancy in 1975. Soon after, the Nature Conservancy transferred section 9 to the Forest Service. By 1980, sections 4, 6, 8, 9 and 10 comprised the national forest lands in Site 1.

After 1950, the need to further consolidate the national forest lands in the Crazy Mountains grew. Increasing pressure on the Forest Service and private landowners

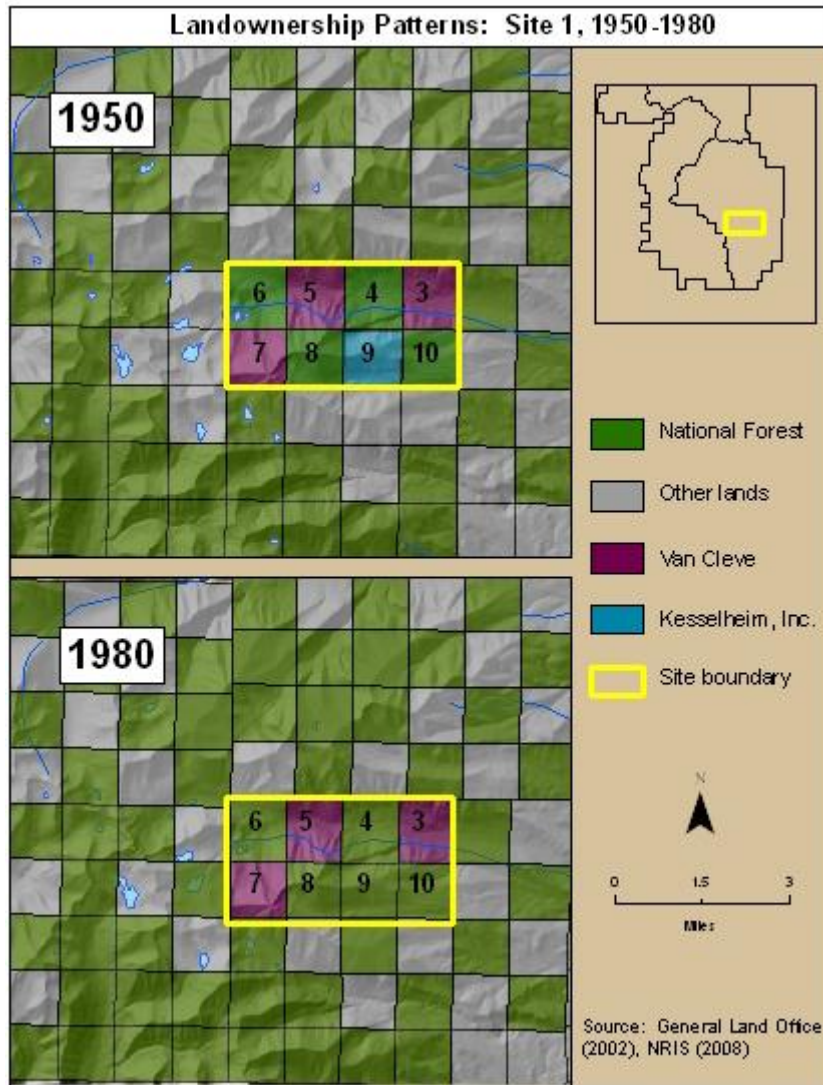


Figure 51. Distribution of Landownership in Site 1, 1950-1980. Source: NRIS, 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

paralleled the overall rise in the number of people visiting the region. The isolated sections of private land set amidst national forest were problematic not only for the visitors, but also for the landholder. Trespassing, poaching, and livestock harassment were common issues that resulted from public encounters with private property.

Alternatively, recreationalists were increasingly frustrated over accessibility issues, particularly with regard to some of the lakes and peaks in the mountains.

Between 1950 and 1980, three major land exchanges took place between private landholders and the Forest Service. Previously, in the 1940s, two land exchanges had occurred on the west and south side of the Crazy Mountains. Then, in 1950, the Criswell family sold six sections of land located in the interior of the range to the Forest Service. This land purchase was important because for the first time, a majority of the west half of the Crazies were under public landownership.

In 1975, the last major land exchange in the southern Crazies occurred between private landholders and the government. That year, the Nature Conservancy, a national environmental organization, purchased eight sections of private land from individual landholders. Shortly after, the Nature Conservancy transferred the lands to the government. Located north and south of Site 1 and including section 9 in the study area, the land exchange totaled nearly 4,000 acres. With the completion of the Nature Conservancy's land exchange, large portions of the interior of the Crazy Mountains were incorporated into the public domain. Altogether, between 1940 and 1975, over 12,000 acres of private land were transferred to public ownership in successful land exchanges (General Land Office 2002) (Figure 52).

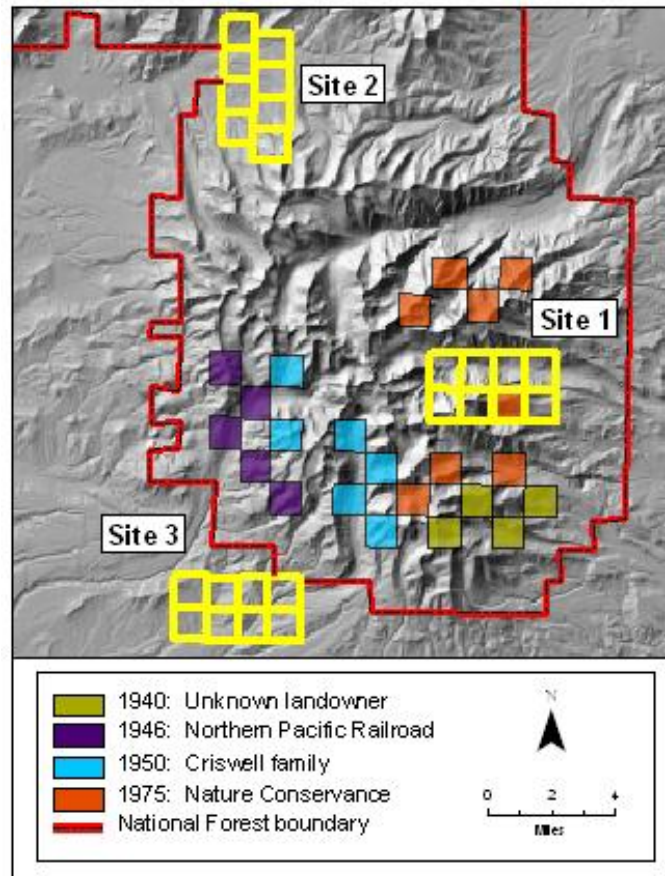


Figure 52. Historical land exchanges in the Crazy Mountains, 1940-1975. Source: NRIS, GLO (2008). Created by: Author (2008).

Site 2:

In 1950, sections 13, 19, 24, and 25 in Site 2 were owned by the Mayo Foundation. Henry Pump, president of the Mayo Foundation, purchased the lands in 1942 and did not sell them until after 1980 (Figure 53). The other parcel of private land in Site 2 was section 31, owned by the Magelessen family. In 1951, the Magelessens

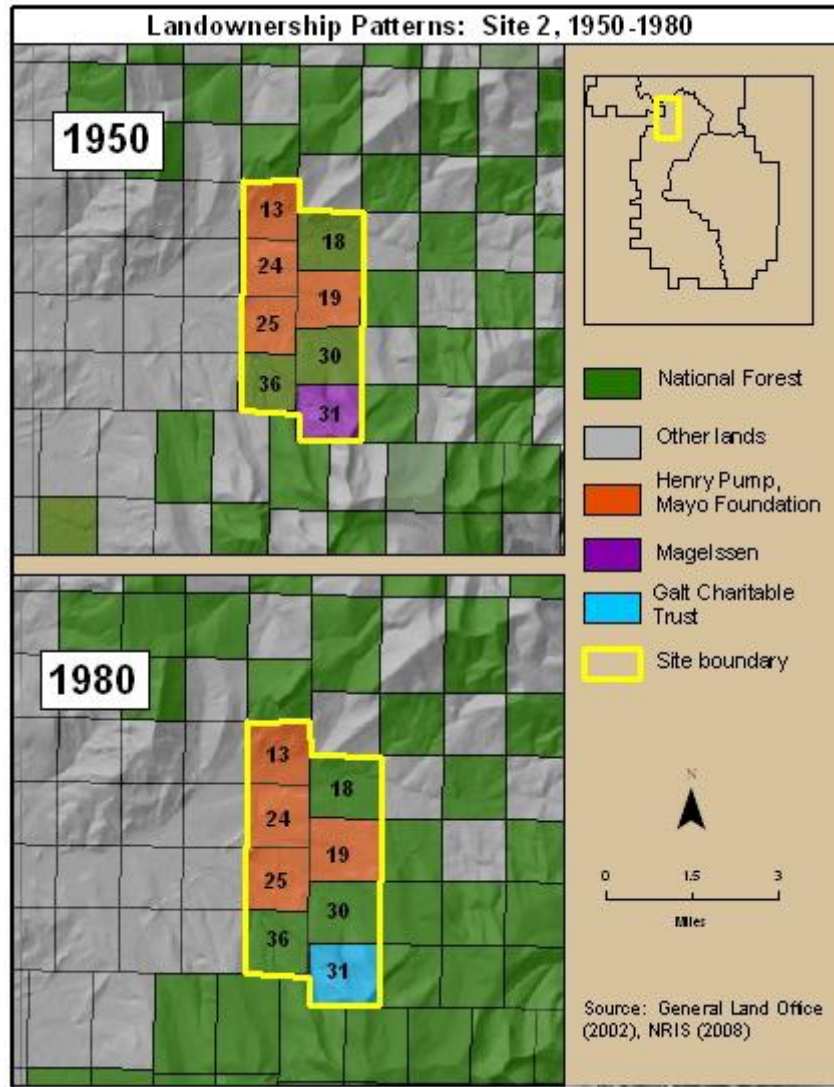


Figure 53 Distribution of Landownership in Site 2, 1950-1980. Source: NRIS, 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

sold section 31 to the 71 Ranch, a livestock company based out of Colorado. In 1977, the 71 Ranch sold section 31 to the Galt family. The Galts homesteaded the northern Crazies in the late 1890s and incorporated section 31 into their expansive ranching operation. By 1980, the Mayo Foundation and the Galt family owned all the private lands in Site 2.

Site 3:

By the mid-1900s, most of the lands in Site 3 were owned by the Criswell family. Collectively, the family owned over 10,000 acres, including nearly 4,000 acres in Site 3. In addition to parcels situated outside Site 3, sections 7, 12, 13, 14, 17 and 18 were owned by the Criswells. In 1964, the Criswell family, along with other landowners in the area, sold their land to Charles Urshel and Stewart Udall. Charles Urshel, a wealthy businessman from Texas, and Stewart Udall, former Secretary of Interior to President Kennedy and President Johnson, jointly purchased twenty-nine sections of land in and near Site 3. At the time, the Urshel/Udall estate, also known as the Double U Ranch, was one of the largest landownerships in the region. Totalling over 18,000 acres, the ranch extended both north and south of Site 3, and included nearly 2,000 acres in the interior of the mountain range. Shortly after the purchase, Urshel bought Udall's portion of the property and became the exclusive owner of the Double U Ranch.

In Site 3, sections 8 and 11 were not included in the Double U Ranch. Section 8 remained in the control of the National Forest Service. Alternatively, Section 11 was privately owned by the Holliday family. The Hollidays, who had homesteaded the Craziess in the late 1890s, sold Section 11 to a local cattle rancher, Ernie Briggs, in 1975. By 1980, most of Site 3, with the exception of section 8, was privately owned (Figure 54).

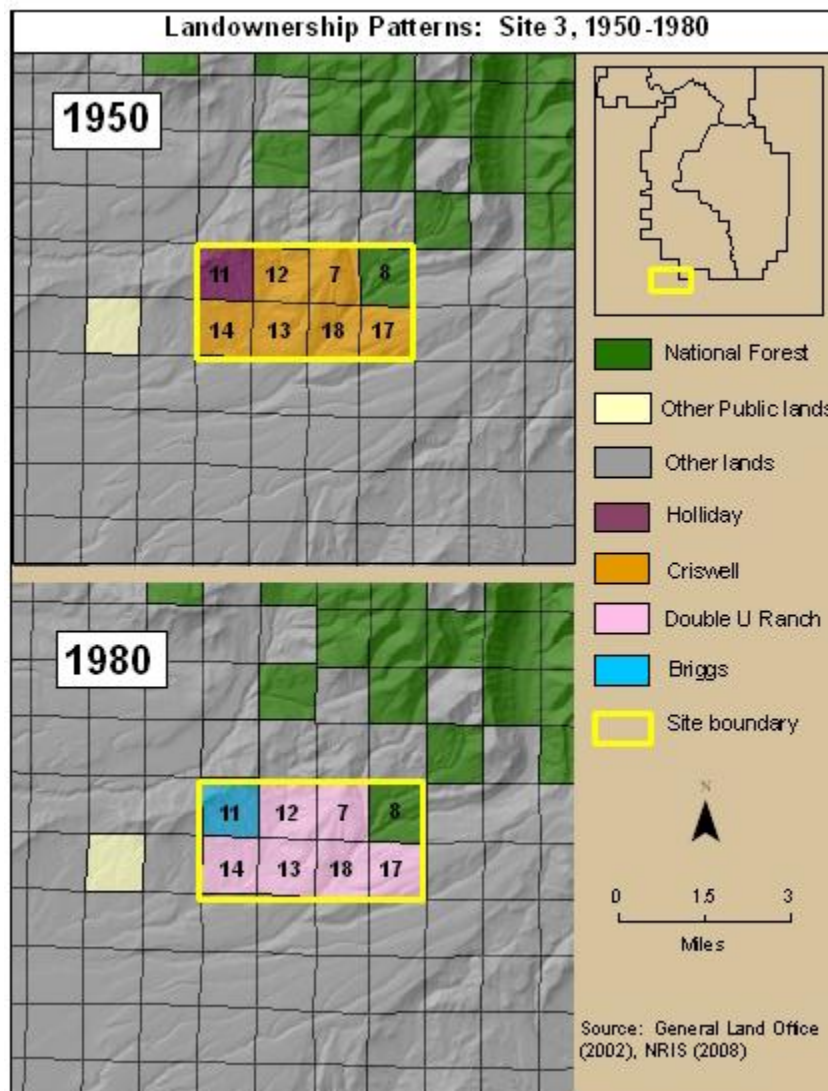


Figure 54. Distribution of Landownership in Site 3, 1950-1980. Source: NRIS, 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

Evolving Landscapes and Land Use Patterns, 1951-1980

During the first half of the twentieth century, land use patterns in the Crazy Mountains were oriented around agricultural production. Ranching dominated the landscape, particularly along the foothills and the surrounding valley floor. For many local landowners, the Crazies were a place to graze livestock and a source of timber for

personal harvest. Previous to the 1950s, recreational activity in the range was minimal and generally involved residents living nearby. However, after the 1960s, more people from outside the region began using the Crazies for hiking, camping, and fishing. Influences of the New West were initially subtle and only slightly suggestive of the broad changes yet to come. However, as the number of people visiting the region grew, outside pressure to modify regional land management practices and resource management also increased.

Site 1:

Like other areas in the Crazy Mountains, Site 1 was heavily grazed during the first half of the twentieth century. Over the years, the government increased regulatory controls on livestock management within the range. Revisions in federal grazing policies reflected changing perceptions regarding the conditions of rangeland ecosystems. After 1950, traditional approaches toward land use in Site 1 were increasingly challenged by the views of recreationalists, visitors, and the larger general public.

In Site 1 and elsewhere in the Crazies, the alternating pattern of ownership allowed for greater contact between the public and private landowners. Many of the trail systems, particularly in the Big Timber drainage, either went through or were adjacent to private lands. Consequently, more people were able to visibly see the immediate impacts and degrading effects of livestock grazing (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005). In an effort to better monitor land cover and the health of rangeland ecosystems, the Forest Service performed soil and plant surveys, vegetation studies, and riparian zone observations within certain areas in the range (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1981). Livestock policies and

grazing allotments were accordingly adjusted to figures the Forest Service assessments determined suitable to the environment. Consequently, by 1950, permitted use dramatically differed from earlier allotment carrying capacities.

The historical activity of the Crazy Allotment exemplifies the complicated administration of grazing controls in the Crazy Mountains. Including sections 9 and 10 in Site 1 and permitted to Louis Grosfield, the Crazy Allotment was one of two grazing allotments situated in the study area (Chapter 2, Figure 21). Initially the Forest Service allowed up to 3,000 sheep on the Crazy Allotment (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005). By 1954 however, allotment was converted to cattle-use only and the carrying capacity was limited at 1,000 head of cattle. In 1957, the grazing permit was subleased to a non-permittee in an agreement not authorized by the Forest Service. For the next two years, nearly 2,000 cattle grazed the allotment annually, far exceeding the figures determined suitable for the area. In response, from 1960 to 1963, the Forest Service designated a recovery period to allow for the regrowth of native forage. In 1964, the allotment was reopened to landowners with a valid permit. For the first three years, the permit was restricted to 800 animal units for a two-month period. In 1968, the permit was increased by 100 units and by 1971, 1,125 cattle were allowed to graze the allotment from July 1 to mid-September.

Other variables contributed to declining environmental conditions in Site 1. The spread of invasive plants and noxious weeds was identified by early Forest Service surveys to have a critical effect on rangeland conditions (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1981). Noxious weeds quickly invaded areas and reduced competition from native plant species.

In Site 1, common weeds included yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*), musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*), and Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) (Figure 55). Intense livestock forage in these areas further reduced the presence of native vegetation and enabled the spread of weeds. In addition, the construction of roads, increasing trail traffic, and other activities that transported seeds from one location to another facilitated the spread of noxious weeds (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005).



Figure 55. Common noxious weeds in Site 1 and in Crazy Mountain region. Source: Invasive Species Database (2008).

In Site 1, landowners practiced rotovating certain areas infested with weeds. Rotovating consists of chopping and shredding all shrubs and trees up to four inches in diameter (Britton et al. 2001). Rotovating essentially plowed and mulched the top four to six inches of top soil and vegetation. In Site 1, rotovating was most common during the 1970s, although it is unknown how many acres were tilled at this time (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1981; 2005). Since the 1980s, the practice of rotovating has decreased as the use of chemicals and other means of combating noxious weeds have developed.

During the early 1950s, noxious weeds became increasingly problematic throughout the Crazy Mountain region. From 1953 to 1954, the number of recorded exotic and noxious plants in Park and Sweet Grass counties nearly tripled (Invasive Species 2008). In addition to the weeds present in Site 1, leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula*), spotted knapweed (*Centaurea stoebe*), and houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*) were common in the region. Not only did invasive plants species threaten natural biodiversity levels by competing with native vegetation, but the rapidity with which exotic and noxious weeds propagated concerned federal officials and landowners.

In addition to livestock grazing and weed control, the landowners of Site 1 were involved in other land use practices. For example, portions of land in and near the study area continued to be logged between 1950 and 1980. Timber harvests at this time were minimal and involved only the private lands (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007e). In comparison to the early 1900s, logging in Site1 and elsewhere in the Crazy Mountains was significantly reduced after the 1950s (Cifala 2007, pers. communication, 18 July). In Site 1, less than 1,000 acres were harvested between 1950 and 1980. Logging was selective and usually involved individual stands of trees or patches of forest. No large clearcuts were harvested in Site 1 at this time.

During the post-war period, it became increasingly difficult for ranchers to make a living off agriculture alone. Dude ranching therefore offered a viable economic opportunity for some traditional landowners. In Site 1, the Van Cleves had been operating a dude ranch since the early 1920s. For the Van Cleves, the Lazy K Bar ranch provided valuable supplemental income to agriculture. Overall, the operations of the

Lazy K Bar varied little from 1950 to 1980. The first guests of the season generally arrived in early May. From May through October, the Lazy K Bar accommodated up to thirty people at any one time. Guests stayed in small but comfortable cabins and a main lodge served as the dining and gathering hall. Over the years, the cabins were repaired or remodeled, but all were originally constructed before 1950. By November, the Van Cleves closed the Lazy K Bar and moved down to their home on the valley floor, where they spent the winter.

During the summer, guests staying at the Lazy K Bar participated in a myriad of activities at the ranch. Some guests helped with the maintenance of the ranch, such as calf-roping, cattle herding, and even haying operations (Van Cleve 2007, pers. communication, 10 July). More importantly however, were the activities oriented around the outdoor and scenic amenities of the Lazy K Bar and the nearby area. Recreational opportunities included fly-fishing, camping, hiking, and picnicking. Horseback riding was particularly popular with guests and was the main source of amusement on the ranch. Shorter horseback rides involved visiting the Twin Lakes at the head of Big Timber Canyon, while longer rides went to other drainages in the region (Figure 56).

The success of the Lazy K Bar was partly attributed to the appeal of the ranch as a restorative sanctuary (Wyckoff and Dilsaver 1995). Guests visiting the ranch were often seeking a removal from the chaos of a more urbanized lifestyle. Indeed, a majority if not all of the guests of the Lazy K Bar were from the city (Van Cleve 2007, pers. communication, 10 July). Set amidst the Crazy Mountains, the Lazy K Bar provided the rurality and ruggedness many guests envisioned for a western ranch. Writing about the



Figure 56. Horseback riding to Twin Lakes, Big Timber Canyon, 1970s. Source: Lazy K Bar.

landscape of the Lazy K Bar and surrounding region, Spike Van Cleve noted,

I am a lucky man. I was born, grew up, and have lived all my life in what I figure is the prettiest country God ever made—under the Crazy Mountains... It's a good country. Where a man can sit in his saddle and see, southwest to south across the Yellowstone valley... All across to the west stretch the Crazies, and, swinging in the stirrups, a man has to throw back his head to follow their abrupt shoulders up the white crests of the peaks. A pretty, clean country where a man can see a long way— and have something to see.

(Spike Van Cleve, *40 Years' Gatherin's*, 1977).

Similar to other areas in the Mountainous West, recreational use in the Crazies increased after the 1950s. The Half Moon campground, located in Site 1, was among the first campgrounds established in the area. Furthermore, the campground served as one of the only entry points into the southern end of the range. Built in the mid-1950s by the Forest Service, the Half Moon campground was located at the mouth of Big Timber

Creek and was only one mile from the Van Cleve home (Cifala 2007, pers. communication, 18 July). The proximity of the campground to the Van Cleve residence brought outside recreationalists and local landowners closer than ever before. Equipped with tent areas, cooking sites, and outhouse facilities, the Half Moon campground quickly became one of the most popular sites in the Crazy Mountains.

Over the years, the rise in visitors created a new set of circumstances for the Van Cleves and other property owners in the region. By the late 1950s, a well-developed trail system interconnected all major entry points into the Crazy Mountains. By entering the range from the Half Moon trailhead, visitors could access the Sweet Grass drainage, located on the east side of the mountains, Cottonwood Canyon, located on the west side of the Crazies, and Sunlight Basin, situated north (Figure 57). From Sweet Grass drainage to Cottonwood Canyon, the trail system extended nearly 20 miles.

Due to the checkerboard forest in the Crazies, the trail system weaved in and out of private lands. For instance, the trail from Big Timber Creek to Cottonwood Creek covers a distance of 14 miles, of which nearly half falls within private lands. Certain activities, like off-trail travel or overnight camping, were not permitted on private lands. Consequently, many recreationalists were frustrated by the restrictions they encountered on private land. Moreover, access to many of the region's noted peaks and lakes were on private property, such as Crazy Peak located near Site 1 and on Van Cleve property. The evolving relationship between recreational users and private property owners remains a central feature of the cultural landscape in Site 1.

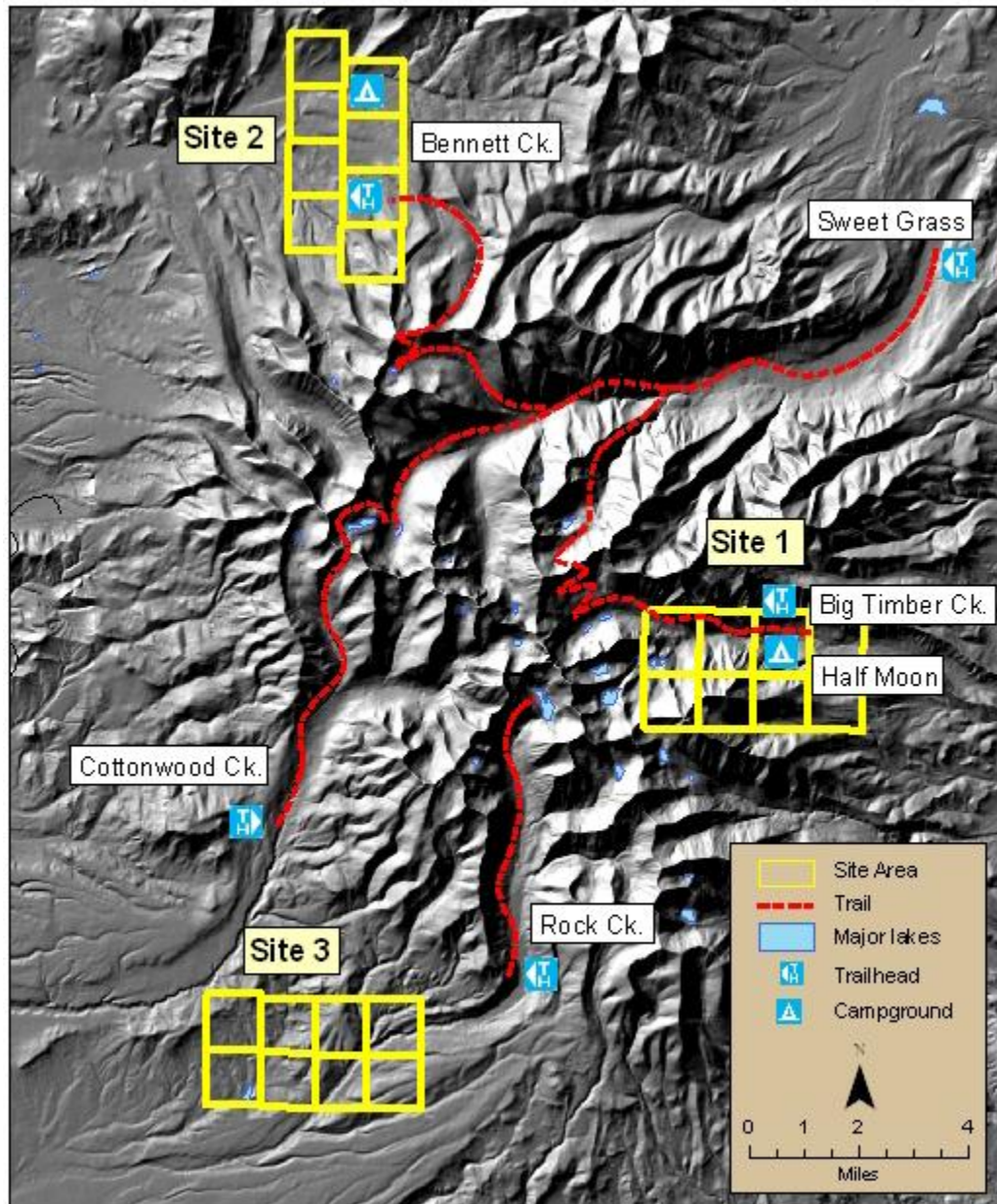


Figure 57. Map of main trail systems and campgrounds. Source: NRIS 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

Site 2:

Between 1950 and 1980, land use patterns in Site 2 were largely influenced by an absentee landowner. During this time, lands situated in areas with high amenities, such as Site 2, were an investment opportunity for wealthy individuals, corporations, and

investment companies. In addition to their potential financial return, some rural lands were used by individuals and large companies as a means of tax shelter (Ripley 1971). Corporations and businesses often purchased several independent ranches and parcels, collectively creating one primary asset thousands of acres in size. The companies would then heavily invest in agricultural projects, operate at a loss and subtract such investment losses from their income taxes (Fisher 1988).

During the post-war era, exploitation of agricultural operations as tax shelter investments was common throughout the Mountainous West. From 1950 to the late 1980s, ranchlands across the West were purchased by foundations and organizations for the purposes of tax benefits (Fisher 1988). At the time, tax code incentives favored and even encouraged agricultural investment by non-farmers and absentee owners. The more capital invested in an operation, the higher the net returns on taxes. Ultimately, Congress passed tax reform acts in 1969 and later in 1986, limiting the ability of “nonfarm” investors to capitalize on agricultural investments (Carman 1972). Although the practice largely faded by the 1970s, many investors continued to view western ranchlands as a financial asset.

Despite an absentee ownership, grazing in Site 2 continued between 1950 and 1980. Beginning in the 1950s, portions of private land within Site 2 were leased to neighboring landowners. The private parcels in Site 2 provided ranchers with enough land to graze an additional 500 to 600 cattle (Berg 2007, pers. communication, 23 July). In exchange for the grazing use of private lands, landowners who leased their property received a monetary compensation.

Both the Bennett Creek and the Shields River allotments were included in Site 2 and were leased to neighboring landowners (Chapter 2, Figure 21). By 1954, both allotments were converted entirely to cattle-use only. Like all allotments within the Crazy Mountains, the number of livestock allowed within the Bennett Creek and Shields River allotments were greatly reduced over time. In the Bennett Creek Allotment, including sections 23, 24, and 26 in Site 2, only 12 head of cattle were permitted from 1950 to 1980, compared to 1,000 head in previous years. Likewise, permissible livestock numbers in the Shields River Allotment, including sections 25, 35, and 36 in the site, dropped from 20,000 sheep in the early 1900s, to 125 cattle by 1980 (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b). The season of use for these allotments was short in comparison to other allotments in the area. Rather than starting June 1 and ending October 31 like most permits, the season of use for the Bennett Creek and Shields River allotments were from June 16 to October 15.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the Forest Service selectively logged areas of timber in and near Site 2 (Figure 58). In comparison to other parts of the Crazies, the gradual terrain of the northern part of the range was more conducive to the removal and harvesting of the logs. Timber cuts on public lands generally occurred around the Bennett Creek drainage and involved sections 18, 30, and 36 within the study area (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007e). During the 1960s, additional lands were logged by private landowners, though harvests were relatively minimal. At this time, sections 19, 25, and 31 in Site 2 were selectively logged. Harvests often involved less than 1,000 acres and more commonly averaged around 500 acres.

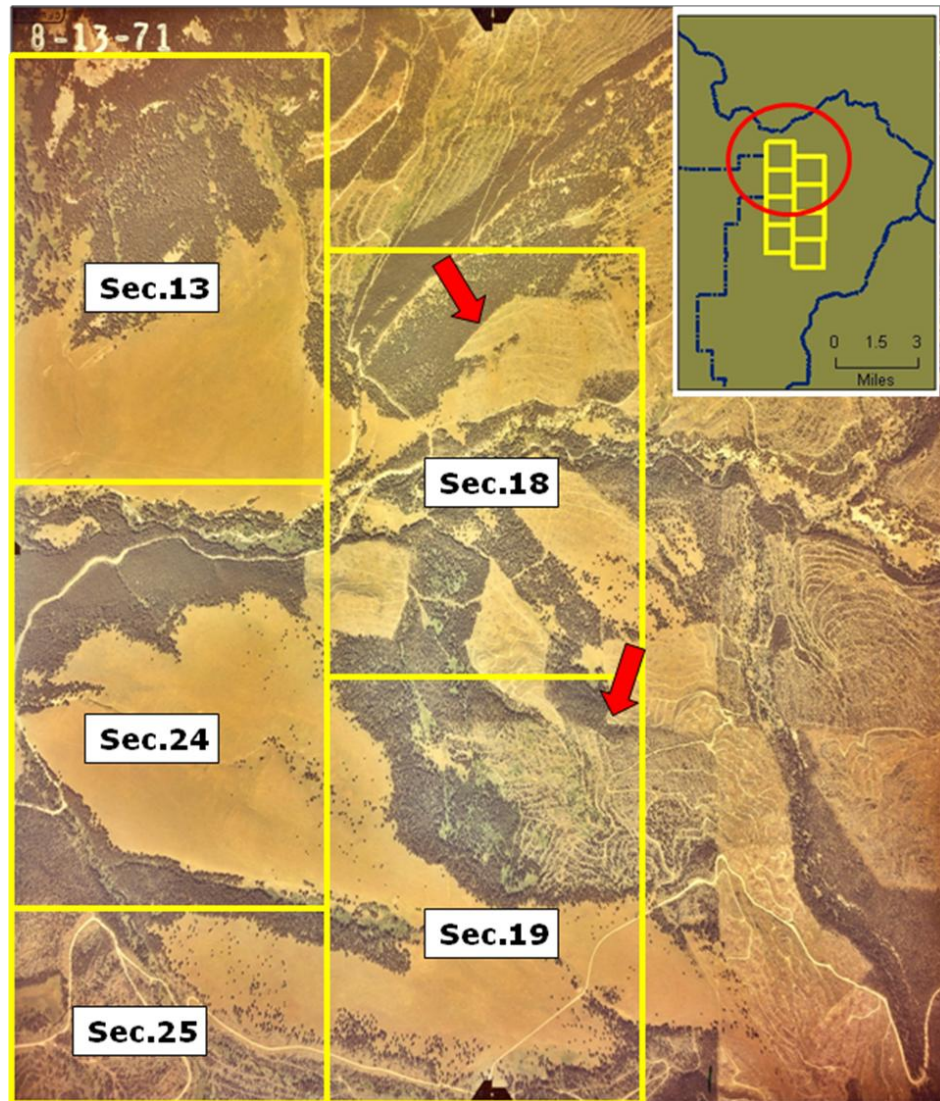


Figure 58. Aerial photograph of logged areas in Site 2, 1960-1970. Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Gallatin National Forest Service (1971; 2007).

Site 3:

The development of Site 3 into a recreational retreat was significant in the historical settlement of the Crazy Mountains. Purchased in 1964 by Stuart Udall and Charles Urschel, the Double U Ranch was one of the first large amenity landownerships in the region. As an amenity ownership, the Double U Ranch was not economically

dependent on the productivity of the surrounding land and resources. Hence, ranching in Site 3 was an avocation rather than a primary means of income. Although the Double U Ranch maintained a part-time ranching operation, agricultural activities decreased from historic levels of production (Figure 59). For instance, the number of cattle was reduced from thousands of head to a few hundred head (Jackson and Kuhlken 2006; U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b; Devoto 2007, pers. communication, 13 August; Travis 2007). With fewer animals to feed, haying operations and other farm cropping activities diminished. The reduction in agricultural activities in Site 3 reinforced the fact that many new landowners in the region were motivated by non-economic factors.

Changes in the residential landscape of Site 3 further reflected a transition in regional land use patterns. During the 1960s and 1970s, facilities were developed that

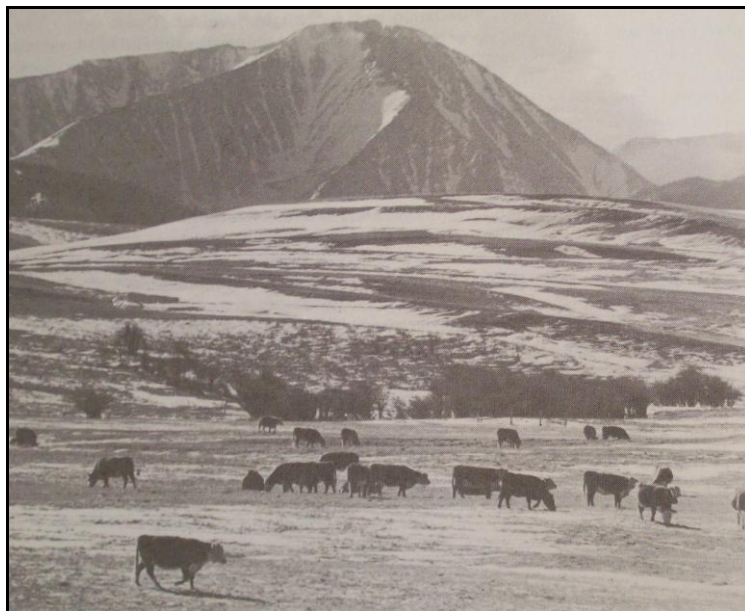


Figure 59. Cattle grazing in Site 3, 1976. Source: Pioneer Society, Sweet Grass County (1980).

reflected the modern values of the New West. Several guest cabins, a main residence, additional housing accommodations, and a riding stable were built in place of traditional ranching structures. In addition, a custom fence was built at this time. Measuring over 12,000-feet long, the fence encircled the perimeter of the residence, visibly demarcating the extent of private property.

The improvements on Site 3 collectively reinforced a cultural landscape oriented around recreation and leisure. Amenity ranchers often built structures supporting their New Western lifestyle, including trout ponds, airplane hangers, and horse arenas. The pastoral charm of living on a ranch was complemented by the outdoor opportunities afforded by most rural western settings. Because agriculture is not the primary means of income, commonly required farm and ranch facilities can be replaced with recreational venues and optional housing accommodations. The presence of these amenity facilities visibly distinguished hobby ranches from more traditional ranches.

From 1950 to 1980, the grazing allotments located in and around Site 3 showed a general reduction in livestock numbers. In Site 3, the Duck Creek, Little Cottonwood and Rock Creek allotments were situated nearby (Chapter 2, Figure 21). Within the study area, section 17 was included in the Duck Creek Allotment and allowed fewer than 50 animals to graze the allotment for two months a year (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b). In 1950, the Little Cottonwood allotment, located slightly north of the Duck Creek Allotment and including section 8 in Site 3, allowed up to 87 head of cattle to graze from July 1 through September 15. From 1955 to 1980 however, the permissible number of livestock in this allotment was reduced to 60 head (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b).

The grazing history for the Rock Creek Allotment appropriately reflects shifting federal regulations. The average use for the allotment in the early 1950s to 1963 was 78 head. For the next two years, the number increased to 105 head, but by 1967, less than 25 cattle were allowed on the allotment. Then by 1977, the number again increased to 125 head. Reasons for fluctuating carrying capacity figures tended to mirror the concerns of the Forest Service and the public over rangeland conditions. Generally, an area grazed intensively by livestock was removed from use for a one to two year period. If however, there is no alternative land available for landowners, then the allotment allowed limited grazing, rather than a complete removal from use.

From 1950 to 1980, logging efforts in and around Site 3 were minimal. The high elevation and extreme terrain historically limited timber harvesting in this part of the Crazy Mountains. During this time, less than 500 acres were privately logged around Site 3. Although the Forest Service harvested slightly more than private landowners, the agency considered the overall timber resource in that area of the range to be limited and costly to harvest. For instance, due to the extreme variability in terrain, road construction for one proposed logging project was estimated at \$444,000 (Havig and Queen 1984; Strong 1995). Therefore, despite certain areas with relatively high yields of timber reserves, such as Ibex and Cottonwood Canyon, harvests remained below average compared to logging efforts in the larger Gallatin National Forest. In Site 3, like elsewhere in the range, timber activities were characterized by single tree stands or patches of forest. In total, between 1950 and 1980, less than 1,000 acres were harvested in Site 3 by the Forest Service.

LANDSCAPES OF THE NEW WEST, 1981-2000

During the final decades of the twentieth century, scenic amenities emerged as an enduring force shaping settlement patterns in the West. Development in the region's mountainous settings reflected and reinforced New West geographies. Enabled by advanced technologies and improved transportation, growth expanded into the West's remote rural hinterland. Cell-phone towers, satellite transmitters, and electrical poles were landscape features of globalization that helped to connect these isolated settings to the larger world. Over time, natural amenities played an increasingly important role in the West's postextractive, postindustrial landscape.

Broader Context of Modernity

During the 1990s, a land rush to certain localities in the West led many to believe that a second homestead boom was underway. Geographers and historians alike identified the latest era of migration as a "reopening" of a "rediscovered frontier" (Rothman 1998; Jackson and Kuhlken 2006). Similar to the rural rebound movement of the late 1960s and 1970s, the later "rush" to the West witnessed the widespread penetration and diffusion of a different value system when it came to natural resources and the environment. Land values that once focused on strictly commodity-driven appraisals of natural resources were reoriented around the scenic attributes and environmental quality of the land. This cultural reevaluation of western lands created new demands on the region's resources and restructured the nature of local economies.

During the late 1980s and 1990s, the high amenity value of the West attracted large groups of people to the region. In particular, the Mountainous West experienced accelerated levels of growth during the 1990s. The majority of the region's eight states, including Wyoming, Montana, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Arizona, and Nevada, had some of the highest growth rates in the country. As a whole, these states grew nearly 30 percent during the 1990s, compared to a growth rate of 13 percent for the rest of the country (U.S. Dept. of Interior 2007). Some states, such as Wyoming and Montana, did not grow as rapidly as the rest of the region, with an average growth rate between 9 to 13 percent. Other states however, including New Mexico, Idaho, and Utah, added 20 to 30 percent more people to their populations. Arizona and Colorado increased their populations by 30 to 40 percent and Nevada had the highest growth rate in the country during the 1990s, with a population increase of over 66 percent (U.S. Dept. of Interior 2007) (Figure 60).

During the 1990s, a large portion of the growth that occurred in the West shifted to non-metropolitan areas in the region's periphery. In a study conducted by researchers at the University of Chicago, more than 64 percent of non-metropolitan western counties gained population between 1990 and 1992, more than any other area in the country (Johnson and Beale 1994). In a similar demographic study, researchers found that between 1990 and 1997, the populations in non-metropolitan counties in the West grew by over 15 percent, compared to only 5 percent for non-metropolitan counties elsewhere (Cromartie and Wardwell 1999). Although natural increase and domestic migration

accounted for a portion of the growth, most of the increase came from out-of-state migration.

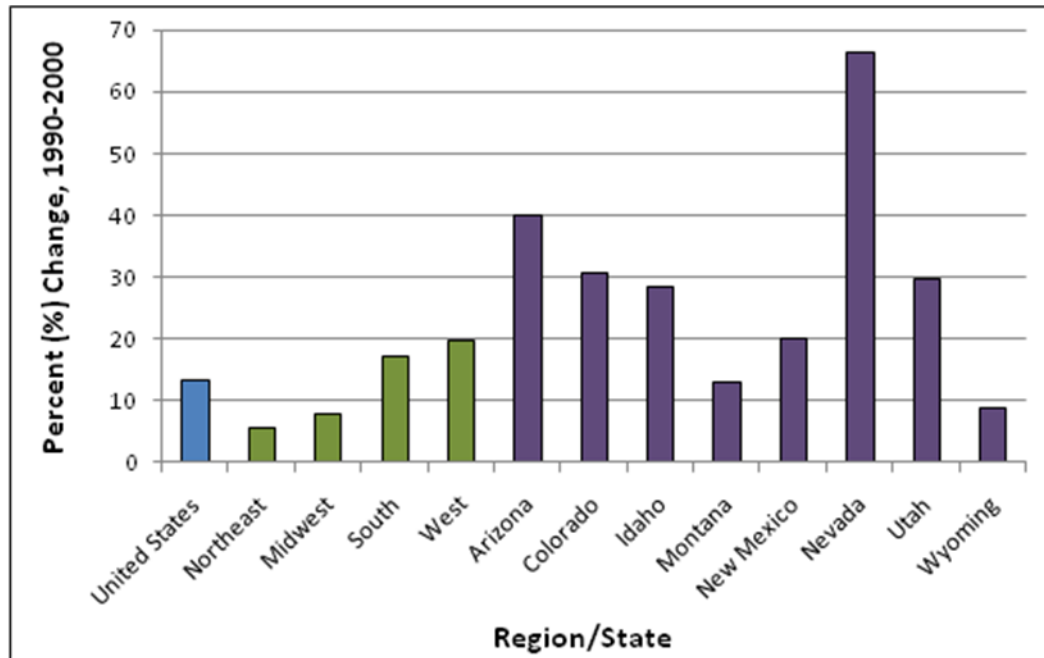


Figure 60. Population growth by region and state, 1990-2000. Source: U.S. Dept. of Interior. National Atlas. (1997).

During the 1990s, there was also a marked preference for destinations in some of the West's most remote and isolated areas. Unlike previous settlement patterns during the late 1960s and 1970s, when growth was directed toward non-metropolitan counties adjacent to urban areas, migration in the 1990s occurred in rural counties *non-adjacent* to metropolitan counties (Cromartie and Wardwell 1999; Beyers and Nelson 2000).

Researchers reasoned therefore, that the 1990s surge to the West was not limited to accessible, large communities surrounded by rural areas but was in fact reaching into isolated, sparsely populated settings as well. These population shifts in the 1990s both

indicated and shaped a wide range of economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental transformations (Shumway and Otterstrom 2001, 492).

Few could have anticipated Montana's selective growth explosion during the 1990s. By contrast, during the 1980s, the state experienced a slowing economy and little population change. For example, between 1978 and 1988, real pay per job fell by 20 percent in the state. Indeed, economic conditions in Montana during the 1980s ranked the worst in the country (Power and Barrett 2001). Between 1980 and 1990, over two-thirds of Montana's 56 counties lost population, and more than 50,000 residents left the state (Wyckoff 1991, 31). Overall, less than 13,000 people moved into the region between 1980 and 1990; and by 1990, Montana's population was just under 799,000 people (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000) (Figure 61).

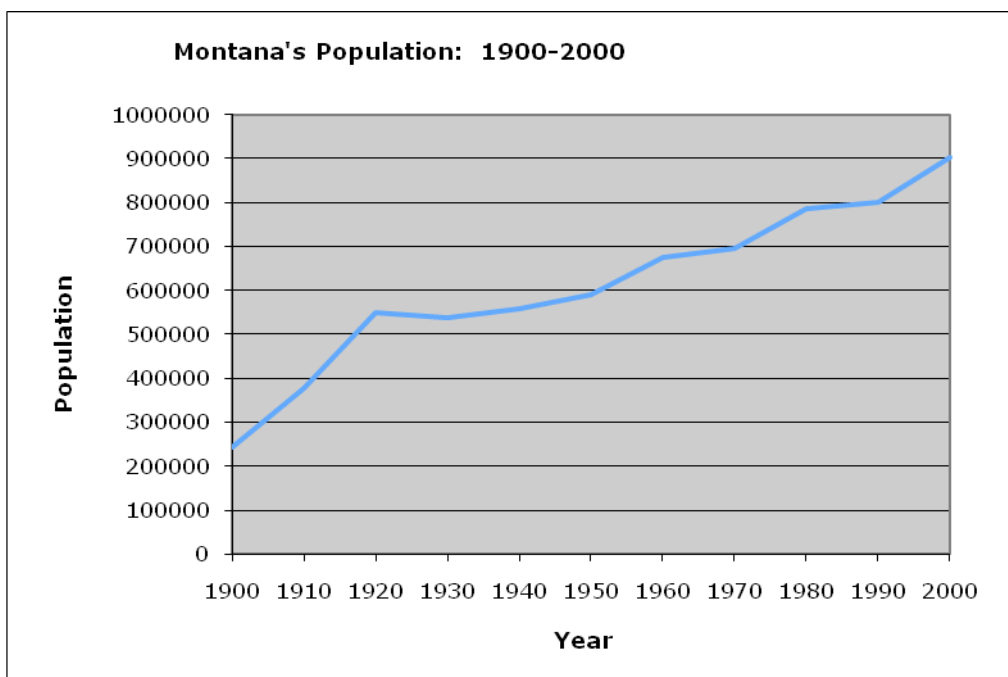


Figure 61. Montana's population, 1900-2000. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce. State-level Series.

The economic and demographic stagnation during the 1980s was a result of many forces. Increased competition from global markets and the less competitive nature of some of the state's manufacturing operations slowed growth at this time. Beginning in 1981, a worldwide recession led to and was fueled by collapsing oil prices, defunct markets, and high American inflation. Further industrial restructuring at a global scale resulted in population declines in many areas that had enjoyed considerable in-migration the previous decade (Beyers and Nelson 2000).

Demographic trends for Park and Sweet Grass counties during the 1980s paralleled fluctuations in the local economy. The closure of the Northern Pacific Railroad station and maintenance yards in 1979, and later their offices in 1982, was detrimental to Livingston's employment base, with nearly five hundred employees laid off (History of Park County 1984). However, a growing timber industry and an emerging tourism sector helped stabilize the town's economy despite the loss in transportation employment. Even with the statewide economic slowdown, Park County gained over 1,600 people between 1980 and 1990, and totaled nearly 14,500 by 1990 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000) (Figure 62).

Like many counties in central and eastern Montana, the population of Sweet Grass County declined from 1980 to 1990. After a brief resurgence in the 1970s, the population fell from 3,216 in 1980 to 3,154 by 1990 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000). This pattern reflected broad changes in the agricultural sector and the lack of additional employment options. Rising operating costs, increasing debt, and low livestock prices further limited ranchers and farmers already financially strapped by a slowed economy.

With fewer timber reserves than other western counties and no energy production underway as in some eastern counties, Sweet Grass County was vulnerable to the cyclical patterns of supply and demand in agriculture.

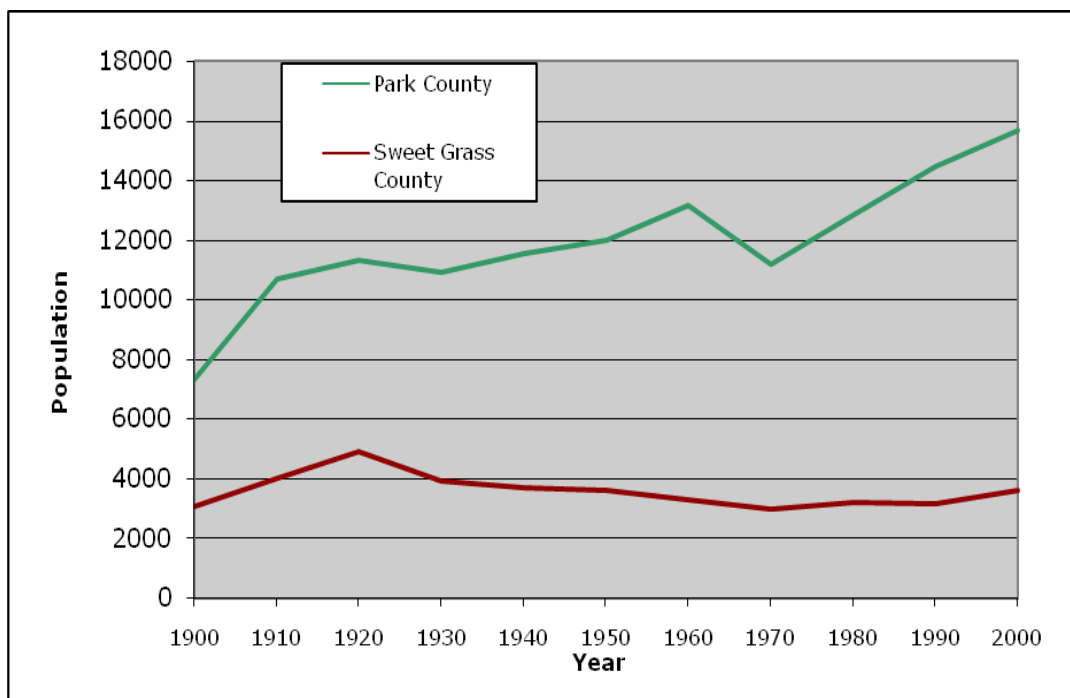


Figure 62. Population in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-2000. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce. County-Level Series.

Fears regarding Montana's declining population and stagnant economy were somewhat alleviated during the 1990s. In the final decade of the twentieth century, the state's population increased by 13 percent and totaled just over 900,000 by 2000 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000). Between 1980 and 2000, Montana experienced its largest influx of migrants between 1992 and 1994, when over 35,500 people moved into the state. Like previous patterns of development during the late 1960s and 1970s, much of this growth was directed towards the state's western mountainous counties. In areas with

high amenities, such as Gallatin, Ravalli, and Flathead counties, the trajectory of growth was unprecedented, averaging twice the national average (Rasker and Hansen 2000).

During the 1990s, counties located near Yellowstone National Park experienced some of the highest rates of population growth in the country. The twenty counties considered part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE), including Park and Sweet Grass counties, absorbed much of the growth directed toward the northern Rocky Mountain States (Rasker and Hansen 2000). Between 1970 and 1999, the collective population for these counties increased by 58 percent, a rate that exceeded more than three-quarters of the counties in the country (Gude et al. 2006). Demographic trends within the GYE at this time reconfirmed that growth within the region was largely driven by the area's high amenity value and recreational opportunities.

Like other areas located within the GYE, Park and Sweet Grass counties grew at an unexpected pace during the 1990s. By 2000, the population for Park County totaled 15,694 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000). Since 1970, Park County's total population increased by 42 percent (Rasker and Hansen 2000). The population for Sweet Grass County similarly increased during the 1990s and by 2000, Sweet Grass County had over 3,600 people.

During the 1990s, the communities around the Crazy Mountains paralleled the overall growth in Park and Sweet Grass counties. At this time, the towns of Clyde Park and Wilsall, located in Park County's Shields Valley, experienced nearly a 10 percent increase in population (Alliance Development 2002). Other areas in the Shields Valley

grew 5 to 9 percent. In Sweet Grass County, the town of Big Timber grew by 6 percent from 1990 to 2000, with a total population of 1,650 by the end of the century.

In addition, the Crazy Mountain region became home to many second homeowners and seasonal residents who were not considered official residents in the region and were therefore not reflected in the census figures. According to the Groundwater Information Center (GWIC), during the 1990s, the number of well site permits issued in the immediate area more than doubled the previous decade (Groundwater Information Center 2007). Prior to 1970, a total of 125 well site permits had been issued for the area (Figure 63). Between 1970 and 1980, nearly 60 site permits were issued over the decade, and between 1980 and 1990, close to 70 site permits were

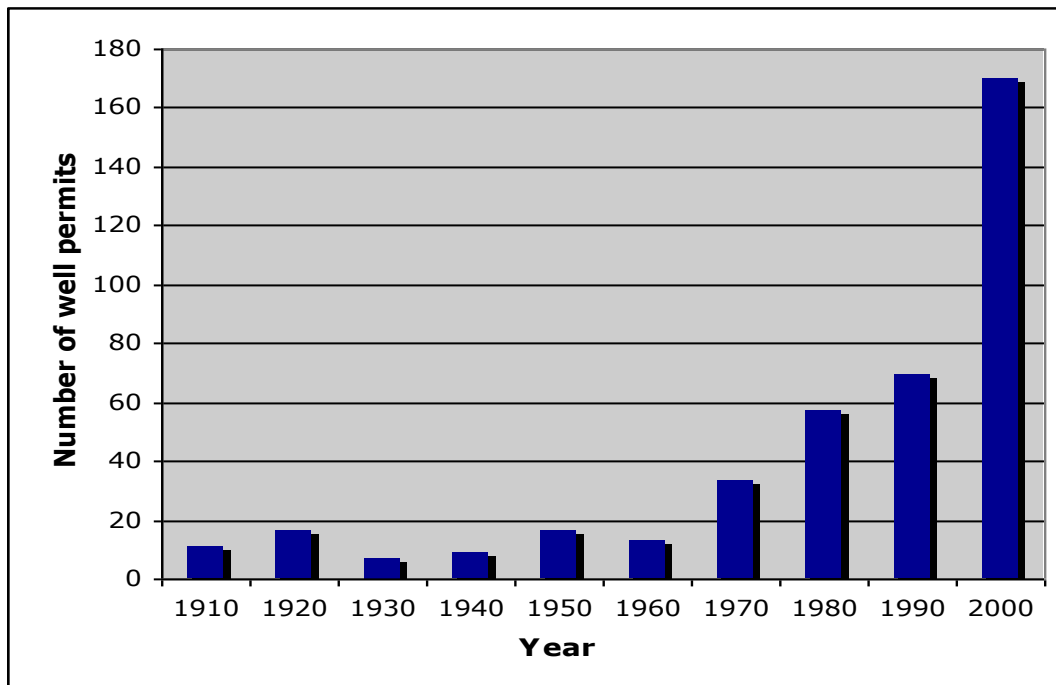


Figure 63. Number of well site permits granted within Crazy Mountain Region, 1910-2000. (Park and Sweet Grass County). Source: Author (2008).

granted. Yet, the largest rise in issued site permits was between 1990 and 2000, when 170 site permits were approved (Groundwater Information Center 2007). The increase in well sites was indicative of developments occurring outside city limits and nearer to the Crazy Mountains.

Throughout the development of the Mountainous West, common influences have resurfaced to drive settlement patterns. Improved transportation routes, better technologies, and increased mobility continue to encourage migration west. A rustic rural lifestyle and proximity to nature also appealed to the urbanites seeking a respite from city life. In addition, there are a number of geographic qualities that distinguish the Mountainous West and help explain the region's continual development. Wyckoff and Dilsaver (1995) argue the Mountainous West is characterized by large concentrations of natural resources, wide distributions of public lands, and its traditional appeal as a restorative sanctuary. Although these attributes have been significant factors throughout the region's historical settlement, their value and purpose have changed over time.

The existence of vast reservoirs of concentrated resources initially drew settlers to the West's mountainous localities. The region's natural resources lured large groups of people who hoped to financially gain from the exploration and exploitation of these reserves (Robbins 1999). Yet the preservation of these same environmental resources, such as heavily timbered forests, open space, and abundant wildlife, similarly attracted people to the region during later homesteading movements. During the 1970s, but particularly during the 1990s, natural resources were increasingly viewed for their amenity potential. As Shumway and Otterstrom (2001) state, development in the West

no longer depended on the exploitation of natural resources, but rather exploitation of the natural environment as a place.

The recognition of natural resources for their non-market value fundamentally restructured western landscapes. During the 1990s, most new migrants into the region were more concerned with the scenic integrity and environmental quality of the landscape than the land's productive viability. In some situations, this made natural resources more valuable in situ than they would be if extracted and exported as commodities for sale in the urban marketplace (Duane 1999, 49). In many areas, this transition was commonly recognized as a shift from "working landscapes" to "leisure landscapes." Consequently, traditional settings with sweeping views and undisturbed scenery are commodified for their visual appeal and rural character rather than for their ranching, farming, logging, or mining opportunities (Figure 64).



Figure 64. Commodified viewshed in the Mountainous West, 1990s (Jackson Hole, WY).
Source: Western Ranches Real Estate.

The restructuring of rural western landscapes subsequently altered local and regional economies. Since the 1990s, non-traditional industries, such as retail services, have dominated and driven local employment trends in many western localities. Between 1985 and 1995, job growth in western mountainous counties outpaced job growth in the rest of the country by almost 60 percent (Beyers 1999). Of those new jobs created during this time period, 97 percent were in service industries. Supporting this trend is the argument that “jobs follow people,” suggesting people are first attracted to a region as a result of noneconomic motivations, then through entrepreneurial activity and multiplier effects, job growth follows (Vias 1999; Beyers and Nelson 2000). For some western communities, natural amenities were catalysts in the diversification and expansion of the local economy.

During the late 1990s, employment patterns in Montana’s western counties reflected this overall shift into nontraditional industries. Counties within the GYE particularly showed a dramatic reduction in the extractive industries during the 1990s. Mining, oil, gas, timber, farming, and ranching collectively accounted for 19 percent of total personal income in the GYE region in 1970; by 1995, they accounted for 6 percent (Hansen et al. 2003). Over this time span, 99 percent of the net growth in personal income was in industries other than the historical staples of the region. The growth sectors included business, engineering, health care, education, and other services. As a result, the economy broadened to include employment in a variety of new professions, such as software development, telecommunications, research, and management consulting (Rasker and Hansen 2000; Hansen et al. 2003).

During the 1990s, relatively high natural amenities encouraged employment growth in Park and Sweet Grass counties. While jobs in most traditional industries in Park County remained stagnant or decreased during the 1980s and 1990s, employment in the services increased by 15 percent; by 2000, nearly 35 percent of Park County's population was employed in the service sector (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis 2008) (Figure 65). Employment in retail trade and professional businesses, such as health and education, also increased at this time, and included 29 percent of the workforce by 2000. By comparison, only 10 percent of the county's employment base was involved in ranching and farming. Due to the closure of the Northern Pacific Railroad operations and facilities in Livingston in 1979, and other restructuring in the transportation industry,

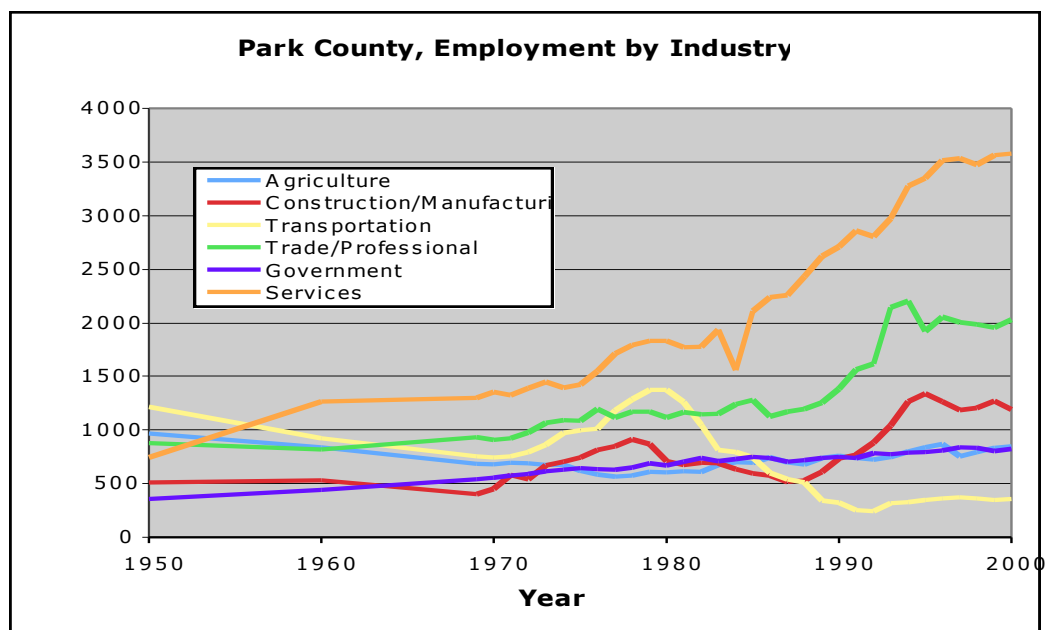


Figure 65. Employment by industry in Park County, 1950-2000. Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; U.S. Dept. of Commerce. County-Level Series.

employment in transportation declined from 20 percent of the workforce in 1970 to 4 percent by 2000. At the same time, the number of jobs in construction and manufacturing increased to 12 percent of the working population. Employment in government-related work slightly increased to 10 percent of the population.

Sweet Grass County was more subtly affected by amenity driven migration during the 1980s and 1990s. Consequently, there was little overall change in employment trends during this time period. Employment in the construction and manufacturing industry slightly rose to include 14 percent of the workforce (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis 2008) (Figure 66). Agriculture involved 27 percent of the working population and the service, trade, and professional industries comprised 42 percent of the employment base.

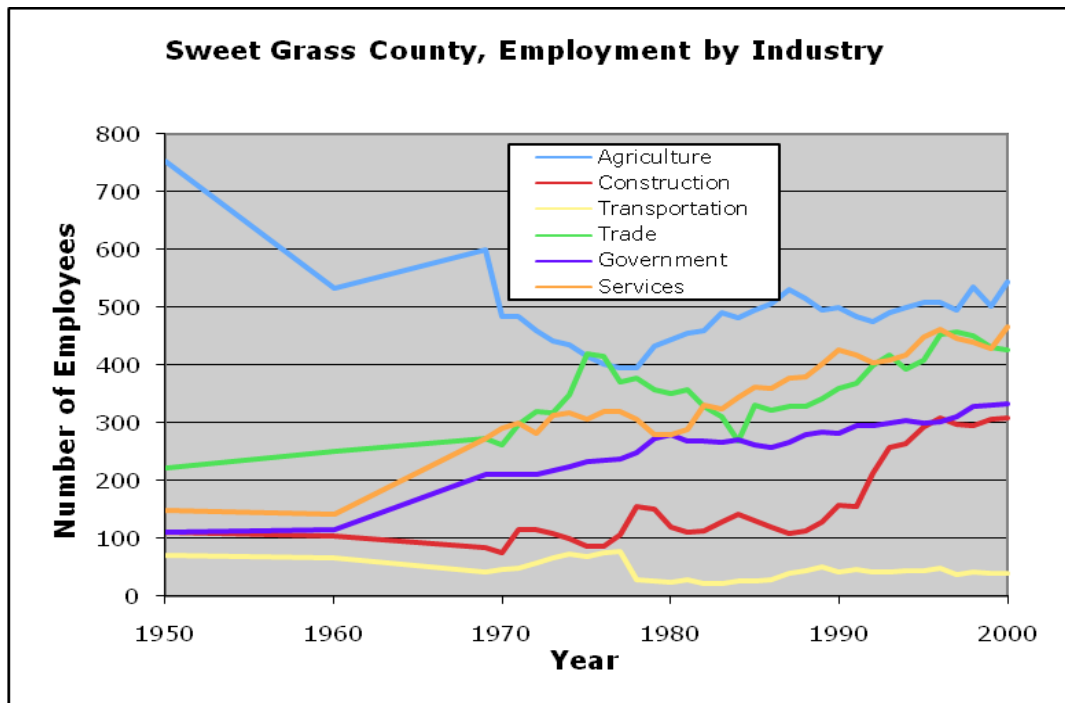


Figure 66. Employment by industry in Sweet Grass County, 1950-2000. Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; U.S. Dept. of Commerce. County-Level Series.

Jobs in government-related work remained unchanged, accounting for 15 percent of the Sweet Grass County's employment base by 2000. The transportation industry employed less than 2 percent of the population.

In addition to, and largely because of the West's vast concentration of natural resources, the federal government remains the dominant landowner in the region. Large portions of rangelands, forests, and water bodies are federally controlled under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management, the National Forest Service, and the National Park Service. In some states, such as Utah and Nevada, more than half of the state's land is federally controlled (Jackson 1995; Riebsame 1997). As a result, management of these public lands is a central theme in the historical narrative of western development. Powerful vested interests operating outside the West have been instrumental in shaping local and regional land policies and resource management. Due to the complexity of public landownership in the West, the presence and actions of the federal government are forever wedded to the region's evolving identity (Wyckoff and Dilsaver 1995, 35).

In comparison to other western states, Montana contains the least amount of publicly owned land (Figure 67). Public lands collectively account for 27 million acres or 29 percent of Montana's land base (Montana Wilderness Association 2008). The Bureau of Land Management and the National Forest Service are the largest owners of public lands in the state. Together, the two agencies manage 93 percent of Montana's public domain. The National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service administer

the remaining 7 percent. Montana's public lands include more than ten national forests, fifteen wilderness areas, and one scenic river (Montana Wilderness Association 2008).

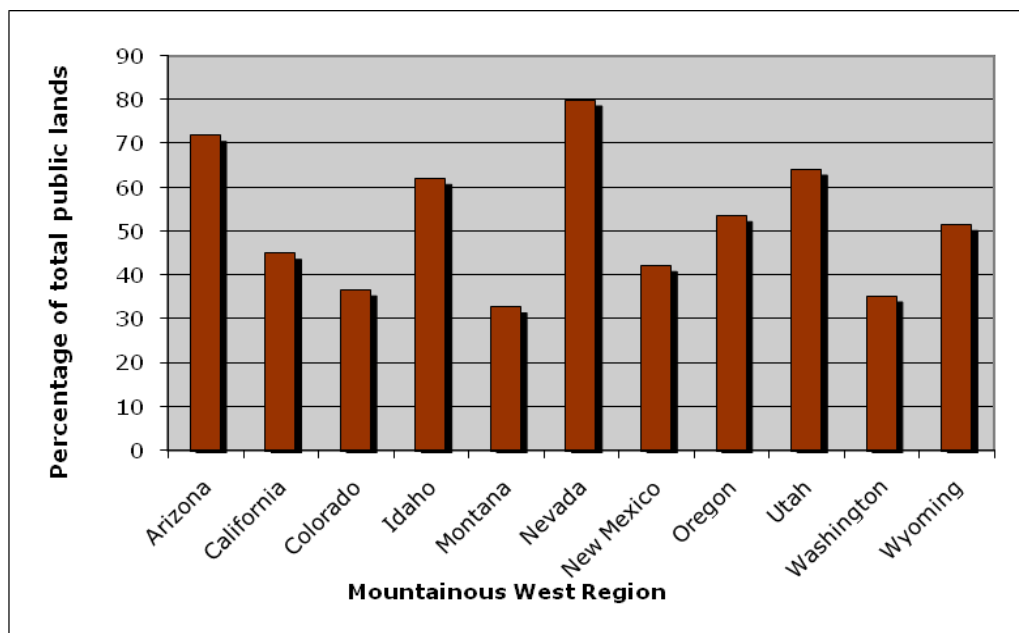


Figure 67. Percentage of federal land base to total state land in the Mountainous West. Source: Jackson, R. (1995); U.S. Dept. of Interior (1999).

The existence of large areas of public land has long attracted people to parts of Montana and the West. Indeed, access into much of the region is made possible via public lands. Unlike earlier in the century however, when public lands were commonly seen as storehouses of extractive resources, they are now increasingly viewed as amenity retreats. As hosts to some of the country's most spectacular sites, endangered wildlife populations, and recreational opportunities, public lands have been influential factors in the settlement of the New West. Although many of these places have been heavily mined, logged, roaded, and grazed, most public lands are not nearly as developed as

private lands (Riebsame 1997, 61). Consequently, the West's public lands emerge as 'natural environments' amidst a rapidly developing landscape (Figure 68).

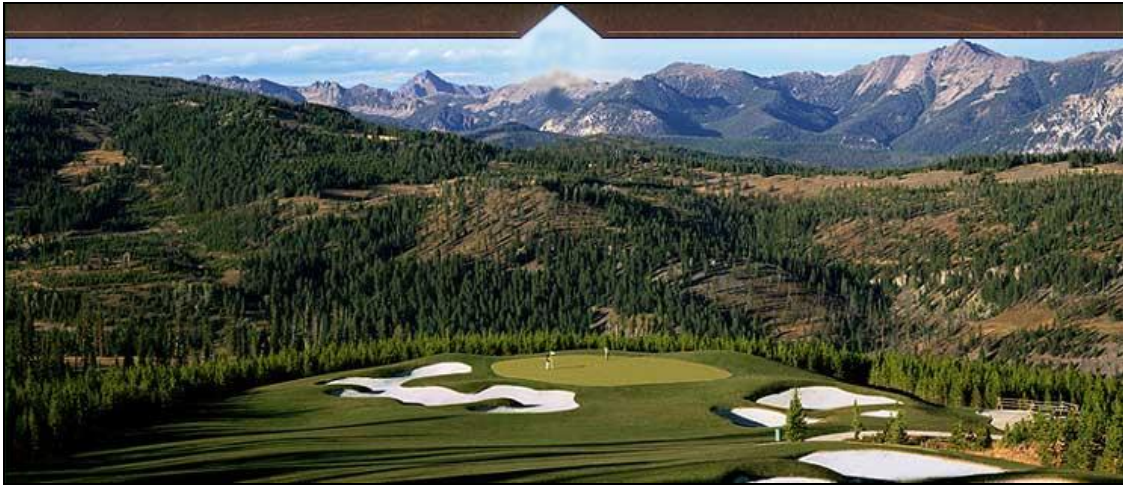


Figure 68. New West development bordering public lands in Big Sky, southwest Montana. Source: New Luxury Items (2007).

Since the 1970s, the amenity appeal of public lands has encouraged high rates of growth in some parts of the Mountainous West. Migrants have been particularly attracted to peripheral settings around the region's national forests, national parks, and wilderness areas. These public lands provided optimal entry to the West's recreational and outdoor venues. Indeed, the fastest growing counties in the nation were those adjacent to federally designated wilderness areas (Rudzitis 1996, 106). During the 1980s and 1990s, counties containing wilderness areas increased their population by 24 percent, six times faster than the national average of 4 percent for non-urban counties as a whole, and almost twice as fast as other counties in the non-metropolitan West. In one study of new migrants, over 60 percent said the presence of wilderness was an important factor in motivating their move (Rudzitis 1989).

Counties within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem reflected these settlement trends that favor growth nearby public lands. Of the 18 million acres that comprise the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, 58 percent of the land is federally owned, and in four of the GYE counties, over 70 percent of the land base is public lands (Rasker 1993). In Park County, the National Forest Service manages 48 percent of the county's public domain, and the National Park Service, BLM, and state control the remaining 7 percent, 45 percent of the county land is in private ownership. The (Travis 2002a). In Sweet Grass County, the Forest Service owns 23 percent of the public lands and the state and BLM control 7 percent of publicly owned lands, the remaining 70 percent of county lands are privately owned (Figure 69).

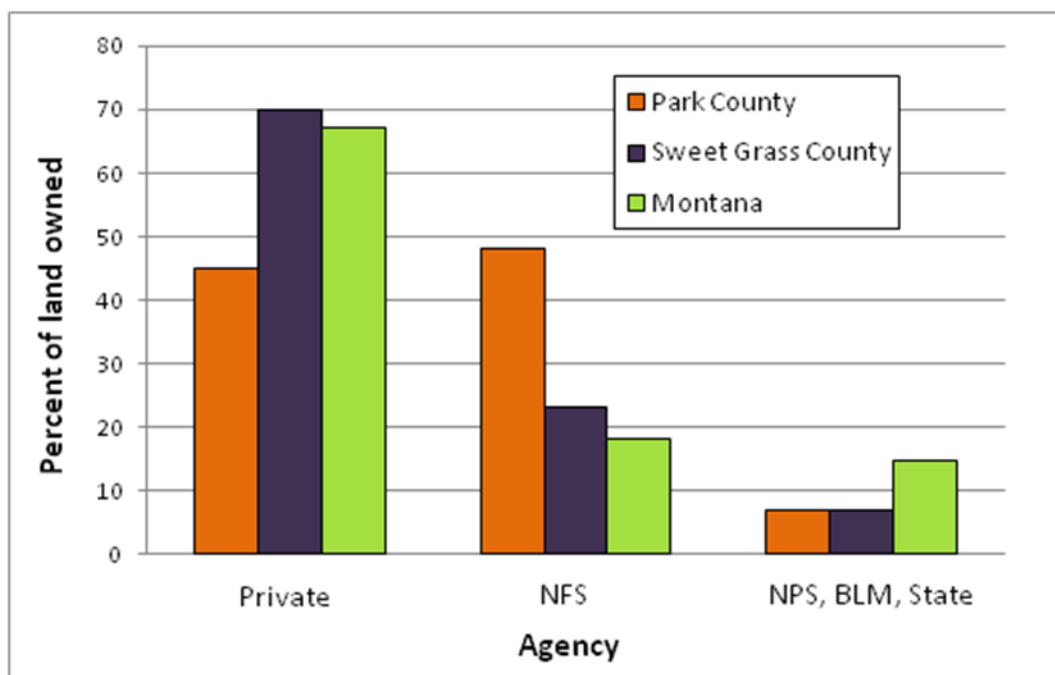


Figure 69. Percentage of landownership in Crazy Mountain region. Park and Sweet Grass counties, Montana. Source: U.S. Dept. of Interior (1999).

The public lands in Park and Sweet Grass counties are widely distributed across both counties. In addition to Yellowstone National Park, the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Area and the Gallatin National Forest, including the Crazy Mountains, are located in both counties. Such settings served as magnets for amenity migration. In a survey of recent arrivals into the region, “scenic beauty,” “environmental quality” and “desire to live in a rural setting” were ranked as the most influential variables in their decision to relocate (Rasker and Hansen 2000). Between 1950 and 1990, the number of rural homes within the GYE bordering federal land increased by 302 percent (Gude et al. 2006). Such strong development trends further suggest that the presence of large swaths of public land and the associated qualities of wilderness were key attractions for recent migrants.

Over the years, the debate over a designated Crazy Mountain Wilderness Area has generated hostilities among the region’s residents and land users. Initially proposed in the late 1960s, the issue of federal wilderness designation for the Crazy Mountains resurfaced during the late 1980s (Strong 1995). Opposing federal wilderness designation of the Crazies were many ranchers, farmers, motorized recreationalists, and many longtime residents who feared designation of the mountains would increase federal land controls. Supporting a Crazy Mountain Wilderness Area were many of the environmentalists, non-motorized recreationalists, Native Americans, and newer homeowners who advocated for more federal management in the area.

In 1988, public support for a Crazy Mountain Wilderness Area was incorporated into a larger statewide Montana Wilderness Bill (Strong 1995). The wilderness

legislation identified 1.3 million acres of public lands, including the Crazy Mountains (McAllister 1988). When it came time for the Forest Service to hear public comment on the issue, more than 250 people participated (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1987). The agency included an environmental assessment of the Crazy Mountains in their Forest Plan of 1987. In their final submission to Congress, the National Forest Service wrote:

The [Crazy Mountain] area “retains its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation” (as required by the Wilderness Act). The area retains a natural appearance; a visitor would find little evidence of man’s influence within boundaries of the area. The size and the shape of the area is conducive to solitude and to good opportunities for primitive recreation.
(U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1987, Environmental Impact Statement)

However, the report further cited the checkerboard pattern of private and public ownership as a major complication in wilderness land management. If designated a wilderness area, the private landholdings within the Crazies would have to be consolidated through land exchanges. In their conclusion, the Forest Service stated, “A major land acquisition program would be needed...because there are over thirty owners of private inholdings, acquisition of all private lands within the boundaries could pose difficulties. It is likely that some of the private landowners would be unwilling to sell their properties” (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1987).

In the conclusion of the report, the National Forest Service did not publicly endorse wilderness designation of the Crazy Mountains. As regional forester James Overbay emphasized, “I am not recommending this area for wilderness classification... This land is owned by many different individuals, and the complexity of ownership

would render efforts to consolidate the National Forest ownership into a solid block through land exchanges very difficult” (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1987). Despite concerns from both the Forest Service and local landowners, the Montana Wilderness Bill passed Congress but was pocket-vetoed by President Reagan in one of his last actions in office (McAllister 1988).

Lobbying for wilderness protection of the Crazy Mountains was temporarily silenced during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Yet, in 1999, the subject was reintroduced to the public in the form of the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act (NREPA). A joint bill between Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Washington, and Oregon, NREPA would designate over twenty-three million acres of wilderness between the five states (Bader 1991). Of that amount, seven million acres were located in Montana and included parts of the southern Crazy Mountains. Yet dissent from several lobbying groups, including loggers, motorized recreational users, and private interests, stalled the bill’s progress (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1995; 2007d). By 2000, the NREPA legislation had yet to be ratified by Congress. However, the importance of wilderness designation among some of the region’s constituents and general public ensures its return in future policy making.

In the Mountainous West, public lands, such as national forests and BLM lands, were often surrounded by ranchlands. During the late 1980s and 1990s, the development of these peripheral areas paralleled changing lifestyle preferences that increasingly favored rural, high-amenity settings. Although ranchlands have been gradually removed from agricultural use and converted into residential developments since the 1950s, these

development patterns accelerated during the late 1980s and 1990s as the number of people moving to the rural West grew. Ranchlands developments were often characterized by low-density housing patterns on lots consisting of 5 to 50 acres, known as ranchettes. Slightly larger lots, commonly referred to as hobby ranches, contained 100 to 200 acres (Jackson and Kuhlken 2006). During the most recent era of New West settlement, it became increasingly common for a single landowner to purchase the entire ranch, even buying two or three ranches nearby (Ghose 1998; Travis 2007). In a process identified by William Travis and others as a form of rural gentrification, the “gentrified range” is the largest and most recent manifestation in rural western lifestyle preferences.

The gentrified range and ranch is a distinct feature of the New West landscape. Travis describes the gentrified range as the appropriation of ranch land with capital not associated with, or earned from, traditional rural land uses such as farming, ranching, logging, and mining (2007, 159). Although similar to hobby ranches, many gentrified ranches contain thousands of acres and include elaborate residential complexes. Gentrified ranch owners were generally from out-of-state, wealthy and lived seasonally on the ranch. Although a gentrified ranch may maintain some semblance of a working agriculture operation, the productivity of the ranch is generally not an issue as it is not the main source of income (Travis 2007).

The gentrified ranch was often purchased for the explicit purpose of incorporating recreation and amenity-oriented activities into a new version of ranch life. New owners of a gentrified ranch were often buying a distinct rural lifestyle that centered around outdoor activities, open space, privacy, bragging rights, and sometimes conservation

(Travis 2007, 157) (Figure 70). Gentrified ranches were generally rich in natural scenery and provided ample opportunities for fly-fishing, horseback riding, hiking and other outdoor and leisure pursuits.



Figure 70. Real estate promotion reflecting a gentrified range ownership. Source: Western Ranches Real Estate.

During the 1990s, the gentrified range was fast becoming one of the most sought-after residential settings in the New West. Although ranches have always been of interest to wealthy urban migrants, their popularity has increased over time (Travis 2007, 157). Promoted by developers as “New Ruralism,” ranchlands bought as amenity tenureships differed strikingly from traditional working ranch landscapes. In addition to removing the lands from agricultural production, there were widespread changes regarding land use practices and resource management.

Compared to longtime residents, amenity ranch owners frequently had different views regarding wildlife management, water reallocation, grazing, and hunting controls. Public access to private lands became a particularly contentious issue related to gentrified

ranchland ownerships. Studies comparing longtime ranching ownerships to newer ownerships suggest that many traditional owners were more lenient towards public access than recent landowners because amenity ranches are frequently purchased for the exclusive right of private access and use (Cordell et al. 1993). Other studies suggest that many amenity landowners discourage livestock grazing and hunting, and encourage the spread of wildlife populations (Maestas et al. 2001; Tschida 2003; Gosnell et al. 2006).

During the 1980s and 1990s, large amenity ranches appeared with increasing regularity in Park and Sweet Grass counties. According to a study conducted by the Center of the American West, not until 1980 did ranchland ownerships in Park County begin to favor amenity purchases. In their assessment of ranchland sales occurring between 1990 and 2001, sixty-one transactions took place involving 400 or more acres (Travis et al. 2002a). During this period, the average ranch sold was approximately 1,700 acres in size. Compared to other counties located within the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, Park County stood out as a setting for large amenity ranches. Of the ranch purchases that occurred at this time, 65 percent were by amenity owners. Only 5 percent of ranchland purchases involved traditional ranchers. The remaining 30 percent of ranchland transactions included investors, developers, and corporations.

Many of the amenity buyers of large ranchlands in Park County during the 1990s were not from the area. When inventoried by the Center of the American West, 77 percent of the lands sold, or roughly 80,000 acres, went to out-of-state residents. Local residents purchased 16 percent of the ranchlands sold from 1990 to 2001, and residents

living in other counties accounted for 5 percent of the land base sold during this time.

Less than 2 percent of the lands sold went to unknown buyers (Figure 71).

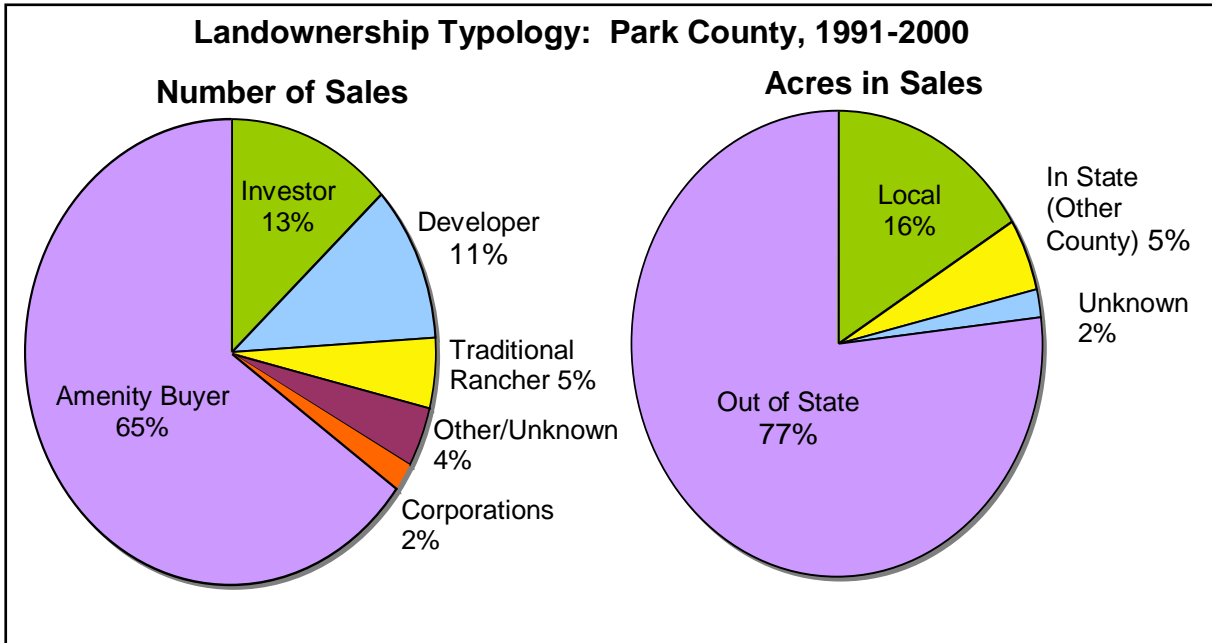


Figure 71. Landownership typology for Park County, 1991-2000. Source: Travis et al. Center of the American West (2002).

A similar study of ranchland dynamics was conducted for Sweet Grass County. Between 1990 and 2001, there were 62 large ranchland sales with each sale averaging nearly 2,000 acres (Travis et al. 2002b). Like Park County, a majority, 52 percent, of the ranchland purchases that occurred during this period were by amenity buyers. Traditional ranchers comprised 13 percent of the ranchland purchases and investors accounted for 21 percent of the ranchland exchanges. Developers, corporations, and unknown buyers purchased the remaining 14 percent of ranchlands.

Approximately half of the ranchland sales that occurred in Sweet Grass County during the 1990s involved out-of-state buyers (Travis et al. 2002b). In relation to the

number of acres sold during this time, out-of-state owners managed 49 percent of the land base sold. Local residents owned 33 percent of the total acreage sold, in-state residents living in other counties owned 14 percent, and 4 percent of the lands sold during the 1990s went to unknown purchasers (Figure 72).

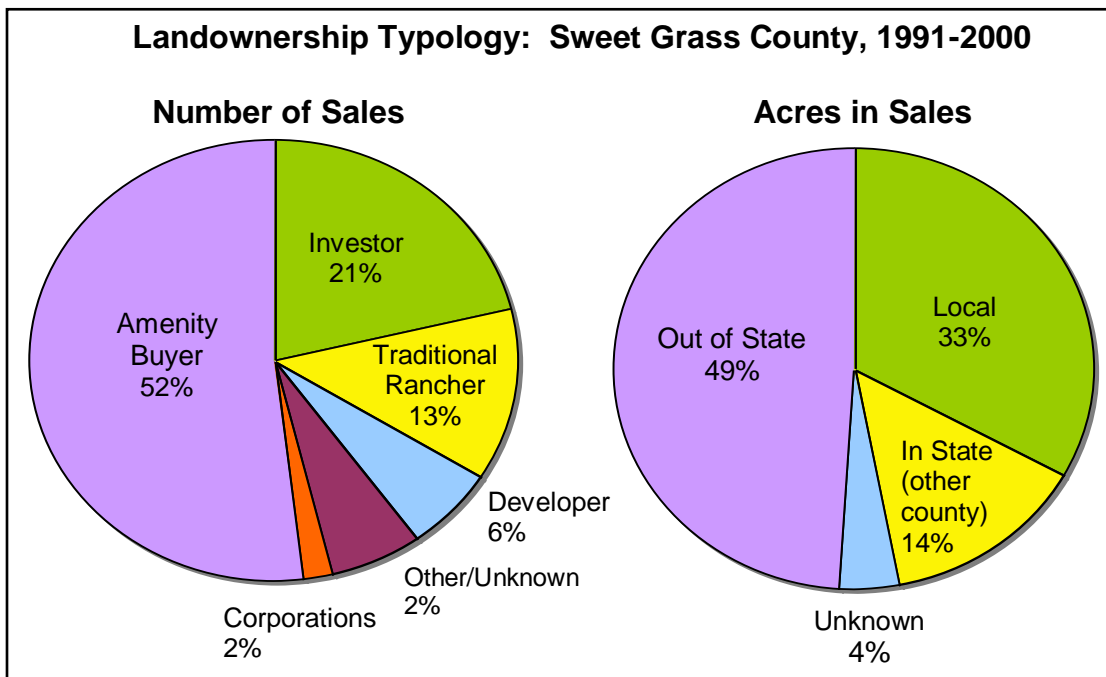


Figure 72. Landownership typology for Sweet Grass County, 1991-2000. Source: Travis et al. Center of the American West (2002b).

During the 1990s, ranchlands that were not sold as gentrified ranges were commonly subdivided into rural residential developments. This type of housing pattern is characterized by low-density, widely dispersed developments, such as ranchettes, hobby ranches, and other rural-style residences (Rasker 1993; Gude et al. 2006). Initially appearing during the late 1960s and 1970s, rural residential developments and agriculture subdivisions became increasingly common during the late 1980s and 1990s (Harper and

Crow 2006). Over time, there has been a declining trend in the average size of the subdivided agricultural parcel (Travis 2007, 164). The evidence suggests therefore, that formerly intact ranchlands are being increasingly subdivided into smaller and smaller land parcels.

There are a number of ecological and biological consequences associated with rural residential developments. In order to maintain agricultural viability in a selected area, traditional rural land uses in agriculture and related commodity production inherently limited the density and degree of settlement (Duane 1999, 201). With rural subdivision developments however, the exurban landowner is more economically independent from the surrounding landscape and therefore a much smaller land area is required for each dwelling unit. Consequently, a residential pattern consisting of low-density developments interrupts the geographic homogeneity of the land, upsetting a number of environmental processes. Obstruction of wildlife migrations, the spread of noxious weeds and invasive species, pollution of water sources, and wildfire potential are ecological exigencies that develop as result of land fragmentation (Booth 2002; Fiege 2005; Jackson and Kuhlken 2006).

Rural residential developments, such as ranchettes and other hobby ranches additionally affect regional biodiversity levels. Building sites tend to be situated either near or within critical ecotones, especially forest boundary and valley-bottom riparian areas (Harper and Crow 2006). Since the 1960s, the number of people living in the rural/wildland interface has increased by more than 700 percent (Bailey 2007). Roads, driveways, structures, manipulated waterways, and other human-created features either

act as barriers or conduits of movement for animal and plant species, disrupting natural migration patterns. In addition, noise, artificial lighting, and domesticated pets can create havoc for surrounding wildlife species. William Travis points out that although the ecological effects of each individual exurban development are generally small, cumulatively they result in significant changes on habitat and species over larger areas (2007, 129).

By 2000, low-density residential developments, such as ranchettes and other agricultural subdivisions, were some of the most common developments in the country. During the 1990s, rural residential developments were growing at a rate of 10 to 15 percent per year (Harper and Crow 2006). By the end of the decade, these types of developments accounted for 378 million acres of the country's developed land, over seven times more land area than urban residences nationwide (Theobald 2005). In the Rocky Mountain West, between 1982 and 1997, the total amount of developed land grew by two million acres, at the expense of agricultural and forested lands (Carruthers and Vias 2005). In Montana, the rate of farmland conversion between 1992 and 1997 increased by 237 percent compared to the previous five years, ranking it the third highest among states losing prime agricultural lands (American Farmland Trust 2001).

In comparison to other areas in Montana, agricultural lands in Park and Sweet Grass counties were not developed as quickly. Since the 1950s, the amount of land in farms has remained relatively stable in both counties. Between 1984 and 1997, the amount of land in farms in Park County decreased from 780,727 acres to 749,000 acres, a drop of around 5 percent. Since 1950, Park County has experienced a 12 percent

reduction in farmland (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950; 1980; 2000) (Figure 73). The amount of farmland in Sweet Grass County varied little between 1980 and 2000. In 1982, approximately 909,000 acres in Sweet Grass County were in farms. By 1997, this had slightly dropped to 839,000 acres, or an 8 percent reduction. Since 1950, there has been an overall decrease of 2 percent in the amount of land in farms in Sweet Grass County (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 1950; 1980; 2000).

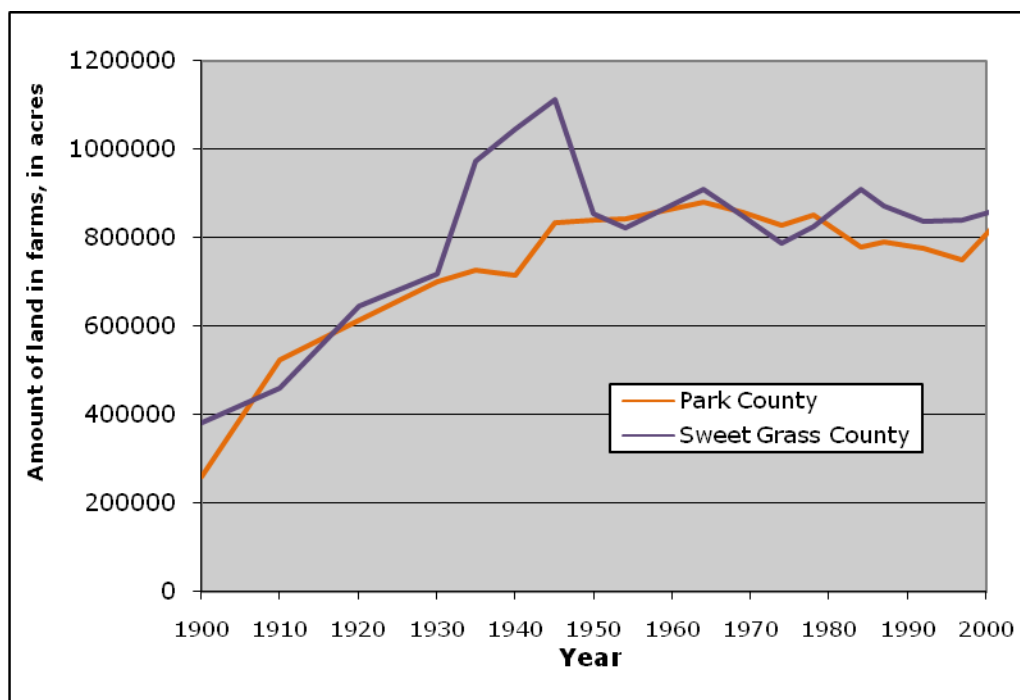


Figure 73. Amount of land in farms in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1900-2000. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce. County-Level Series.

Between 1980 and 2000, the number of farms in Park and Sweet Grass counties also leveled off. During much of the century, farm numbers in Park and Sweet Grass steadily declined, from an average high of 810 farms in 1920 to an average low of 300 farms in 1970 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000). After 1980 however, farm numbers

stabilized in both counties. In 1982, there were approximately 400 farms in Park County and by 1997, there were 420 farms in the county. Farm numbers in Sweet Grass County were similarly stable at this time, increasing from 292 farms in 1982 to 300 farms by 1997 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000) (Figure 74).

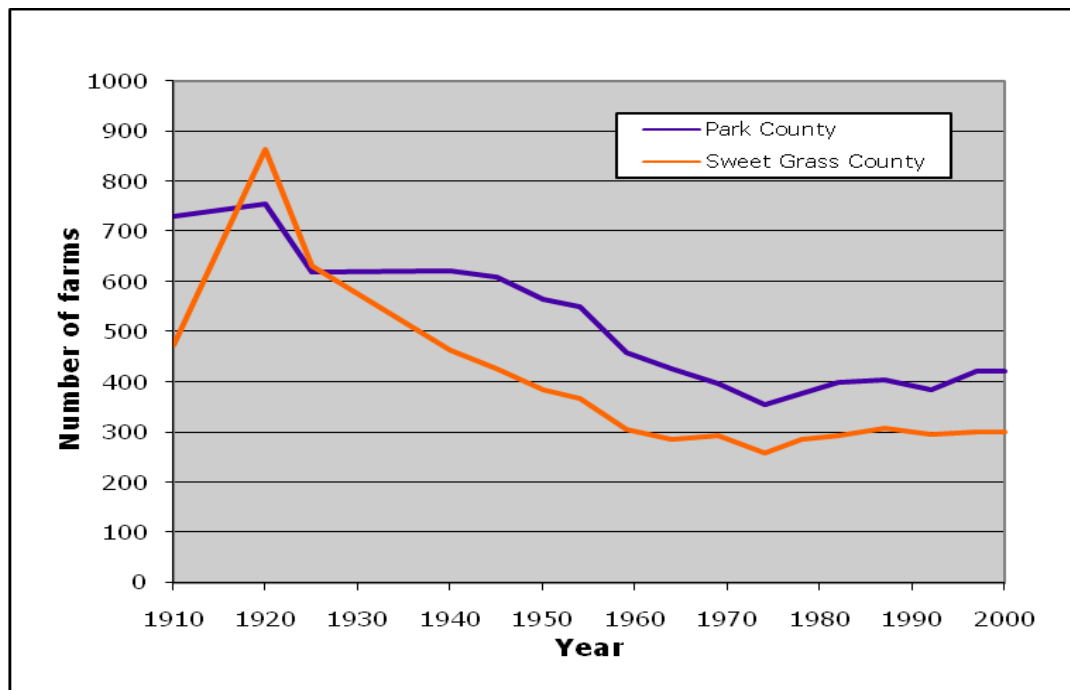


Figure 74. Average number of farms in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1910-2000. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce. County-Level Series.

Although some aspects of the agricultural sector within Park and Sweet Grass counties remained stable during the 1980s and 1990s, other changes at the local and regional level suggested the ongoing development of rural, high-amenity settings. For example, increasing property values at this time paralleled real estate development trends (Travis et al. 2002a; 2002b). In 1982, the average farm in Park County was valued at \$640,588. By 1992, this had increased to \$712,700, and five years later, the average farm

in Park County was worth \$1,177,514 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000). The average price per acre in Park County similarly reflected rising property values, increasing from \$331 per acre in 1982 to \$640 per acre by 1997 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000). Land prices rose in Sweet Grass County as well. In 1982, the average farm in the county was valued at \$689,103. By 1992, the value had increased to \$807,694, and by 1997, the average farm in Sweet Grass County was worth \$1,089,195 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000) (Figure 75). The value per acre in Sweet Grass County increased from \$220 in 1982 to over \$400 by 1997 (U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2000).

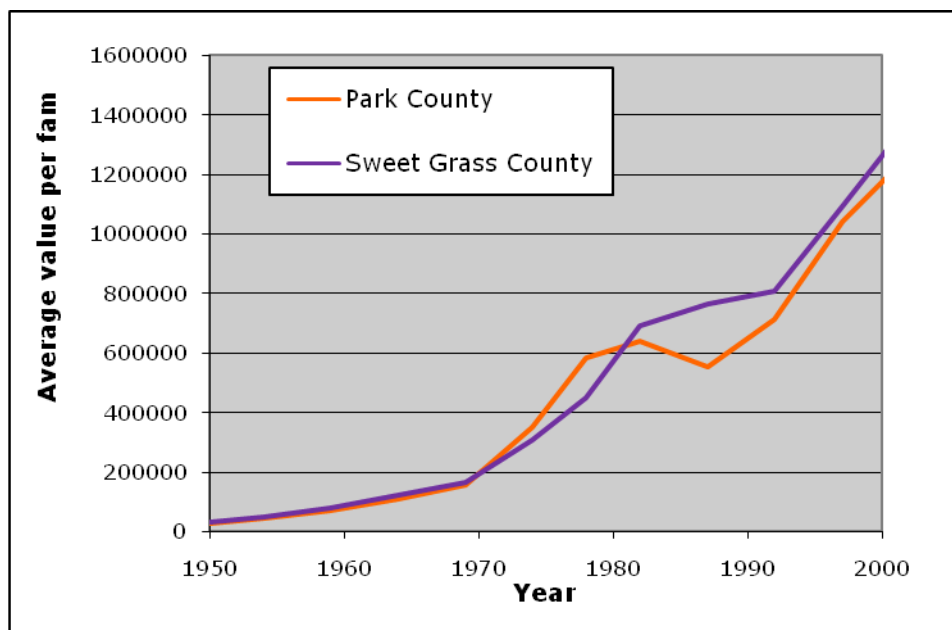


Figure 75. Average farm values in Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1950-2000. Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce. County-Level Series.

Common cultural trends also suggested the growing appeal of rural western settings during the late 1980s and 1990s. At this time, images of the West in film, television, and literature reinforced shared perceptions of the region's ranching

landscapes. Many of these expanded on themes common in the historical development of the West. Popular forms of media often drew on the mythic symbolism of the American West, and emphasized themes of individualism, freedom, courage, and rejuvenation. For example, in 1993, the cover of *Time Magazine* announced it was “Boom Time in the Rockies” (Bonfante 1993). According to the article,

The Rockies are increasingly being regarded as the new American heartland. They hold out a promise not just of scenery and jobs but also, most important, of old, back-country values and certainties- like home, hearth and family- that have seemingly gone astray in many urban centers... The Rockies’ new ethos manages to combine the yearning for a simpler, rooted, front-porch way of life with the urban-bred, high-tech worldliness of computers and modems.
(Bonfante, 1993).

In Montana, three convergent cultural trends occurred during the 1990s that encouraged growth in the state’s rural western areas (Travis 2007). First, several Hollywood films used Montana as their primary set location. Using the state’s scenic rivers, open sky, and snowcapped mountains as backdrops, such films as *A River Runs Through It* (1992), *The River Wild* (1994), and *Legends of the Fall* (1994), illustrated Montana’s most dramatic settings (Figure 76). In particular, the film, *The Horse Whisperer* (1998) featured the Crazy Mountains in the background (Ricker 2008). Characters in the movies were often seen fly-fishing, horseback riding, hunting, or engaging in other outdoor activities that promoted the recreational and amenity opportunities of the region.

Secondly, a high profile clientele of amenity owners popularized Montana’s real estate market. In 1990, the *New York Times* reported, “Stars Stake a Piece of Big Sky



Figure 76. Popular films made in Montana. Source: Columbia Pictures (1992); Universal Studios (1994); Touchstone (1994).

Country” (Robbins 1990). In the article, the author writes, “The Great Montana Ranch Rush has begun. Movie stars, film makers, airline captains, captains of industry, songwriters, surgeons, advertising executives and writers- anyone with extra cash has come hunting for a big piece of Montana” (Robbins 1990; Travis 2007, 163). The appearance of celebrities not only brought visibility to Montana’s western settings, but also largely influenced the region’s trendy real estate market. By purchasing homes near one another, celebrities branded certain areas as the most chic and ‘in’ places to live. Not far from the Crazy Mountains live Michael Keaton, Mel Gibson, Tom Brokaw, Jeff Bridges, Peter Fonda, and Dennis Quaid; Ted Turner, Bill Gates and Tiger Woods own homes in the adjacent Gallatin Valley (Robbins 1990).

Finally, social networks were influential in the settling of western Montana during the 1990s. It was not uncommon for groups of two or three people to buy several adjoining properties. It was equally frequent for someone to purchase his or her own gentrified ranch after visiting a friend or relative’s home in the region (Travis 2007, 163).

Social networks were particularly influential in the development of gated communities. Increasingly prevalent during the late 1990s, gated communities in the Mountainous West have been called “shared ranch developments” (Williams 2002). According to *High Country News*, gated ranch communities “attract buyers from out of state by marketing a combination of expansive ranch living, a homogenous social scene, and convenient property and recreation management” (Williams 2002).

The widespread promotion of western rural settings during the 1990s, and the wave of migrants that followed, received criticism from many longtime residents. Sometimes referred to as “cappuccino cowboys” or “wanna be ranchers,” new migrants often arrived with little understanding of the realities of ranching (Maxwell 1993). According to one native Montanan rancher from Livingston, many newcomers were “posers...They [new arrivals] never had an adventure in their lives until they bought all this stuff. Now, with \$2,000 or \$3,000 worth of fly gear, they suddenly think they’re experts” (Bonfante 1993). Further fueling frustrations between traditional residents and newcomers was the arrival of urban value systems. As one rancher stated, “I call it the Aspenization of Montana. People come here and say they’re trying to escape places like California, but they’re not. They bring the world they come from with them” (Robbins 1990, C10).

Conflicts between longtime residents and new migrants were characterized by long-held economic and cultural differences. Many longtime residents were opposed to the opulent and grandiose lifestyle demonstrated by some newcomers (Robbins 1996). Residential development in rural, remote areas increased the demands for new roads,

utility lines, facilities, and other services. Many small towns and communities maintain tight economic budgets and the costs of services often depleted existing financial resources (Gude et al. 2006). In addition, many locals were hired to work on the ranches of new landowners, further incurring hostilities between longtime residents and new arrivals.

How different types of landowners viewed local decision making processes also influenced relations between groups of people. Many amenity-owners and other new migrants viewed land management issues separately. This is particularly true when it came to conservation management and future growth policies. For example, one study found amenity-oriented owners and traditional ranchers tended to clash over future land use planning. Whereas amenity-oriented owners prefer a growth model that constrains future development, ranchers and farmers wanted to preserve the right to subdivide and sell their land to developers (Gosnell et al. 2006, 751).

During the 1990s, Montana's rapid development raised concerns among both locals and newcomers. At this time, the state's motto of "The Last Best Place" became common parlance with real estate agents, developers, and speculators. Critics argued against the wanton selling of the state's precious lands (Maxwell 1993). Under the Montana's Subdivision and Planning Act of 1973, any land parcel containing more than 20 acres was not subject to state and local review (Desch 1990). It was not until 1993, that the 20-acre limit was increased to 160 acres, redefining the requirements for subdivision review. However, prior the revised legislation, an estimated 92 percent of the state's subdivided land escaped monitoring of any sort (Maxwell 1993, 46).

Despite the revisions in Montana's subdivision regulations, large portions of the state's western counties were recklessly developed. As one article headlined, "A Realtor Runs Through It... Montana has been cut, quartered, and sold" (Maxwell 1993). Since the 1990s, local governments have been more proactive in managing major developments in the area. Comprehensive management plans, planning policies, and zoning regulations have become standard in many communities, yet such municipalities often lack the financial resources and expertise it takes to effectively control large-scale developments (Travis 2007).

After experiencing a period of rapid development during the 1990s, citizens living around the Crazy Mountains established a comprehensive management plan for the area. Developed in 1997, the growth plan for the Shields and Paradise Valley was premised off a communal "vision" for the future and outlined how each community in the region was going to work towards these shared objectives. Among the goals Clyde Park considered significant to the region's future was the preservation of the area's "peaceful, caring, and small community feel" (Park County Board of Commissioners 1997). In order to achieve this, it was important to "educate citizens, especially those new to the area, about Clyde Park's history, the values and traditions of the people, the area's natural environment and the realities of the farm and ranch economy" which will "help everyone, especially new residents, better understand and respect the community's values" (Park County Board of Commissioners 1997, 4).

Despite resistance from some citizens in the community, growth in Clyde Park and the peripheral setting opened up opportunities in the local economy. Increasing

development in the area diversified the employment base and created jobs in outdoor and recreationally-related work. Local residents found employment as fly-fishing guides, snowmobile repair workers, horsepacking trip leaders, hunting outfitters, and in other recreational services. Some landowners in the region even started their own dude ranching establishments. Growth in the Crazy Mountain region was therefore advantageous for some local residents who financially gained from entrepreneurial business endeavors.

At this time, the Gallatin National Forest also responded to the increase in recreationalists, visitors, and other land users by developing new administrative policies. In 1987, the agency produced its first forest travel plan (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 1987). In the mandate, the agency clearly recognized the contributing role recreation played in the region's socioeconomic and political landscape. According to the forest plan, the Forest Service wanted to achieve a balance between "resources," "opportunities," and "uses" while maintaining management direction "within the physical and biological limitations of the land" (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 1987, 4). Although increased emphasis was placed on management of "recreation, wildlife, fisheries, and water quality," the forest plan also provided "historical levels of local employment and a mixture of commodity outputs including timber and livestock grazing" (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 1987, 4).

In keeping with the objectives of the Forest Service, the forest plan further outlined measures to balance between the region's amenity and extractive resources. Most importantly, the agency wanted to develop recreational opportunities throughout the

region. The ability to meet these goals rested on the establishment and distribution of new public access points, thus involving the participation of the private sector. In order to “meet the demand for more developed recreation,” local landholders were “encouraged to help” (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 1987, 8). This was particularly true in areas like the Crazy Mountains, with large numbers of private parcels within the national forest. By providing more recreational opportunities, the Forest Service reasoned the added impacts from overuse would be reduced if not altogether removed.

By placing more emphasis on recreational use, the Gallatin National Forest travel plan was a shift away from the traditional management of the region’s national forests. Since the 1950s, the needs of the ranching, logging, and mining industries have been increasingly marginalized by the growing demand for more recreational opportunities. In the Crazy Mountains, the travel plan applied increasing pressure on local landholders to accommodate rising public use of the range. During the last decades of the twentieth century, the relationship between private landowners, the government and the public was a defining feature shaping the region’s cultural landscape and human geography.

Case Studies

By the 1980s and 1990s, many of the large land ownerships in and around the Crazy Mountain region were established. Ranchettes and other rural residential developments increasingly appeared along the foothills, and within commuting distance of Livingston, Clyde Park, and Big Timber. By comparison, large intact ranchlands still dominated the base of the Crazies, although the meaning and purpose of many of these

ranches changed over the years. During the past two decades, the rate at which agricultural ranches have been converted into amenity retreats has increased, accounting for a majority of new ownerships. Unlike earlier in the century, the scenic landscape and natural amenities of the Crazy Mountains drives recent settlement patterns.

Landownership Chronology, 1981-2000

Site 1:

The land tenureship for Site 1 varied little from 1981 to 2000. After the Nature Conservancy transferred section 9 to the Forest Service in 1975, five of the eight sections in Site 1 were part of the national forest (Figure 77). The remaining parcels, including sections 3, 5, and 7, were owned by the Van Cleve family. In addition to the lands included in Site 1, the Van Cleves owned nearly 20,000 acres distributed between Park and Sweet Grass counties. Of that, over 12,000 acres is located within the perimeter of the national forest.

Site 2:

By the early 1980s, Henry Pump was the dominant private landowner in Site 2 (Figure 78). However, in 1985, Pump sold sections 13, 19, 24, and 25 to Margaret Bedford, who owned them for a brief time before selling them to Muffy Murray. Murray, an out-of-state amenity rancher, bought the four sections in 1987 and was the private landholder of Site 2 by 2000. In 1992, Murray exchanged a quarter section of land in section 24 of Site 2 with the Forest Service. The small land purchase provided the

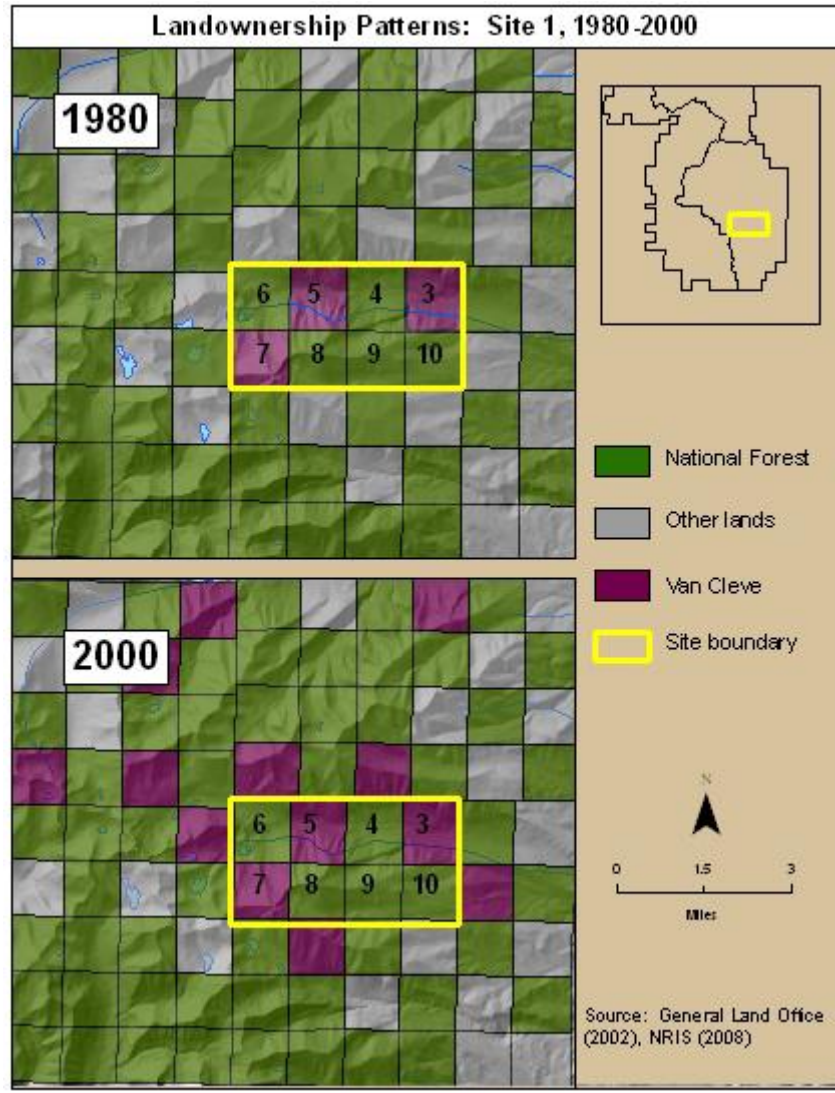


Figure 77. Distribution of Landownership in Site 1, 1980-2000. Source: NRIS, 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

agency with land to build a ranger station near the Bennett Creek trailhead (Beebee 2007, pers. communication, 30 August; Murray 2007, pers. communication, 27 August). In 1991, section 31, once owned by the Galt family, now the Galt Charitable Trust, was donated to the Forest Service in one of the largest land exchanges in the history of land management of the Crazy Mountains. Situated in the northern portion of the range, the

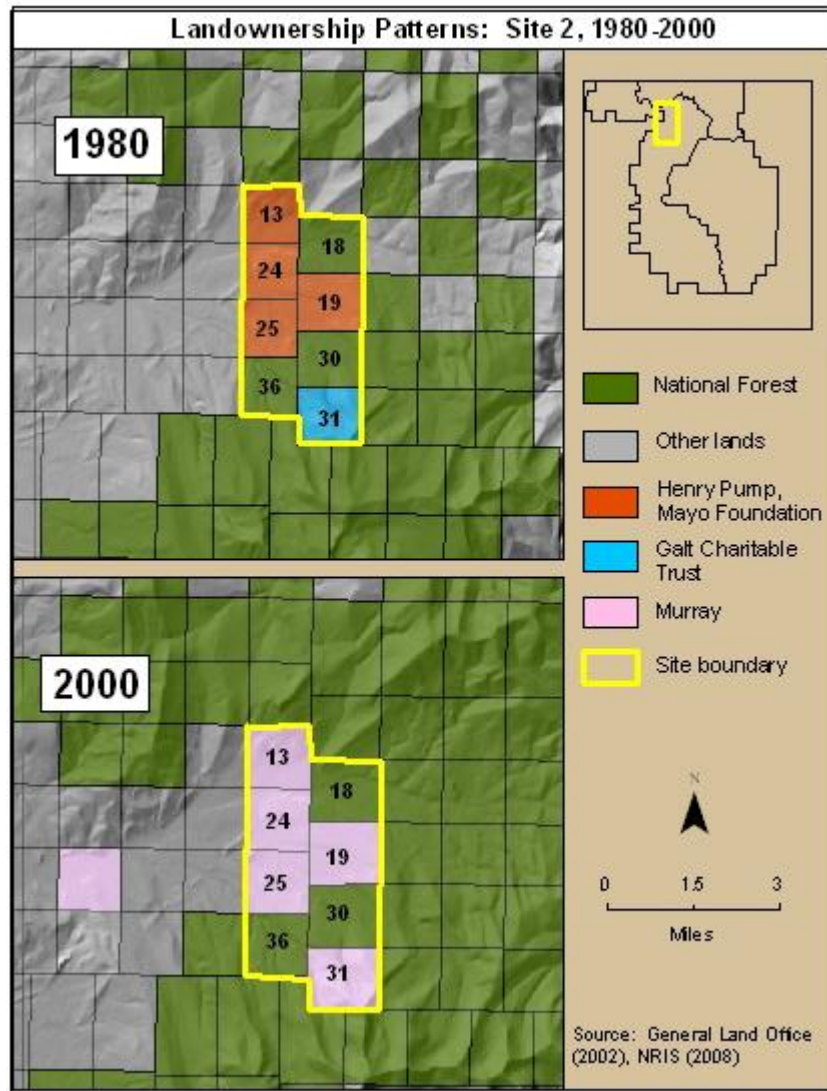


Figure 78. Distribution of Landownership in Site 2, 1980-2000. Source: NRIS, 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

sale involved over 3,500 acres of private lands, including section 31 in Site 2, for an estimated worth of \$500,000 (Lindler 1991). Formerly owned by the Galt family, the exchanged lands were part of a large ranch that included lands in both the Gallatin and the Lewis and Clark National Forests. At this time, the Forest Service was provided the option of purchasing up to 35,300 additional acres for \$7 million (Lindler 1991).

Between 1992 and 1993, 7,360 acres of Galt land located in the Gallatin and Lewis and Clark National Forest were transferred to the public domain. In Site 2 therefore, by 2000, half of the lands were privately owned by Muffy Murray and half of the lands were part of the national forest.

Site 3:

By 1980, a majority of Site 3 was part of Charles Urshel's ranch estate. Sections 7, 12, 13, 14, 17, and 18 were purchased by Urshel in 1964 and had since comprised the Double U Ranch (Figure 79). In 1975, the Brigg family purchased section 11 from the Hollidays and section 8 was in the national forest. This landownership pattern remained unchanged until 1990, when the private sections in Site 3 were collectively purchased by Glenn Patch, an out-of-state amenity rancher. Adding to the already impressive Double U Ranch, Patch expanding the ranch to nearly 19,000 acres, encompassing a large portion of the Rock Creek drainage. Patch renamed the property the Crazy Mountain Ranch. In 1999, the Crazy Mountain Ranch was purchased by Philip Morris Incorporated, the largest tobacco company in America. In 2000, Philip Morris Inc. was the landowner of Site 3 and was one of the most significant landholders in the Crazy Mountains.

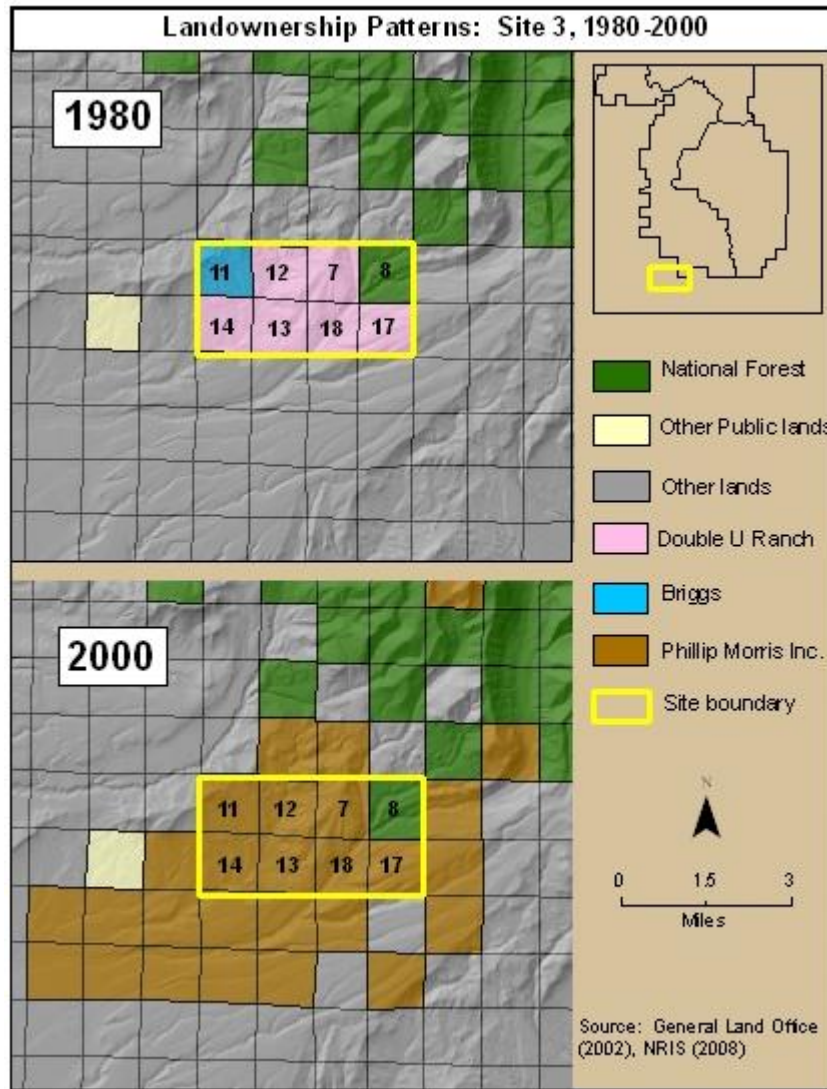


Figure 79. Distribution of Landownership in Site 3, 1980-2000. Source: NRIS, 2008. Created by: Author (2008).

Evolving Landscapes and Land Use Patterns, 1981-2000

During the final decades of the twentieth century, transformations in the landscape were increasingly directed by influences of the New West. Over time, confrontations between private landowners and outside recreational users increased along with public use of the range. During the 1990s, polarizing conflicts over land use

practices and land management accelerated with the development of the Crazy Mountain region.

Site 1:

By the late 1990s, the Lazy K Bar Ranch, located in section 3 of Site 1, was one of the most respected dude ranching establishments in the country. By 2000, they were the second oldest dude ranch in America, and the only operation still managed by founding family members (Kirby 2007, pers. communication, 10 July). In promoting the continuity and authenticity of the Lazy K Bar, there has been little overall change. Many of the activities on the ranch remained oriented around ranching, including roping, calving, and haying operations. In addition, horseback riding and camping were popular with guests. The structural layout of the ranch has not changed since 1980. With the exception of minor repairs and improvements to the cabins and facilities on the ranch, no new buildings or facilities have been constructed. Furthermore, the Lazy K Bar remains “off-the-grid” and does not have telephone service, the Internet, or televisions. The absence of these “luxuries” gives the Lazy K Bar a distinctive, and for many, more appealing rustic atmosphere (Van Cleve 2007, pers. communication, 10 July).

Since its early beginnings as a dude ranch, the Lazy K Bar has purposefully distanced itself with being called a guest ranch. Over time, dude ranches have dually functioned as vacation retreats and working agricultural establishments. Clients of dude ranches partake in daily ranching activities and enjoy a more conventional stay at the ranch (Figure 80). A guest ranch, by comparison, is a more “leisurely” approach towards ranching and often promotes the scenic and recreational amenities of the ranching

lifestyle (Borne 1983). By connotation, guest ranches are the New West version of dude ranches. Clients staying at a guest ranch are provided with modern amenities such as spa treatments, relaxation therapies, hot tubs, satellite television, Wi-fi availability, and gourmet dining. By contrast, the Lazy K Bar maintains and advertises its more “authentic” dude ranching experience (Van Cleve 2007, pers. communication, 10 July).



Figure 80. Daily life at the Lazy K Bar Ranch. Source: Lazy K Bar, 2007.

Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s, but particularly during the past two decades, the Crazies have become a recreational hotspot for a myriad of outdoor activities. In the summer, the range is widely used by backpackers, hikers, mountain bikers, and motorcyclists; in the winter, the region is host to multitudes of snowmobilers and backcountry skiers. Although a number of people gain access through privately owned Sweet Grass drainage, a majority of visitors enter the mountains through Big Timber Creek, Cottonwood drainage, Rock Creek trailhead, and Bennett Creek. Of these entry points, Big Timber Creek, located in section 4 in Site 1, receives the most people (Cifala

2007, pers. communication, 18 July). Its proximity to Livingston and Big Timber, as well as the larger communities of Bozeman and Billings, makes Big Timber Creek one of the most visited and accessible recreational sites in the Crazy Mountains.

The Half Moon campground, located at the mouth of Big Timber Creek, is one of the only established camping sites in the Crazies. Built in the mid-1950s, use of the Half Moon campground has increased with added pressure from visitors. In 2000, the Half Moon campground was remodeled to provide more tent sites, bathroom facilities, and parking spots. Although there is no way to assess how many people stay at the campground, the Forest Service agrees that annual use of Big Timber Creek has been higher during the past two decades than ever before (Cifala 2007, pers. communication, 18 July).

One reason for the rise in summer use of Big Timber Creek has been kayakers. Since its first descent in the late 1990s, Big Timber Creek has experienced an influx of elite paddlers. Access to the creek can only be reached by going through the Van Cleve property. Over the years, people have come from all parts of the world to kayak the creek's precipitous drops (Figure 81). Acknowledged as one of the steepest kayaking runs in the world, Big Timber Creek plummets an average of 720 feet per mile (Nolt 2007). Included in the run are several Class V maneuvers, like "The Pinch," a 210-foot vertical rockslide. In addition, "The Gambler," "Fine Line," and the "Falls" are unique water features that make Big Timber Creek a specialized and challenging endeavor, even among the sports best athletes.

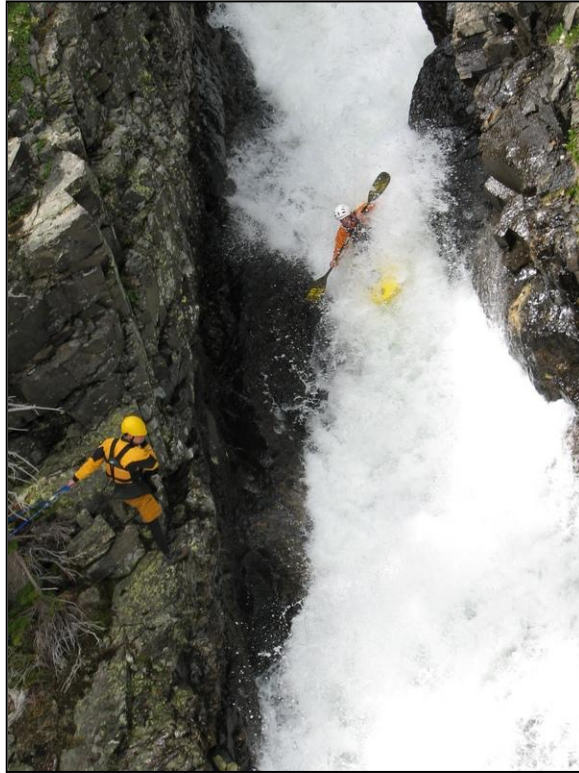


Figure 81. Big Timber Falls. Source: Teton Gravity, 2007.

Tensions between local landowners and recreational users were further aggravated by the growing presence of kayakers and other recreationalists. The Van Cleve family was especially impacted by the rise in public use of the mountains. As primary landholders in Site 1, the Van Cleves owned portions of private land, such as sections 3,5, and 7, located in and around Big Timber Creek. Consequently, the main trailhead can only be entered through the Van Cleve property. Over the years, the Van Cleves, like many other landowners in the region, have complained about increasing traffic use, noise, pollution, and trespassing. According to Tack Van Cleve, since the 1990s, the pressure on the Half Moon campground has been “horrendous.” “Unfortunately, the general public is not clean,” says Van Cleve, “[They think] if it’s

pretty and pristine when I get there, well... I'll finish my pop and throw it over there. Not tidy... they decide where they want their own trails, with no thought to what's it doing to the land. They gun it when they drive past, no thought to the dust and pets... [especially] kayakers, they are rude, rude, rude" (Van Cleve 2007, pers. communication, 10 July).

Livestock grazing has also played an important role in the landscape evolution of Site 1. Over the course of the century, both public and private lands within the study area were extensively grazed. After the 1950s, grazing restrictions within the Crazyies increased and the number of animal units allowed within each allotment was reduced. Then during the 1970s, the Forest Service readjusted grazing permit policies according to estimated sustainable carrying capacity levels. In general, between 1980 and 2000, livestock numbers for the Crazy Mountains varied little from the 1970s.

In order to better assess rangeland conditions in the Crazy Mountains, the Forest Service conducted a variety of localized land surveys. By using the Crazy Allotment, including sections 9 and 10 in Site 1, as indicative for the region's grazing lands, the Forest Service was able to ascertain environmental conditions for the remaining twenty allotments (Chapter 2, Figure 21). The initial land survey was performed in 1981. At this time, the suitable range for the Crazy Allotment was analyzed. In their report, the Forest Service concluded only 1 percent of the allotment's present range was in excellent condition (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 1981; 2005). A majority of the range, or 46 percent, was considered to be in good condition with an upward trend while 44 percent of the

range was in good condition showing a static or downward trend; the remaining 9 percent was in fair condition.

In 1998, the Forest Service conducted a second land survey of the Crazy Allotment. In comparison to the land survey of 1981, the later report suggested a negative trend in suitable range. According to the Forest Service summary, 1 percent of the allotment was in excellent condition, 28 percent was in good condition with an upward trend, and 60 percent of the range was in good condition, but showing a downward trend; 11 percent of the range was in fair condition (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005). The Forest Service concluded historic activities on the allotment exceeded sustainable levels of use. In the report, the Forest Service surmises, “Declining range and streambank conditions verify that management activities (the combined effects of private timber harvest, road building, and grazing on private and public land) are contributing to negative impacts on the condition of the allotment” (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 2005, 3-8).

In response to the land survey reports, the Forest Service proposed a reduction in livestock numbers on the Crazy Allotment. The Forest Service estimated a decrease of 30 percent in carrying capacity would relieve pressures from added cattle numbers. The agency also wanted to redirect cattle distributions away from upland and riparian sensitive areas and toward more sustainable forage. “The allotment must be in compliance with Forest Plan utilization and streambank stability standards,” advised the report. “The main issues that need to be addressed are riparian and upland vegetation grazing levels, including long-term maintenance of desirable forage and native plant

species, noxious weed invasion, and streambank integrity and stability” (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 2005, 1-6).

In 1995, the Gallatin National Forest Service included the Crazy Allotment livestock reduction proposal in their upcoming project listings. At this time, the Forest Service solicited comments and concerns from various agencies and the larger public (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007d). Later in 1998, the agency reintroduced the Crazy Allotment reduction proposal to the public. During this time, the few comments received addressed widespread conditions existent throughout the Gallatin National Forest. Most people spoke out for or against livestock grazing on public lands, or were concerned with potential effects on water quality, riparian areas, wildlife, and threatened and endangered species where grazing occurred (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 2005, 2-2).

The Gallatin National Forest proposal for grazing cutbacks in the Crazy Allotment involved a time consuming and laborious process. After the public outreach program was completed in 1998, the Forest Service identified key public concerns regarding the allotment. In 2000, the agency was still involved in the evaluation, thus grazing policies for the allotment changed little over the past two decades. Between 1980 and 1989, the estimated carrying capacity for the allotment was 378 cow/calf pairs or up to 944 animal units. However, actual livestock numbers were as high as 1,125 animal units. During the 1990s, actual use of the Crazy Allotment decreased to 1,007 animal units. The grazing cutbacks proposed by the Forest Service would limit permitted use of the allotment to 312 cow/calf pairs or up to 780 animal units.

According to the Forest Service, in addition to excessive livestock use of the Crazy Allotment, noxious weeds and private logging efforts were at fault for rangeland degradation in and near the allotment area. Although the report regarded all three causes separately, the spread of invasive plants, private timber harvests and livestock grazing were interrelated and collectively contributed to existing allotment conditions. The spread of noxious weeds in particular, accounted for the general downward trend in suitable rangeland from 1981 to 1998. High forage utilization in some areas resulted in overuse of native plant species and underuse of preferred forage. Overstocking also altered species composition to favor lower seral species in some places, leading to an increase of noxious weeds (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 2005, 1-5).

During the early 1990s, plant inventories around the Crazy Mountains showed the highest levels of noxious weeds in the region's history. Between 1989 and 1994, the number of reported invasive and noxious plant species more than doubled the previous decade (Invasive Species 2008). During this time period, 47 different exotic plant species were recorded and 24 types of noxious weeds were documented. Some of the plants inventoried were historically common in the region such as houndstongue, leafy spurge, and thistle. Others noxious weeds, like knapweed (*Centaurea repens*) and yellow toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*) were more recently introduced. Below average precipitation, dry conditions, high winds, and road building facilitated the spread of noxious weeds. After 1994, the number of invasive species slightly decreased, yet they remained above previous amounts (Figure 82).

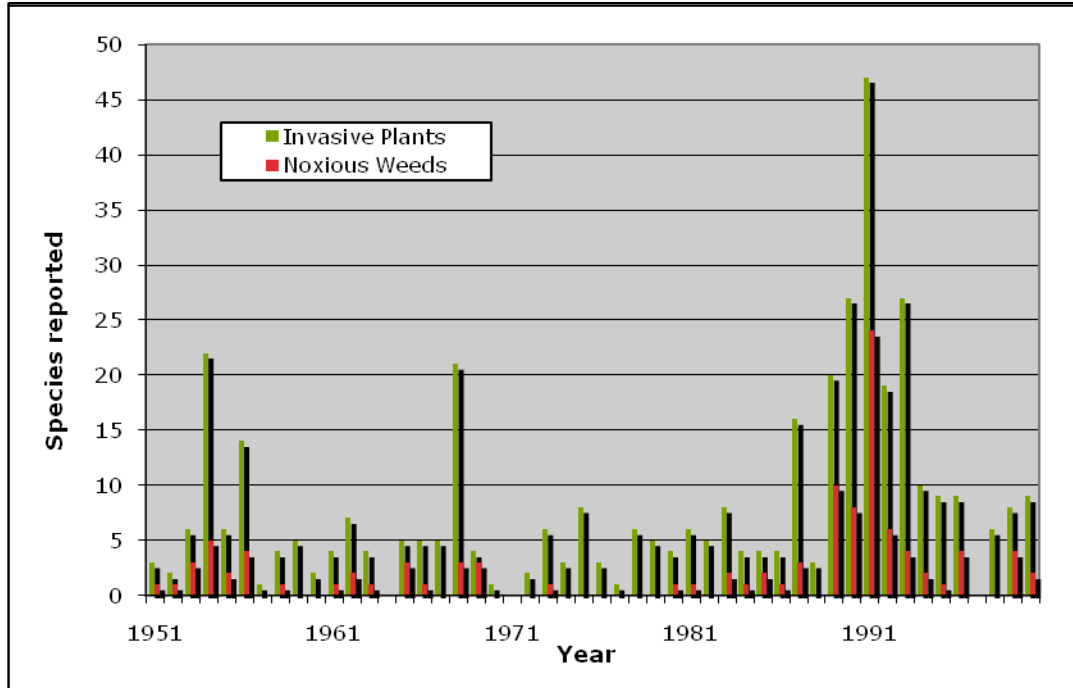


Figure 82. Invasive plant and noxious weed inventory for Park and Sweet Grass counties, 1950-2000. Source: Invaders Database System, County-Level.

Landowners such as the Van Cleves and others living in the region combated the spread of invasive plant species in a variety of ways. The most common methods of weed management focused on complete eradication of an infestation while alternative means applied more suppressive measures against weed proliferation. During the 1980s, the Van Cleves continued to practice rotovating (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005). By removing the top layer of soil, rotovating prevented weeds from seeding, growing and spreading. Since the 1990s, the Van Cleves have used other techniques, such as spraying herbicides and selective burning, in an effort to prevent invasive plants from reproducing (Van Cleve 2007, pers. communication, 10 July).

In Site 1, logging disturbed natural rangeland environments. Between 1980 and 2000, approximately 300 acres of timber harvesting occurred on public and private lands

within the area (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007e) (Figure 83). According to the forest service report, timber harvests involved clearcutting merchantable trees, constructing roads, skidding logs over the ground, and slash burning (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 2005,

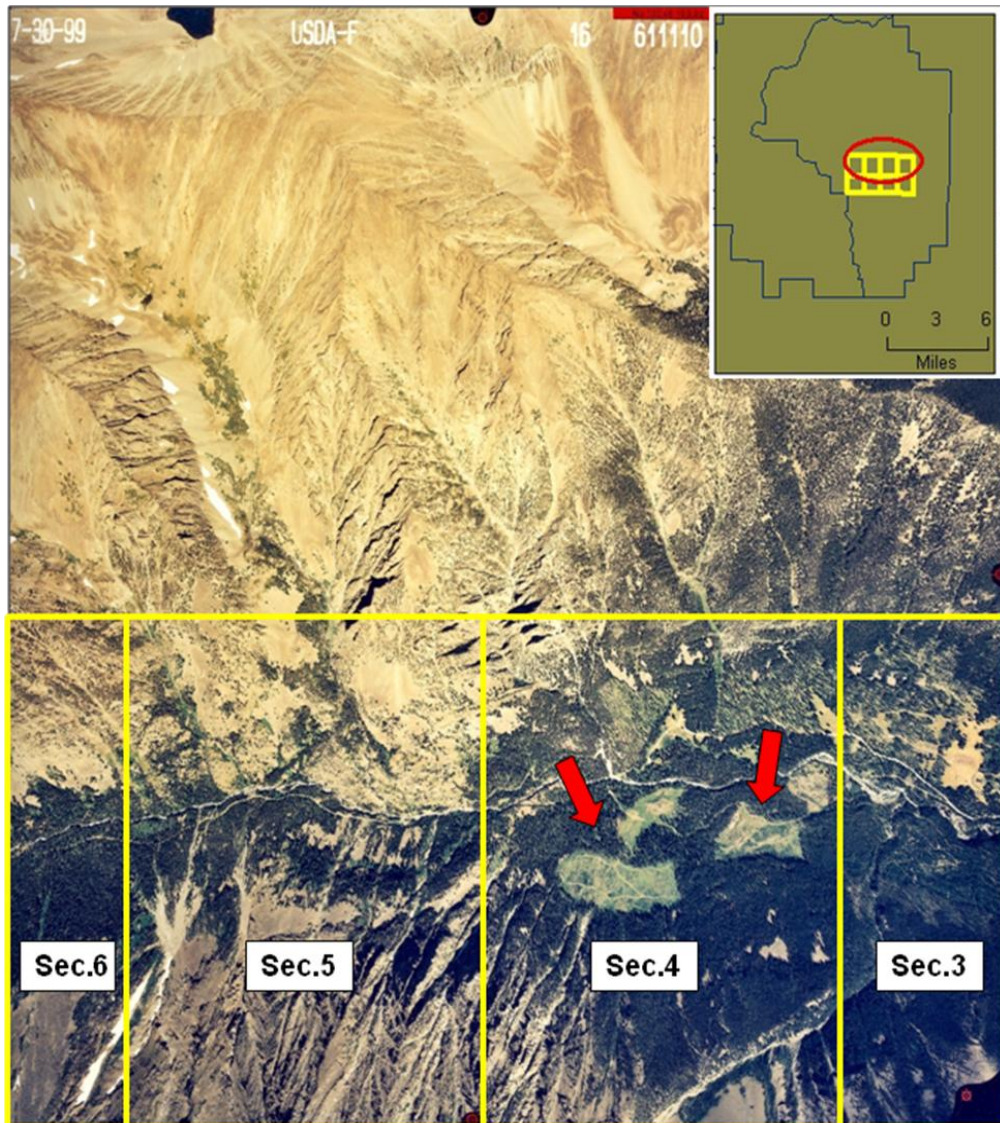


Figure 83. Aerial photograph of logged areas in Site 1, 1980-2000. Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Gallatin National Forest Service (1999; 2007).

3-4). Following harvest activities, timber units would often become forage grounds for livestock. Known as “transitory ranges” because grazing capacity declined with forest cover reestablishment, harvested timber areas were highly susceptible to weed infestation. Although transitory ranges provided temporary grazing grounds for livestock, much of the regenerated vegetation was unpalatable to animals. Consequently, logging certain areas unsettled natural forage and contributed to the spread of undesirable plant species.

Site 2:

During the late 1980s and 1990s, a number of amenity ranches appeared in and near Site 2 (Figure 84). One of the largest new ownerships in the area was purchased by Muffy Murray. Murray, an out-of-state hobby rancher, used the property as a seasonal retreat. Although the land occasionally hosted livestock, Murray herself was a non-agricultural ranch owner. Similar to many other amenity landowners in the region, Murray was attracted to the natural scenery, solitude, and rural nature of the ranching lifestyle. The most common activities included horseback riding, camping, fishing, and rafting. As a part-time owner, the ranch was occupied from June through September, although staff generally stayed longer.

Despite an amenity orientation, some traditional land management practices were maintained on Site 2. For example, the private lands in the study area were routinely monitored for noxious weeds, pine beetle infestations, and Murray continued to allow livestock grazing (Beebee 2007, pers. communication, 30 August; Murray 2007, pers. communication, 27 August). Furthermore, Murray worked with the Forest Service to



Figure 84. Entry way into an amenity ranch, Site 2. Source: Author, 2008.

accommodate public use and access to her lands adjacent to national forest property. In 1992, a small land exchange was negotiated between Murray and the government. The land transfer consolidated the public lands in and around the Bennett Creek trailhead and provided the Forest Service with ranger facilities.

Public and private lands in Site 2 continued to be used for livestock grazing during the 1980s and 1990s. The Bennett Creek and the Shields River allotment both included portions of the site (Chapter 2, Figure 21). Since 1944, the Bennett Creek Allotment, including sections 23, 24, and 26 in Site 2, was a cattle-use only permit, allowing 12 head of cattle on national Forest Service lands and up to 500 head on private lands (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b). In 1987, this was adjusted to 15 head on public lands and 300 head on private property.

Despite the overall reduction in livestock numbers, forest officials remained concerned over the rangeland conditions in the Bennett Creek Allotment. Consequently,

in 1990, a deferred rotation grazing system was implemented for the area. This type of grazing policy is designed to allow native range plants to regrow before livestock are permitted to graze in the allotment. In a deferred grazing rotation, grazing is generally discontinued in one portion of the allotment but allowed in another portion. The following year, the discontinued portion is reopened to grazing, thus allowing the previously grazed area to rest for the season (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2008).

The revised grazing system for the Bennett Creek Allotment supported sustainable management of the area. By redistributing where livestock could graze, certain areas in the allotment were not used as heavily as in the past. In addition, ranchers using the allotment were encouraged to move cattle away from sensitive areas, such as watersheds and riparian zones (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2005; 2007b). These types of grazing policies attempted to reduce the impacts of grazing without having to greatly reduce the number of livestock within an allotment.

Livestock figures for the Shields River Allotment fluctuated over the years. Since 1954, the Shields River Allotment, including sections 25, 35, and 36, has been cattle-use only. During the 1970s and 1980s, the allotment carrying capacity ranged from 60 animals to 129 animals (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b). Then in 1992, when the Galt Land Exchange took place, most of the private sections in the Shields River Allotment were absorbed into the national forest. Consequently, grazing permits were adjusted to allow grazing in the public lands only. By 2000, 129 head of cattle were allowed to graze the allotment from July 1 to October 15.

Like other regions in the Crazy Mountains, continued logging in Site 2 influenced the area's landscape evolution. New, once inaccessible portions of the site were opened for harvesting. In the 1990s, Murray began to use helicopters as a means for log removal and transportation (Beebee 2007, pers. communication, 30 August). Rather than logging timber for market value however, Murray thinned certain areas of private land as a preventative measure against forest fires. The Forest Service also logged sections in Site 2 at this time. In particular, sections 30 and 31 were harvested during the 1990s (Figure 85). Larger than most harvests in the Crazies, these logged areas totaled approximately 1,500 acres (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2000; 2007e).

During the 1980s and 1990s, fire occurrences in the Crazy Mountains surpassed historic levels. In 1987, the largest fire in the region consumed 25 to 50 acres (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2000; 2007e). However in 1994, forest fires burned nearly 1,400 acres near Smith Creek, located approximately five miles west of Site 2. Between 1995 and 1999, fire occurrences in the Crazies were relatively infrequent. Then in 2000, fires consumed 500 acres around Sugarloaf Peak, less than four miles south of Site 2 (Ricker 2008). Although warm temperatures and below average precipitation partially accounted for the increase in fires, human intervention largely facilitated fire activity.

Site 3:

The landscape evolution of Site 3 provides an example of Old West traditions converging with New West values. Over the course of the century, Site 3 has been

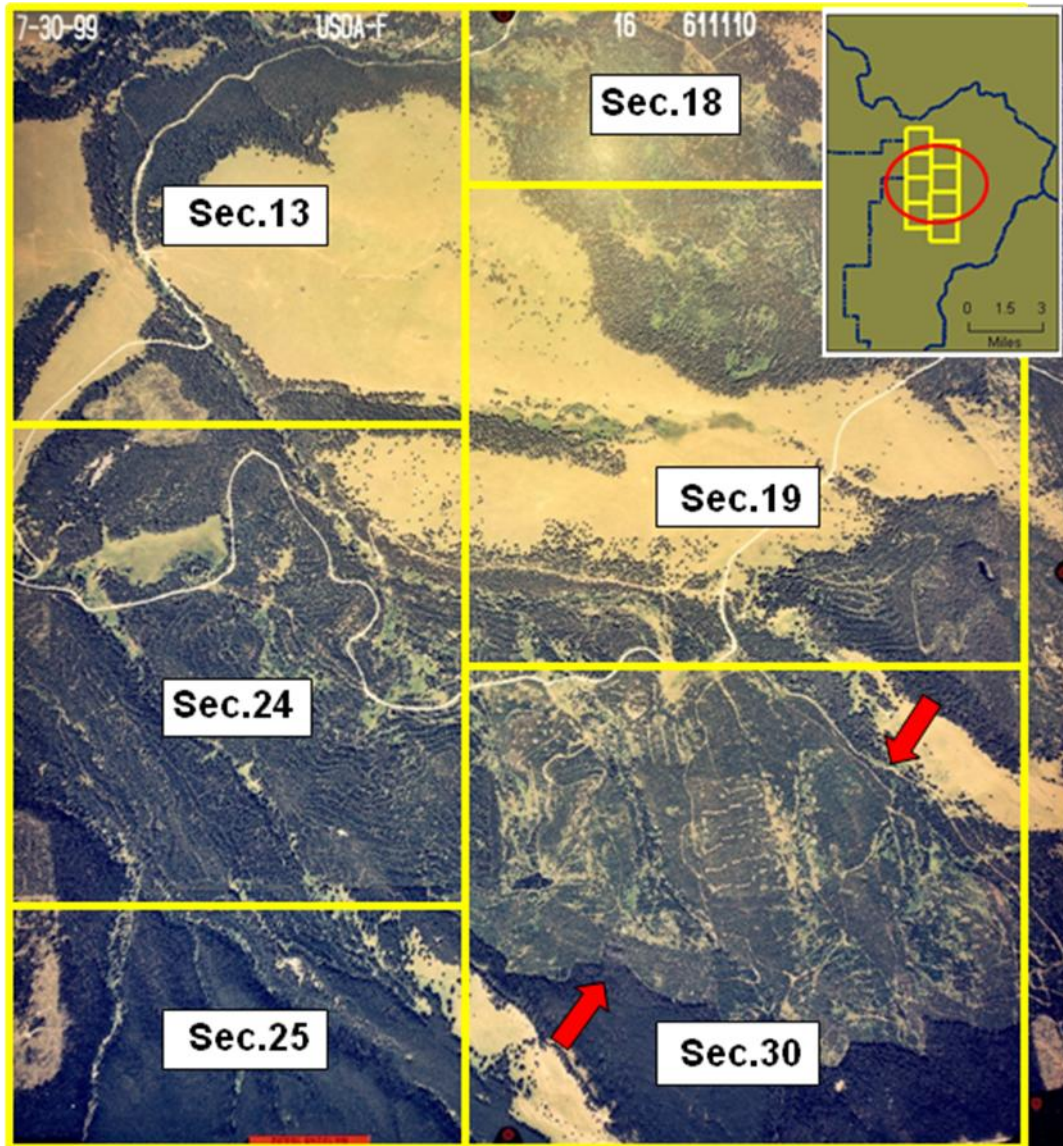


Figure 85. Aerial photograph logged areas in Site 2, 1980-2000. Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Gallatin National Forest Service (1999).

fundamentally transformed by society's changing valuation of the environment and natural resources. Initially settled at the turn of the century by homesteaders, Site 3 operated as a traditional cattle ranch until the 1950s. During the early 1960s, the private lands located in and near Site 3 were incorporated into the Double U Ranch. Later, in the

early 1990s, Site 3 was transferred to Glenn Patch, another out-of-state hobby rancher. The most recent purchase of Site 3 took place in 1999, and signaled the arrival of the corporate landowner in the region.

The purchase of Site 3 by Philip Morris Incorporated was influential in the development of the Crazy Mountains for several reasons. Although corporations have long been interested in the Crazies, their customary role was limited to real estate investments and speculative land opportunities. However, during the 1990s, it became more common for corporations to relocate a portion of their business in areas with high amenities (Rasker and Hansen 2000). A corporate ranch generally operated as a venue for business conferences, company retreats, and executive employee vacations. Corporate ranches were amenity ownerships, where guests enjoyed the outdoor and recreational opportunities provided by the surrounding area. In some cases, the ranch maintained a part-time working agricultural operation, seasonally running livestock on the property. Yet, cattle and other agricultural activities were often valued more as visual props rather than as productive resources.

During the 1980s, Site 3 was still managed as the Double U Ranch. In 1990, Site 3, along with several surrounding sections, were collectively purchased by Glenn Patch. Patch owned the ranch as a vacation retreat, often inviting friends and family to stay through the summer (Devoto 2007, pers. communication, 13 August). Although Patch was impressed with the location, he envisioned a more rustic atmosphere. During the first years of ownership, Patch remodeled the Double U Ranch after an early 1900s mining town (Dead Rock Brochure 1993). Renamed Dead Rock, the ranch was

reconstructed based on images and photographs of early western settlements. Included in the newly refurbished grounds were a bank, saloon, firehouse, hotel, barbershop, jailhouse, livery stable, and several other buildings representative of early pioneering communities (Devoto 2007, pers. communication, 13 August) (Figure 86). Drawing on the historical iconography of the region, Dead Rock merged traits of the Old West with the capital, influence, and views of the New West.

In addition to the residential setting of Dead Rock, the ranch offered a myriad of activities and outdoor pursuits. Among the recreational opportunities available, snowmobiling, fly-fishing, dog-sledding, hay riding, and cross-country skiing were the most popular (Dead Rock Ranch Brochure 1993). Lodging included premium accommodations, gourmet meals, a souvenir shop, an exercise room and a hot tub. For those guests desiring further cultural amenities, Patch hired local musicians and entertainment services for the evening. The modern amenities of Dead Rock combined



Figure 86. Replicated buildings of the Old West, located on Dead Rock (1993) and Crazy Mountain Ranch (1999). Source: Travel webshots. (2008).

with the locational backdrop of the Crazy Mountains and provided guests with a luxurious, and highly fabricated version of a western ranching experience.

In 1999, the Dead Rock Ranch and the lands surrounding it were purchased by Philip Morris Incorporated. The cigarette company, whose widely recognized mascot was the Marlboro Man, similarly used the ranch for guest services. Renamed the Crazy Mountain Ranch, the establishment was exclusively reserved for product promotional packages and as a corporate retreat (Figure 87). Although a number of minor additions were made at this time, including more guest cabins and service facilities, the general residential complex remained unchanged. Adding to the existing list of available outdoor activities, the Crazy Mountain Ranch provided guests with the option of downhill skiing, mountain biking, rafting, and rock climbing (Marlboro 2005). Although cattle remained on the property, agriculture was not the main source of income on the ranch.



Figure 87. Crazy Mountain Ranch sign. Source: Author, 2008.

In selecting the Crazy Mountain Ranch as a corporate retreat, Philip Morris effectively promoted the region as Marlboro Country. Since the early 1960s, the cigarette company used the Marlboro image, consisting of a cowboy riding amid a western landscape, as a central figure in their advertisement campaigns (Figure 88). By the 1970s and 1980s, the Marlboro Man and the country he roamed, were iconic images of western ranching and independence. Analogous to early twentieth century settlement promotions, Philip Morris promoted a rugged, individualistic lifestyle in a rough, yet beautiful and tamable land (Lohof 1972). The Marlboro Man, a cultural manifestation of masculinity and strength, reflected America's recurrent fascination with settling the American West.



Figure 88. Popular Marlboro cigarette ads during the 1980s and 1990s. Source: Philip Morris Incorporated, 2006.

Beyond the symbolic relevance of the Marlboro Man as an individual is the implied significance of the country in which he lives. Expressed in the promotional phrase “Come to Marlboro Country,” the landscape offered an open, mountainous terrain removed from society; in effect, it is the Crazy Mountains (Figure 89). In an essay discussing the Marlboro image, Bruce Lohof writes, “Marlboro County, in a sense, is Montana- ‘The inhumanly virginal landscape: the atrocious magnificence of the mountains, the illimitable brute fact of the prairies’ ... this is Marlboro Country” (1972, 27). Suggested in the figure of the lone cowboy smoking the cigarette, life in Marlboro Country (and in Montana) was forever linked with the freedom and grandeur that was available in spectacular mountain settings.

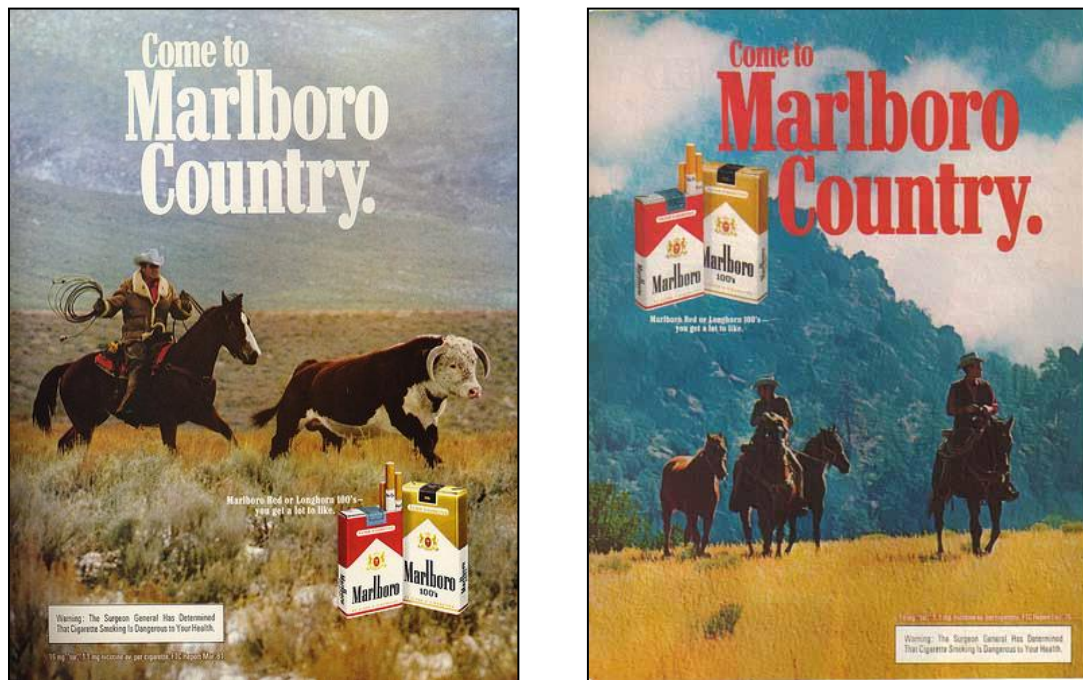


Figure 89. Phillip Morris and Marlboro Country. Source: Philip Morris Incorporated, 2006.

The promotion of the New West in the late 1960s and 1970s coincided with the Marlboro campaign. By the 1990s, the slogan “Marlboro Country” was common social vernacular. Reconstructing the Crazy Mountains as Marlboro Country therefore reinforced familiar cultural values at the time. In replicating a western settlement town, the Crazy Mountain Ranch evoked a sense of nostalgia for Old West patterns of life. However, land use practices oriented towards outdoor pursuits and recreation clearly represented New West values. Consequently, the nature and meaning of the Crazy Mountain landscape changed with different types of landowners.

Since purchasing the Crazy Mountain Ranch, Philip Morris has worked to establish a friendly rapport with the local community. The company has contributed to the region’s employment base, especially for the towns of Clyde Park, Livingston, and Bozeman. The company hires local residents for positions ranging from ranch management to food services. Although some longtime residents are uneasy with the large corporate presence, others enjoy the employment opportunities and the option to work close to home.

In addition to Site 3, numerous sections of surrounding land were included in the Crazy Mountain Ranch. Altogether, the ranch contained more than 22 sections of land, approximately 19,000 acres, in the southwest corner of the range (Devoto 2007, pers. communication, 13 August; Natural Resources Information System 2008) (Figure 90). Several of these parcels, more than 2,500 acres, were situated within the national forest, and included lands located in Sheep Creek and Rock Creek drainages. By 2000, the Crazy Mountain Ranch was one of the largest landownerships in the region.



Figure 90. Crazy Mountain Ranch. Source: Tolga, 2005.

Managers of the Crazy Mountain Ranch actively monitored the conditions of the property and took proactive approaches to maintain suitable environmental conditions. The containment and control of noxious weeds was a main concern. In addition to spraying infested areas, ranch managers employed bio-control agents, such as natural predatory insects, to prevent the spread of weeds (Devoto 2007, pers. communication, 13 August). Livestock is seasonally rotated to allow the regeneration of undergrowth and plant forage and although logging efforts have decreased in the area, dead timber and fuel caches are regularly removed. Active land management on the Crazy Mountain Ranch has contributed to amiable relations between the company and other local landowners.

Dealings between the Crazy Mountain Ranch and the public have been occasionally strained. In particular, the proximity of Rock Creek trailhead to the ranch's private lands has been problematic. Rock Creek drainage is one of the more popular

entry points into the Crazy Mountains, especially with residents living in Bozeman and Livingston (Cifala 2007, pers. communication, 18 July). As the dominant private landholder in the region, Philip Morris controls over 3,000 acres located within the Rock Creek drainage. Moreover, some of the range's most recognizable sites are located on the company's land, such as Rock Lake, Smeller Lake, and access to Iddings Peak. Consequently, the Crazy Mountain Ranch continues to experience conflicts with trespassers and other land users who wish to access the ranch's private lands.

The national forest lands surrounding Site 3 have traditionally been popular with elk hunters. Hunting Districts 315 and 580 are included within the study area (Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks 2004). A majority of the hunting districts, nearly 80 percent, is situated within private lands. Although Rock Creek is a public trailhead, hunting was initially limited by the positioning of the Crazy Mountain Ranch and other nearby private lands. In the late 1990s, in a coordinated effort with neighboring landowners, the government, and the public, the Crazy Mountain Ranch agreed to a Block Management Program that allowed hunters free entry onto private lands. As a result, average annual elk harvests significantly increased from 360 in the 1990 to 1992 season to 534 in the 1999 to 2001 season (Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks 2004). By working with Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP) as well as regional hunters, ranch managers in Site 3 have reduced the number of trespassers as well as controlled and more effectively managed a burgeoning elk population.

Other private landowners in the region however, have not been as supportive of public hunting. For example, a recent land acquisition adjacent to Site 3 greatly reduced

the efficacy of the Block Management Program. The new owners prohibit elk hunting on their lands in the area. In addition, second homeowners and other newer residents to the area generally approach wildlife management differently than the Crazy Mountain Ranch and other landowners, and tend to be less open to public access. A report by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (2004) summarized the situation:

Limited public access to national forest lands and lack of public access on or through private lands reduces the potential harvest. This limited access causes frustration among hunters and concentrates hunting pressure in the vicinity of the few existing public access points. Several ranches on the south and west side of the Crazy Mountains are owned by absentee landowners who do not depend on ranching for their income. Their perspective on public hunting and elk numbers results in creation of elk “refuges” which reduces the effectiveness of hunting seasons designed to reduce or stabilize elk populations. (*Source: Montana FWP, 2004*).

Ranching activities continued in Site 3 during the 1980s and 1990s. Three grazing allotments were situated near the Crazy Mountain Ranch and Site 3, including the Duck Creek, Little Cottonwood Creek, and Rock Creek allotments (Chapter 2, Figure 21). Since 1980, there have been few changes in the allotment grazing policies. From 1980 to 2000, the carrying capacity for the Duck Creek allotment, located in section 17 of Site 3, ranged between 15 and 25 animals. Livestock numbers for the Little Cottonwood and Rock Creek allotments, both situated east of the site, remained unchanged at 60 head of cattle and 125 head of cattle. The grazing season for these allotments began July 1 and ended October 15 (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007b).

Logging activities also resumed in Site 3 between 1980 and 2000. Although minimal, most harvests involved cutting patches of forests, single trees, or stands of trees.

In Site 3 and elsewhere in the Crazies, the practice of shelterwood logging, or the selective cutting of certain trees to ensure forest regeneration was frequently done (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007e). In addition, forest thinning and the removal of dead wood and fuel caches was a common measure of fire prevention. In Site 3, between 1,000 to 1,500 acres were harvested on public and private lands between 1980 and 2000 (U.S. Dept of Agriculture 2007e).

Other land use changes in and around Site 3 illustrated and reinforced the region's transition into an amenity-oriented landscape. Over the past two decades, exurban developments around the foothills of the Crazies have become increasingly more common. In particular, areas located south of Site 3 have been developed because of their proximity to Clyde Park, Livingston, and the mountains (Figure 91). The marketable appeal of the region's rural setting, relatively short commuting distance, and splendid viewshed have encouraged development. As with similar settings, many of the



Figure 91. Low-density rural developments located near Site 3. Source: Author, 2007.

lands traditionally reserved for agriculture, have been subdivided into 5 to 20 acres residential lots and sell for as much as \$250,000 a parcel (Berendts 2007, pers. communication, 1 August).

The presence of rural residential developments around Site 3 and the foothills of the Crazies reflected New West development patterns. In addition to the lands surrounding Site 3, other areas in the Crazy Mountains were being developed as a result of the region's relatively high-amenity value. Changes in the agricultural sector, increasing property values, and rising demands in the housing market applied pressure on local ranchers to sell and subdivide their lands. Consequently, large landownerships, such as in Site 1, 2, and 3, are playing an increasingly important role in the management of these rural lands.

PLACE PERCEPTIONS IN THE CRAZY MOUNTAINS

Over the course of the twentieth century, there were many cultural and visible landscape changes in the Crazy Mountains. With time, the region has come to mean many things to different groups of people. In order to better understand these views and their potential influence on the management and development of the range, I conducted a series of interviews with local landowners and land users. The interview process was meant to draw out personal values of sense of place. These meanings can in turn help to explain larger, visual transformations on the landscape.

Understanding sense of place can be challenging in the evaluation of landscape change. Sense of place concepts are concerned with the non-visible, qualitative transformations in a region's evolution and include themes of place attachment, place identity, and perceptions of place. The development of sense of place hinges on numerous biological, environmental, and cultural processes. Collectively, these forces influence and shape the meaning of a particular setting and can provide valuable insight into a region's historical and geographical development.

The purpose of the interviews was to provide a more comprehensive understanding of landscape change in the Crazy Mountains. How local landowners and land users described the region provided an intimate viewpoint that could not be garnered through most other resources. Why were people living in the region? What makes the Crazy Mountains important? What issues were significant in the region's management? What major processes are presently shaping the Crazy Mountains? What issues are important in the future development of the Crazy Mountains?

The interview process included participants living in both Park and Sweet Grass counties. Altogether, thirty people were interviewed over the course of four months. The interviews were structured around five, open-ended questions that encouraged detailed, personal responses. In providing a more complete synthesis of landscape change, there were two main goals of the interviews. Part of the interview process involved establishing a working landownership typology for the Crazy Mountain region. In addition, I wanted to identify key themes and concerns common among the region's primary interest groups. The intent with the questionnaire was not to classify the respondents by their answers but rather emphasize the worries, concerns, and values that exist, and may potentially unify, Crazy Mountain residents.

Based on their responses, participants of the interviews were identified as a particular type of landowner. Using a similar study conducted by the Center of the American West (Travis et al. 2002a; 2002b) as reference, I categorized each participant into a particular class of landowner according to their interests, duration of residency, occupation, and other characteristics (Figure 92). A landownership typology is a useful guide for recognizing common themes and values among the region's residents. Despite inherent generalizations that typologies may introduce, identifying types of landowners is a functional method for distinguishing among generic groups of residents, based on their goals and strategies regarding land management and land tenure (Travis et al. 2003, 5).

Typology of Landowners
<p>Traditional rancher: Generally a full-time owner-operator raising livestock for profit without the aid of a ranch manager; may engage in some off-work (or on-ranch work unrelated to livestock), but derives the majority (or at least a significant portion) of his or her income from the ranch.</p>
<p>Part-time rancher: An owner-operator who often has a full-time job off the ranch; ranch income is generally less than the off-ranch income; usually smaller operations.</p>
<p>Non-agricultural landowner: Someone previously involved with ranching activities and is now retired or is living in the region because of employment purposes (e.g., Forest Service employee, ranch hand, outfitting, etc.)</p>
<p>Amenity buyer: Purchases a ranch for ambience, recreation, and other amenities, not primarily for agricultural production; often an absentee owner; may have some interests in ranching but generally hires a ranch manager who makes most day-to-day decisions and does the majority of the work; or, the owner may lease the majority of his/her land or cattle to a “real rancher.” The majority of amenity ranchers’ personal income is, by definition, from off-ranch sources; the economic viability of the ranch is not an issue.</p>

Figure 92. Definition of landowner types. Source: Travis et al. 2002a; 2002b.

Three main types of landowners in the Crazy Mountain region were identified. The first, traditional ranchers, generally maintained large livestock operations and other agricultural activities. In the Crazies, most traditional ranchers are involved in cattle production and haying operations. A third of the participants interviewed fit into this category (Figure 93). Traditional ranchers were often longtime residents of the Crazy Mountains, with family still living in the local community or surrounding area. Although some traditional ranchers were partly involved in other means of employment, ranching was their main source of income.

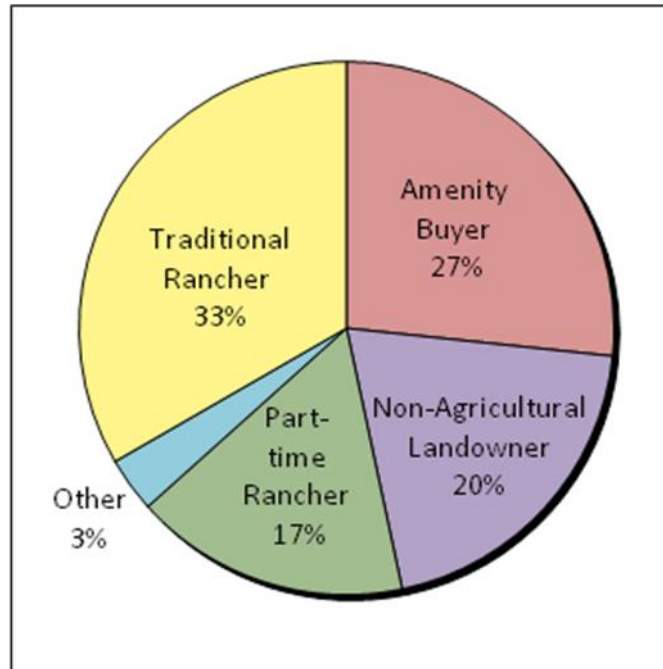


Figure 93. Distribution of landowners included in the interview process.

Non-agricultural landowners and part-time ranchers in the Crazy Mountain region were residents who often operated small agricultural operations or were living in the region because of employment. Non-agricultural landowners included Forest Service employees, guest ranch managers, and other residents living in the region because of work-related circumstances. Of those interviewed, 7 participants, or 20 percent, were non-agricultural landowners. For part-time ranchers, ranching provided minor supplemental income and was not the primary means of employment. Many part-time ranchers were employed either halftime or full-time in other work. Five landowners, or 17 percent, of those interviewed were part-time ranchers. Unlike amenity buyers, part-time ranchers and non-agricultural landowners live in the region year-round and are often employed in full-time positions.

Amenity buyers purchased their home in the Crazy Mountains because of the region's scenic and natural appeal. Following traditional ranchers, amenity ownerships were the second most common type of landowner interviewed, with 8 participants, or 27 percent of the sampled population. Often, amenity landowners owned two or more sections of land, altogether owning thousands of acres. As seasonal residents, amenity landowners often hired ranch managers and local residents to maintain their ranch and property. This type of landowner is generally not dependent on the land nor its productivity as a source of income. Consequently, amenity landowners are often financially secure and involved with other means of employment "off the ranch."

This typology proved useful in identifying key land use issues among the surveyed participants. With traditional ranchers, three themes were identified as issues of future concern. The first was the potential closure of the national forest lands to livestock grazing and other agricultural activities. A second major concern, and closely related to the first, was an increase in government control over the use of public lands. Many of these fears stemmed from a potentially federal wilderness area designation of the Crazy Mountains and other future changes in administrative policies. A third scenario considered significant amongst traditional ranchers was the increasing turnover of ranchlands. While many ranchers have been able to maintain agricultural operations on their land, others have sold portions, or all of their ranch, to out-of-state amenity buyers. Although most ranchers are concerned with the future of ranching, many concede that the lack of younger ranchers and financial uncertainties in agriculture make the ranching business a difficult and unpredictable industry.

Issues that emerged as significant concerns for part-time ranchers and other non-agricultural ranchers were related to the increasing privatization of lands surrounding the national forest. In particular, they considered accessibility to public lands relevant in the future use of the mountains. This included issues related to the closure of some access points into the national forest, travel through the private parcels located within the range, and a decrease in the amount of land available for lease. Part-time ranchers and non-agricultural landowners were more receptive to increasing government controls in order to maintain present levels of access.

Amenity buyers were most concerned with issues involving the public and the increasing rate of subdivided developments. Many amenity buyers purchased their mountain home in the Crazies because of its privacy, exclusive views, and access rights to the surrounding area. Consequently, concerns over trespassing, poaching, and traffic were common among many amenity landowners in the region. In addition, the increasing rate with which formerly open space is being subdivided and developed worried many residential amenity buyers.

Questions and Responses

The first question asked participants to explain why they were living near the Crazy Mountains. Responses varied according to individual interests, occupations, and type of landownership. Participants often associated their reasons for living in the Crazy Mountain region to a particular activity, such as ranching or recreating. Others

respondents cited family ties to the area. Most importantly, the natural landscape of the Crazy Mountains was a main reason they were living in the region.

My wife has been here for 88 years. I've been here for 88 years minus fifteen (73 years). We ranched in the foothills of the Crazy Mountains for fifty years, and retired about ten years ago. It was like pulling teeth getting out of there. Ranching up there was like my dream job. *Park County, Traditional Rancher*

I was born and raised here in Wilsall. My father was born here too, around the '40s, he was a logger up in the Crazies. He logged up in the north end. And now you can go in there and see where they logged and see all the new trees coming up. You can really see the benefit that comes from logging when you see all the new trees. *Park County, Traditional Rancher*

We've been here since 1992. We moved [to the Crazy Mountains] because it was beautiful. *Park County, Non-agricultural landowner*

We are farmers and ranchers. I've been here for about 35 years. My husband's been here for much longer, since about 1951. My interest in the Crazy Mountains is recreational... they're in our backyard. *Sweet Grass County, Traditional Rancher*

I came in '81 the first time, '83 the second time... I always knew I wanted a place out West, that was one of those things, you know, childhood dreams. So in 1973, I spent about six months camping all along the Northwest... I spent my twenty-first birthday in Yellowstone Park which was more or less closed... And it was that trip that I kind of narrowed it down. I knew what I wanted it to look like but I didn't know what state it would be in. When I saw a picture of the [Crazies] I knew that was where I wanted to live. *Park County, Amenity Buyer*

Of the participants interviewed, nearly 75 percent cited the natural scenery and outdoor opportunities of the Crazy Mountains as a strong basis for living in the area. Open space, natural resources, and a relatively intact environment were also reasons why people live in and near the Crazy Mountains. Many participants identified with the Crazies on a very personal level and considered the range to be in their "backyard." For

some, strong attachments towards certain areas in the range have developed with repetitive visits. On an individual level, themes of sense of place change as one interacts with the same setting over time, accumulating and deepening personal experiences (Tuan 1977; Lowenthal 1979; Ryden 1993). This was particularly evident with participants who were born and raised in the region. For this type of resident, there were extended memories, histories, and narratives associated with particular locations in the Crazy Mountains. These past experiences reinforced emotional ties and shared connections to the landscape, thus shaping how participants perceived the region's development over time.

The second question asked participants what makes the Crazy Mountains important. According to the responses, the mountains have a distinct meaning for different types of landowners. For many traditional ranchers, the Crazies were a source of water and a grazing ground for cattle. Newer landowners valued the region as a scenic and rural retreat. Still other residents prioritized the recreational and outdoor opportunities of the region. When collectively analyzed, these responses suggested that values of place largely centered around the environmental qualities of the Crazies.

The mountains are a place for me to rest. And I do not have computers or any of that kind of stuff out there. The phone doesn't usually work, there's no T.V., there's none of that. We're completely isolated... it's a very important time for people to just sort of create their own fun. So we go camping, we do little teepees, we do a lot of things...we go inter-tubing down on the Shields [River], which is fun. It's absolutely gorgeous- we ride [horses] and then we picnic and things like that. And you know, it's very much something that's very old fashioned. *Amenity rancher, Park County*

We have a small place here in Wilsall and we raise sheep. Right now, [our sheep] are up in the foothills of the Crazies, that's where their summer pasture is. *Part-time rancher, Park County*

The Crazies are an amazingly powerful place. I wish they could be protected. They mean a lot to me and my family, their history is tied to us. *Non-agricultural landowner, Sweet Grass County*

The Crazies are my favorite place to go. They're in my backyard and the terrain is extreme. Sunlight basin, Bennett Creek area...they don't get a lot of traffic because they are so extreme. Most people don't go there. I love that about them... *Non-agricultural landowner, Park County*

I go into the Crazies quite a bit. More during the day in the summer than any other time of the rest of the year. I like to hike up there, so I use them quite a bit. I just love them... they're so beautiful. *Non-agricultural landowner, Park County*

Besides going horseback riding in the mountains, I don't spend much time in them. We lease land in them to graze our cattle. *Traditional rancher, Sweet Grass County*

Many landowners view the natural amenities of the Crazy Mountains as important features of the landscape. More than half of the respondents surveyed stated that they use the mountains for recreation equally, if not more than other types of land use.

Consequently, outdoor activities, such as hiking and snowmobiling, were common interests with residents in the region and in some ways, contributed to an overall shared sense of place.

A shared sense of place can develop as different people begin to have similar experiences in the same area (Farnum et al. 2005). However, the degree and scale of sense of place may vary slightly among individual participants. Longtime residents seemed to have higher place attachment toward a specific locale, such as a lake or peak in the region. Connections to these "special places" have been encouraged through frequent

visits, memories, and experiences. People who had an intimate understanding of a particular area in the Crazy Mountains were highly concerned with the overall ecological and environmental health of the region.

For many residents, the Crazy Mountains were a place of spiritual rejuvenation. The natural environment of a place can play an important role in deepening the meaning of a certain locale. In particular, settings that are relatively intact and less impacted by human activity can enhance feelings of restoration (Meinig 1979; Ulrich et al. 1991). Furthermore, most people have a positive experience when they are in a natural environment, in turn generating a positive attachment to the region (Tuan 1974; Kaplan and Kaplan 1989). Many residents identified with the mountains as a place of renewal, solitude, and tranquility. These emotional connections subsequently reinforced strong attachments to the region for certain individuals.

When asked what issues were significant in the management of the Crazy Mountains, nearly all of the participants cited issues related to various activities that impacted environmental processes within the region. The management of wildlife populations, noxious weeds, and logging were considered important variables in the region's development. In addition, climatic influences, such as drier conditions and wildfires, were perceived as key issues influencing change in the Crazy Mountains.

There is less logging, more fires...I am not a proponent for logging, but I do see a need for it. I don't like seeing clear cuts, like when they logged back in the '40s and '50s. Limited logging would be good. I'm in the middle of the road because I'm not an environmentalist but I do believe in good land stewardship. *Park County, Traditional rancher*

We do lots of different types of weed control to try and...we do bugs, we have a bug release. We actually have our own insectarium now where we collect bugs of our own and release them for weed flanking. We have lots of different things that we do on our property to do that. So there's an emphasis definitely from that land management standpoint, to be able to preserve it, and say that this is what it is. So that's a great thing. *Park County, Non-agricultural landowner*

I've seen the elk numbers really grow like you can't believe. When I was a kid, it was rare to see an elk at all, now when you go hiking you see elk. Back then, the Forest Service logged the area and used the money from logging to keep their programs going. Now, it's an act of god to get any logging done. When you're out hiking, you can see all these old trees dying. Like today, there's a fire I just hope that it doesn't get into that old growth and just explode. *Park County, Traditional rancher*

There might be more wild animals...More elk, more bear, more moose, even more antelope which there never used to be any antelope in the area. *Park County, Traditional rancher, retired*

Things are just a lot drier. I just hope we get winters again...It's getting drier every year. The springs aren't running and over the past five years the Crazies are going downhill. There is just not as much water as there used to be. *Sweet Grass County, Traditional rancher*

So I think it's...you know, it's quite a bit drier, you're seeing more sagebrush up where I am. Even though there's not tons, there was almost none...and there's no question that it's drier...Whether this is some kind of cyclical thing that will go on ten, fifteen, twenty years- I don't know. But it is scary because the lightening and the fires and all that, and that was something that I don't really remember hardly at all...it's scary. That's why we remove our dead wood from the forests... as fire prevention. *Park County, Amenity buyer*

Many participants appeared to have a practical understanding of the region's changing environment. Both longtime residents and newer landowners felt that certain responsibilities should be expected of the landowner, particularly with weed control and fire prevention. In addition, many felt the Forest Service needed to improve land management strategies in the Crazy Mountains. As a whole, most of those surveyed

agreed that environmental exigencies in the region were increasing the demand for effective land management practices.

Perceptions of land management can be influenced by individual values of place (Smaldone et al. 2006). Many residents with strong place attachment towards the Crazy Mountains have intimate knowledge of the region's environment, and can provide valuable insight regarding land management priorities (Farnum et al. 2005). This is particularly evident in settings like the Crazies, where the alternating pattern of private and public lands has facilitated contact between different types of landowners and land users. Consequently, many residents are aware of critical management issues that often go unseen by the general public and forest officials.

The fourth question asked participants what main processes were presently shaping the Crazy Mountains. Numerous geographical forces were subsequently identified, such as the presence of the government, changing administrative policies, and increasing pressures on land use. Many landowners, or one third of those interviewed, viewed the role of the Forest Service as subject to the needs of tourists, other recreationalists, and environmentalists. Residents often recognized the decrease in forest access, the prohibition of certain types of land use and other changes in administrative policies as evidence of this perceived favoritism.

We've had a long relationship with the Forest Service. That relationship is better or worse depending on who the head ranger is. We've had some marvelous rangers, marvelous to work with, very considerate- acted like a neighbor. Then we have had district rangers who thought that their status as a federal employee put them miles above a private partner. So the relationships with the public and the Forest Service, the two are the same, because the Forest Service supposedly is a steward of their land for the public. *Sweet Grass County, Traditional rancher*

I'm an avid snowmobiler and I like to get out in to the backcountry and the [forest service] travel plans have been a ...have been a more of a contention from me personally from a ranching perspective. For me personally, and a lot of the people in the Valley who like to snowmobile...it's a tough situation because they say, "Well, we're going to shut it down because nobody's using it" and they never, ever open anything else back up. You know what I mean? In twenty-five years from now, they meet up once again, they'll end up shutting down smaller pieces by pieces. ... it's so hard to reconcile the decrease in public use. It takes apart this beautiful place... *Park County, Non-agricultural landowner*

I don't think you would find too many local landowners who would consider the Forest Service to be good a neighbor. *Park County, Traditional rancher*

Well right now, there is a proposal to make more portions of the Crazies to be roadless, which would really cut down the public use. This is not a benefit for me, because one of my favorite things is to go hiking in there. If you have everyone starting from the same trailhead, you see a lot more people...with no road access, we all have to go to the same place and run into people. I like not seeing a lot of people. We don't do that motorize thing now, we hike. But there's a lot of people who do use fourwheelers and motorbikes and stuff, and they should have the right too. It's public land up there. And even horses, I've heard that they are going to try and stop letting horses up there. The decisions are not based on science but rather environmental pressure. *Park County, Traditional rancher*

Unfortunately, they [the general public] are not clean. I think they decide where they want their own trails, with no thought to what's it's doing to the land. And in a way you can't blame the general public. They got no ties the land, they don't understand it, and listen to it, and watch it. I hate to see it happen. *Sweet Grass County, Traditional rancher*

I would say that there has been an increase in public use. There's a lot more cars at the trail heads than there used to be. The cabins (Ibex, Porcupine) get a lot of regular use. There are more Bozeman plates...the hunting is a pain in the ass though, there are lots 'o people then. *Park County, Traditional rancher*

The biggest change I've noticed in the area has been more pressure. Definitely more public pressure on the mountains. *Sweet Grass County, Traditional rancher*

I would say that, there has been an increase in pressure over the years, because last summer, I hiked into [the mountains] on a weekday, but then we tried to bicycle in on a weekend, and I could not believe the numbers of people going in! Like I almost felt like it was a sorority or fraternity party, and I assume they all

just knew it was a beautiful spot but it was nonstop groups of five or six...it was kinda like somebody had posted it on the Bozeman Chronicle and there were a bazillion people going up. *Park County, Amenity buyer*

Many people living in the Crazy Mountain region frequently refer to the mountains as “home,” suggesting that residents identify with the range on a very personal level. The sense of belonging and attachment to the Crazies reinforces individual perceptions that distinguish between different types of users in the area. Whereas most landowners viewed themselves as “locals,” other recreationalists, tourists, and visitors were acknowledged as “outsiders.” This clear division characterizes and influences the region’s developing cultural landscape.

The distinction between locals and outsiders relates to individual values of sense of place. People who associate a particular meaning and purpose to a specific locale are likely to have stronger feelings and emotional ties toward that place (Tuan 1974; Ryden 1993; Jones et al. 2000). In addition, local landowners tended to have a more detailed understanding of a place compared to visitors who maintain a more “detached” relationship with the location (Farnum et al. 2005). Consequently, collective attitudes towards outsiders reinforced a shared sense of place for Crazy Mountain residents.

The last question asked participants to identify major issues that they considered important in the future development of the Crazy Mountain region. Many respondents cited similar processes that have historically shaped the region’s landscape, such as loss of agricultural lands and unregulated regional growth. According to these residents, the subdividing and development of agricultural lands would be an irrevocable loss of the

region's rural landscape. Other responses cited increasing property values, ranchland turnovers, and generational change as important issues in the future.

I hate to see it happen...I hate to see land go out of agricultural use because you can still have the beauty in agriculture, only the ground is farmed or hayed or however you use it. But when you start putting up these trophy homes...living there for three months of the year...then you're destroying the beauty as well.
Sweet Grass County, Traditional rancher

A lot of older people are gone and a lot of the ranchers, like our ranch, are going to out-of-staters. Like our ranch went to Texas money, lots of money. I think there is just a lot more outside money coming in, people moving in. I see a lot more land being subdivided, it's getting harder to make a living off cows. The biggest change is that there are smaller acreages, like 5-50 acre lots. There are a lot of non-working ranches. *Sweet Grass County, Traditional rancher, retired*

Growth is a major issue...a lot of new homes. Our ranch was on about 10 ½ acres, and now there are a lot of new homes around it. There are multimillionaires moving in all the time, buying up the land and building huge homes on it...so many rich people here and more moving in. In my opinion, this place is going to be a lot like Mexico where there are the real rich and the real poor, like a third world country or something. So many subdivisions are going in and more will come. People with a lot of money are coming in and building huge houses and that won't stop...so many rich people, millionaires. *Park County, Traditional rancher, retired*

One big change is that quite a bit of the land around here is held by wealthy out-of-staters. The land is owned by rich people from out of town but worked by the locals. The land is no longer locally owned. This is a trend that I think will continue in the future. They are the ones with a lot of money to buy the land. I think we will see more people from out of town coming here- what I call, "Wealthy Persons Paradise", and they buy a ranch, which they call 80 acres, and try and live here. The locals end up selling to them because they will pay the big price. *Park County, Traditional rancher*

A lot of rich people...a lot of out-of-staters taking over. They want changes. Yeah, ten, twenty acre plots. A lot of good ranching just gone and ruined up there in the Upper Valley [Yellowstone]. You know, people with places with maybe a hundred head of cow. Subdivide it. Twenty acres here, twenty acres there. Then ya got no cattle left. *Park County, Traditional rancher*

I guess the biggest change is that kids are no longer wanting to work on the ranches like the rest of the family has done before them. For the next generations, I see this as a big change. *Park County, Amenity buyer*

You have a lot of third, fourth, fifth generation ranchers around, but who knows what will happen when they die. *Park County, Traditional rancher*
 When I was growing up, it was strictly agriculture where people lived...survived off the land. The land is not meant for survival anymore. It's not a true agricultural community anymore. We don't live in the real world anymore. The economy is not surviving on cow production or the services of agriculture, like milk and cows...Younger generations are not wanting to stay at the ranch and work that hard. I know of one person in the whole valley whose son wants to work the ranch, only one family in the valley. They can hope that their kids will work hard on the ranch and hope that the economy will change or they can sell now at a huge profit and retire. *Park County, Traditional rancher*

The land prices are going up- they are unbelievably outstanding. So now young people can't afford to get into ranching even if they wanted to. It's just too expensive to buy all the equipment and stuff that you need to ranch, which is sad. *Park County, Part-time rancher*

Concern over the gradual conversion of open spaces into developed lands was a common theme among residents in the Crazy Mountains. Of those interviewed, nearly 80 percent, considered the development of agricultural lands to be a major issue for the region's future. Both longtime residents and newer landowners were equally reluctant to see agricultural land practices and ranchlands disappear. Consequently, retaining the region's traditional character was similarly important for amenity ranchers as it was for longtime ranchers. Those interviewed expressed a common regard for the region's resources and environmental integrity, in part unifying them as a group.

How landowners value and perceive the Crazy Mountains can play an important contributing role in determining its fate. On an individual level, the Crazies are composed of intimate meanings and purpose. Yet on another level, these separate place

values collectively create a holistic understanding of the region's evolving landscape and character. Many residents are concerned with the direction development in the Crazy Mountain region is going. Consequently, discussion over the need for more land planning and growth management is a reoccurring theme among some landowners.

I don't see any future planning...I just don't see any planning. There's none of that, which... people, I hear all over the place, you know, people want to move out of Bozeman or wherever...but I hope there's some sort of controlled development, some sort of zoning and that sort of thing. But I don't foresee that... *Park County, Part-time rancher*

What I would like to see 'em do is instead of people who are buying 20 acre plots, if your going to buy a house up there, ya got to buy a 100 acres. You see what I'm saying? Stop a lot of it...put a hundred acre minimum on it. I'm kind of glad to see at least one guy buy that big portion of those ranches. But if they start subdividing all that... even if someone else in another state owns it- at least it's being used. *Park County, Amenity buyer*

The growth doesn't bother me, it's just the way it is. As long as the development is done in a way...there is a lot of inappropriate development occurring in some ways. If there are regulations on the development, if it is proactive, then I think that it is a good thing. *Park County, Non-agricultural landowner*

That's the beauty of this place, you get a bunch of rich guys buying up ranches and it keeps the surrounding land from being subdivided. You still have a lot of open area. *Park County, Traditional rancher*

They [developers] were set to do a bunch of one acre spots up there, and for me to have an [out-of-state amenity rancher] come in, in this situation, and buy it and make all into one and to put a conservation easement on it...that's the difference I think with somebody who's really committed to the amenities, is to preserve it for all time. *Park County, Non-agricultural landowner*

We sold our ranch to a wealthy out-of-state owner. The ranch is still a working ranch with about 1,000 cattle on it. We sold it because we knew that it was going to remain an agriculture entity, which was very important to us. *Sweet Grass County, Traditional rancher*

My hope is that it stays open land, my fear is that it won't. *Park County, Amenity buyer*

A sense of stewardship pervades both life and land in the Crazy Mountains. By building on this shared denominator, issues over future growth and potential points of conflict may be better anticipated. Similarly, understanding how and why individuals differ in their perceptions toward a place may create a framework for communication and relationship building. Establishing a common dialogue among residents of the Crazy Mountains may be one of the best means of preserving the mountains and land each has grown to enjoy and respect.

CONCLUSION

The settlement of the American West is an ongoing process. From the earliest settlers to the most recent amenity seeker, the landscape evolution of the region retells a story of opportunity, fortitude, exploitation and conservation. During the first half of the twentieth century, white settlement in the West was largely driven by utilitarian goals of resource extraction and production. The region's high yield of minerals, lumber, and other resources intimately tied the West to the country's overall political and economic ascendancy. After World War II however, changing attitudes toward nature and the environment fundamentally reconfigured the region's remaining rural and wild landscapes.

Early exploration and settlement of the Crazy Mountains opened the range to varied people. During the late 1880s and 1890s, prospectors, ranchers, loggers, and investors viewed the Crazies as a venue for natural resource extraction. By the late 1890s, ranching had surpassed other land uses to become the dominant force shaping the region's evolving settlement geography.

By the turn of the twentieth century, multiple interests were directing the development of the Crazy Mountains. Landownership in the region was distributed amongst the Northern Pacific Railroad, the federal government, and private owners, thus creating a complex and intertwined legal landscape. Management of the land and resources was further complicated by the arrival of large groups of homesteaders during the early 1900s. Between 1900 and 1920, the Crazy Mountain region, like other areas in Montana and the West, experienced rapid settlement and growth. This period of

expansion was largely driven by the region's agricultural viability and extractive potential.

Economic development in the Crazy Mountain region decreased after the initial homestead boom. Between the late 1920s and 1940s, changes in the agricultural sector, droughts, and an overall slowed economy impacted the area. During this time, local communities grappled with declining livestock prices, rising debt, and insolvent financial institutions. As a result, the population dropped in Park and Sweet Grass counties as people began to search for opportunities outside the region. Restoring the economic and social vitality of these communities would be a long and tedious effort.

During the post-war era, multiple forces converged to redefine the evolving landscape of the Crazy Mountains. Technological innovations, increases in mobility, and a changing global economy encouraged new settlement and investment in many Mountainous West settings. In addition, personal lifestyle preferences played an important role in people's decision to relocate in the rural West. Growth in some traditional areas, like the Crazy Mountains, was increasingly redirected toward the needs of recreationalists, tourists, and other amenity seekers.

The final decades of the twentieth century were a period of renewed settlement in many parts of the Mountainous West. Referred to by some scholars as a "rediscovery" of the region, many of the West's most remote settings were "reopened" for development (Rothman 1998; Jackson and Kuhlken 2006). Facilitating this process was the arrival of a footloose economy that allowed people to freely choose where they wanted to live and

work. Increasing value on scenic and outdoor amenities subsequently led many people to move to rural, formerly sparsely populated settings in the West.

In the Crazy Mountains, the broad reinterpretation of the region's land and resources has reconfigured longstanding traditions and ways of life. Since the post-war era, geographies of the New West have subtly reshaped the development of local and regional landscapes in the Crazies. Patterns of landownership and land use in the area have reflected these larger shifts, and provide a unique narrative in the region's historical and geographical development.

Case Studies: 2000-2008

Site 1:

Compared to other areas in the Crazy Mountains, landownership patterns in Site 1 have changed very little over time. The Van Cleves have remained the only private landholders in the study area since purchasing their property in 1920. The family shares ownership of Site 1 with the Forest Service. In 2008, the Forest Service managed sections 4, 6, 8, 9 and 10 in the site. In addition to many other sections located around Site 1, the Van Cleves owned sections 3, 5, and 7 in the study area.

In 2007, the Lazy K Bar celebrated its 88th year in operation, making it one of the oldest dude ranches in the country. The ranch continues to receive a strong clientele of guests, including many who have been annually visiting the ranch since they were very young. For most guests, the familial atmosphere of the Lazy K Bar, and its sense of

continuity and tradition, is a unique constant amidst an ever-changing world (Kirby 2007, pers. communication, 10 July).

Over the years, a steady rise in recreational use of the Crazy Mountains has applied increasing pressure on the Big Timber Creek trailhead. Located less than a mile from the Van Cleve residence, Big Timber Creek and its surrounding drainage is popular amongst hikers, campers, and, most recently, kayakers. Since 2000, Big Timber Creek has increasingly been recognized as an elite, often dangerous, destination for kayaking enthusiasts. In 2007, the Big Timber Kayaking Race was hosted in the area. An elite paddling competition among some of the sport's best athletes, the Big Timber Race drew over 100 spectators and participants. Organizers of the competition met with the Van Cleves and promoted the event as an awareness raiser between landowners and the kayaking community. Celebrated as a "New Approach to Paddling," the Big Timber Creek Race was the first of its kind in the region to acknowledge a growing relationship between recreational users and local property owners (Nolt 2007).

In addition to kayakers, the Big Timber trailhead is increasingly popular amongst hikers, horseback riders, and campers. Rising use of the range has reflected regional growth, particularly in the towns of Billings, Bozeman, and Livingston. In the summer of 2008, a nationally televised adventure race, known as Primal Quest, included the Crazy Mountains in part of the course (French 2007; U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007). Advertised as the "Worlds Most Challenging Human Endurance Competition," Primal Quest involved traversing the mountain range from Big Timber Creek to Cottonwood drainage (Forbes 2008).

In 2002, the most expensive land sale in Montana's history occurred in the Crazy Mountains. Constituting over 44,000 acres and \$40 million, the land purchase involved nearly all of the private lands located west of the Van Cleve property (Great Falls Tribune 2002). Bought by an out-of-state amenity rancher, the property collectively merged seven neighboring ranches. Known as the Rock Creek Ranch, the purchase reinforced popular community beliefs that traditional ranchlands were in danger of being turned into developed parcels. However, since the completed sale, the Rock Creek Ranch has maintained a part-time working cattle operation and much of the land remains undeveloped (Hansen 2007, pers. communication, 30 Oct.).

Ranchers continue to use the Crazy Mountains for grazing. In 2005, reductions were proposed for the Crazy Allotment, partially located in Site 1. According to the Forest Service, current stock levels were contributing to declining range conditions and no longer met agency standards (U.S Dept. of Agriculture 2005). Overall, the Forest Service proposed a 25 percent reduction in livestock numbers. This would have decreased the carrying capacity of the allotment from 806 head to 624 head. Lorents Grosfield, the current permittee, opposed the revisions, stating that loss of grazing ground would be "a big financial hit" (McMillion 2005). By 2008, the Forest Service had yet to make a decision. However, historic trends in management suggest that with time, livestock grazing in the Crazy Mountains will continue to decrease.

Site 2:

Large landownerships continue to characterize the landscape of the northern Crazy Mountains. In addition to Muffy Murray's property, there are several ranches situated near Site 2. While some of these ranches remain traditional cattle ranches, others are more recent amenity retreats. Most of these ownerships contain 4 or more sections of land situated near the Forest Service boundary. Muffy Murray owns 5 sections of land, including sections 13, 14, 25, and 29 in Site 2. The Forest Service is also a main landholder in the study area and by 2008, the agency controlled all of the lands surrounding Murray's ranch, including sections 18, 30, 31, 36, and a quarter of section 24.

As one of the earliest large non-agricultural landowners in the region, Muffy Murray has endeavored to build a working relationship with neighboring ranchers. In doing this, Murray has attempted to maintain some traditional land use patterns, such as leasing her land for livestock grazing. In addition, Murray has taken aggressive action against the spread of weeds, thinned peripheral forests against pine beetle and wildfires, and allowed rare and endangered wildlife to thrive on her lands. Her presence as an amenity rancher has been overshadowed by the recent arrival of larger hobby ranchers in the nearby area.

Since owning her ranch in the Crazy Mountains, Murray has experienced an increase in wildfires in the region. From 2000 to 2007, drier than average summers and below average precipitation encouraged the accumulation of dead timber and other wildfire fuels (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 2007). During the summer of 2007, the Chi-Chi

wildfire broke out on the north and east side of the Crazies, burning more than 30,000 acres (Stark and Halstead 2007). The Chi-Chi fire was the region's worst recorded natural fire event in the history of land management. Fueled by winds of 80 to 100 miles per hour, the fire quickly consumed buildings and structures in its path (Pitts and Oberly 2007). In less than 16 hours, the Chi-Chi fire scorched 3 ranches, 40 homes, 3 bridges, a fire engine, and forced the evacuation of the town of Melville. The fire raged for one week before snow and colder temperatures finally put out the flames.

As with other areas in the Crazies, there has been a rise in public use of the Bennett Creek area. Located just outside Site 2, the Bennett Creek trailhead is becoming increasingly popular with hikers, and more recently, snowmobilers. Many of the visitors are from nearby communities, such as Martinsdale, White Sulphur Springs, and other towns located in the Shields Valley. Consequently, Murray has had more dealings with trespassers and traffic over the years. This has been particularly evident with winter use, when heavy snowfall conceals property lines and fences. Over the years, the Forest Service has expressed interest in coordinating another land exchange with Murray. However, changing administrations and other delays in the agency have temporarily stalled any future talks over a land swap.

Site 3:

Philip Morris Incorporated remains one of the largest landowners in all of Park County. The Crazy Mountain Ranch, situated in Site 3, serves as a corporate retreat for the company. Consisting of nearly 20,000 acres, the Crazy Mountain Ranch includes

much of the southwest corner of the range. By 2008, sections 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, and 18 in Site 3 were owned by Philip Morris; section 8 was part of the national forest.

The Crazy Mountain Ranch is a unique combination of Old West traditions and New West values. The rural western landscape set against the dramatic backdrop of the Crazy Mountains makes the ranch truly representative of Marlboro Country. The carefully constructed setting of early settlement buildings, horse stalls, and weathered barns are a paradox to the luxuries and entertainment of the guest ranch. Corporate retreats like the Crazy Mountain Ranch are the most recent, and in many ways the most emblematic manifestation of an amenity-oriented landscape.

Effective land management of the Crazy Mountain Ranch is an important issue in the maintenance of the ranch. Like Muffy Murray, Philip Morris has coordinated efforts with local residents, the public, and the Forest Service to combat the spread of noxious weeds and pine beetle (Devoto 2007, pers. communication, 13 August). In addition, the Crazy Mountain Ranch remains receptive toward wildlife population controls and maintains its block management program with the state (Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks 2004; Devoto 2007, pers. communication, 13 August). Locally, the ranch continues to contribute financially to community projects, including a scholarship program, as well as serve as one of the largest regional employers. Although most of the complex was built prior to 2000, a number of minor structures and facilities have been added to the ranch.

Since 2000, other companies have established similar corporate retreats in the region. Cargill Incorporated, a global agricultural and food company, recently purchased

a ranch in the Crazy Mountains (Hansen 2007, pers. communication, 30 Oct.). Slightly south of the Crazies, the CEO of the Home Depot owns a ranch as does the CEO of Pepsi. In 2007, Neiman Marcus, the large fashion dynasty, began selling homes in Park County through their mail-order catalogue. For just under \$2.5 million, one could purchase a 10-acre lot situated in an exclusive 11,000-acre Ameya Preserve in Paradise Valley (Billings Gazette 2007).

Exclusive developments like the Ameya Preserve are becoming increasingly common in remote areas in the Mountainous West. For instance, the Yellowstone Club located in the Gallatin Canyon and the Stock Farm in the Bitterroot Valley are two private communities situated in western Montana. Like other gated developments, the Yellowstone Club and the Stock Farm are marketed for their rurality and expansive viewshed, with lots selling for \$3.5 million to \$7 million (Williams 2002; Dunn 2005). For those who can afford it, recreational opportunities abound and a social scene is found amongst neighboring landowners with the same social standing. Researchers are just beginning to study the cultural, environmental, and geographical impacts from such elite mountain developments (Burton Wheeler Center 2005).

The Crazy Mountains in the Twenty-First century

Over the course of one hundred years, forces both great and small have shaped the evolution of the Crazy Mountains. Changes in landownership and land use have left visible signatures on the twenty-first century landscape. Each landscape in turn, serves as a memoir of the historical and geographical development of the Crazy Mountains. Closer

examination of particular settings in the region can elicit details and a better understanding of larger processes at work. In the Crazy Mountains, four conclusions can be reached based on the evolving nature of Sites 1, 2, and 3.

The first point that can be concluded from the evolution of the Crazy Mountains is that traditional ranching remains a critical land use and lifestyle within the region. As illustrated by Site 1, ranching is intimately tied to the region's cultural and economic development. Although over time, agricultural landscapes have been increasingly marginalized by the growing presence of the New West, ranching remains a vital aspect of community life in Park and Sweet Grass counties. Furthermore, ranching is intimately tied to rural patterns of life and cannot be easily erased by modern changes and value systems. For many people living in the Crazy Mountains, ranching provides an inherent connection to the land and it will continue to play a role in the region's future.

The second conclusion evident from the historical development of the Crazy Mountains is that large landownerships are dominant in the region. Both traditional ranches and newer amenity ownerships characterize the spatial configuration of settlement patterns in the Crazies. Nearly all of the landownerships bordering the national forest consist of one or more sections of land. As a result, large portions of land are collectively owned by a single landholder. This type of landownership pattern is optimal for open space because it prevents the subdivision and development of individual parcels. Regardless of the type of landowner, large ranchlands are and will remain important in preserving the rural landscape of the Crazy Mountains.

Third, retaining the environmental integrity of the Crazy Mountains is a main concern with many of the residents. A strong sense of stewardship is a shared theme in the community and surrounding region. Although groups of people differ in their precise attitudes over land management and land uses, most feel a degree of responsibility in maintaining the overall health of the forest and nearby rangeland. This is partly due to broad environmental changes in the region. In addition to wildfire, other issues, such as water allocation and wildlife management, pose considerable challenges to local residents. Catastrophic events like the Chi-Chi fire remind landowners of their vulnerability to the larger and indifferent forces of nature. Disasters that affect so much of a region similarly pull people together in ways never before possible and provide an opportunity to build on community relations.

Finally, geographic change in the Crazy Mountains is illustrative of similar areas located elsewhere in the Mountainous West. Growth in the region has been quieter compared to some mountainous settings and represents the more subtle nuances of the New West. While population figures for Park and Sweet Grass counties reflect broader changes taking place within the region and may not necessarily support development in the Crazy Mountains, the number of well sites permitted around the range has greatly increased since the 1950s and suggests more people are moving into the area. As such, the Crazy Mountains exemplify landscape change in an area that remains wild and remote yet has become increasingly accessible over time. As transportation and telecommunications improve, formerly sparsely populated settings like the Crazy

Mountains will continue to provide the stage with which Old and New West geographies converge.

Life and land in the Crazy Mountains will likely continue to reflect larger geographical forces at work. For example, in late 2008, the country entered an economic recession that will potentially impact development in areas that previously experienced high levels of growth, like some places in the Mountainous West. How much and for how long a national economy in recession may affect growth patterns in the region is difficult to determine. In addition, how different parts of the West manage the economic downturn and the rippling effect it may have on local landowners invites further examination. Although the West and its mountainous communities have experienced previous economic recessions, the enormity of the financial crisis in 2008 has yet to be fully revealed and provides an interesting context for future work.

In the Crazy Mountains, the convergence of the Old and New West will continue to define the region's evolving cultural landscape. However, through collective efforts, residents in the Crazy Mountains can largely determine the course of local and regional change. By building on common values toward the land, landowners can formulate a shared vision for the region's future, thereby directing future growth. Understanding and managing these changes will likely shape the geographical evolution of the Crazy Mountains over the next one hundred years.

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