



National park gateway land use evolution : a case study of Glacier National Park, 1890-2001
by Lisa Marie Baracz Lamoreux

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in
Earth Sciences

Montana State University

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Abstract:

This study of national park gateway communities focuses on the Glacier National Park setting. It examines the evolution of landscape changes in Glacier's gateway communities as they were created by various public and private institutions. The study also investigates the gateway communities through changing patterns of land use and landscape because cultural and historical geographers agree that such changes can tell a great deal about a locality's changing cultural values and economic base.

Multiple objectives were addressed by the study. The first objective was to reconstruct the evolution of the past land use in the gateway communities of West Glacier and East Glacier. The key years of reconstruction were 1910 (the establishment of the park), 1930 (the rise of automobile tourism), 1960 (the post war era) and 2000 (the present day community). The second objective was to reconstruct how the cultural landscapes of these communities changed and how those landscape features contributed to distinctive place images. The third objective was to identify the key issues that face gateway communities as they enter the twenty-first century. The final objective was to use the Glacier case study to develop a regional and local model of national park gateway community development and evolution.

The results of the study will be useful in future land planning and development of national park gateway communities. The impact of technology has been a significant part of the evolution of the gateway landscape. Therefore, the regional and local evolution models will be an asset to gateway community evolution.

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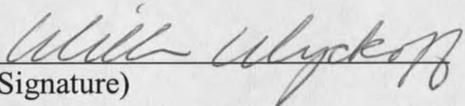
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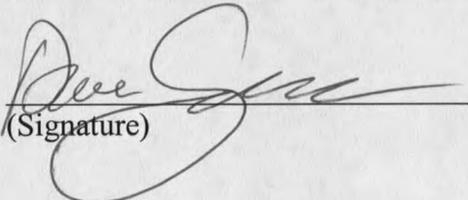
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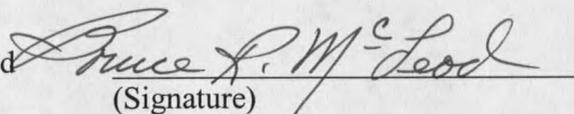
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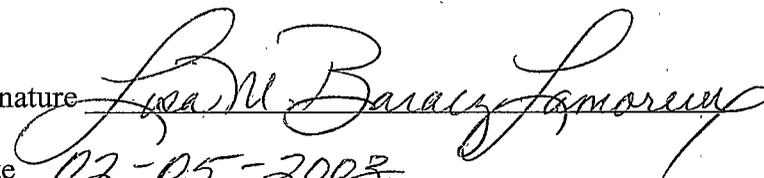
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ABSTRACT

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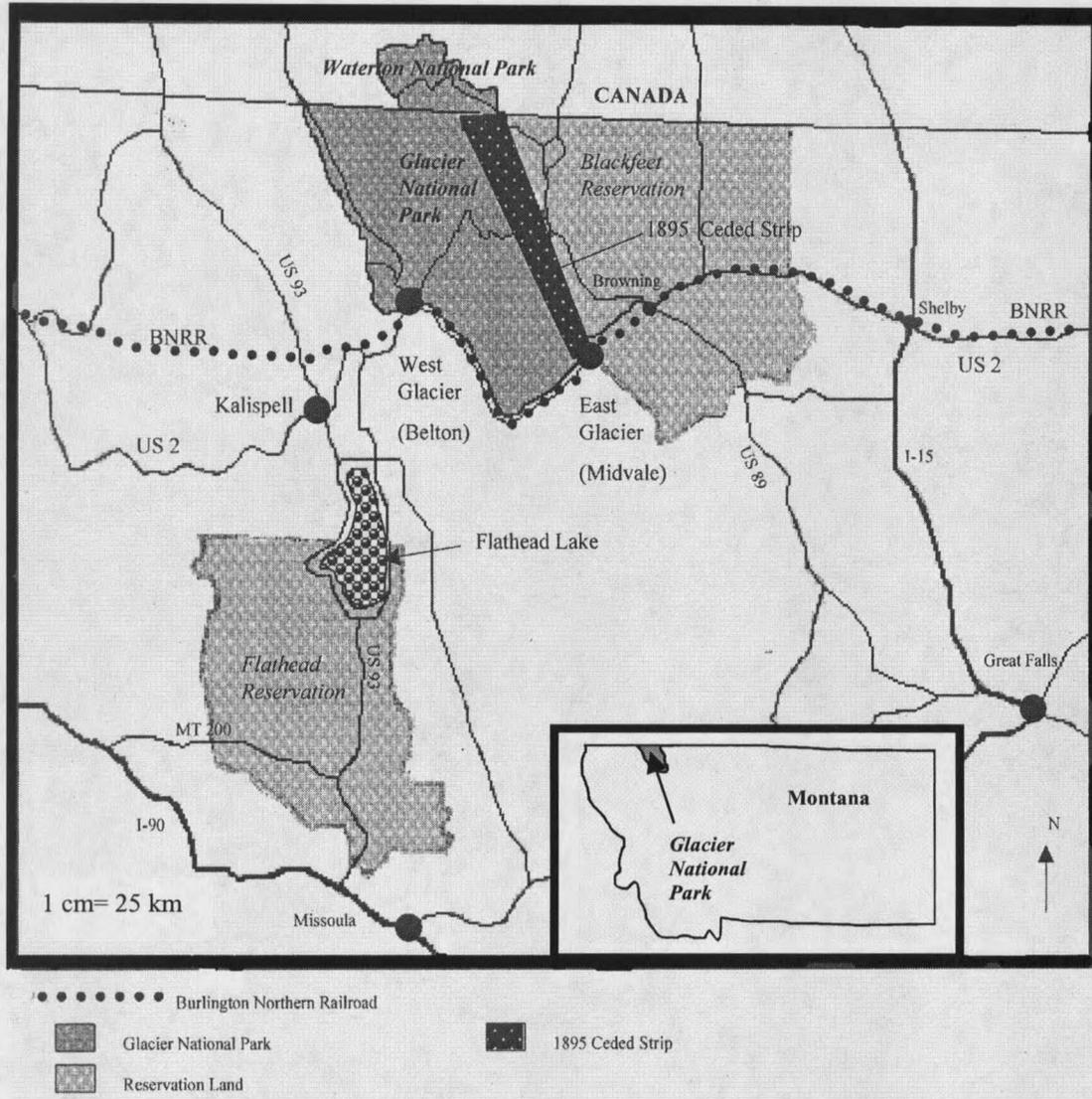
THE GATEWAY SETTING

Introduction

The gateway communities of Montana's Glacier National Park witnessed powerful changes between 1910 and 2000, as tourists began to rely on automobiles rather than the railroad to reach the park, and as evolving park policies conflicted with the interests of gateway residents (Fig. 1). Since the early establishment of East Glacier and West Glacier, land use patterns and landscape appearance were often the centers of conflict and tension between different agencies of government, businesses (including the railroad), and local residents including Native American populations. This study of national park gateways focuses on the Glacier Park setting and examines the evolution of landscape changes in Glacier's gateway communities as various public and private institutions created them. The railroad, the government, the residents and the Native Americans each marketed different images of the Glacier landscape in these gateway centers.

The community of West Glacier is located in the secluded Middle Fork of the Flathead River canyon (Fig. 2). The west-side landscape is rugged country with thick, lush vegetation that surrounds the community. In comparison, East Glacier is located on the boundary of the plains of eastern Montana and the Rocky Mountains (Fig. 3). The community is nestled along the Midvale Creek area with the spectacular mountains of Glacier rising above the town. Gateway land use patterns and landscape evolution help

Figure 1. Regional Location Map



The Northwestern United States and the location of Glacier National Park and its gateway communities. [Montana State Highway Commission 2001-2002]

