

SOCIAL ASSESSMENT for the Kootenai National Forest



1995

United States
Department of
Agriculture



Forest
Service

Kootenai
National
Forest

506 U.S. Highway 2 West
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List of Acronyms

ASQ Allowable Sale Quantity FDR Forested Development Road IDT Interdisciplinary Team KNF Kootenai National Forest LRMP Land and Resources Management Plan MMBF Millions of Measured Board Feet SO Supervisor's Office (USFS) USFS United States Forest Service USFWS United States Fish and Wildlife Service

ABSTRACT

This report is a social assessment prepared for the Supervisors Office, Kootenai National Forest in Libby, Montana. The report was prepared as part of the process of revising the existing Forest Plan for the Kootenai National Forest. A major objective of the report is to describe public perceptions regarding forest management issues and the social, cultural, and economic factors that influence these perceptions. The study for this report used multiple data collection methods, including archival and ethnographic techniques. The report describes the socioeconomic characteristics of communities surrounding the Kootenai National Forest, past studies relevant to the assessment of current conditions, public assessments of natural resources in the region, and concerns about specific forest management issues, including ecosystems management. The report concludes that stakeholders in the region share many values about natural resources, but they also have important differences in their perceptions about the use of these resource. These shared and common values in combination with changed socioeconomic conditions from the recent past result in diverse views about forest management practices.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The Kootenai National Forest (KNF) is conducting a social assessment as part of the process of revising the 1987 Land Resources Management plan. This social assessment is intended to provide information about how stakeholders and opinion leaders in surrounding communities perceive the resources of the KNF and their management. This information includes an assessment of some of the social factors that influence the types of issues that concern stakeholders in the study area.

The report has eight chapters. Chapter one states the objectives of the study and the issues for achieving each objective. Chapter two presents an overview of the KNF and the socioeconomic conditions, land uses, and population characteristics in the surrounding communities. Chapter three discusses significant findings from previous studies of the socioeconomic conditions, attitudes, and opinions about forest use and management. Chapter four presents a brief overview of the methods, procedures, and sampling used in this study. Chapter five presents data about the socioeconomic and cultural factors in Lincoln County communities that influence responses to forest management. Chapter six presents data for Sanders County similar to that discussed for Lincoln County in chapter five. Chapter seven is a discussion of findings regarding a Kootenai Tribe perspective on forest management issues. Chapter eight is a summary of the major points of the study and their relationship to the overall study objectives. Readers interested in only a summary of findings and implications should begin with chapter eight.

TECHNICAL APPROACH

A working hypothesis of this study, supported by other research (cf., Carroll 1995,) is that social factors influence how individuals and community groups evaluate forest management issues. We therefore collected data about the socioeconomic conditions and cultural values in the study region that this evaluation process for the KNF. Specifically, we collected economic, labor force, and population information about the study area as well perceptions about the nature of community life, the characteristics of social relationships within communities, and information regarding the values and other perceptions about natural resources. These data are part of the context the study communities that may shape responses to forest management issues. We also examined public assessments of the Forest Service and its management of the KNF. These perceptions are relevant for this study since other research suggests that perceptions of trust in government agencies influence how publics respond to specific management or regulatory issues (cf., Dunlap, Kraft, and Rosa, 1993). Consequently, stakeholder assessments of trust in the Forest Service and its management style were also examined for this study.

Data collection for this study was guided by an ethnographic approach. This approach is built around the idea that the way of life of a people and how they evaluate their world are facts to be discovered and not assumed. An important corollary to this idea is that a particular way of life is best understood from the point of view of persons living within a particular social setting. This requires data collection techniques that focus on getting information about how people define and explain the issues of importance from their point of view. This may be a very different view than what a researcher or government agency may perceive to be of interest or important. The ethnographic approach is usually highly inductive: that is, the theories, axioms, or findings about a circumstance derive from an examination of data about it. Social scientists who use this approach often describe this strategy as the use of "grounded theory" (cf. Strauss and Corbin 1990) because theories or findings result from data about it and are therefore "grounded in the data." Ethnographic approaches are well-suited to situations where a goal is to discover the views about particular issues and the connections of those perceptions to the social context in which they live. For this purposes of this study, ethnographic methods are a valid and useful approach. Note that this approach may identify local perceptions about issues that may or may not be consistent with the views of the Forest Service or the realities regarding specific forest management issues, agency participation in the communities of the region, and other factual matters. However, the identification of perceptions that vary from the facts as perceived by the Forest Service offers an opportunity to discover the reasons for why these differences exist.

This ethnographic approach was implemented by using an interview protocol to collect qualitative data from a targeted sample of individuals within the study area of Lincoln and portions of Sanders Counties. Members of the Kootenai Tribe were also interviewed since they have both current and historical connections to the KNF. The interview protocol asked questions about community structure and values, views about natural resources, views about the Forest Service and forest management, understandings and evaluations of ecosystems management, and views about public participation. The qualitative data that resulted from this work is intended to identify the types and ranges of issues of concern within the region. These data are not quantitative measures of the opinions of the total population. Such a determination would require a different type of study methodology that was not specified for this work. The interviews were conducted between November 1994 and January 1995. Approximately 119 persons were interviewed using the protocol, although other persons were present in some of these interviews and also made contributions that became part of the overall data included for analysis. A total of about 135 persons made contributions to the data based on the interview protocol. The table below indicates the distribution of persons interviewed.

| Number of Participants by Area | | | | |
|---|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-------|
| County | Area | Interviewees | Additional Participants | Total |
| Lincoln County | Libby, Troy, Yaak | 56 | 4 | 60 |
| | Trego, Fortine, Eureka | 23 | 1 | 24 |
| | Total County | 79 | 5 | 84 |
| Sanders County | | 35 | 11 | 46 |
| Kootenai Tribe [Flathead Indian Reservation] | | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Total | | 119 | 16 | 135 |

Note: In addition to the 135 participants counted in this table, contacts were made through brief "verification" interviews which were conducted to further develop and check specific issues.

Interviews ranged from about 45 minutes to several hours. Some interviews involved taking field trips with study participants to observe features of the forest which they indicated were important in order to understand their point of view. Several persons were interviewed multiple times in order to check other data collected.

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Socioeconomic conditions within the study region are part of the social context that can shape responses to public issues, including those regarding forest management. These conditions, in part, explain why some groups or individuals may find particular issues more important than others; or, they result in different responses to the same issue. Consequently, we examined available socioeconomic data that might provide insights about the socioeconomic status and trends that prevail in the study region.

Northwest Montana is experiencing social, economic and population changes that are sensitizing residents to the use of natural resources. This sensitization is itself a consequence of multiple factors that collectively suggest that a previous way of life based on "timber culture" may be either lost or substantially altered.

- The population of the region shows a modest decline between 1970 and 1990, but updated 1993 population estimates indicates a substantial population increase.
- Population composition is changing in part because of an in-migration of new residents and an out-migration of established residents or their adult children. Older residents are accounting for an increasingly larger portion of the total population of the region.

- The costs of social programs and services have steadily increased.
- Employment opportunities are declining because of a decrease in mining and timber industry activity.
- Despite a downward trend in employment, the total number of housing units has increased, average number of persons per household has decreased, and the average value of real estate has increased.
- The timber basis of community economies is changing. The total number of timber industry companies has declined, there is uncertainty about the economic viability of the timber industry, the total value of wood products sold has declined, and the current trend is downward. Agriculture is a small but nonetheless significant portion of the region's economy. The total number of agriculture operations has decreased but the value of products sold has shown a steady upward trend, with livestock production accounting for a major contribution to this upward trend.
- Multiple economic activities allow many small scale businesses to exist. In fact, residents emphasize the necessity to "piece together" a living, and often one of those pieces has some basis in the uses of the resources of the KNF. The loss of even a small portion of total income for such business can have major consequences.
- There is a significant economic dependency of the region on the resources of the Kootenai National Forest.
- Economic diversity is a significant goal of the region given the changing nature of the timber industry and the current downward trend of the total value of wood products produced.

Overall, the socioeconomic conditions of this region suggest that population is changing such that in-migration is accounting for an increasingly larger percentage of population growth; natural resource industries that are based on extraction or harvesting are declining; economic diversification is perceived as an alternative to the timber industry that supported a "timber culture" in the region. Increasingly, the trends in current socioeconomic conditions are evaluated as sources of change for the region's timber culture.

Land Use

- Land use in the region is dominated by the existence of the forest lands. Federal and state owned lands account for more than 90% of all lands in Lincoln County and a major portion of lands in Sanders County.

- Harvesting and extracting natural resources is a major land use in the region. Timber harvesting is the largest among these, and large scale mining has significantly declined in recent years.
- Recreational and tourism are increasingly important land uses in the region.
- Ranching and agriculture have traditionally been important uses of land in the region. Recently, however, land has been taken out of agricultural use and put into subdivision and housing developments. This trend tends to feed on itself, in that as the demand for land to develop increases, land prices increase, assessed value increases, taxes increase, and agricultural land becomes more expensive to maintain and more tempting to sell for profit.
- With the breakup of farms and ranches, there is lessening reliance on local resources for local income. Combined with a lack of timber sales on public lands, this has raised concerns about the apparent loosening of ties between the local economy and locally-available resources.
- It is understood that people are moving to this area primarily because of what are variously termed as "way of life," "quality of life," or "lifestyle" issues that are based on the characteristics of the lands in this region.

The overall land mass of the KNF and its multiple uses by timber, agriculture, recreationalists, and others in the region results in a significant investment in and dependence upon KNF resources. The effect of this pattern of land use is a broad based interest throughout the region in how forest management decisions influence issues as broad as the regional economy and as narrow as an individual's concerns about the habitat conditions of a favorite hunting sport.

SOCIOCULTURAL PERCEPTIONS AND VALUES ABOUT COMMUNITY

Communities in different parts of the study region have strong local identifies that need to be taken into consideration when management decisions are made about the KNF. Accompanying these strong local identifies are some commonalities in how these communities function as entities. These commonalities concern values about what a community should be and characteristics of social relationships that affect social integration and participation in issues of concern to community members. These types of issues also address the context of the study region; and this overall context is what shapes needs, wants, and desires regarding forest management issues. Understanding the overall context and some of the specifics regarding how it works offers some insights that may be useful in the process of developing public input regarding forest management decisions.

Values about Community

The values about "community in the study region are based on attachment to the natural beauty and resources of the region and on shared perceptions about an "idealized rural community" and an outdoor lifestyle. The value of KNF landscapes and resources is highly important and widely shared. These values invest individuals in the landscape and the lifestyle that becomes intertwined with its use. Such values become an important reason stakeholders are motivated to live in northwest Montana. There are also shared values about "community" and specifically an idealized view of the rural Montana community. This idealized view portrays a closely knit, mutually supportive, safe environment in which children can be raised in a family and community atmosphere. The values about community in this view also support the pursuit of self-reliance, independence, and the exercise of personal freedom. This idealized view of what a community should be may not always be the reality. However, the reality of community life are not diminished by the shared expectations about what it should be. These shared expectations are a force of integration within communities where there are characteristics of social relationships that promote segmentation. Another important integrating force in these communities is shared values and expressions of "an outdoor lifestyle." The salience of hunting, fishing, hiking, and myriad other outdoor pursuits expresses the significance of this lifestyle in local culture. It also ties individuals, families, and groups to concerns about natural resources that impinge on their lifestyle, their sense of place, and their values about community.

Social Characteristics of Communities

The characteristics of social relationships in the study region are observable in the types of social groupings that exist and in what people say about their connections to others and their overall participation in community life. The characteristics of social groupings are relevant for this study because they affect the potential for community integration and the degree of homogeneity in response to issues of importance to a community. Similarly, the characteristics also influence how people interact as individuals and participate in the issues of importance to their community. The findings summarized below address the types of social groupings, their characteristics, and attributes of social relationships in the study area.

The major types of social groupings within the study region are: territory or locality based groups (communities); formal organizations; clubs; volunteer organizations; parent-based organizations; churches; identified cliques or sub-groups; special interest groups; and, newcomers and oldtimers. The integration of groups within the community is influenced by a "satellite-hub" process. "Hub" relationships are those that tie different groups and individuals together, much like the hub that connects spokes in a wagon wheel. Hub relationships tend to be cross-cutting, that is their ties tend to cut across different groups to which they belong. The more interconnections among groups, the more there tends to be a hub relationship. These relationships promote a tightly integrated community. "Satellite" relationships refers to loosely connected associations

among individuals and groups. A group exhibiting satellite attributes tends to have a single purpose, and there are few connections with other groups. Individuals belonging to satellite groups tend to participate in a few groups and there are few cross-cutting ties with other individuals and groups. The loose connections among satellite groups result in a less tightly knit community. Currently, communities tend to have more characteristics of a satellite rather than a hub type community.

Individuals in these communities tend to have multiple types of connections with each other. That is, a boss might also be a hunting partner as well as a fellow church congregation member. These multiple types of connections in social relationships tend to make face-to-face relationships more complicated than in those situations where there is only a single interest in the connection between individuals. Such multiplex relationships tend to act as a break on social conflicts and on participating in situations where social conflicts are possible.

The interview data for this study suggest that there is an ethic of conditional participation in community activities. This ethic supports limited participation in community activities among those individuals who do not wish to be involved in group activities or in only a narrow range of activities. Individuals can participate in a narrow range of "satellite" groups and perceive that they are "involved" in their community; this ethic of conditional participation also means that they do not feel compelled to participate in other community-wide activities. Public involvement programs need to consider this ethic of conditional participation and its relationship to other values and characteristics of groups in these communities.

Reference groups in these communities tend to be those based on territory and focused mutual interests. This is not to say, for example, that people in Eureka do not know and associate with people in Troy; nevertheless, residents tend to associate based on kinship, neighborhood, church membership, a common work place, or on common activities in which they participate. These reference groups are more often than not the ones that people are concerned about when they evaluate issues of concern to them. Furthermore, because these reference groups are local, those influences that are external to these communities are viewed with some caution, if not concern. In the past reference groups were often based on affiliation with one part or another of the timber or mining industry. Increasingly reference groups have a more diverse character resulting in less social homogeneity than in the past.

Individuals often have numerous brief interactions with a wide range of people. These brief interactions promote a sense of connection among those who are "known" in some way to each other. These seemingly casual interactions result in a perception of social connection, although such connections do not necessarily result in a tightly knit community. Nonetheless, along with a sense of shared values, ongoing face-to-face relationships constitute a major feature of social relationships that result in feelings of community in northwest Montana.

PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE FOREST SERVICE

Public perceptions about the Forest Service and evaluations of its management of the KNF are issues that have to be considered in the context of a local culture that prefers limited government. Yet the very dominance of land use in the region by all levels of government and the Forest Service in particular results in a prominence of the agency that is at odds with a culture that prefers limited government influence in their lives. The views expressed about the Forest Service in this report need to be considered in this context. That is, this context tends to exacerbate negative responses to government in general.

Analysis of the data regarding public perceptions regarding the forest service can be organized into the following summary statements.

- There is limited trust in the Forest Service as an agency, although stakeholders trust specific individuals with whom they have ongoing working relationships.
- The Forest Service is perceived as too rigid in adherence to regulations and as exhibiting a too inflexible bureaucratic style for working with local stakeholders.
- The Forest Service favors timber interests at the expense of recreational and other types of uses of the resources of the Kootenai National Forest. "New" forest managers have insufficient on-the-ground knowledge to make effective decisions about management issues. "New" forest managers rely on "book knowledge" whereas the "older" managers relied on practical experience. The agency is being diminished by the loss of the older types of managers.
- Forest managers disregard or under-use local knowledge and expertise about natural resources and their management. The rejection of this local expertise works against effective management of forest resources.
- Decision making is too centralized; District Rangers should have more power to make decisions that affect their areas of responsibility.
- The Forest Service is paralyzed by its concern about taking any action that will be opposed by "pressure groups." This paralysis needs to be addressed for their to be effective forest management and renewed trust in the agency.
- Most interview data would indicate that residents recognize the complexity involved in trying to manage resources to suit the needs of different local and non-local constituencies. This, of course, is not unique to the Forest Service; as with resource management issues in other small communities, there is to a degree an inherent tension and a need for a balance to be struck between those perceived as "locals" and "outsiders" managing resources.

These types of evaluations should not be unexpected given the cultural values of these communities and specifically the prevailing preferences for limited government.

Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that criticisms are often more volunteered than positive assessments of a government agency. This type of study can therefore suggest that there is more distrust and concern about the Forest Service than might be the case. Yet, given the criticisms and concerns expressed by a wide range of stakeholders, the finding that stands out the most to the research team is the expectations among stakeholders that the Forest Service is the agency that has the skills and science to manage the KNF so that it is of benefit to all users. Given the past conflicts among various stakeholder groups, the Forest Service is currently perceived as perhaps the only source of solutions to concerns and problems that frustrate many stakeholder groups. However, the perceptions regarding trust in the agency, its style of interaction with stakeholders, and its future effectiveness in dealing with "pressure groups" of all types will be important determinants of how publics evaluate not only the agency but also its overall evaluation of important forest management issues.

RESOURCES OF THE KNF

Investment in the management of the KNF is in part related to how people view and use these resources. And, perceptions about the values and attributes of the forest provide insight into how individuals and groups think about management of forest resources. Individuals also develop stakes in forest management and respond to management decisions based on patterns of use.

Perceptions About the KNF

The KNF is widely valued for the variety of its natural beauty, recreational opportunities, and economic potentials. There are a diversity of views about what are the important resources and the special places within the forest. Analysis of the interview data suggested that the diversity of these views could be organized by four perspectives or orientations.

(1) The "bedrock" view, which is widely shared, emphasizes the inherent value of the natural beauty of the region's flora, fauna, and water resources. These resources motivate individuals to live in the region and they are the basis for an outdoor lifestyle that itself is central to how individuals define their personal identify. The core of the bedrock perspective is the inherent value of these resources.

(2) The "use" perspective emphasizes that natural resources should be used for the benefit of man. While this view emphasizes resource use, especially for man's benefit, it also entailed is the notion that forest lands, wildlife, and all other resources must be managed and not left to "Mother Nature's whims." Further, the use perspective incorporates the idea that natural resources should not be "wasted."

(3) The "preservation" perspective emphasizes that natural resources need to be conserved and managed with concern for natural processes. This view includes the perspective that natural resources can and should be used. However, there should be a

strong emphasis on the conservation of resources and the restoration of damaged resources.

(4) The conservation perspective promotes various types of uses, but no one use at the expense of another. The conservation perspective emphasizes ideas such as "sustained yield," "multiple use," and overall environmental quality. In this view natural resources are truly perceived as capable of serving economic, recreational, spiritual, and other needs. These needs can and should be served such that all users of these resources are treated fairly. This perspective more than any other stresses the idea of "balance" in the value and use of resources and it entails the idea that resources can be conserved as well as used for logging and other economic purposes.

Uses of the Kootenai National Forest

The uses of the natural resources of the Kootenai National Forest result in individuals having economic, spiritual, recreational, and lifestyle stakes in its natural resources. The major types of uses indicated by the interview data for this study are as follows:

Subsistence activities include gathering (for example, huckleberries, mushrooms, and firewood), hunting, fishing and other personal/family uses of the natural resources of the KNF.

- Subsistence uses are economically important and they are also significant because they allow the expression of a lifestyle in which the harvesting of such resources is highly valued.
- Harvesting natural resources for economic purposes is also a significant use of the Kootenai National Forest. Logging and mining are the prototypes of this type of use, but it also includes the commercial harvesting of mushrooms and huckleberries.
- Grazing livestock is important to ranchers who use National Forest lands to supplement the feeding of their cattle and other animals.. The viability of most medium to larger scale operations depends on access to these lands.
- Recreational uses include viewing, hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, horse back riding, and the full range of recreational activities of residents in northwestern Montana. These types of uses constitute the major reason for many residents to live in this area.
- Spiritual uses are important for members of the Kootenai Tribe as well as for other residents of northwestern Montana. The Kootenai Tribe continues to use the KNF as a site for vision quest activities and other religious purposes. Other residents derive non-material, or spiritual benefits from both "knowing it is there" and from their use of these lands.

Many individuals use the KNF in multiple ways, thereby compounding their stakes in the management decisions about the forest.

PERCEPTIONS OF FOREST MANAGEMENT ISSUES

This study identified a wide range of issues of concern to residents. Some of these concerns are idiosyncratic while others appear to be wide shared. Analysis of the data indicate that the major concerns about forest management can be grouped into the following categories:

- Roads
 - Road standards are too high and need to be rethought for economic reasons.
 - While there is some strong feeling against road closures, there is also support for the need for road closures to protect game and game habitat. Among most stakeholders there is criticism of the process of how road closures are decided and a feeling of a need for more consultation with stakeholders about how to achieve the objectives of road closures.
- Timber Harvest Levels
 - There are alternative perceptions that (1) too much wood has been cut from the forest, and there needs to be further consideration of sustainable cutting of the timber resources in the forest; and (2) there is timber that can and should be cut in the Kootenai National Forest but it should be accomplished in a sustainable manner.
- Clearcuts and Selective Harvests
 - Clearcutting is a harvesting tool with limited applications. Selective harvesting results in a sustainable cut and, as "environmentally friendly," is a preferred harvesting method.
 - Clearcutting has political liabilities that damage the future of the loggers and other non-corporate stakeholders among timber interests.
- Appeals of Timber Sales
 - The appeals process is perceived to be working against effective forest management by most stakeholders other than environmentalist.
 - A more reasonable appeals process will consider the "weighting" of various stakeholders and especially "local" interests.
 - A more reasonable appeals process will insert much needed predictability into the process of timber harvesting and the stakeholders who are economically dependent on it.

- Fires and Salvage Logging
 - Stakeholders perceive the Forest Service was effective in its response to the 1994 fires. There are some complaints about waste of resources in responding to the fire and the speed of response in some areas, but overall stakeholders have a favorable evaluation of the fire fighting effort.
 - More local residents should have been used in fighting the fire.
 - Community and timber stakeholders have strong views that fire damaged timber needs to be salvaged or it will be "wasted."
 - Environmental stakeholders are concerned that there may be damage to other resources in any harvesting of fire-damaged timber.
 - The buildup of bug-damaged timber and other downed timber presents a fire hazard that can threaten communities more than did the fires of 1994.

- Wildlife Management
 - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has too much control over the Forest Service and its management of lands within the Kootenai National Forest.
 - Most species of wildlife in the National Forest are valued as an important contribution to the quality of life in northwest Montana.
 - Game species are highly favored by stakeholders, and predators are generally considered competitors.
 - Residents value grizzly bears, but bear management practices that close roads and threaten to reduce the use forest lands exemplify a concern for animals more than human uses of the Kootenai National Forest.
 - The potential for the introduction of wolves into the area evokes concerns about Forest Service priorities in forest management. Management of National Forest areas primarily as endangered species habitat, particularly in the case of species introduced from outside of the area, runs directly counter to sentiments about multiple use (as it is traditionally understood and practiced by the Forest Service) as the appropriate strategy for managing local resources. Introducing predators and then "locking up" areas of the forest for their benefit, while at the same time not holding timber sales that are perceived as essential for the health of the local economy, is seen as "preferring animals over people."

- Wilderness

- Local concerns expressed over the wilderness area issue are often a distillation of a number of other issues
- For those who subscribe to the philosophy that a National Forest primarily represents a set of renewable resources that are set aside for periodic harvest and other multiple uses, the creation of Wilderness Areas often seems to represent "what is wrong" with Forest Service management of the public resources. That is, to those who hold this view, the National Forest is not, and should not be treated as, a National Park. The commercial use of the Kootenai National Forest's resources are the key to the local economy and to larger economies.
- Stakeholders support the concept of wilderness, but there is some sentiment that wilderness "locks up" the land and is therefore wasteful. There is also sentiment that there is enough wilderness lands in the Kootenai National Forest and the addition of more is unnecessary.
- Appearance and Environmental Quality.
 - Two major themes emerge from the interview data about the overall appearance of the Kootenai National Forest. One is that it should have a "park-like" appearance with little or no downed timber. The second view is that the "natural" state of the forest is preferred, even if that includes heavily covered, downed, and bug-killed timber.
 - Viewsheds are important and should be considered in forest management decisions, especially those concerned with timber harvesting.
 - Clearcuts are generally perceived as ugly and undesirable. If clearcutting must be used, more concern should be given to irregular cuts rather than square "diaper" cuts that emphasize the clearcut landscape.
 - Water quality is a major concern of residents in the region. Water quality is perceived to be affected by some timber harvesting methods, roads, and mining.
 - Air quality can be adversely affected by controlled burns. Overall air quality is increasingly an important issue in portions of Lincoln County.
- Ecosystems Management

Study participants were asked directly about their knowledge regarding ecosystems management. In general, study participants expressed that they had limited to no knowledge about the concept, but it was of concern to most stakeholders. For example, environmental stakeholders were concerned that it was a ploy to further timber cutting while timber stakeholders perceive that ecosystems management is a ploy "to lock up the forest." Publics are, however, eager for more information about the details of the

concept and its application to the KNF.

SUMMARY

In general, this social assessment indicates that public responses to specific forest management issues can be determined by asking the following types of questions:

- 1) How is this person/stakeholder group affected by recent changes in the socioeconomic conditions of the region?
- 2) What is the investment of the person/stakeholder group in the community?
- 3) What social groups does this individual/stakeholder group belong to that might suggest how responses are being structured.
- 4) What perspective about natural resources does the person/group have that may suggest how they view the overall value and use of resources?
- 5) How are the resources of the forest used by this person/group?
- 6) What is the sense of trust in the agency in general and specific individuals within the agency in particular?
- 7) Are there other social issues, e.g. community conflict, that may influence the expectations, needs, wants, and desires about specific management issues?

These types of questions are intended to support an awareness of social dynamics that affect public responses and concerns about forest management. If any single finding is important in this report it is that management issues about the KNF are embedded with cultural values and social dynamics. The current social climate in study communities is such that effective management of the forest will be enhanced by incorporation of a perspective that considers the perspectives and local residents as one of the inputs that affect forest management. This report can foster development of that perspective, but it is not a replacement for it.

1.0 PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

This report is a social assessment of the Kootenai National Forest (KNF) produced under Contract Number 53-03J1-4-0099 for the KNF Supervisor's Office in Libby, Montana. This study was initiated as part of the process of revising the existing Forest Plan, written in 1987. The Forest Plan, "guides all natural resource management activities and establishes resource management practices, levels of resource production and management, and the availability and sustainability of lands for resource management" (USFS 1987 Vol. I:I-1). Revision of the 1987 Plan is intended to incorporate consideration of the community effects of forest management. To this end, this document contributes information to assess how communities in Lincoln and Sanders Counties evaluate existing plans and desires for any future plan. The specific purposes and objectives of this study, along with this report's organization, are described in the remainder of this chapter.

1.1 Purposes of the Report

There are two major purposes for this report:

- 1) To assess public perceptions, values, attitudes, behaviors, lifestyles, community characteristics, and other sociocultural factors that affect the interaction of nearby communities with the natural resources of the Kootenai National Forest.**

The KNF contains natural resources such as timber, viewsheds, ore, watersheds, and wildlife with economic, cultural, and other meanings for individuals and communities that live near or use the KNF. It is important to understand how people evaluate such resources as well as factors that influence their evaluations. An important purpose of this study is therefore to identify how people think about and use the natural resources of the KNF and how social, economic, and cultural factors may structure these thoughts and actions.

- 2) To assess public responses to Kootenai National Forest management plans and determine if social, cultural, and economic factors influence these responses.**

Public knowledge about and responses to forest management plans has implications for the potential conflict or cooperation in implementing these plans. An important part of this study is to identify public concerns about existing or future management plans and any existing socioeconomic or cultural factors that may structure these concerns.

These two purposes are directly related to the needs of the USFS to evaluate the

interaction of forest management plans with the communities that use or depend on the resources of the KNF.

1.2 Objectives

There are both findings and implications objectives for this study. The findings objectives relate directly to presenting and analyzing information about the factors that affect public responses to and involvement in KNF forest management plans. The implications objectives concern how the results of this study can be used to include socioeconomic factors in the process of developing and implementing forest management plans. Both the findings and implications objectives are stated and briefly elaborated in the following two sub-sections.

1.2.1 Findings Objectives

- **Understand what people need, want, expect, and/or desire in regard to natural resources management in general, and to the KNF.** Achieving this objective is important because public evaluations and understandings about management of a National Forest can be significantly different than those of natural resource managers. Such differences can result in conflicts about or disruptions of forest management. Information about public needs and expectations can be used in the planning process to assess areas of public concern. Achieving this objective is accomplished in this study by describing how different stakeholders view the natural resources of the KNF and how these resources are and should be managed.
- **Determine spatial and temporal trends of social parameters.** This objective is important because a social environment influences how groups within communities respond to resource uses and identify particular issues as problems (Fitchen 1989). A sociocultural context is not static. It may change over time in response to migration, changes in resources, growth, and other such factors. Temporal trends often influence current public perceptions of natural resources and proposed changes in their management. In this study, this objective is achieved by reviewing changing population and economic trends in the nearby communities and by presenting interview data about differing perspectives of the meanings of these changes.
- **Determine effective methods for public involvement for Forest Plan revision and Forest Plan implementation.** Public involvement is an important part of planning for as well as implementing the management of the KNF. This objective is achieved by summarizing interview data about how publics interpret current and past efforts at public involvement as well as interview data pertaining to expectations about the desired

process for public involvement in activities relating to forest management.

- **Provide a quality social assessment that is credible.** This study is based on the application of recognized social science methodologies to develop independent data and analysis about the social conditions in communities surrounding the KNF. This objective is achieved by thoroughly planning the data required to achieve all of the study's findings objectives and by succinctly reviewing in this report the scientific methods and procedures upon which these findings are based.
- **Research and display the findings in a clear, concise, and usable format for decision makers.** The findings of this study are intended to be usable by the decision makers who will receive this report. Consequently, we have minimized the use of technical language and jargon that might impede understanding the meanings of the findings. Where technical language is used, its meaning is defined in clear, concise, and common-sense terms. To achieve this objective we have also established procedures with relevant KNF staff to ensure that the structure and content of the report meets the needs of the management team and other decision makers in the KNF.

1.2.2 Implications Objectives

- **Provide the social basis for making defensible decisions and understanding the social implications of those decisions.** Achieving this objective requires presenting information about the social, economic, and cultural factors that may be affected by management decisions. In this study the methods and procedures underlying data collection are presented along with a straight-forward qualitative analysis of the social issues that may affect forest management decisions.
- **Identify possible changes to the KNF Land and Resources Management Plan.** Achieving this objective is an ambitious undertaking. In the context of this study this objective is achieved by suggesting areas of concern about the existing management plan and how publics desire to see those addressed.

1.3 Organization of the Report

This report is organized into eight chapters. Following this statement of purposes and objectives (chapter one), the remaining seven chapters present background information, the results of the study, and a summary and conclusion of the overall

findings as they pertain to the study objectives. The wide range of socioeconomic, demographic, and sociocultural data presented in this report results in a relatively long and detailed report. However, each chapter is essentially a self-contained presentation of information about a particular topic. Readers interested in specific topics can read the relevant chapters. The major findings and their relationship to the study objectives are summarized in Chapter 8. The following is a brief description of the contents of each of the chapters in the entire report:

- **Chapter one** is a brief statement of the purposes and objectives of the study. This chapter serves as a general introduction to the report.
- **Chapter two** presents an overview of the KNF and the socioeconomic conditions, land uses, and population characteristics in the surrounding communities. This overview provides important contextual information for a social assessment of the KNF. As such, chapter two is beneficial to the reader who wants to know more about the KNF and its usage, population, and economy.
- **Chapter three** presents and discusses significant findings from previous studies of the socioeconomic conditions, attitudes, and opinions about forest use and management. Summarizing the findings from other work serves to augment this research as well as provide a backdrop for discussing current findings. As a review of previous studies, this chapter provides additional background information to the reader.
- **Chapter four** presents a brief overview of the methods, procedures, and sampling used in this study. This chapter is also background to the study, but it is a necessary component of understanding how the research was conducted.
- **Chapter five** presents data about the socioeconomic and cultural factors in Lincoln County communities that influence responses to forest management. This chapter also includes additional background important to the context of analysis. Readers who want to know specifically about study findings pertaining to Lincoln County should read this chapter.
- **Chapter six** presents data similar to that presented in chapter five, but the focus is on Sanders County socioeconomic and cultural characteristics. Those readers wanting to know about study findings pertaining to Sanders County, should read chapter six.
- Chapter seven is a discussion of findings regarding a Kootenai Tribe perspective on forest management issues.

- **Chapter eight** is a summary of the major points of the study and their relationship to the overall study objectives. Readers interested in only a summary of findings and implications should begin with chapter eight.

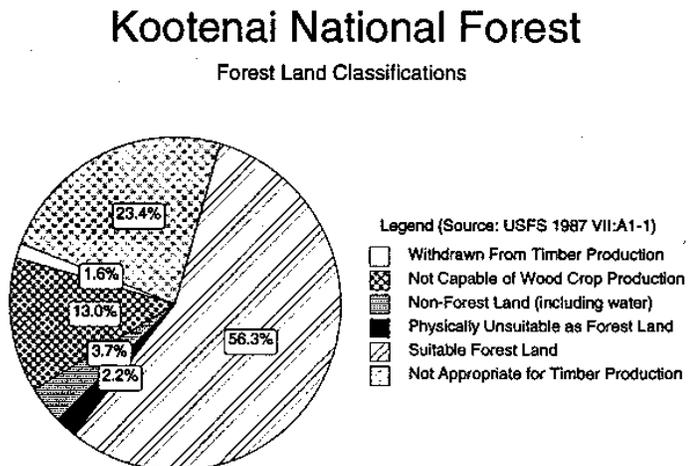
2.0 SETTING FOR THE SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

Montana is known for both its big sky and thick timber. In northwestern Montana, where the Kootenai National Forest is located, both of these elements can be found. The verdant, Pacific Northwest-like woods and valleys of Lincoln and Sanders Counties are a sharp contrast to the flat, dry plains of eastern Montana. Winter snows and summer rains fall west of the Continental Divide in the Kootenai National Forest and environs. This abundant moisture facilitates an economy closely tied to timber. Winter and summer recreation are also dependent on the area's wilderness resources and weather. Mining is dependent on the region's valuable geologic resources. These physical characteristics, in addition to population, political, economic, and other characteristics are important contextual components of a social assessment of the Kootenai National Forest. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of these elements through a description of the Kootenai National Forest, its historic and present usage, neighboring population, and economy.

2.1 Description of the Kootenai National Forest

2.1.1 Characteristics of Kootenai National Forest

The Kootenai National Forest (KNF), located in the northwestern corner of Montana and a small section of neighboring Idaho, covers approximately 2,245,000 acres. The distribution of these 2.2 million acres by USFS land classifications is depicted in the pie chart to the right. Over half (56%) of the KNF acreage is suitable forest land that can be used for timber production. In the KNF's large expanse, it encompasses parts of five counties: Lincoln, Sanders, and Flathead Counties in Montana, and Bonner and Boundary Counties in Idaho. The majority of the Kootenai National Forest, however, is in Lincoln County with the second-largest proportion located in northern Sanders County. Its physical context is dominated by the rough, high peaks of the Cabinet, Purcell, Salish, and Whitefish ranges; thick timber which blankets the majority of these areas; and long, narrow river valleys. The Forest's rugged terrain, abundance of resources, and relative isolation contribute to the unique socioeconomic context of the region (discussed in section 2.2).



Located west of the Continental Divide, the Kootenai National Forest is more akin in climate to the Pacific Northwest than to the dry plains of eastern Montana. Moist air

from the Pacific Ocean brings abundant rainfall to lower elevations and heavy snow to the highest peaks in the area. Precipitation in the forest averages over 20 inches annually. Snowfall in the Kootenai National Forest ranges widely from an annual average of 60 inches in valley floors, to several hundred inches in higher elevations (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:7). Typically the heaviest snow falls on the west and southwest slopes of the mountains. Winter snow significantly contributes to the available water resources of the region.

The Kootenai National Forest was established in the first decade of the 20th century; however, the area and its natural resources were significant long before such designation. Before Anglo explorers mapped the area in the early 1800s, the Columbia River Plateau and what is now the Kootenai National Forest was inhabited and traversed by Native Americans. The Salish and Kootenai Tribes, which used to inhabit the area and migrate across the Continental Divide in western Montana to hunt buffalo on the plains, now reside on the Flathead Indian Reservation tangent to the eastern border of Sanders County. A catalyst for white immigration to the area was the establishment of British fur trading posts, first, the North West Company's "Kootenai House" built in 1808 near present-day Libby, and then the "Saleesh House" built a year later by David Thompson near today's Thompson Falls. Trappers and traders were drawn by these outposts, and they were soon followed by prospectors, loggers, cattlemen, and pioneers. Other major stimuli for immigration to the region included the discovery of gold in the 1860s, increased steamboat activity on the Kootenai River, and subsequent increases in the local demand for timber. The emergence of railroads in the latter part of the 19th century increased regional population and helped logging make the transition from a primarily-local business to a broader-based industry with regional and national markets. This stimulated the federal government to establish the National Forest Reserves, later superseded by the U.S. Forest Service, to manage valuable timber resources. Currently, the Forest Service is a major employer and contributor to the local economy in many communities throughout the region. National Forests bordering the Kootenai include the Lolo to the southeast, the Flathead to the northeast, and the Idaho Panhandle to the west.

The principle population centers within the confines of the Kootenai National Forest are the cities of Libby, Eureka, Troy, and the adjacent communities of Thompson Falls, and Plains. Over 26 percent of the total population in Lincoln and Sanders Counties reside within the boundaries of these incorporated communities, and the majority of the regional population lives near these cities and towns. In Lincoln County, over three-fourths of the county population lives in the Libby-Troy area.

Several state and U.S. highways traverse the Kootenai Forest. Running primarily east-west through Montana, U.S. Highway 2 bisects the Forest near the community of Happy's Inn, winds its way through the mountains to Libby and Troy, and exits the state via the Kootenai River Valley. U.S. Highway 93 passes through the northeastern corner of the Kootenai Forest from the Port of Roosville on the Canadian border, to Eureka, Fortine, and Stryker before crossing the Lincoln County-Flathead County border. Montana Highway 37 originates at the town of Libby and runs north-south, following the

eastern shore of Lake Koocanusa through the KNF to the town of Eureka. Montana Highway 200 follows the Clark Fork River. Running roughly northwest-southeast, this highway links the communities of Plains, Thompson Falls, Belknap, Trout Creek, Noxon, and Heron. Near the Idaho border, Montana Highway 56 runs north-south and connects communities along the Clark Fork River Valley with those along the Kootenai River Valley. In addition to these highways, numerous paved, gravel, and un-surfaced roads cross the KNF and provide access to the opportunities the forest contains.

2.1.2 USFS Organization of the Kootenai National Forest

The Kootenai is one of thirteen Region One National Forests managed by the Forest Service, a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Within the Forest Service's organizational structure of the Kootenai National Forest there are five Ranger Districts and two Engineering Zones. Prior to 1987, there were seven districts; the Three Rivers Ranger District is a combination of the previous Yaak and Troy Ranger Districts, and the Fisher River Ranger district is being incorporated into the Libby Ranger District.

The management structure of the Kootenai National Forest includes a Forest Supervisor, District Rangers (one for each district), Zone Engineers (one for each zone), and timber, fire management, lands/minerals and recreation, resources, planning, engineering, and administrative staff. The Kootenai National Forest Supervisor's office is located in Libby, Montana. The location of each district ranger station is indicated in the following table (Table 2-1) along with a brief description of the districts.

In 1986, the Forest Service workforce in the Kootenai numbered approximately 540, including 200 summer seasonal employees (USFS 1987, Vol.1:I-2). In 1993, the majority of Federal Employees in Lincoln and Sanders Counties, 779 persons total¹, were Forest Service Employees.

The Forest Service relies on a Forest Plan for the Kootenai National Forest in its management efforts. The current plan was accepted in 1987 and the plan's strategies are monitored, reviewed, and reported on every five years. Management objectives set forth in the Forest Plan include foci on the following resource/activity elements: wilderness, roadless, timber, recreation, cultural, visual, air quality, range, threatened and endangered species, wildlife and fish, soil and water, mineral, land, roads and trails, fire protection and fuels management, corridor establishment, facilities, riparian areas, and special areas (USFS 1987, Vol.1:II-3 - 11). Multiple objectives are considered in the implementation of management in any given area. The 1987 Forest Plan divides land within the Kootenai National Forest into twenty-four Management Areas, although the boundaries of these areas "are not firm lines" (USFS 1987, Vol.1:III-1). Of these Management Areas, six (one-quarter) are considered suitable timberland, and timber harvest may occur in some unsuitable areas when specified to reach management goals, minimize the spread of insects or disease, or enhance wildlife habitats. These Management Areas and the specific goals associated with them are described in

¹ This federal employment figure is based on 1993 covered employment in Sanders County and Lincoln County (Montana Department of Labor, Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau 1994:Table 5.10). Outside of the Forest Service, there is little federal employment in these areas.

Chapter III of the Forest Plan (USFS 1987).

| Table 2-1 Ranger Districts and Headquarters Locations | | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| District No. | District Name | District Situation in the Kootenai National Forest (KNF) | Headquarters | Engineering Zone |
| D1 | Rexford Ranger District | located in north-central KNF; bordered on the north by Canada, east by Fortine District, west by Three Rivers District, and south by Libby District; major features include Kooconusa Reservoir, Tobacco River, Big Creek, Pinkham Creek, Dodge Creek, Young Creek, Tobacco River Valley livestock grazing capacity, Bighorn sheep range (east of Reservoir), and harvesting areas for timber and commercial Christmas trees. | Eureka Ranger Station | Eastside (office in Canoe Gulch) |
| D3 | Fortine Ranger District | located in northeast KNF; bordered on the north by Canada, east by the Flathead National Forest, west by Rexford District, and south by Libby District; major features include Tobacco River, Sunday Creek, Grave Creek, Sunday Creek, Fortine Creek, Ten Lakes Scenic Area, grizzly habitat (eastern edge of district in Whitefish Range), wolf habitat (near Murphy Lake), and harvesting areas for timber and commercial Christmas trees. | Murphy Lake Ranger Station | |
| D5 | Libby Ranger District* | encompasses pre-1994 Fisher River Ranger District*; stretches from central to southeast KNF; bordered on the north by Fortine and Rexford Districts, on the west by Three Rivers District, on the south-southwest by Cabinet District, on the southeast by the Lolo National Forest, and on the east by the Flathead National Forest; major features in the western portion of the district include Kootenai River, Pipe Creek, Quartz Creek, eastern half of the Cabinet Wilderness, viewsheds from Libby city and Highway 2, and closed vermiculite and silver mine sites; major features in the eastern portion of the district include Fisher River, Wolf Creek, the Libby Dam, southern Kooconusa Reservoir, Loon Lake, Crystal Lake, Thompson Lake, McGregor Lake; recreation and timber resources are throughout the district. | Libby Ranger Station (also a Ranger Station in Canoe Gulch) | |
| D4 | Three Rivers Ranger District** | located in the northwest and central-west KNF; bordered on the north by Canada, east by Rexford and Libby Districts, west by the Idaho Panhandle National Forest, and south by Cabinet District; major features in the northwest portion of district include Yaak River, Pete Creek, Burnt Creek; major features in the western portion of the district include Kootenai River, Yaak River, Bull River, Callahan Creek, Lake Creek, O'Brien Creek, northern Bull River Valley, Bull Lake, Asarco's Mt. Vernon mine site, Ross Creek Cedars Scenic Area, part of the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness, grizzly and mountain goat habitat, and timberlands. | Troy Ranger Station | Westside (office in Troy) |
| D7 | Cabinet Ranger District | located in southern KNF in Sanders County; bordered on the north by Three Rivers District, northeast by Libby District, west-southwest by the Idaho Panhandle National Forest, and southeast by the Lolo National Forest; major features include Clark Fork River, Bull River, Vermilion River, Pilgrim Creek, Marten Creek, Beaver Creek, southwestern Cabinet Mountains Wilderness, Scotchman Peaks, Ulm Peak natural area, elk herds, mining claims, and timberlands. | Trout Creek Ranger Station | |

*Beginning in 1994 and continuing in 1995, the Fisher River Ranger District (D6), is being incorporated into the Libby District (D5); however, a ranger station is being maintained at Canoe Gulch (formerly the D6 Headquarters).

**In 1987, the Yaak Ranger District headquarters were moved from Sylvanite to Troy. Subsequently, the Yaak and Troy Districts were combined as the Three Rivers Ranger District, and D2 was incorporated into D4.

Source: Adapted from the Kootenai National Forest Plan, Volume I (USFS 1987), the Forest Plan Monitoring Report (USFS 1993), and personal communication with district offices.

2.1.3 Natural Resources and Major Features of the KNF

Region

Timber and mineral deposits are the most noted natural resources of the Kootenai National Forest. Water, agricultural land, and the intrinsic value of the area's forested mountains and fertile valleys are also notable. The recreation resources of the area have made it valuable to hunters, fishers, wildlife viewers, berry pickers, hikers, and other sports and outdoor enthusiasts.

Atop a layering of shrubs, berries, wild flowers, and ferns, the Kootenai National Forest has dense forests containing 15 species of conifers including species of cedar, fir, hemlock, larch, pine, and spruce. The wood products industry relies heavily on the following timber resources: western larch, Douglas-fir, lowland grand- fir, spruce, ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine, western white pine, and western red cedar. In addition to lumber and wood/paper products produced from these timber resources, regional agricultural resources facilitate the production of Christmas trees. Inhabiting the forests of the Kootenai are about 280 different wildlife species (USFS 1987 Vol II:A12-1).

Mineral resources have played an important role in the historical development of the region in the current economy. Gold deposits were discovered along the Libby Creek as early as 1860 (the date of gold discovery here varies by source from 1860 to 1869). This lured seasoned prospectors from California and elsewhere as well as new miners to the area. By the turn of the century, placer mining was visible throughout the region. The richest mineral deposits, however, were not easy to extract. The hard rock of the Cabinet and Purcell ranges required 20th century technology to make mining in northwestern Montana economical. Deposits of silver and copper have attracted large operations and investment to the area. Until recently, Asarco Corporation operated one of the nation's largest silver mines, also a productive copper mine, seventeen miles south of Troy. The once-world's-largest vermiculite mining operation was owned by W.R. Grace Company near Libby, but this operation was terminated and the land reclaimed in 1991. Other rich mineral deposits have been located within the Kootenai National Forest, and known mineral reserves have an estimated value of \$5 billion (Tirrell 1991:232). This potential wealth has prompted a resurgence of mineral exploration in the region, particularly in the Cabinet Mountains. For example, the Noranda Company is working through the necessary requirements to execute plans to extract as much as 140 million tons of ore containing copper and silver from under the Cabinet Wilderness Area. There are, however, no large currently-active extraction operations in the Kootenai National Forest.

A major feature in the Kootenai National Forest is the Kootenai River. Montana's lowest elevation, 1,820 feet above sea level, is located just northwest of Troy where the Kootenai River flows into Idaho. This point of exit is 47 miles downriver from the Libby Dam. Most of this free-flowing portion of the river is in valley bottoms of private ownership; 29 percent of the river is in National Forest landownership (USFS 1987 Vol II:22-7). Lake Koocanusa (a name created by combining Kootenai, Canada, and USA), was formed by the construction of Libby Dam on the Kootenai River in central Lincoln County. Over half of the narrow lake's ninety-mile length is in Lincoln County; Canada claims the remaining 42 miles. This lake serves as an important recreation area and it

also has flood-control purposes. Running adjacent to the eastern shore of Lake Kootenusa, is Montana State Route 37, a National Forest Scenic Byway; Forest Road 228 skirts the western shore of the lake. In its nearly-600-mile-long course, approximately 100 miles of the Kootenai River, including its flooded portion captured in the Kootenusa reservoir, flows through Lincoln County. The Kootenai River is the largest waterway in the region and carries more water volume than the Missouri River east of the Divide. As the river flows from Canada, south into Lincoln County, then west and northwest into Idaho and back to Canada, it is fed by many tributaries and rivulets. Three of the Kootenai's principle tributaries are the Yaak, Tobacco, and Fisher Rivers.

Draining the northwestern corner of the Kootenai National Forest, the Yaak River converges with the Kootenai River six miles downstream from the town of Troy. The majority (57%) of this river's 45-mile length flows through lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service. Some of the private land found in the scenic Yaak River Valley is located in and around the town of Yaak. The Purcell Mountains which surround the Yaak River Valley are home to game animals such as mule deer, whitetail deer, elk, caribou, and moose, as well as mountain lions, black bears, and a few grizzlies.

The Tobacco Plains, through which the Tobacco River flows in northeastern Lincoln County, comprise the county's dominant agricultural region. Although not in the Kootenai National Forest itself, the Tobacco Plains are bordered by National Forest Lands. Major uses of agricultural land in the area include hay cultivation, Christmas tree production, and cattle range.

The Fisher River runs through southern Lincoln County. This river runs northward from the Chain Lakes region into the Kootenai River approximately fifteen miles east of Libby. Most of the private land in this Fisher River Valley is near the Chain of Lakes, approximately 45 miles southeast of Libby.

Another important river in the region is the Bull River. This river originates in southern Lincoln County but flows into Sanders County and feeds the Clark Fork River system. The Bull River Valley is sparsely populated by humans but abundant in wildlife, scenery, and timber. The Cabinet Mountains line both sides of the Bull River Valley. Within this large valley, between the highways US-2 and Montana-200, both private and public forest lands are found. Approximately 19 percent of the river is within KNF-administered (non-private) land. The Bull River is the primary drainage system in the southwestern edge of the Kootenai National Forest. Four miles northwest of Noxon the Bull River converges with the Cabinet Gorge Reservoir, an important recreation area. Montana State Highway-56 passed through the river valley and is the path which travelers take to Bull Lake and westward to the 100-acre preserve of old-growth cedars known as the Ross Creek Cedar Grove. The Cabinet Mountain Wilderness runs north-south along the east side of the Bull River Valley and encompasses 94,000 acres of protected wilderness. Many recreation areas, including Snowshoe Lake, Wanless Lake, Bramlet Lake, and Falls Creek, are located within the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness area. The highest peak in the Kootenai National Forest, Snowshoe Peak (elevation 8,712 feet), is in the northern portion of the Cabinet Mountains, on the border between Sanders and

Lincoln Counties. Wildlife observers in the Cabinet Mountains commonly see deer, elk, mountain goats, bighorn sheep, and many small game and non-game wildlife species. Less commonly observed are mountain lions and grizzly bears.

The Clark Fork River in Sanders County flows through both public and private lands of great value. Some of the major features of the Kootenai National Forest within this region include Thompson Falls (water falls) and the Trout Creek roadless area. The communities of Heron, Noxon, Trout Creek, and Thompson Falls are situated in a linear fashion in the Clark Fork River Valley. Important to recreation in the area, the Cabinet Gorge Reservoir is located between the Noxon Dam, south of Noxon, and the Cabinet Gorge Dam, west of Heron. Another water body, the Noxon Reservoir, is to the southeast of the Noxon Dam and extends beyond Trout Creek.

Both Lincoln County and Sanders County have Kootenai National Forest-based camping, snowmobiling, cross-country and alpine skiing (e.g., Turner Mountain near Libby has two single chairs and about 8 runs), and other established recreation areas. Recreation and other means of using the region's natural resources are discussed in the following section. Additional information regarding individuals' perceptions about natural resource use is included in the county-specific chapters later in this report.

2.1.4 Natural Resource Use

Natural resources in the Kootenai National Forest region are utilized in a number of commercial, recreational, and subsistence activities. Most notable commercial uses include timber production, mining, agriculture, and cattle ranching. Recreational use of natural resources include sightseeing, camping, hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, off-road vehicle driving, birdwatching, photography, canoing, and water sports. Hunting, fishing, and berry picking combine elements of recreation with subsistence activities. Firewood collection is more distinctly a subsistence activity. This section examines some of the Kootenai National Forest's natural resource uses, including recreation, range, mining, and timber. As a precursor to the discussion of the types and patterns of use in the National Forest, land ownership issues are briefly discussed.

Land Ownership in the Forest Region: Distribution of Public and Private Lands

In Lincoln County, the majority of land is publicly owned. The federal government owns approximately 77 percent of the county; this area is managed by the U.S. Forest Service, as discussed above. State ownership is approximately 3 percent. Corporate ownership of timber-producing land accounts for 13 percent of the county's land, and the remaining percentage of Lincoln County is held in small parcels by private land owners. Sanders County contains a higher proportion of private land than does Lincoln County; however, the majority of acreage in both regions is owned by the federal government. The slightly less rugged terrain of Sanders County, in the Clark Fork River Valley, for example, is more conducive to private development than in the majority of Lincoln County. Land ownership in these two counties provide an interesting contrast to the neighboring Idaho panhandle counties, where there is a larger proportion of private

land. The map on the following page depicts forest land ownership in and around the study area.

While the majority of land in the study area is owned by the federal government, the land ownership patterns in the Kootenai National Forest region are comprised of multiple National Forest-private-and corporate combinations. These combinations vary widely by location. The following characteristics best describe ownership patterns:

- 1) large blocks of contiguous National Forest land,
- 2) "checkerboards" of public and private land,
- 3) isolated tracts of private land located within National Forest,
- 4) isolated tracts of Forest land surrounded by privately-owned lands, and
- 5) large tracts of corporately-owned land.

Within the geographic context of the Kootenai National Forest, most corporate-owned land, as well as public/private "checkerboards" lie in the southeastern portion of the Forest. Non-corporate private lands are found primarily in the northeastern portion of the Forest, in the Eureka-Fortine vicinity. Additional concentrations of privately-owned lands occur in the following areas: Libby, Troy, Yaak River, the Clark Fork River valley, and Bull Lake valley. Private lands surrounded by National Forest are widespread through out the region. National Forest lands surrounded by private holdings are concentrated around the Eureka-Fortine area (USFS 1987 Vol II:A9-1).

Predominant federal ownership of land in the region affects the usability of the land which, according to one study participant, results in "positive and negative aspects of that go back and forth...From a negative standpoint, they're controlling the land use... but a positive thing is having nice scenery and wildlife right out your back door." Some of the most valuable private land in the region are those lots adjacent to the federal lands. However, this situation does cause some conflicts. For example, one resident of Eureka indicated that these lands have historically been open grazing land, "but the cows don't know whose land they're on--they travel all over-- so the rancher, the forester, and the new owner are all in conflict." Additional land ownership conflicts can arise from public/private "checkerboard" ownership, as well as isolated tracts of both public and private lands. Issues created by such land ownership patterns include problems of right-of-way, title claims, trespassing, encroachments, easements, and cost-share roads (USFS 1987 Vol II:A9-1). For example, one study participant indicated that conflicts may arise when private land owners have to cross federal land to access their property. Reasons noted for this conflict include difficulties in receiving easements, building roads or paths, and maneuvering around special habitats. Situations in which adjacent lands are being used for opposing purposes, such as primitive recreation and residential development may also produce land-use conflicts.

Map for page 13 is Map 2

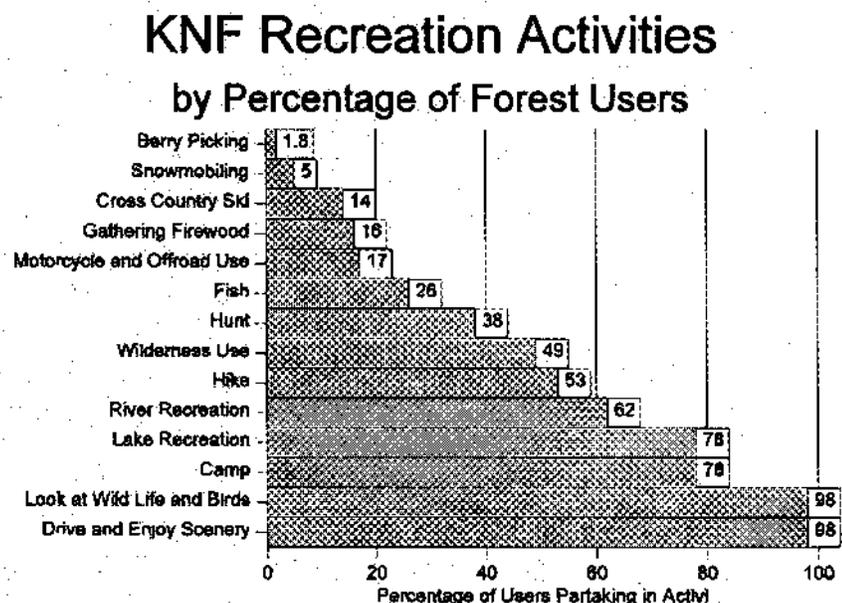
The relatively small amount of privately-owned land has a somewhat limiting effect on potential urban expansion by restricting the area available for new residents and infrastructure developments. This situation may be exacerbated by the counties' numerous and steep mountain ranges which inhibit development in areas other than the valley bottoms, many of which are currently used in small-scale ranching and agricultural activities. As the demand for residential land increases, property values and the costs associated with managing larger tracts of land increase. Some study participants suggest that in recent years, this situation has led to the selling-off of existing farms and ranches for conversion to residential developments.

Recreational Use of the Kootenai National Forest

Recent studies of National Forest usage have found that of those individuals residing in the Kootenai National Forest's primary service area, 17 percent had used the KNF within the past 12 months (Eiselein n.d.:1). In a description of National Forest Consumers in Region One, A&A Research found that over 75 percent of the individuals who had used or visited the Kootenai National Forest within the past year were males, 75 percent had lived in the area 10 years or more, and over 50 percent had lived in the area for over 20 years (Eiselein n.d.:2-6). In addition, the majority of the individuals who had used the Kootenai National Forest were in the lower-middle income (\$20,000-30,000) bracket. Adult KNF users of age 55 or older tended to outnumber younger adult users in the age classes of 18-34 and 35-54.

A&A Research also reports the types of recreational activities National Forest users were involved in within the past 12 months (Eiselein n.d.:10-35). The bar chart below displays the type of Kootenai National Forest uses investigated in the study, as well as the percent of KNF users involved in each activity.

In the Kootenai National Forest, according to the work conducted by A&A Research, the two most common activities participated in were driving/enjoying scenery and looking at wildlife and birds. Approximately ninety-eight percent of the surveyed individuals who indicated that they had visited the Kootenai National Forest participated



in these activities. The prominence of these two activities is logical, given that both are easily undertaken by a wide variety of individuals, and both can be routinely engaged in while enroute to another activity or place. For example, boaters, hikers, skiers, and campers are all likely to drive and enjoy scenery or observe wildlife enroute to their recreational destination. Seventy-eight percent of the Kootenai National Forest users indicated camping as an activity they participated in. The high number of Forest users who indicated lake and river recreation use, 78 percent and 62 percent respectively, may be accounted for by the presence of Lake Koocanusa and other numerous lakes and rivers in the region. Hiking was an additional recreational use that involved over 50 percent of Kootenai National Forest users. It is interesting to note that despite the limited amount of forest land in the Cabinet Wilderness, almost half of KNF users were involved in "Wilderness Use." Hunting was also a fairly common use, and was pursued by 38 percent of the Forest's users.

Range

The extensive efforts in ranching and livestock production found elsewhere in Montana are absent in northwestern Montana. The moist, mountainous environment of the Kootenai National Forest lends itself more readily to timber production and recreation than to farming or cattle grazing. Small-scale farming occurs primarily outside of the National Forest boundaries, on valley floors. The majority of grazing also occurs in the river valleys but is not limited to private lands. Livestock is commonly grazed within the Kootenai Forest's boundaries, primarily in its northeastern portion. The Kootenai National Forest Plan projects that 12,600 Animal Unit Months (AUMs) of forage is available annually for grazing livestock on the Forest range (USFS 1993:41). During the 5 years between 1988 and 1992, an average of 11,400 AUMs, or 90 percent of the annual projected amount, was utilized for grazing cattle. Requests for non-use, some seeking to prevent young timber resource damage, largely accounts for the difference between projected and actual AUMs utilized (USFS 1993:41).

Mining

Mining activity in the Kootenai National Forest and surrounding area has varied over time. Placer mining for gold in the late 1800's was the first mining activity undertaken in the area. Additional gold mining efforts followed in subsequent years. The W.R. Grace company was involved in the mining of vermiculite at a site northeast of Libby until the mine was closed and reclamation began in 1991. The Mount Vernon mine, a large silver and copper mine operated in the Kootenai National Forest by Asarco, also closed recently. The extent to which coal and oil deposits exist in this region is not specifically known, but their extraction is a conceivability (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning, n.d.:50).

As the Kootenai is located in an area rich in mineral deposits, the potential exists for mining activity to increase within its bounds. Such an increase in activity stands to significantly impact the renewable resources found in the Forest. Major mining operations require large investments in capital and land for mining and processing facilities, as well as substantial transportation routes for the movement of equipment

and mined material. Two companies, Asarco and Noranda are currently engaged in the process to develop new mines on the Kootenai National Forest (USFS 1993:77).

Timber

Timber production has played an important role in northwestern Montana since non-Native settlement. Early settlers cut timber, then floated it down the Kootenai and Yaak Rivers to sawmills in Idaho. Local processing of lumber began in 1889, with the opening of the region's first sawmill near Eureka. The creation of the Kootenai Forest Reserve, which later became the Kootenai National Forest, established the federal government's role in the management of timber in the area. The harvesting and processing of timber remains an important aspect of the regional economy, and the Kootenai National Forest continues to be the largest local source of that timber. In particular, Libby, the Lincoln County seat, has been closely tied to the timber industry since early in this century. Julius Neils, a lumberman from Wisconsin, purchased an existing mill in Libby in 1910. The Libby mill along with other assets including timberlands, logging equipment and railroads, contributed to the J. Neils Lumber Company in successfully becoming the largest single enterprise in Montana's lumber industry. This company eventually sold the Libby mill to St. Regis Paper Company, who in turn sold it to Champion International, who recently sold it to Plum Creek. The Libby mill is still an important component of the economy in Libby and Lincoln County, as a whole. The manufacturing of lumber and wood products provides over one-third of the annual wages in the county. Additional reliance on related retail services, forestry, and other local support industries serve to solidify the tight bonds between Lincoln County and the timber in the Kootenai National Forest.

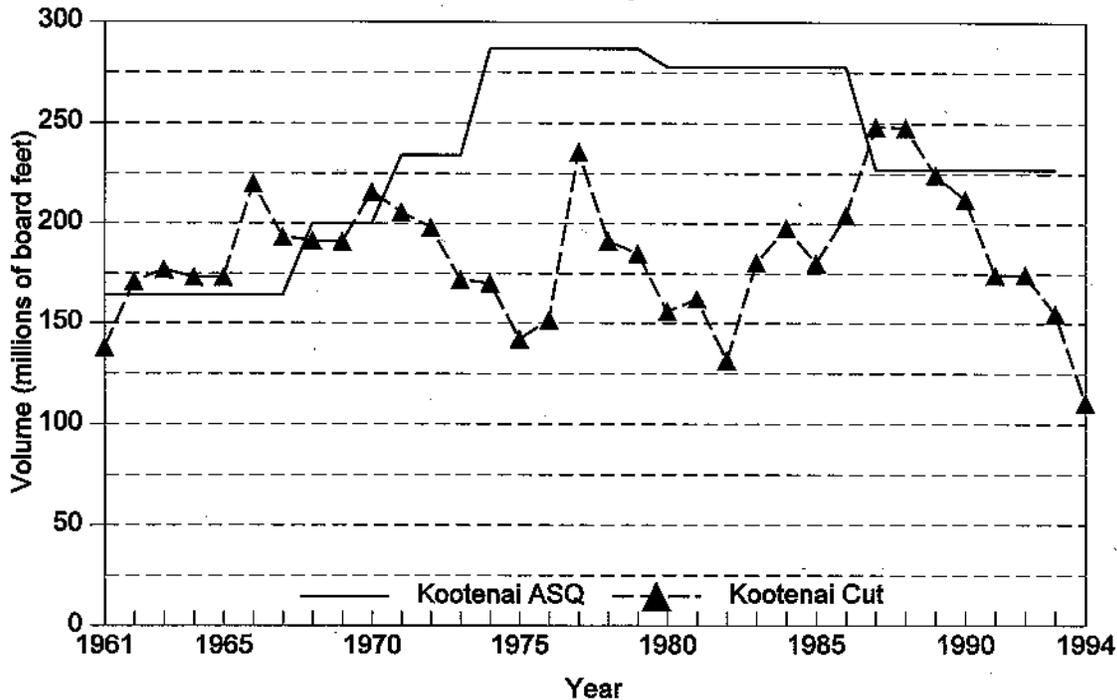
The annual amount of timber cut in the Kootenai National Forest, measured in millions of board feet (MMBF), has varied widely in the years between 1961 and 1993. The figure entitled "Timber Sale Program" displays the Allowable Sale Quantities (ASQ) as well as the amounts of timber cut in the Kootenai National Forest during the past three decades. Note that the ASQ is the maximum amount of timber that could be cut and it should not be construed as the actual volume of timber harvested. The lowest amount of timber cut during this period was 131.5 MMBF in 1982; the highest amount cut was 248.3 MMBF in 1987. Additional low total cut years were 1961 (138.0 MMBF), 1975 (142.3 MMBF), 1980 (155.9 MMBF), and 1993 (154.8 MMBF). The average annual amount of timber cut over these three decades is 192 MMBF; however, the total volume cut has not been consistent across the years. In each of the three decades examined the harvest pattern has included periods of relatively high and low cut volumes. Such fluctuations likely had repercussions in local economies and lifestyles by effecting the individuals, corporations, and communities involved in timber harvesting and processing activities.

Currently, as well as traditionally, the predominant timber harvest methods used within the Kootenai National Forest are regeneration methods, including clearcutting, seed tree cutting, and shelterwood cutting. Selection harvests, intermediate harvests, and timber-stand improvement cuttings are also timber management techniques utilized in the Forest. The particular method to be used to harvest a stand of trees is primarily selected by physical and biological site factors, existing timber types, and economic

factors (USFS 1987 Vol. II:Appendix 2). Each of these harvest methods is briefly described below.

Timber Sale Program

Allowable Sale Quantity & Total Cut



Clearcutting, or completely clearing an area of its timber, is a harvesting method which has undergone some scrutiny by various user groups. This method, however, does address a number of different Forest management concerns. For example, clearcutting allows for significant changes to be made in the character and composition of the future forest. Using this technique, less valuable tree species may be replaced by more productive ones. Clearcutting can also be employed as a tool in effectively controlling the spread of insects and disease in the Forest. Multiple-use objectives, such as big game browse, are frequently achieved using clearcutting. Additionally, clearcutting is an economical means of harvesting timber; the maximum amount of marketable timber is harvested per acre (USFS 1987 Vol.II:Appendix 2).

Seed tree cutting typically takes place in sites physically similar to those in which clearcutting is used to harvest timber. In the case of seed tree cutting, desirable seed trees exist in the stand to be cut. These trees are left uncut, and are intended to provide the seeds for the next generation of trees. Reductions in the costs of forest regeneration, and higher visual quality are two key benefits to this method of timber harvesting (USFS 1987 Vol.II:Appendix 2).

The shelterwood harvesting method also provides for a natural regeneration of trees. This system is effective in those situations wherein other harvest methods would be too harsh for tree regeneration. In this system a higher amount of trees are left uncut than in the seed tree method. As much as 50 percent of the large, commercially valuable trees are left standing. These remaining trees provide protection from temperature extremes and provide for a more stable environment. Regeneration costs may be lowered by using this harvest method. Shelterwood harvests are also one means of maintaining the visual quality of the forest (USFS 1987 Vol. II:Appendix 2).

As stated above, there are a number of additional, less common timber harvest methods employed in the Kootenai National Forest. In the case of selection harvests, individual trees or groups of trees are chosen to be harvested. Common situations in which this method may be implemented include harvesting in riparian areas or in areas where the scenic quality of the forest is an issue. Intermediate harvests, such as commercial thinning, are used to harvest timber in stands threatened by insect infestation, or in stands in which extensive harvests are constrained due to multiple-use concerns. Timber stand improvement cuts, including pre-commercial thinning and clearing, are used on sapling sized stands in order to improve the future quality of the stand. All of these intermediate silvicultural treatments do not significantly open the forest canopy (USFS 1987 Vol. II:Appendix 2). Currently, the Forest Service is also implementing an uneven age harvest approach.

2.2 Overview of the Socioeconomic Context of the Kootenai National Forest: Lincoln and Sanders Counties

While the Kootenai National Forest contains a diverse natural environment which is used in many ways, it also is the setting for an active social and economic environment. To orient the reader to this region's socioeconomic context, an overview of Lincoln and Sanders Counties is presented in this section. This overview briefly describes the geographic location and demographic composition of these areas and their relationship to the Kootenai National Forest. Demographic information places the study population within the context of Montana as a whole. Some data corresponding to national population are also included as points of comparison for the reader. Recent population trends in the counties are described, including information which allows for the comparison of the counties to one another. This overview permits a greater understanding of the growth- and resource-related issues reported in this document.

2.2.1 Population Overview

The status and trends in population size and composition can be useful indicators of social and economic characteristics of an area. The following subsections describe the population of Lincoln and Sanders Counties, Montana. Much of this information is gleaned from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing. While 1990 data may seem "out-of-date" now that we are mid-decade, census information remains the most comprehensive and readily-comparable data. When possible, more recent data provided by state and county sources is also included.

Textual discussion throughout this chapter augments tabular demographic data and provides some insight into the regions socioeconomic context.

Total Population

Regional exploration by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, and later David Thompson investigated population growth in northwestern Montana. Fur trading, prospecting, mining, logging, and homesteading instigated the first major population influxes. The construction of a sawmill near Eureka in 1889 spurred additional growth. At the same time, westward expansion of the railroad created a demand for ties and lumber, directly stimulating the timber market. The railroad also carried new populations and economies to the region, indirectly stimulating the logging and mining industry. In 1909, the county boundaries of northwestern Montana were re-drawn for the last time, and the 1910 census reported population figures for Lincoln and Sanders Counties for the first time.

The populations of both counties increased, with some fluctuations, from 1910 to 1970. Timber production had much to do with many of these fluctuations. For example, the primary reason for the rise in population exhibited in the 1950 census was due to late-40's plans to salvage spruce from the spruce beetle -- i.e., harvest it quickly: "Logging increased tremendously, as did manufacturing . . . the Lincoln County economy boomed. Employment was abundant and the population exploded" (Lincoln County n.d.:7) Many of the migrants who came for logging stayed when the wood products industry slowed in the following decade. The next catalyst to population growth was the construction of the Libby Dam in 1966: "This project provided seasonal employment for residents, as well as contributing to increased in-migration of the previous decade" (Lincoln County n.d.:7). Population in Lincoln County peaked in 1970 with 18,063 persons. At that time the population of Sanders County was 7,093. Since 1970, the population of Lincoln County decreased slightly; that of Sanders County continued to increase until the 1980 census. The 1990 Census of Population and Housing indicated that 17,481 persons lived in Lincoln County and 8,669 persons lived in Sanders County (U.S. Bureau of the Census). Montana's total population increased 1.5 percent between the 1980 and 1990, but the population in Lincoln and Sanders Counties declined 1.5 percent and 0.1 percent, respectively.

Today (1995), over 800,000 residents, less than one percent of the total U.S. population, reside in Montana, the nation's fourth largest state. Lincoln and Sanders are two of 56 counties in Montana. The most recent (1992) county population estimates by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, are likely conservative at 17,600 for Lincoln County and 8,700 for Sanders County (Montana Department of Commerce 1994: Table 1.12). Table 2-2 displays decennial populations of these counties since 1910. Available population figures for the incorporated communities within the study area are also displayed in this table.

Table 2-2 Total Population by Year, 1910-1990

| Census Region | Year | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|--|
| | 1910 | 1920 | 1930 | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | |
| Montana Total | 376,053 | 548,889 | 537,606 | 559,456 | 591,024 | 674,767 | 694,409 | 786,690 | 799,065 | |
| LINCOLN COUNTY | 3,638 | 7,797 | 7,089 | 7,882 | 8,693 | 12,537 | 18,063 | 17,752 | 17,481 | |
| Eureka Town | 603 | | 680 | 912 | 929 | 1,229 | 1,195 | 1,119 | 1,043 | |
| Libby City | 630 | | 1,752 | 1,837 | 2,401 | 2,828 | 3,286 | 2,748 | 2,532 | |
| Rexford Town | No record | | 329 | 274 | 248 | No record | 243 | 130 | 132 | |
| Troy City | 483 | | 498 | 796 | 770 | 855 | 1,046 | 1,088 | 953 | |
| SANDERS COUNTY | 3,713 | 4,903 | 5,692 | 6,926 | 6,983 | 6,880 | 7,093 | 8,675 | 8,669 | |
| Hot Springs Town | No record | | 447 | 663 | 733 | 585 | 664 | 601 | 411 | |
| Plains Town | 481 | | 522 | 624 | 714 | 769 | 1,046 | 1,116 | 992 | |
| Thompson Fls. C. | 325 | | 468 | 736 | 851 | 1,274 | 1,356 | 1,478 | 1,319 | |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Decennial Censuses 1910 - 1990. Blank cells indicate missing or non-available data.

Within Lincoln County there are four incorporated communities: Libby, Troy, Rexford, and Eureka. Hot Springs, Plains, and Thompson Falls are the incorporated communities in Sanders County. In addition to these incorporated cities and towns, both of Lincoln and Sanders Counties have a number of smaller residential communities. Libby is the largest town in this region of northwestern Montana, and the only town that is urban by census definition (over 2500 in population), with a 1990 population of 2,532.

Compared to most other areas of the United States, Montana is sparsely populated. This is evident in the predominately-mountainous, rural region of northwestern Montana. Sanders County, in particular, has a low total population and population density. According to census data, Montana has 5.49 persons per square land mile -- less than one-twelfth of the entire U.S. population density (70.33 persons per square mile). The population per square land mile in Lincoln County is 4.84; in Sanders County, population density is 3.14. Montana's population is distributed almost evenly between urban (52.5%) and rural (47.5%) populations; however, both of the counties examined in this study had predominantly rural populations at the time of the last census: 84.9 percent of the Lincoln County population resides in a rural setting, and 100 percent of Sanders County's population is rural. While population estimates indicate that there may have been some growth in both counties, the rural condition has not changed significantly since the latest census.

| Table 2-3 Total Population and Rural Character of U.S. , Montana, Lincoln County, and Sanders County, 1990 | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------|--------------------------------------|------|----------------|------|---------------|------|
| Characteristic | U.S. Total | Montana Total | | Lincoln County | | SandersCounty | |
| | | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Total Population | 248,709,873 | 799,065 | 100% | 17,481 | 100% | 8,669 | 100% |
| % of State Population | 124,939% | 100% (MT is .08% of U.S. Population) | | 8.78% | | 4.35% | |
| Urban Population ¹ | 187,053,487 72.8% | 419,826 | 52.5 | 2,644 | 15.1 | 0 | 0% |
| Rural Population | 27.2% | 379,239 | 47.5 | 14,837 | 84.9 | 8,669 | 100% |
| Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, Summary Tape File 1A ¹ Refers only to civilian non-institutionalized population | | | | | | | |

| Table 2-4 Area of Counties and Incorporated Communities | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| Community | Area | Population Change (%) 1980 to 1990 |
| Montana | 145556 sq. land mi. 14890 sq. water mi. | 1.6 |
| LINCOLN COUNTY | 3613 sq. land mi. 62 sq. water mi. | -1.5 |
| Libby | 1.11 sq. land mi. | -7.9 |
| Eureka | 1.01 sq. land mi. | -6.8 |
| Rexford | .10 sq. land mi. | 1.5 |
| Troy | .55 sq. land mi. | -12.4 |
| SANDERS COUNTY | 2762 sq. land mi. 27.89 sq. water mi. | -0.1 |
| Thompson Falls | 1.24 sq. land mi. | -10.8 |
| Plains | .57 sq. land mi. | -11.1 |
| Hot Springs | .30 sq. land mi. | -31.6 |
| Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 and 1990 Censuses of Population and Housing, Population and Housing Units Counts, Summary Tape File 1, and Public Law 94-171. Data were processed by the Montana Department of Commerce, Census and Economic Information Center, 1993, and presented in Tables 1.1 and 1.4 of the County Statistical Reports. | | |

Gender, Age, and Ethnic Distribution

The distribution of the study area population by gender, age, and ethnicity is displayed in Table 2-5. On a basis of gender, the state and counties are similar to the entire U.S. population and are fairly evenly distributed. The average age of Sanders and Lincoln County populations are 37 and 34.7, respectively. These mean ages are older than that for Montana's population as a whole: 33.8 years of age. Persons 65 and over, individuals typically of retirement-age, accounted for a slightly higher percentage of the population in both Lincoln and Sanders County than they did for the state as a whole.

The study region does not exhibit a large degree of ethnic diversity. Minority populations are small, and the largest proportion of residents in Lincoln and Sanders Counties are Caucasian. Census figures indicate that 97.8 percent of Lincoln County and 93.8 percent of Sanders County are white. Native Americans, the largest minority population in the region, accounted for 1.6 percent of Lincoln County's 1990 population and 5.4 percent of Sanders County's population. Montana's population is 6.0 percent Native American. These proportions are significantly higher than the nation's cumulative Native American population which is 0.8 percent of the total population. African Americans, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and persons of other ethnicities accounted for less than one

percent of the remaining population of each study county. Individuals of Hispanic origin, of any race, comprise just over one percent of the population in these counties.

| Characteristic | U.S.Total | Montana Total | | Lincoln County | | Sanders County | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|---------------|-------|----------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| | | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Total Population ¹ | 248,709,873 | 799,065 | 100% | 17,481 | 100% | 8,669 | 100% |
| Males | 121,239,418 | 395,769 | 49.5% | 8,777 | 50.2% | 4,377 | 50.5% |
| Females | 127,470,455 | 403,296 | 50.5% | 8,704 | 49.8% | 4,292 | 49.5% |
| Age<5 | 18,354,443 | 59,257 | 7.4% | 1,250 | 7.2% | 602 | 6.9% |
| Age 5-17 | 45,249,989 | 162,847 | 20.4% | 3,979 | 22.8% | 1,882 | 21.7% |
| Age 18-24 | 26,737,766 | 70,011 | 8.8% | 1,105 | 6.3% | 488 | 5.6% |
| Age 25-34 | 43,175,932 | 123,070 | 15.4% | 2,479 | 14.2% | 1,074 | 12.4% |
| Age 35-44 | 37,578,903 | 126,756 | 15.9% | 2,862 | 16.4% | 1,381 | 15.9% |
| Age 45-54 | 25,223,086 | 82,306 | 10.3% | 2,074 | 11.9% | 971 | 11.2% |
| Age 55-64 | 21,147,923 | 68,321 | 8.6% | 1,590 | 9.1% | 873 | 10.1% |
| Age 65-74 | 18,106,558 | 60,884 | 7.6% | 1,346 | 7.7% | 792 | 9.1% |
| Age 75+ | 13,135,273 | 45,613 | 5.7% | 796 | 4.6% | 606 | 7.0% |
| Median Age | 32.9 | 33.8 | na | 34.7 | na | 37 | na |
| White | 199,686,070 | 741,111 | 92.7% | 17,103 | 97.8% | 8,135 | 93.8% |
| Black | 29,986,060 | 2,381 | 0.3% | 11 | 0.1% | 12 | 0.1% |
| American Indian ² | 1,959,234 | 47,679 | 6.0% | 282 | 1.6% | 471 | 5.4% |
| Asian/ Pacific Islander | 7,273,662 | 4,259 | 0.5% | 54 | 0.3% | 37 | 0.4% |
| Other Ethnicity | 9,804,847 | 3,635 | 0.5% | 31 | 0.2% | 14 | 0.2% |
| Hispanic Origin (any race) | 22,234,059 | 12,174 | 1.5% | 197 | 1.1% | 104 | 1.2% |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, Summary Tape File 1A & 3A
¹Refers only to civilian non-institutionalized population
²American Indian also includes Eskimo and Aleut population.
Percentages describe each category as it relates to the total population.

Educational Attainment

Levels of educational achievement of the populations of Lincoln and Sanders Counties are very similar. In both counties, the percentage of the population with a high school diploma or less education was higher than the percentage of the state population in the same categories. The percentages of the populations in both counties with at least some college were less than the average for the state.

| Table 2-6 Educational Attainment of Study Area Residents, 1990 | | | | | | |
|---|---------|------|----------------|------|----------------|------|
| Characteristic | Montana | | Lincoln County | | Sanders County | |
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Total Persons over 18 years of age | 578,268 | 100% | 12,307 | 100% | 6,184 | 100% |
| Less than 9 th grade | 42,416 | 7.3 | 1,340 | 10.9 | 586 | 9.5 |
| Some high school, no diploma | 68,971 | 11.9 | 2,037 | 16.6 | 1,012 | 16.4 |
| High school diploma | 190,896 | 33.0 | 4,913 | 39.9 | 2,546 | 41.2 |
| Some college, no degree | 138,693 | 24.0 | 2,086 | 17.0 | 960 | 15.5 |
| Associate degree | 31,337 | 5.4 | 507 | 4.1 | 232 | 3.8 |
| Bachelor's degree | 74,900 | 13.0 | 1,035 | 8.4 | 615 | 9.9 |
| Graduate degree | 29,065 | 5.0 | 389 | 3.2 | 233 | 3.8 |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary Tape File 3C.
 Percentage totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.
 Percentages describe each category as it relates to the total number of person over 18 years of age.

Nativity of Residents

The location of birth for residents of Lincoln County and Sanders County is displayed in Table 2-7. The counties of Lincoln and Sanders exhibit similar percentages for population nativity. In both cases, slightly less than half of each county's residents were born in Montana. Less than 1.5 percent of the residents of Lincoln and Sanders Counties are foreign born. The remainder of the population claims nativity in a state or U.S. territory other than Montana. While Table 2-7 does not display the nativity of state population, the 1990 census indicates that approximately 60 percent of Montana's total population was born in the state.

| Characteristic | Lincoln County | | Sanders County | |
|-----------------------|----------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| | # | % | # | % |
| Born In Montana | 8496 | 48.60% | 3935 | 45.39% |
| Born in another state | 8659 | 49.53% | 4543 | 52.41% |
| Born Outside US1 | 80 | 0.46% | 72 | 0.83% |
| Foreign Born | 246 | 1.41% | 119 | 1.37% |
| Total Persons | 17,481 | 100.00% | 8,669 | 100.00% |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary Tape File 3C.
1Born Outside U.S. includes: Puerto Rico, U.S. Outlying Areas, and Abroad or at Sea of American Parents.

Marital Status

Table 2-8 shows that the majority of the residents over 15 years of age in Montana (58.7%), Lincoln County (65.9%), and Sanders County (64.9%) are currently married. The proportion of divorced residents in the state as a whole exceeds proportion of divorced residents in Lincoln and Sanders Counties. Although not presented in this table, Montana Department of Health and Environmental Sciences statistics indicate a fairly constant rate of marriage solemnizations and terminations in both counties, with the former exceeding the latter. In Lincoln County, the 1992 ratio of marriages to terminations was 139:93; the Sanders County ratio was 67:40 (Montana Department of Commerce 1994:Table 2.2).

| Characteristic | Montana | | Lincoln County | | Sanders County | |
|-----------------------------------|---------|-------|----------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Total Person over 15 years of Age | 611,539 | 100% | 13,110 | 100% | 6,611 | 100% |
| Never Married | 134,010 | 21.9% | 2,265 | 17.3% | 1,170 | 17.7% |
| Now Married | 358,831 | 58.7% | 8,604 | 65.6% | 4,293 | 64.9% |
| Separated | 18,939 | 3.1% | 218 | 1.7% | 85 | 1.3% |
| Widowed | 44,156 | 7.2% | 1,117 | 8.5% | 534 | 8.1% |
| Divorced | 55,603 | 9.1% | 846 | 6.5% | 529 | 8.0% |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary Tape File 3C. Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding. Percentages describe each category as it relates to the total number of persons over 15 years of age.

Household Characteristics

Census data indicates that the majority of households in the study area are family households. It is not surprising given the marital status data presented above that the majority of family households are comprised of married-couples. Married-couple family households in Lincoln and Sanders Counties accounted for 63 percent and 62 percent of the total households, respectively, in 1990. These figures are slightly higher than the percent of married-couple family households for Montana, which comprised 58 percent of the total households in the state. Almost 9 percent of the total households are "other" (non-married or single parent/guardian) family households headed by females, and nearly 3 percent have a male householder. Individuals over 65 years of age comprise 10.5 percent of the total households. Approximately four-fifths of the total housing units in both counties are owner-occupied. Table 2-9 displays household characteristics for the U.S., Montana, Lincoln County, and Sanders County in additional detail.

| Characteristic | U.S.Total | MontanaTotal | | LincolnCounty | | Sanders County | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------|---------------|-------|----------------|-------|
| | | # | % | # | % | # | % |
| Total Households | 91,947,410 | 306,163 | 100% | 6,668 | 100% | 3,397 | 100% |
| Family Households | 64,517,947 | 211,666 | 69.1% | 4,905 | 73.6% | 2,377 | 70.0% |
| Married Couple Families | 50,708,322 | 176,526 | 57.7% | 4,202 | 63.0% | 2,098 | 61.8% |
| Other Family, Male Householder | 3,143,582 | 8,743 | 2.9% | 223 | 3.3% | 91 | 2.7% |
| Other Fam. Female Householder | 10,666,043 | 26,397 | 8.6% | 480 | 7.2% | 188 | 5.5% |
| Non-Family Households | 27,429,463 | 94,497 | 30.9% | 1,763 | 26.4% | 1020 | 30.0% |
| Householder living alone | 22,580,420 | 80,491 | 26.3% | 1,554 | 23.3% | 921 | 27.1% |
| Householder age>65 | 8,824,845 | 32,208 | 10.5% | 607 | 9.1% | 450 | 13.2% |
| Total Housing Units | missing | 361,155 | 100% | 8,002 | 100% | 4,335 | 100% |
| Occupied Housing Units | missing | missing | na | 6,668 | 83.3% | 3,397 | 78.4% |
| Total Persons Living in households | 242,012,129 | 775,273 | na | 17,353 | na | 8,594 | na |
| Average Persons Per Household | 2.63 | 2.53 | na | 2.60 | na | 2.53 | na |
| Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes | \$79,100 | \$56,100 | na | \$48,900 | na | \$42,000 | na |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, Summary Tape File 1A & 3A Percentages describe each category as it relates to the total number of households, with the exception of owner-occupied housing units which is a proportion of total housing units.

2.2.2 Political Structure and Connections with the Kootenai National Forest

The Kootenai National Forest is managed by a federal agency, the U.S. Forest Service; however, there are interactions between the KNF and local government. Because the existence and management of the KNF affects the social and political structure of the region, it is important to understand the county and city government contexts and the connections of these political structures with the Kootenai National Forest.

Local Government

Lincoln County is comprised of three districts, each of which is represented by a commissioner on the Board of County Commissioners. A commissioner's term is six years. Every two years, one commissioner's term expires, and a new district representative is selected by a vote of the county electorate. Also elected are a County Attorney, Clerk, Sheriff, Treasurer/Superintendent of Schools, Assessor, Coroner, Public Administrator, and Justice of the Peace. The Lincoln County seat is located in Libby. In addition to being the hub of county/local government, Libby is the largest service and residential center in the vicinity. Kalispell and Missoula, larger Montana cities, are located 89 and 198 miles from Libby, respectively. However, instead of crossing the mountains to these cities in the Flathead Valley, the population of northwestern Montana often chooses to interact with the Idaho panhandle and Spokane, Washington, approximately 150 miles west. The city is also serviced by the Milwaukee and Burlington Northern railways. There is no major airport in the region; however, Lincoln County owns a small-plane airport near Libby.

The Sanders County seat is located in Thompson Falls which, by highway, is 90 miles from Libby, 108 miles from Kalispell, and 100 miles from Missoula. Similar in governmental structure to Lincoln County, Sanders County is governed by three County Commissioners, each with six-year terms.

Each of the incorporated communities within Lincoln County and Sanders County has a form of city or town government. In Lincoln County, incorporated cities include Libby and Troy, while Eureka and Rexford are un-incorporated towns. The towns of Hot Springs and Plains and the city of Thompson Falls are all incorporated communities in Sanders County. Each of these incorporated communities has an elected city/town government which includes a mayor and a council.

Spread throughout these counties in northwestern Montana are small, unincorporated residential areas and farms. Some insight into the geographic layout of the counties is helpful in understanding county government's logistical demands and distribution of local political structure. The physical landscape of the region dominates the location of towns and much of their character; thus it is in the river valleys that the majority of regional population is found. For example, the city of Libby is located near the confluence of the Libby Creek and Kootenai River. To the west approximately 20 miles Lake Creek flows into the Kootenai, and this is where Troy is located. Rexford is located at the juncture of the Tobacco and Kootenai Rivers at Lake Kooconusa. Eureka,

Fortine, Trego, and Stryker are in the Tobacco River Valley. In the northwest region of Lincoln County, the town of Yaak is located in the Yaak River valley in Purcell Mountains. Happy's Inn and Manicke are in the southeastern region of the county. In addition to geographic factors limiting the location of these communities and others in the region, it should be noted that "The economics of developing on excessive slopes is a natural prohibitor" to growth outside of the river valleys (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:10).

The Cabinet Mountains partially form the division between Lincoln and Sanders Counties. The Bitterroot Mountains form the western border of Sanders County, separating it from Shoshone County, Idaho. Sanders County is centered around the Clark Fork and Thompson River valleys. In the northern end of the Clark Fork Valley lies the community of Heron. Following the river to the southeast, towards the Flathead Indian Reservation, the valley contains Noxon, Trout Creek, Belknap, Thompson Falls, Plains, and Paradise. Within the Indian Reservation boundaries are the communities of Perma and Dixon (along the Clark Fork), Hot Springs, Camas, Lonepine, and Niarada.

County-KNF Interactions

The immense amount of federally owned and managed National Forest land located in northwestern Montana influences the atmosphere of local government. The federal government's influence, primarily through the U.S. Forest Service, is commonly felt in the area's affairs. Local communities' economic dependence upon natural resources, and the concentration of those resources on federal land, has created an intimate relationship between these two bodies.

The creation of private lands in Lincoln and Sanders Counties was accomplished through several federal land policies in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Public lands in the area were granted, sold, and given away to individuals and companies to encourage the development of the West. A noteworthy transfer of federal lands to the private sector occurred in 1864, when the Northern Pacific Railroad was allocated lands in a "checker-board" pattern for as many as 50 air miles adjacent to the railroad². Few of the numerous land transfers that took place in northwestern Montana approached the size of this immense grant. Most federal land transfers were small, and when homesteading effectively came to an end in the 1930s, the majority of lands suitable for agricultural use had been claimed. A restriction to the transfer of public lands in the region came in with the establishment of the Kootenai Forest Reserve, the forerunner of today's Kootenai National Forest.

In recent years, there appears to have been more of a trend to reduce the availability of privately-owned lands rather than transfers to that sector. State and federal government has re-acquired some portions of the lands previously held by the private sector. Additionally, some 20,000 acres of small land owners' property was inundated by Lake

² The Northern Pacific Railroad is currently the Burlington Northern Railroad. This railway remains an important link between northwestern Montana and other areas of the United States.

Koocanusa after the construction of the Libby Dam began in 1966. Aside from the federal government, the largest land owners in this region are large lumber companies.

Local county governments have expressed interest and concern over the management of federally held lands within their domain. Local government concerns grow out of a consciousness of the integral connections between the ecological and economic systems in place in both privately and federally held lands. Local governments are likewise involved in the protection and continuation of traditional multiple uses of public lands. Specific uses within this management strategy expressly defined as important by Lincoln County government include timber production, mineral mining, cattle grazing, oil, gas, and coal exploration and development, hunting, fishing, and recreation (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:99).

Local county governments have stated their intention to protect the traditions, customs, and local culture of county citizens. Methods presented to achieve this goal include the protection of private property rights, the development of the economy, and encouragement of self-determination in local communities and individuals. Lincoln County has stated in its Land Use Plan that it wishes to be included and consulted in all state and federal plans which have the potential to effect local communities and citizens (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:100). The county also states in the same document that it has the legal right -- as defined by the Federal Land Management and Policy Act of 1976 and the National Forest Management Act -- to require all federal and state agencies to comply with the Lincoln County Plan, and to coordinate with the County Commission when planning and managing federal and state lands within their jurisdiction (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:100).

Outspoken statements of county rights have been heard throughout the West. Management of local lands and resources by what is sometimes considered a distant "outsider" agency -- such as the U.S. Forest Service or the Bureau of Land Management -- is frequently resented by those individuals that live and work near public lands daily. When traditional uses are restricted, and local economies impaired by what may be perceived as political trends, local residents may become resentful of federal land management. Demands by counties for their right to govern the use of local public lands were made in the 1970s in movements such as the "Sagebrush Rebellion," and have been made recently in several western states including Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, and elsewhere in Montana.

2.2.3 Labor Force and Employment

The social and cultural aspects of the region are intricately related to economic factors. For example, the socioeconomic context of the Kootenai National Forest is affected by what jobs are available within its vicinity, and who is available to fill those jobs. Sources of employment and the associated labor force are briefly examined in this section. A more detailed discussion of the region's economy, including an examination of the timber and mining industries is presented in section 2.2.4.

Wage and salary employment in non-farm establishments provide the greatest sources of employment in Lincoln and Sanders Counties. When considering the general sources of employment in the region, four sources stand out: manufacturing, services, retail trade, and government enterprises. The majority of residents in the region are employed in these broad categories.

Table 2-10 displays the distribution of Lincoln County and Sanders County occupations. This data is based on a sample count from the 1990 census. While employment information provided by other sources differ, census data serves as one indicator of the relative importance of given occupations and industries in the region.

| Table 2-10 Occupation of Employed Civilian Persons 16 Years and Older | | | | |
|--|----------------|------|----------------|------|
| Occupational Categories | Lincoln County | | Sanders County | |
| | # | % | # | % |
| A = executive, administrative, and managerial | 545 | 8.4 | 213 | 7.0 |
| B = professional specialty occupations | 899 | 13.8 | 490 | 16.0 |
| C = technicians and related support | 142 | 2.2 | 106 | 3.5 |
| D = sales | 677 | 10.4 | 277 | 9.0 |
| E = administrative support/clerical | 655 | 10.1 | 249 | 8.1 |
| F = private household service | 18 | 0.3 | 9 | 0.3 |
| G = other service (not protective/private household) | 844 | 13.0 | 330 | 10.8 |
| H = protective service | 116 | 1.8 | 28 | 0.9 |
| I = farming, forestry, fishing | 385 | 5.9 | 390 | 12.7 |
| J = precision production, craft, & repair | 765 | 11.8 | 285 | 9.3 |
| K = machine operators, assemblers & inspectors | 518 | 8.0 | 250 | 8.2 |
| L = transportation & materials movers | 470 | 7.2 | 226 | 7.4 |
| M = handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers & laborers | 466 | 7.2 | 208 | 6.8 |
| Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary Tape File 3A. | | | | |

Table 2-11 displays census labor and income data corresponding to Lincoln and Sanders Counties. There are notable differences between these county data. Among the most obvious differences is that Lincoln County's labor force is more than twice the size of the labor force of Sanders County. Individuals employed by the Armed Forces are negligible in both counties. The unemployment rate in Montana was estimated at 7.0 percent in 1990--slightly higher than the national average of 6.3 percent and lower than in Lincoln (16.1%) and Sanders (9.5%) Counties (U.S. Bureau of the Census). Annual per capita income for Montana in 1990 was \$11,213; the national average was

\$14,420. Lincoln and Sanders Counties annual per capita incomes were lower than the Montana average by \$1,400 and \$1,754, respectively. According to census estimates of 1989 income and poverty, almost 20 percent of the Sanders County population and 15 percent of Lincoln County population were below poverty level.

| Table 2-11 1990 Labor and Income Characteristics for Lincoln and Sanders Counties | | | |
|--|--------------|-------------|------------|
| Characteristic | State Total | Lincoln Co. | Sanders Co |
| Persons 16 years and older | 599,765 | 12,890 | 6,469 |
| Persons in labor force | 381,860 | 7,756 | 3,382 |
| Civilian labor force | 376,940 | 7,749 | 3,382 |
| Employed Persons | 350,723 | 6,500 | 3,061 |
| Unemployed Persons | 26,217 | 1,249 | 321 |
| Percent Unemployed | 7% | 16.1% | 9.5% |
| Armed Forces | 4,920 | 7 | 0 |
| Persons not in labor force | 217,905 | 5,134 | 3,087 |
| Percent of Males (16 or over) in labor force | 71.9% | 70.8% | 61.0% |
| Percent of Females (16 or over) in labor force | 55.8% | 49.8% | 43.5% |
| Percent of Males Unemployed | 7.7% | 17.7% | 9.4% |
| Percent of Females Unemployed | 6.1% | 13.9% | 9.6% |
| Median Household Income (1989) | \$22,988 | \$20,898 | \$18,616 |
| Median Family Income (1989) | \$28,044 | \$25,084 | \$21,320 |
| Median Nonfamily Household Income (1989) | \$12,502 | \$10,920 | \$10,863 |
| Per capita income (1989) | \$11,213 | \$9,813 | \$9,459 |
| Total number of person for whom poverty status was determined (1989) | 776,793 | 17,315 | 8,566 |
| Persons below poverty level (1989) | 124,85316.1% | 2,45014.7% | 1,68019.6% |
| Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary Tape File 3C. Note that since the time these data were collected (1989) conditions have changed in Lincoln and Sanders Counties such that unemployment may be worse in Sanders County than in Lincoln County. | | | |

Labor force and unemployment data compiled by the Montana Department of Labor and Industry differ from the 1990 census accounts; however, these data are frequently collected and provide an indication of the trends in employment levels in these counties. Table 2-12 displays yearly labor force and unemployment data since 1970. Unemployment rates are currently lower than their peak levels in the 1980s. According to this data, the Lincoln County unemployment rate peaked at 19.4 percent in 1982, and

had declined to 13.6 percent in 1994. The rate of unemployment in Sanders County was highest in 1985 when it reached 16.5 percent; in 1994 it had declined to 10.7 percent.

| Year | Lincoln Co. | | Sanders Co. | |
|------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| | Civilian Labor Force | Unemployment Rate | Civilian Labor Force | Unemployment Rate |
| 1970 | 7,275 | 8.9% | 2,686 | 6.0% |
| 1971 | 7,176 | 9.1% | 2,993 | 5.5% |
| 1972 | 7,282 | 9.0% | 3,126 | 5.2% |
| 1973 | 6,872 | 9.2% | 3,215 | 5.0% |
| 1974 | 6,552 | 12.1% | 3,372 | 6.6% |
| 1975 | 6,315 | 14.3% | 3,644 | 8.7% |
| 1976 | 6,505 | 13.1% | 3,934 | 7.4% |
| 1977 | 6,788 | 12.8% | 4,071 | 8.5% |
| 1978 | 7,291 | 12.4% | 3,939 | 8.5% |
| 1979 | 7,202 | 10.3% | 3,887 | 7.9% |
| 1980 | 6,992 | 15.3% | 3,972 | 9.6% |
| 1981 | 7,558 | 15.0% | 4,005 | 11.6% |
| 1982 | 7,788 | 19.4% | 4,062 | 16.0% |
| 1983 | 8,497 | 13.4% | 4,262 | 12.6% |
| 1984 | 8,847 | 12.8% | 3,875 | 12.4% |
| 1985 | 8,691 | 11.6% | 3,280 | 16.5% |
| 1986 | 8,816 | 11.4% | 3,265 | 15.5% |
| 1987 | 8,712 | 10.9% | 3,282 | 12.8% |
| 1988 | 8,879 | 11.7% | 3,231 | 12.8% |
| 1989 | 8,431 | 10.2% | 3,129 | 12.4% |
| 1990 | 8,272 | 11.2% | 3,734 | 10.2% |
| 1991 | 8,273 | 14.9% | 3,666 | 14.0% |
| 1992 | 8,050 | 13.0% | 3,782 | 12.1% |
| 1993 | 8,296 | 14.0% | 3,817 | 11.9% |
| 1994 | 8,065 | 13.6% | 3,855 | 10.7% |

Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research & Analysis Bureau, 1995

One aspect of the economy missing from these tables is the seasonality of employment. The Forest Service itself is a major employer of seasonal labor in the summer months. Also, the majority of timber harvests takes place in the summer and fall seasons. The

seasonality of logging, in addition to offering difficult and sometimes dangerous working conditions, long commutes to job sites, and wages lower than the average worker in the county, also affects the available pool of labor in the region. The manufacturing side of the timber industry is slightly less sensitive to seasonal fluctuations.

2.2.4 Economic Conditions

Economic conditions in Lincoln and Sanders Counties are closely related to employment sources and opportunity. To better understand the regional economic conditions, however, further examination of the region's primary industries is required. To this end, the dominant economic sectors and their relationship to the Kootenai National Forest and its resources are examined in this section.

The Census of Population and Housing is among the available data sources pertaining to economic conditions and characteristics of the counties. 1990 U.S. Bureau of Census data includes detailed information about the number and proportion of individuals employed in particular industrial classifications. The State of Montana is another available data source. Monthly and yearly breakdowns of industries are produced by the Montana Department of Labor and Industry's Research and Analysis Bureau. The state agency's information is drawn from employment and wages covered by Montana unemployment insurance laws. Due to reporting requirements, the Research and Analysis Bureau's data may not be as inclusive as the U.S. census; however, it is a more recent and frequently collected source of industry sector and employment data. For these reasons, the state data is commonly referred to in the following discussion. It is important to note that comparisons of U.S. Bureau of Census data to Montana Department of Labor and Industry data reveal similar trends, despite numerical discrepancies.

Economic Sectors

While the emergence and emphasis of industrial sectors in northwestern Montana have varied historically, several elements have remained important to the region's economy. Encompassing both primary and support sectors these important elements include timber, mining, agriculture/livestock, government, and support industries such as retail trade and services. Table 2-13 shows the number of workers involved in these and other major industries in Lincoln and Sanders Counties from 1988 to 1993. Industry and population sizes between the counties vary, thus cross-county comparisons are of limited utility. State data has also been included in Table 2-13 to facilitate additional proportional comparisons over time.

The number of workers in the combined standard industrial classification of Lincoln County's agriculture/forestry/fishing sector grew to a peak in 1990 and has since declined to a point lower than in 1988. The same sector in Sanders County has slowly gained employees and exceeded Lincoln County's volume of workers in 1992. Forestry is the largest component of this combined classification. Areas suitable for farming and livestock are limited in this mountainous region; thus, the agricultural industry has played a lesser role in the local economy. Isolated farms and ranches, however, do

contribute to lifestyles partially based on subsistence activities. Manufacturing -- which includes the processing of lumber and other wood products -- has undergone fluctuations in the number of individuals employed, but has remained relatively stable in both counties over the six years examined here.

Both the retail trade and service industry sectors have grown since 1988 in Lincoln and Sanders counties. This growth may be associated with rising numbers of tourists and retirees visiting the area. Government employment is also an important industry in the county economy and has undergone limited growth in both counties during the six years examined herein. In 1993, within the government sector, local government was the largest component by annual average employment: 758 employees in Lincoln County and 430 in Sanders County. By comparison, federal government employed 630 and 149 average annual employees in Lincoln and Sanders Counties, respectively. Federal government enterprises, however, produced between \$7,072 (Lincoln) and \$10,439 (Sanders) more average annual wage per worker and contributed more income (total annual wages paid) to Lincoln County's economy than did local government. The annual wages paid in 1993 to federal employees amounted to \$17,224,162 in Lincoln County and \$4,058,305 in Sanders County. State government was the smallest component of the government sector with 78 and 44 average annual employees and total wages of \$1,722,824 and \$1,090,937 in Lincoln and Sanders Counties (Montana Department of Labor and Industry 1994: Table 5.10). The most significant single components of the regional economy are the natural resources industries. A detailed discussion of the timber and mining sectors is presented below.

Dependence on Natural Resource Industries: Timber and Mining

Timber

Timber production has long been an important component of northwestern Montana's economy. Log harvests were carried out by settlers before the turn of the century. During these early harvests, timber was cut and hauled to the Kootenai River, or a tributary of it, to be floated in high spring waters to Idaho sawmills. The first mill in northwestern Montana was built near Eureka in 1889. The construction of more mills and the growth of the railroad industry fueled the timber market and opened the region to an increasing population of foresters, gold and silver miners, homesteaders, missionaries, and others wanting to settle the West. Timber production remains a significant element of local economies today, and the celebration of events such as Libby's "Logger Days" is documentation of the industry's importance in local culture.

In addition to annual average employment, Table 2-14 displays other employment and wage details about the forestry industry in Lincoln and Sanders Counties for the years 1988-1993, inclusive. Confidentiality issues limit the data available for the forestry and mining sectors in Sanders County. For example, data regarding forestry employment and wages for years other than 1988 and 1991 were withheld by the Montana Department of Labor and Industry because the Sanders County forestry industry consisted of either fewer than three reporting units, or one single establishment accounted for 80 percent or more of the industry's employment. The importance of the

forestry sector is not immediately obvious when one examines the percent of the total county industry accounted for by forestry alone (row C). Indeed, the percentage of total Lincoln County annual employment accounted for by forestry is small, ranging between 0.55 percent and 1.1 percent. Disregarding any seasonal or non-covered employment that could affect the forestry employment figures, the significance of the industry becomes more obvious when one considers the ties between forestry and manufacturing, which includes lumber mills and the production of wood products. Local mills and wood products producers depend upon near-by timber harvests to supply them with affordable and abundant raw materials to process.

Table 2-15 presents establishment, employment, and salary information for the lumber and wood products manufacturing industry in Lincoln and Sanders Counties. Examination of the counties' lumber and wood products manufacturing components reveals this sector's prominence in the regional economy. In 1993, this industry represented 23.4 percent of Lincoln County's total employment and 34.3 percent of total wages paid. Although this same sector accounted for slightly less of the total employment (18.3%) and wages (23.6%) in Sanders County, it is a significant element of the economy. **Manufacturing of lumber and wood products in Lincoln County in 1993 generated \$38,026,025 in annual wages paid. This amount was far greater than the amount paid by any other single private industry in the county.** Indeed, manufacturing of lumber and wood products accounted for almost half (49.7%) of all private business wages paid in Lincoln County in 1993. Likewise, manufacturing of lumber and wood products accounted for 35.2 percent of private business wages paid in Sanders County in the same year. In 1993, all Lincoln County services combined accounted for the second largest amount of private sector wages paid, \$10,431,759, which is approximately 27 percent of the amount paid by lumber and wood products manufacturing. The only sector of industry which approaches the magnitude of annual wages paid in Lincoln County by lumber and wood products manufacturing is government. In this public sector, annual wages paid to local, state, and federal employees accounted for \$34,309,746, or 30.9 percent of total industry annual wages paid in Lincoln County.

The economic significance of the combination of forestry and manufacturing of lumber and wood products for Lincoln and Sanders Counties is high. Although the local forestry industry does not account for the largest percentage of county employment or wages, it performs the vital task of providing the manufacturing industry with raw materials. The annual wages paid by these two industries circulate through the economy and into sectors such as services and retail trade, which in turn benefit the counties' economies. At the present time, the availability of timber is a key concern for the wood products industry in Lincoln and Sanders Counties.

Mining

Montana's motto, "Oro y Plata" (Gold and Silver), and its nickname, "The Treasure State," are clear indications of the importance of mining in the state, including Lincoln and Sanders Counties. Libby Creek revealed placer gold to prospectors as early as 1860, but it remained largely undeveloped until the 1880s. In addition to Libby Creek,

placer mining was done along Howard, Cherry, and Callahan Creeks and the west Fisher River. Two properties, the Howard Placer and the Vaughan-Greenwell, accounted for the majority of placer gold mined in what is now Lincoln County during the late 1800s and early 1900s (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:47).

Mining continued in the region sporadically throughout the early and middle periods of the 1900s. From the 1970s through the 1980s, companies such as Asarco and Noranda developed large ore mining operations in the region. Despite the richness of mineral deposits or large capital investments, mining activity can be relatively short lived. For example, Asarco spent almost \$90 million constructing a silver and copper mine south of Troy that was expected to last approximately 16 years (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:48), and after just a few years of mining, they recently suspended the operation. According to the Lincoln County Land Use Plan, there are approximately 50 operators active in the national forest annually, but the majority of these mineral extraction operations are small (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:48-49)

Prospecting and exploration for new deposits are current activities associated with mining in the region. Numerous claims are held within or adjacent to the Cabinet Wilderness in the Kootenai National Forest. In addition to precious metals and minerals currently being mined or explored, there is potential for coal, oil, and natural gas deposits to be extracted from within the Kootenai National Forest region. The Lincoln County Land Use Plan states that, "the overthrust area of western Montana has considerable potential for oil and gas development" (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:50). The social and economic impacts of the discovery and development of such deposits in the region could be significant.

For the purposes of historical summary, Table 2-16 displays employment and wage information for the mining industry in Lincoln and Sanders Counties for the years between 1988 and 1993. Overall, this sector's prominence has decreased in both counties over the years examined here. This trend continued after 1993, and the recent closing of Asarco's Mount Vernon mine effectively ended any major mining activity in the area. Mining accounted for 8.8 percent of Lincoln County's, and 1.6 percent of Sanders County's average annual employment in 1988. Since then, the sector has fallen to account for less than 3 percent and 1 percent of annual employment in Lincoln and Sanders Counties, respectively. Total annual wages paid by the sector has decreased significantly in both of the counties. It is interesting to note that despite the overall decrease in the proportion of mining in total annual employment, wages in mining jobs increased during this time period. As of 1993, average wages paid to each workers in the mining industry in Lincoln County were double the average county wage. Although information for average annual wage per worker is not available for the years 1992 and 1993, workers in the mining industry in Sanders County prior to those years had not received as high a wage as those in Lincoln County.

**Table 2-13 Annual Average Employment by Industry in
Montana, Lincoln County, and Sanders County 1988-1993³**

| Industry | Montana | | | | | LincolnCo. | | | | | SandersCo. | | | | | | | |
|--|---------|--------|-------|--------|--------|------------|------|------|------|------|------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 | 88 | 89 | 90 | 91 | 92 | 93 |
| Agriculture/ Forestry/ Fishing | 3095 | 3117 | 3482 | 3568 | 3572 | 3822 | 76 | 104 | 122 | 119 | 55 | 53 | 100 | 113 | 107 | 106 | 115 | 124 |
| Mining | 6265 | 6220 | 6280 | 5901 | 5740 | 5508 | 462 | 457 | 443 | 399 | 360 | 156 | 33 | 18 | 17 | 17 | -- | -- |
| Construction | 9011 | 9726 | 10367 | 11519 | 12675 | 13428 | 224 | 119 | 166 | 174 | 116 | 123 | 34 | 49 | 56 | 54 | 44 | 57 |
| Manufacturing | 21425 | 22162 | 22232 | 21835 | 22416 | 23046 | 1353 | 1511 | 1447 | 1295 | 1334 | 1358 | 480 | 468 | 448 | 407 | 448 | 454 |
| Transportation Communication Utilities | 16360 | 16370 | 16627 | 16924 | 16694 | 16881 | 218 | 201 | 191 | 160 | 156 | 164 | 103 | 129 | 118 | 109 | 117 | 119 |
| Wholesale Trade | 14835 | 15643 | 15731 | 16112 | 16425 | 16967 | 51 | 64 | 68 | 67 | 64 | 58 | 25 | 26 | 28 | 27 | 31 | 31 |
| Retail Trade | 59534 | 61755 | 62636 | 65443 | 68457 | 70497 | 833 | 904 | 918 | 964 | 1008 | 976 | 284 | 312 | 325 | 340 | 338 | 334 |
| Finance, Ins., Real Est. | 13143 | 12768 | 13085 | 13577 | 14021 | 14506 | 115 | 124 | 128 | 127 | 128 | 129 | 52 | 54 | 50 | 53 | 57 | 61 |
| Service | 64845 | 68803 | 71085 | 73963 | 78496 | 82416 | 638 | 634 | 758 | 765 | 800 | 873 | 352 | 391 | 370 | 339 | 382 | 414 |
| Government | 62220 | 62975 | 71981 | 64294 | 66661 | 65655 | 1269 | 1280 | 1309 | 1350 | 1427 | 1466 | 591 | 594 | 606 | 595 | 621 | 624 |
| Total | 271013 | 279778 | 64046 | 293190 | 305148 | 312787 | 5243 | 5403 | 5557 | 5425 | 5452 | 5361 | 2058 | 2157 | 2129 | 2051 | 2172 | 2237 |

Source: Montana Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Bureau, Annual Average Employment and Wages 1986-1993 (Covered employment data, ES-202).
 Note: "--" indicates either no employment or disclosure suppression. Also, there is considerable timber-related employment in jobs categorized as "manufacturing." Consequently, overall timber-related employment is more than that indicated only by the Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing category in this table.

³ This table, "Annual Average Employment", displays the average number of monthly workers covered under the Montana Unemployment Insurance laws who earned wages from a reporting unit during the pay period that includes the 12th day of the month. Covered employees were reported for employees who have annual payroll which exceeds \$1,000 per year.

Table 2-14 Detail of Forestry Employment and Wages , 1988-1993*

| Employment Characteristic** | Lincoln County | | | | | | Sanders County | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|------|------|-----------|------|------|
| | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 |
| Establishments | a | 10 | 13 | 15 | 15 | 13 | 4 | --- | --- | 3 | --- | --- |
| | b | 50.00 | 54.17% | 57.69% | 62.50% | 61.90% | 36.36% | --- | --- | 33.33% | --- | --- |
| | c | 1.83 | 2.34% | 2.63% | 2.61% | 2.32% | 1.56% | --- | --- | 1.09% | --- | --- |
| Average Annual Employment | a | 29 | 45 | 61 | 55 | 38 | 9 | --- | --- | 11 | --- | --- |
| | b | 38.16% | 43.27% | 50.00% | 46.22% | 69.09% | 9.00% | --- | --- | 10.38% | --- | --- |
| | c | 0.55% | 0.83% | 1.10% | 1.01% | 0.70% | 0.44% | --- | --- | 0.54% | --- | --- |
| Annual Wages Paid | a | \$400,591 | \$541,410 | \$774,216 | \$803,727 | \$641,478 | \$94,366 | --- | --- | \$147,206 | --- | --- |
| | b | 39.97% | 38.20% | 43.00% | 41.72% | 78.35% | 9.62% | --- | --- | 10.46% | --- | --- |
| | c | 0.43% | 0.54% | 0.73% | 0.76% | 0.58% | 0.31% | --- | --- | 0.46% | --- | --- |
| Average Annual Wage Per Worker | a | \$13,813 | \$12,031 | \$12,692 | \$14,613 | \$16,881 | \$10,485 | --- | --- | \$13,382 | --- | --- |
| | b | 104.76% | 88.28% | 86.00% | 90.26% | 113.40% | 106.85% | --- | --- | 100.78% | --- | --- |
| | c | 78.45% | 64.78% | 66.09% | 75.08% | 83.69% | 71.85% | --- | --- | 86.08% | --- | --- |

Employment and Wages covered by Montana Unemployment Insurance Laws
 ** a= actual number; b = percent of Agriculture/ Forestry/ Fishing sector accounted for by Forestry alone
 c= percent of total county industry accounted for by Forestry
 Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry , Research and Analysis Bureau, 1994
 "--" indicates disclosure suppression. Note that this table addresses Forestry-related employment and not all of the timber-related jobs.

Table 2-15 Detail of Lumber and Wood Products Manufacturing Employment and Wages , 1988-1993*

| Character-istic** | Lincoln County | | | | | | Sanders County | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 |
| Establish-ments | a | 75 | 79 | 78 | 74 | 67 | 64 | 35 | 32 | 31 | 32 | 30 |
| | b | 84.27% | 86.81% | 86.67% | 84.09% | 80.72% | 81.01% | 87.50% | 84.21% | 79.49% | 78.05% | 76.92% |
| | c | 13.71% | 14.21% | 13.66% | 12.89% | 11.96% | 11.41% | 13.62% | 12.40% | 11.70% | 11.64% | 10.53% |
| Average Annual Employ-ment | a | 1291 | 1449 | 1383 | 1218 | 1229 | 1257 | 465 | 448 | 426 | 375 | 410 |
| | b | 95.42% | 95.90% | 95.58% | 94.05% | 92.13% | 92.56% | 96.88% | 95.73% | 95.09% | 92.14% | 90.31% |
| | c | 24.62% | 26.82% | 24.89% | 22.45% | 22.54% | 23.42% | 22.59% | 20.77% | 20.01% | 18.28% | 18.33% |
| Annual Wages Paid | a | 28,853,003 | 36,310,601 | 36,226,117 | 31,338,145 | 34,614,743 | 38,026,025 | 8,274,565 | 8,352,697 | 8,580,805 | 7,656,008 | 8,664,396 |
| | b | 97.57% | 97.98% | 97.76% | 96.38% | 95.84% | 96.34% | 97.74% | 97.37% | 96.82% | 95.76% | 95.63% |
| | c | 31.25% | 36.18% | 33.94% | 29.68% | 31.48% | 34.31% | 27.55% | 26.75% | 26.65% | 24.01% | 24.56% |
| Average Annual Wage Per Worker | a | \$22,349 | \$25,059 | \$26,193 | \$25,729 | \$28,164 | \$30,251 | \$17,871 | \$18,644 | \$20,142 | \$20,416 | \$20,928 |
| | b | 102.25% | 102.17% | 102.28% | 102.48% | 104.03% | 104.08% | 101.32% | 101.72% | 101.81% | 103.93% | 103.49% |
| | c | 126.93% | 134.92% | 136.39% | 132.20% | 139.63% | 146.54% | 122.46% | 128.81% | 133.17% | 131.33% | 128.84% |

Employment and Wages covered by Montana Unemployment Insurance Laws
 ** a= actual number; b = percent of industry sector (e.g., Agriculture/ Forestry/ Fishing or Manufacturing) accounted for by subsector (e.g., forestry or lumber product manufacturing); and c= percent of total county industry accounted for by individual industry subsectors
 "-." indicates disclosure suppression. Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry , Research and Analysis Bureau .

Table 2-16 Detail of Mining Employment and Wages, 1988-1993*

| Character-istic** | Lincoln County | | | | | | Sanders County | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------|
| | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 |
| Establish-ments | a | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | -- |
| | b | 0.55% | 0.72% | 0.70% | 0.70% | 0.89% | 1.07% | 1.17% | 1.16% | 1.13% | 1.09% | -- |
| Average Annual Employ-ment | a | 462 | 457 | 443 | 399 | 360 | 156 | 33 | 17 | 17 | 17 | -- |
| | b | 8.81% | 8.46% | 7.97% | 7.35% | 6.60% | 2.91% | 1.60% | 0.83% | 0.80% | 0.83% | -- |
| Annual Wages Paid | a | 11744,701 | 12,489,385 | 13,384,505 | 11,887,386 | 11,578,482 | 6,458,324 | 669,287 | 213,279 | 283,886 | 210,632 | -- |
| | b | 12.72% | 12.45% | 12.54% | 11.26% | 10.53% | 5.83% | 2.23% | 0.68% | 0.88% | 0.66% | -- |
| Average Annual Wage Per Worker | a | \$25,421 | \$27,329 | \$30,213 | \$29,793 | \$32,162 | \$41,400 | \$20,281 | \$11,849 | \$16,699 | \$12,390 | -- |
| | b | 144.37% | 147.14% | 157.32% | 153.08% | 159.45% | 200.54% | 138.98% | 81.86% | 110.41% | 79.70% | -- |

* Employment and Wages covered by Montana Unemployment Insurance Laws **a= actual number; b= percent of county industry accounted for by mining "..."
indicates disclosure suppression. Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry , Research and Analysis Bureau, 1994.

3.0 RELEVANT PRIOR WORK AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

This chapter summarizes some of the relevant findings from prior examinations of the study region's socioeconomic conditions as well as other work addressing the natural resources of the KNF and their management. The purpose of this summary is two fold: first, to integrate information from previous work that can be used to augment the findings from the current study; and second, to provide a historical backdrop for discussing findings from the present study. This summary is not intended as a review or critique of scientific methods, procedures, and analysis of previous work. Such a task would be out of context for this study where the objective of this effort is to summarize and synthesize relevant findings of other work.

This chapter is organized by the content of the material reviewed. The first section (3.1) reviews several major pieces of work describing the relationship of the Kootenai Tribe to the KNF. The second section (3.2) reviews studies of Lincoln County's socioeconomic conditions and the relationship of communities to the KNF. The third section (3.3) presents an overview of findings from several surveys regarding community-forest connections. The final section of this chapter (3.4) integrates the major trends of the other sections and discusses the implications of these findings for the present social assessment study.

3.1 The Kootenai Tribe and the Kootenai National Forest

The Kootenai Tribe has historical connections to the KNF region. Reviewed in this subsection are works that focus on the nature of these connections. The discussion below addresses forest uses among the Kootenai Indians, including subsistence, religious and ceremonial uses; the general cultural orientations to the forest setting; and the kinds of interests in the KNF that form part of the Kootenai traditional culture. Two sources are directly relevant to these topics and form the basis for the discussion below. Turney-High's (1941) ethnography of the Kootenai provides a general discussion of territory, subsistence, religion, and social life. Smith (1984) reviews written sources on Kootenai subsistence and settlement. Before presenting this material, the areas historically associated with the Kootenai are noted.

3.1.1 Areas Historically Associated with the Kootenai

Smith (1984:3) observes that the Kootenai Tribe occupied a region of "rugged mountain chains, narrow valleys and vast forests tucked deeply into the Western face of the Rockies" and, in later years, their region also included "the remote eastern slopes of the Divide." The summary map provided by Smith (1984:24) indicates an area west of the Continental Divide including parts of Canada, northern Idaho, and northwestern Montana as traditional to the Kootenai. The bands of the Kootenai are often described

in terms of geographic division: the Lower Kootenai and the Upper Kootenai. Turney-High (1941:18-20) names eight Kootenai bands, with two of these (Bonners Ferry and Creston) identified with the Lower Kootenai. Smith's review names ten bands of Kootenai Indians and their traditional locations. Since the bands (especially those of the Upper Kootenai) are described as "distant wandering bands" (Smith 1984:4), these locations might best be seen as areas around which the Kootenai bands moved to subsist. Band locations linked to the Upper Kootenai include the Columbia Lakes region, Fort Steele, Fernie, Tobacco Plains, Warland, Jennings, Libby, and Flathead Lake. Band locations associated with the Lower Kootenai include Bonners Ferry and Creston. The historical existence of three other Lower Kootenai band locations is suggested, but the sites and bands are not named (Smith 1984:48). The Upper and Lower Kootenai were somewhat isolated from one another by geographical barriers, such as mountains and river gorges, while travel within the Upper Kootenai region and within the Lower Kootenai region were comparatively easy.

Cultural differences between Upper and Lower Kootenai are noted by Turney-High (1941) and Smith (1984; drawing on Turney-High's work and other sources). Smith (1984:31) suggests that many of these differences emerged after the introduction of horses and firearms, which were far more prevalent among the Upper Kootenai. The Lower Kootenai were more sedentary and made less use of horses and more use of canoes for travel than did the Upper Kootenai. As outlined in the discussion of subsistence uses (below, section 3.1.3), the Upper Kootenai relied more on bison hunting, while the Lower Kootenai made more use of deer hunting, duck hunting, and fishing. The Lower Kootenai had a more complex leadership structure; Turney-High argues that this was necessitated by their difficulty in hunting which required a higher level of organization to pursue quarry effectively. The more-mobile Upper Kootenai took more of their cultural practices from Plains Indians (Smith 1984:31). In addition, there were differences in housing, with the Lower Kootenai constructing lodges covered with tule while the Upper Kootenai used skin (hide) tepees.

3.1.2 Religious and Ceremonial Significance of the Forests

Turney-High (1941) indicates that the forest had an important role in Kootenai religion, both as a site for significant events and through the use of specific forest resources in rituals and ceremonies. His work suggests that Kootenai spiritual belief was connected to the environment in which they lived, and that religious imagery derived from this setting. Today these connections remain important to the Kootenai and in the years since the Turney-High work, the substance of religious beliefs have become an increasingly sensitive topic given the potential for desecration of areas with religious significance for the tribe. However, as noted by Turney-High, there were and continue to be important ceremonial uses of the forest lands (e.g. the Spirit Quest) and some types of trees and forest animals have played central roles in the ceremonies or religious beliefs of the tribe. These religious and ceremonial uses of the forest have tied the tribe to the lands of the KNF in the past and they continue to give the Kootenai a stake in the management of forest lands in northwest Montana.

3.1.3 Subsistence Uses of the Forest

The Kootenai historically relied on hunting and gathering practices for subsistence, and in doing so, made extensive use of the forest. Smith (1984:4) quotes Bailie-Grohman (1907), who wrote about the Kootenai ". . . they lived entirely upon the products of their rivers, lakes, and forests. . ." Included in their diet were many kinds of roots such as bitter root and camas, as well as black moss and wild onion. They also consumed many varieties of berries such as the service berry, huckleberry, choke cherry, grouseberry, and blue elderberry. The bitter berry was used by the Lower, but not the Upper, Kootenai. Seeds were gathered from different varieties of pine and hazel. Plants consumed by the Kootenai included varieties of parsnip, the prickly pear cactus, and mint. Trees used for subsistence and housing included the lodgepole pine, ponderosa pine, white pine, western larch, black cotton wood, and trembling aspen. Other trees and plants, including cedar, birch, dogbane, and silverberry were used to make boxes, bows and arrows, baskets, and twine, while animal hides were made into clothing.

Later in time, the Upper Kootenai descended to the Plains for bison, their major meat source. Bison was less important for the Lower Kootenai who more often sought deer meat (Turney-High 1941:39). Late fall and early winter, especially after a heavy snow were considered the best time for deer hunting. Since deer was the major meat source for the Lower Kootenai, large groups hunted deer together, and the hunt was highly organized. The best and most knowledgeable hunter in these groups was the Deer Chief. In the fall, the Kootenai hunted elk and caribou, though not in large hunting groups. Other sources of meat, although minor, were beaver, mountain goat, moose, lynx, rodents, and muskrats. Birds were also hunted, and there was substantial reliance on fishing. Because the Lower Kootenai could rely less on bison as a food source, they placed greater importance on hunting ducks and fishing than did the Upper Kootenai. For the Lower Kootenai, these were highly organized, communal activities with defined leaders and a bounty sharing. Hunting activities were strongly integrated with the religious beliefs and activities of the tribe.

Forest resources were also used in making medicinal products. Turney-High mentions a few of the ingredients used in medicinal preparations, but notes that he was able to learn little about this practice. Turney-High also mentions that the supernaturals provided directives about which plants to employ in making medicines, and thus at one time or another, he argues, medicinal properties had been attributed to most plants. Further, "the Kutenai themselves think of all curative herbs as having magico-religious properties" (Turney-High 1984:101). Thus there appears to be a connection drawn in this aspect of Kootenai culture between the natural environment and the world of religious belief. Later in this report we will build on the importance of these cultural connections to the KNF when the opinions of the Elmo Kootenai of the Flathead Reservation are discussed in Chapter 7.

3.2 Socioeconomic Conditions and the Kootenai National Forest

Three groups of studies are examined in this section. The first group of studies are of historical interest that address the connections of communities to the natural resources of the KNF. The second group of studies are about more recent socioeconomic conditions within the study area. The third group examined include attitude and opinion studies about the KNF and forest management issues.

3.2.1 The Historical Context of Community-Forest Interconnections

During the 1940s, three works were produced that provide "snapshots" of Lincoln County and its relationship to the KNF. In 1940 S. Blair Hutchinson published a report for the USFS titled, *The Forest Situation in Lincoln County Montana*. This report is itself background for the second piece of work, *Toward the Stabilization and Enrichment of a Forest Community*, produced in 1946 by Harold and Lois Kaufman for the USFS as part of the Montana Study conducted by the University of Montana. The results of the Kaufmans' study in Libby were incorporated into a compilation of findings about the Montana Study reported in a work by Richard Poston (1950) titled, *Small Town Renaissance*. The relevant findings from these works are briefly summarized below.

S. Blair Hutchinson worked as an economist for the USFS. His task in his 1940 report was to , "help create for Lincoln County a prosperous future" (Hutchinson 1940). Hutchinson's report briefly reviewed the economic status and land use patterns in Lincoln County and the significance of the resources of KNF for the county economy. He emphasized the dominance of federal lands within the region, noting that of all the forest lands within the county 75% were national forest, 4.2% state, county, and public domain, and 20.3% were private forest lands. Forest products along with mining, agriculture, the railroad and federal employment accounted for the major elements of the Lincoln County economy (Hutchinson 1940:2-10). Forest products were clearly the most dominant economic sector and within this sector, "Lumbering, which dwarfs the other forest industries, is almost a 'one ring' affair. Twenty-seven sawmills were operating in 1940, but four-fifths of the limber was sawed at the J. Neils Lumber Company Plant in Libby. It is the second largest sawmill in Montana" (1940:8). Harvesting huckleberries and Christmas trees as well as mining were also important economic uses of natural resources. However, in reviewing the development and decline of the timber and mining industries between 1910 and 1940, Hutchinson notes that the boom and bust character of these industries is the problem which needs to be solved. In regards to timber specifically he notes:

"Like every other part of the United States, Lincoln County has its problems. It is largely forested and must depend upon the products of the forest for most of its living. Those familiar with the history of our older forest communities know what can happen. In most of these communities the tale has been the same—first a feast and then a famine." (Hutchinson 1940).

"A prosperous future for the county depends, more than anything else, on the success in stabilizing and expanding lumbering and associated enterprises. Silent sawmills with gaping, empty windows are of little value to anyone . . . Sawmills have come and gone leaving communities high and dry. Lincoln County needs a lumber industry that is permanent and stable -- one that can be depended upon to be here today and here tomorrow . . ." (1940:19).

Hutchinson's work outlines forest resource use and potential. In regards to timber, his report observes that there is an overcutting of Ponderosa and White Pine and undercutting of other species such as Larch and Fir (1940:22-23). This overcutting of pines and under-utilization of other species posed a problem for the timber industry in the county:

". . . The situation as it stands is one which can be brought under control because the demand for timber is not far out of line with the ability of the forests to produce it, and because no mill is easier to control than two or three. If the milling capacity is increased, the most likely possibility is a scramble for timber with tomorrow's timber being cut today" (1940:24).

In addition to lumber, railroad ties and Christmas trees were other important forest products that contributed to the county economy. Hutchinson observed that the tie industry was important because, "it affords an outlet for Larch and Douglas-Fir" (1940:32). Ties were produced primarily by small mills that paid lower wages than the lumber mills and were generally less desirable places to work. The Christmas tree industry was viewed as a bright spot in the economic outlook for the county, although it was noted that economic benefits would depend upon recognition by the Forest Service that the Christmas tree industry needs further development. This industry earned about \$130,000 in 1940. Trees were cut in most areas of the county, but Eureka shipped out more trees than any other area.

Hutchinson's review of the economic potential of natural resources also includes what might result from developing recreational opportunities. He observed that the Kootenai National Forest has "natural magnets" that should draw vacationers and outdoor enthusiasts to the area (1940:40). These include:

1. Natural beauty
2. A change of scenery
3. Elbow room
4. 'Westernness'
5. Forest, streams, lakes and mountains even if their beauty is not outstanding
6. Primitiveness
7. Wildlife to see and fish to catch

These resources are observed to be potentially in conflict with "land settlement" that

discriminates and timber that is "logged without regard to its location" (1940:40).

The value of Hutchinson's snapshot of Lincoln County is its demonstration of the area's dependence on forest products and the region's economic future as being based on land settlement patterns, appropriate use of natural resources (especially timber), and effective forest-management planning that considers the effects of management on local economic health.

The work by the Kaufmans was released in 1948. It was part of the Montana Study that was commissioned by the USFS Region One office. The Kaufmans' study focused on Libby and Troy. Its purpose was to examine, ". . . the problems of stabilization and enrichment of a small forest community in northwestern Montana" (Kaufman and Kaufman 1946:iii). This work emphasized socioeconomic and physical factors contributing to community stability as well as how the existing "forest program" affected socioeconomic stability. A major impetus for the tone of this work was the Sustained Yield Act which stated an objective of community stability through combining public and private timber lands in practicing "sustained yield management." At the time, the major effect of implementing the Sustained Yield Act in Lincoln County would have been to form a management unit to be managed for "sustained yield" and to provide the J. Neils Lumber Company with a "no bid" contract for the lumber from that unit. The focus of the Kaufman report was (1) the examine the effects of this approach on "community stability" and (2) to assess public responses to this management proposal.

The Kaufmans' study is important for our purposes because it examines some of the sociological factors that affect the interaction of community context and the forest management plan. More than Hutchinson's economic analysis of Lincoln County, the Kaufmans' study examines the basis for community stability, how this stability is connected to the timber industry, and how publics within the county responded to the plan to provide the J. Neils Lumber Company with a "no bid" source of lumber that was intended to promote community stability.

The Kaufmans discuss several noteworthy points about the community context of the KNF in Lincoln County:

- Land use patterns are dominated by the large ratio of public to private lands in the county and the fact that those lands are heavily forested.
- The timber business and the forest service are the major employers in the local economy, and as such, the forest industry dominates the community and, "in many ways influences the people and their institutions" (1946:6).
- The cycles of the forest industry economy have influenced the economy, population, and social institutions of the county (1946:10).
- These cycles resulted in a perceived need for a "stable community."
-

A significant portion of the Kaufmans' work proposes options for creating a stable community through three different areas: (1) land use and judicious use of natural resources; (2) industry and employment; and (3) social welfare and organizational development. In each of these areas the Kaufmans propose programs for engineering

community stability. The programs derive from the sustained yield proposal to "centralize" the timber industry in one major operator. This is argued as the core for a stable "forest culture" and an economy that can sustain a "level of living" that will create the stability that was indented by the Sustained Yield Act.

Unfortunately there was far from unanimity among those interviewed and surveyed by the Kaufmans about the ultimate benefits of the proposed "forest program." Of 97 persons interviewed, ". . . 18% are classified as definitely favoring the present program, 48 percent as unfavorable toward it, and 34 percent as undecided . . ." (1946:46). They then note that their sample overstates opposition to the program since, "persons with unfavorable attitudes were definitely sought out" (1946:46). A wider survey of 444 persons taken from individuals attending the meetings of 15 organizations also addressed the substance and effects of the sustained yield proposal. The summary of their findings of both samples is revealing:

The forest situation in south Lincoln County presents real problems, but also great opportunities. The community has a relatively large acreage of forest land... The public is, however, greatly divided as to how this raw material should be utilized (Kaufman and Kaufman 1946:85).

". . . public opinion overwhelmingly supports the principle of sustained yield in forest management, is less certain that it will be followed, and is deeply divided as to how national forest timber should be utilized (e.g., one large operation, several smaller ones, etc.). Other than the Forest Service and the management of the Libby Mill, the strongest support for the present forest utilization program comes from the businessmen of Libby who well recognize the contribution of the mill to the economic well-being the town. The most pronounced opposition to the present and proposed programs is found among the small operators, and the business leaders in Troy" (1946:51).

The solution offered by the Kaufmans to the dilemma of instability is for more planning and analysis of what the forest industry should be in the area, with an important role to be played by public participation. The most useful among the findings of the Kaufmans' work for this present study concern the requirements for community stability given the status of the economic and social conditions of the time. Their recommendations are:

1. Development of a stable timber industry and one that has all possible remanufacturing.
2. Practice of sustained yield forestry on timber lands and wise use of other natural resources.
3. Promoting greater public participation in determining forest policy.

4. Creation of a more diversified and balanced economy.
5. Securing adequate leadership in community affairs.
6. Providing more adequate assistance to youth especially with reference to vocation guidance and training in citizenship.
7. Strengthening the rural home
8. Creating a more community-centered religious and church emphasis.
9. Developing a forest-centered tradition.
10. Organizing for united action of the greater Libby-Troy area. (Kaufman and Kaufman 1946:81)

These points are noteworthy because we will see some of the same themes in the sentiments expressed by the current residents of Lincoln County.

The Kaufmans' research was conducted in the summer and fall of 1945, and the work by Richard Poston examined what happened in Libby subsequent to the publishing of their report. The focus of Poston's work was examining the actions taken by Libby and Troy residents in response to the USFS proposal to implement the Sustained Yield Act with the "no bid" contract to J. Neils Lumber Company in Libby. As the Kaufmans noted, this proposed action had resulted in social conflicts within Libby and Troy. In Poston's words,

"Libby was split wide open, each faction shouting bitter allegations at the other. In Troy ... people charged discrimination against their community, saying that Libby was to be stabilized at the expense of Troy" (1950:149).

The problem, according to Poston, was one of too much "emotion" clouding the debate:

"Although public discussion was desirable, it was too evident that as long as people's thinking was ruled by emotions, as long as bitterness, controversy, and misunderstanding prevailed, community betterment, permanent productive forests, and economic and cultural stability could be nothing more than idle dreams" (Poston 1950:152).

As a solution to this problem, a member of the Montana Study facilitated the formation of a "study group" to discuss the findings of the Kaufmans' report. The group was intended to represent the diverse interests within the community and to directly address the implications of the Sustained Yield Act and the divisiveness it fostered within the county. The group met at a series of meetings to discuss the findings of the Kaufman 's study and to review the provisions of the Act and their implications. Poston's report was completed before the issue of the Sustained Yield Act was resolved, but he reports that this group was valuable in addressing the facts of the Act and in mitigating some of the

divisiveness within the county. Poston, in a somewhat glowing account of the results of the study group, notes:

" . . . without emotional conflict, but through objective study, a group of Libby Citizens representing all shades of local opinion had arrived at an intelligent understanding of the most controversial issue in their community. And this was a major achievement" (Poston 1950:157).

Poston also states:

"During the thirteen weeks of this study people learned that by honest objective means men and women of widely divergent views, representing all levels of social and economic position, can forget personal differences and work together for the common good. It had given them a new appreciation of the natural resources upon which their community depend . . ." (Poston 1950:163).

Although the Sustained Yield Act was never implemented in Libby, the study group had, as Poston suggested, a number of positive consequences. It created a forum in which issues could be examined and through the process it convinced people that despite divergent views they could work cooperatively. As a fact of some historical interest, this group eventually assumed other responsibilities and became, at least for a while, an integrating force for the community.

3.2.2 Recent Studies of Socioeconomic Conditions

The works by Hutchinson and the Montana Study indicate the dependence of Lincoln County communities on the natural resources of the region and recognize that cycles in the markets for these resources have had significant impacts on the social and economic conditions within Lincoln County. Furthermore, these studies reflect the controversy surrounding the present and future of the timber industry as a force in the local economy. Threads from these findings can be found in more recent studies of the socioeconomic conditions within the study region.

There are four major pieces of work that provide information useful for constructing the socioeconomic context within the county since the mid 1980s. Collectively these works offer some insight into the socioeconomic trends within the county; individually they report on topics that range from land use to perceived community needs for future growth and development.

Two unpublished documents, one by Haugen and one by McMenus, regard the social and economic conditions in the Libby and Yaak area respectively. Haugen's work (1984) briefly addresses the issue of polarization within Libby over the use of natural resources. After a brief recapitulation of the dependency of the town on timber and mining, Haugen makes some observations about inter-group conflict that suggest that

the debate over natural resource issues which was reported by the Kaufmans in the 1940s continued, although in different form, into the 1980s. Haugen notes,

"The conflicting demand for jobs and the desire for retention of a natural appearing environment coupled with the historic perception of wild west individuality and the lack of control over much of what was happening led to a great deal of community polarization which still exists" (1984:13).

Haugen makes some observations that are relevant to the current study:

- There are division over the use natural resources among groups that favor the use of natural resources to create local jobs and those that favor conservation of resources.
- An ethic of individualism within these communities influences views about natural resource use and the regulatory function of the Forest Service in implementing forest management policy.
- The Forest Service is often caught in the middle between groups that promote "job creation" and those that favor natural resource conservation.
- Despite polarization over natural resource issues, community integration is promoted by recreation and fraternal organizations and community festivals that cut across the divisiveness over other issues.
- Libby is no longer the "company town" as it was in the days of the work by Hutchinson and the Kaufmans. Libby is more heterogenous, with an influx of new residents who bring with them a new set of values about natural resource use.

McMenus produced a Social Analysis for the Yaak EIS in October 1988. This is a relatively brief document, but it emphasizes that in Yaak there is a diversity of lifestyles among different groups of residents that have moved into the region. Residents and their lifestyles are reported as follows:

| Table 3-1 Yaak Social Groups and Interests | | |
|---|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Group | Social Variable | Interests |
| Homesteaders | Lifestyle & Beliefs & Values | Self-Sufficiency Rural Lifestyle |
| Retired/Affluent | Lifestyle & Beliefs % Values | Scenic Beauty/Wildlife |
| Back-to-Land | Lifestyle & Beliefs & Values | Self Sufficiency Rural Lifestyle |
| Local Business | Lifestyle & Beliefs & Values | Financial Stability Rural Lifestyle |
| Seasonal Residents | Lifestyle & Beliefs & Values | Scenic Beauty/Wildlife |
| Source: McMenus 1988:6-7 | | |

This table of social groups and "interests" is itself an indication of a trend toward more heterogeneity in the social composition of county and a diversity in views about the use of natural resources. McMenus gives some attention to how Forest Service activities impact the social, economic, and quality of life issues in the Yaak, but there is more description of these issues than analysis.

Also useful in providing some insight about the socioeconomic conditions in the county are city planning documents and a canvass of residents in Troy, Eureka, and Libby (Edgar 1994) conducted as part of the county planning process. Planning documents produced by the cities of Troy and Eureka report on information concerning perceptions about the quality of life in these communities. This discussion will not completely review these documents. Instead, in order to place public views about natural resources in a wider context of public concerns and issues, we will examine only relevant socioeconomic and attitude information.

The report by Edgar (1994) titled, Analysis of Data from Canvass of Citizens for Preparation of Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan, presents findings from a "canvass" of residents obtained through distributing about 6000 questionnaires of which a total of 1488 (~25%) were returned. The return rate itself is an important finding given the interpretation offered by the author of the report:

"Even in light of the low response rate and the marginally positive stance toward community involvement, there is some evidence that the people of Lincoln County care about their community" (Edgar 1994:5).

The author goes on to suggest that county residents "have yet to be convinced that they are facing any kind of situation which would call upon them to unite as community and work to overcome economic challenges of the future" (Edgar 1994:5). This is directly relevant to public perceptions about the role of community in addressing major issues and how publics participate in or do not participate in this process.

Several other findings from Edgar's work are noteworthy:

- **There is an overall sense of satisfaction with living in the county.** When asked to rate their community as a "good" "average" or "poor" place to live, 72% of the total respondents rated their community as "good." 82.1% of the Eureka respondents and 67.1% of the Troy respondents rated their community as "good." Libby residents were in-between those of Troy and Eureka.
- **Current economic conditions are among the most important concerns of county residents.** Overall 80.6% of respondents support this point of view, with Libby having the highest percentage of agreement (86.2%) and Troy respondents having the lowest (70.7%).

- **Respondents prefer traditional mining, forest products, and light manufacturing jobs for their employment future.** Furthermore, 95.5% of respondents also indicate the need for more job opportunities in the county.

“When it comes to issues of more specific kinds of regulation, the respondents were less enthusiastic about regulating their own property” (Edgar 1994:29).

- **Preserving the small-town, rural character of communities in the county is important to residents.** Planning activities should be directed to sustaining the existing character of the communities.
- **Responses to closed-ended questions about the focus of the Kootenai National Forest indicate that the balance of environment and job interests is a priority.** When given the opportunity to rank 6 different foci for the forest the most frequent first place ranking was given to "balance environment/jobs" (617) and "natural resource development" was given the second most frequent (452) first place ranking. We will interpret this finding as one that indicates the tension between the preference to continue an exiting lifestyle and the need to address environmental concerns of residents and outsiders.
- **Citizens that have recognized interests in particular issues may not always attend public meetings about those issues.** This finding is expressed in discussions by Edgar about concerns regarding public works (Edgar 1994:31-32). In relationship to findings about the need for improvement of public services, Edgar notes, "The point that arises here is why people that are otherwise active fail to attend public meetings and/or participate in them in some meaningful way" (1994:32). This is a point that is developed in the interpretation of the interview data from this study since it relates directly to USFS concerns about conducting meaningful public involvement programs.
- **Community involvement tends to be focused on single issues rather than a broad base of participation in community groups and activities.**
- **While respondents indicate a sense of belonging to their communities, they also feel "left out."** Edgar interprets the findings from an anomie scale in the canvass as suggesting that, "citizens do not believe that they are listened to or that their contributions are not being taken seriously" (1994:41). We will interpret these data slightly differently, but the important point to note here is the suggested perception that residents may not have the control they would like to have over their environment, and they believe that they cannot make a difference in decisions regarding their community.
- **Perceptions about the quality of life in the county include an emphasis on natural resources, scenic beauty, and recreation opportunities (Edgar 1994:Appendix C).**

As stated above, city planning documents can be useful contributions to understanding the socioeconomic context of a community. A document produced by the City of Eureka is a prime example. In an effort to assess major issues and concerns within the community, the City of Eureka gathered information from citizens in public meetings and a survey of about 100 residents. Several important findings are useful for our purposes to understand the socioeconomic context of this community. First, in the resident survey, three times as many residents rate their community as a "good" place to live (71 responses) than rate it as "average" (22 responses). This suggests that among these respondents there is a relatively high degree of satisfaction with the overall status of their community. Second, the substance of residents' concerns is also revealing. The responses listed in the table below indicate that increasing population is a major concern, as is more services and a stronger economic foundation for existing residents.

| Table 3-2 Frequency of Responses to a Eureka Resident Survey Question | | | |
|---|--------|-------|-----------|
| Would the following list of conditions make living in Eureka better, worse, or no change for you? | | | |
| Item | Better | Worse | No Change |
| Increaseinpopulation | 29 | 36 | 27 |
| decreaseinpopulation | 17 | 40 | 34 |
| morebusiness | 69 | 5 | 22 |
| fewerbusiness | 5 | 63 | 24 |
| moreshoppingfacilities | 68 | 3 | 25 |
| morehealthcare | 73 | 1 | 20 |
| morechoicesinhousing | 55 | 2 | 37 |
| childdaycarefacilities | 45 | 1 | 43 |
| moretouristpromotion | 51 | 15 | 28 |
| Source: City of Eureka n.d. | | | |

Other findings suggest that residents have major concerns about their infrastructure, especially the need to address roads and highway conditions such as the improvement of US Highway 93 which travels through the center of Eureka. While storm drainage, public transport, health care, and housing conditions all are perceived to need improvement, "The water, sewer, solid waste, law enforcement, schools, parks, and seniors citizen services are all average or better" (City of Eureka n.d.:CNA-2). Importantly, there is a perceived need for economic diversification in response to a decline in the timber industry. The needs assessment report notes, "In Eureka and the Tobacco Valley, approximately 850 persons were employed in timber harvest and timber mills in 1986. During the past five years, these direct timber-based jobs have declined to approximately 250" (City of Eureka n.d.:CNA-3). The findings that stand out from the city's work are: concerns about economic diversification and population growth

in the context of decreased timber industry jobs that have, in the past, been the mainstay of the local economy.

3.3 Attitude and Opinion Studies About the Kootenai National Forest and its Management

The third group of documents regarding socioeconomic conditions within the county report on findings from surveys of county residents regarding use and management of the KNF. These studies are:

- An unpublished study by Linda Sootsman (1976) titled, The opinions of the Citizens of Lincoln County as They Relate to the Management of the Kootenai National Forest and the Functioning of Lincoln County Government.
- A study by A&A Research titled regarding demographic characteristics of forest users and opinions about forest management.
- An unpublished study by Charles Clark (1994) reporting on a survey of Lincoln County residents concerning timber management issues.

3.3.1 Opinions about Community and Forest Management

The study by Linda Sootsman interviewed 186 people about 15 general questions about social characteristics of their communities, uses of the KNF, and issues in forest management. Citizens from Libby (75), Eureka (54), and Troy (57) were interviewed. The nature of sampling is not discussed, but there was apparently no attempt to use a random sampling technique or to analyze the findings using statistical techniques: "Efforts have been made to minimize statistical significance and emphasize respondent views" (Sootsman 1976:4). The findings of the Sootsman study are noteworthy here because they address some of the same issues addressed by this current study. The parallels with Sootsman's results will be noted when the findings of this study are presented in Chapter 5.

At the time of Sootsman's work, Lincoln County was on the brink of a potential increase in population resulting from the proposed Asarco mining project, the potential Army Corps of Engineers re-regulation dam, and the proposed Northern Lights dam at the Kootenai Falls. All of these issues were controversial with ardent proponents and challengers. The findings of Sootsman's work are briefly summarized below, by community.

Libby

- People live in Libby primarily because of a "personal attachment" to the area.
- There is an absence of "steady employment" and a diversified economy.
- Generally, Libby is perceived as a friendly town that is readily accepting of newcomers.
- Recreation is a primary use of the KNF among study participants.
- Clearcutting is perceived as more of a problem than as a useful tool.
- Wilderness exists in sufficient amounts, and no more lands should be put to that use.
- Management issues of concern are: size and bureaucracy of the USFS, multiple use management, road construction costs, outside control of forest management, effective planning, and local hiring.
- Mining is supported.

Troy

- People live in area because of a combination of employment and personal attachment.
- Economic diversity and new sources of stable employment are perceived as important community needs.
- Troy is a friendly community which is generally accepting of newcomers, depending on the individual person.
- Recreation and employment are important uses of the KNF.
- Opinions about clearcutting are divided: as many people oppose it as believe it as a useful tool.
- There is enough wilderness area and no more is needed.
- Forest management concerns include the size and bureaucracy of USFS, multiple use management, costly road construction, outside influence in forest management, USFS communication with community, burning usable timber, and local hiring.

- Perceptions about closing logging roads are divided: there are slightly more responses in opposition to closures (45%) than favoring them (40%).
- Economic stability, employment opportunities, and public interest in the community are salient concerns about the Troy area.

Eureka

- Salient reasons for staying in the area are both employment and personal attachment.
- Eureka is a friendly community which generally is readily accepting of newcomers, depending on the individual.
- Recreation and employment are major uses of the KNF.
- Economic diversification that does not change the community is desirable.
- Clearcutting is perceived as a useful tool by 40% of the respondents and 40% do not like clearcutting.

The aggregate findings reveal several noteworthy points for our current examination of Lincoln County:

- 1) People live in this area more because of personal attachment than any other reason.
- 2) Economic diversification in the form of light industry is perceived as a potential source of steady employment; the greatest economic need of the region is more sources of stable employment.
- 3) Lincoln County is a friendly place that is accepting of newcomers, although this is dependent upon the individual.
- 4) Clearcutting is disliked by more people (51%) than see it as a useful tool (35%).
- 5) 75% of respondents indicated that there is enough wilderness in the county.
- 6) Concern about forest management include the nature of the USFS bureaucracy, multiple use, and the costs of road construction.

These findings are tantalizing because they raise questions about who maintains these opinions and why do they think as they do. The value of the Sootsman study is in identifying issues that were and, to some extent, are still important for Lincoln County residents.

3.3.2 KNF Management Issues and Evaluations of the USFS

In August of 1992, a random telephone survey was administered to 230 adults living in the Kootenai National Forest area. The survey, conducted by A&A Research, a private firm in Kalispell, Montana, resulted in a wide variety of information about users of the Kootenai National Forest, their perceptions about the USFS, and forest management issues. For the purposes of this present study, it is useful to summarize some of the survey's major findings. Especially relevant are findings about perceptions of the Forest Service and major issues and concerns. Additional findings by A&A Research about the forest users and their primary activities were reported in chapter two.

As a component of the A&A Research study, respondents were asked what they considered to be the most important issues, concerns, or problems confronting the Kootenai National Forest. Approximately 29 percent of the respondents indicated that they did not know what the most important Kootenai National Forest issues were. Just less than one-quarter (24%) of the respondents indicated that too much logging/clear cutting was a major concern (Eiselein 1992:All Adults Tables Appendix). The need to preserve and protect what they have was mentioned by one-fifth of the respondents. Ten percent or less of the respondents mentioned the following issues, concerns, or problems: fire and fire policy, the need for balanced use, management, environmental issues, balance logging controversy, need to plant trees, timber management, general maintenance, and lack of timber sales (Eiselein 1992:17 and All Adults Tables Appendix).

Respondents were also asked if they agreed, disagreed, or had no opinion/did not know whether they agreed or disagreed with several statements about the Kotoenai National Forest. The majority of respondents disagreed with the following statements (the percentage of disagreement among respondents is indicated in parentheses):

- "The Kootenai Forest should allow more timber to be harvested even if this means harvesting in roadless area." (71%)
- "More areas of the Kootenai forest should be available to motorized recreation, such as snowmobiling, motorcycling, and other off-road vehicles." (67%)
- "More roads should be available in the Kootenai Forest." (49%)

The majority of respondents agreed with the following statements:

- "The Kootenai Forest should be more concerned with the fish and wildlife within the forest" (73%)
- "The Kootenai Forest should be managed more for wilderness values." (68%)

- "The Kootenai Forest should develop more recreational areas, such as campgrounds, picnic areas, groomed trails, and scenic drives." (62%)
- "The Kootenai Forest has a good mix of uses." (66%)
- "The Kootenai Forest is doing an adequate job of protecting endangered and threatened species, such as grizzly bears, bald eagles, and caribou." (63%)

The last item above indicates that most respondents thought that the Forest Service was "doing an adequate job" in at least one management area. Similarly, their overall management of the natural resources in the Kootenai National Forest tended to receive moderate-to-good ratings. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being very poor and 5 being very good), the Forest Service's management of natural resources received an average rating of 3.3. Less than 11 percent of the respondents rated the Forest Service "very good" in this area, and 4 percent rated them "very poor" (Eiselein 1992:All Adults Tables Appendix). On a similar scale, the Forest Service received an average rating of 3.4 among respondents for providing information about the forest, and an average rating of 2.8 for involving the public in the management of the forest (Eiselein 1992:All Adults Tables Appendix). In addition to complaints of not keeping the public informed, low satisfactory ratings for the Forest Service's public involvement efforts were attributed to their limited allowance of public involvement, need for an opinion poll, not listening to the general public, not revealing "the entire facts", and informing people too late (Eiselein 1992:All Adults Tables Appendix). The public not wanting to be involved was also cited as a reason for non-satisfactory ratings of public involvement.

3.3.3 A Survey of Selected Opinions About Forest Management

Charles Clark administered serial surveys to a sample of residents in Lincoln County to determine attitudes toward their communities and the use of natural resources. The findings of this survey are presented in a paper titled, *Using Serial Surveys in the Investigation of Attitudes Towards Community Stability and Natural Resource Use in Timber Dependent Communities* (Clark 1994). The findings of Clark's work are relevant to this study because they address issues of conflict regarding timber management and the perspectives of various groups about the nature and substance of those conflicts. The survey was administered to a random sample of country residents, a sample of business and community leaders, and members of the Cabinet Resources Group, a local environmental organization based primarily in Troy with members in Libby and parts of Sanders County.

Clark's work is useful because he places his survey results in the context of selected findings from the Kaufmans' study. Furthermore, Clark's results are discussed in relationship to some of the social context issues that are relevant for this study. Several of these points are noteworthy and will be developed in more detail later in this report:

- Timber harvests are decreasing for a combination of technological and regulatory reasons. This has affected the economy of Lincoln County, sometimes resulting in debates about the "true" reasons for the economic downturn.
- Local conflicts exist about forest management that have been framed as debates about the "environment versus jobs." Organized groups within communities have engaged in these conflicts.
- Debate exists about a perception that the USFS will base future management decisions more on the needs of the timber industry than on scientific facts.

In review of the Kaufmans' work and the work of Edgar, Clark notes several points of relevance for his survey:

- Libby was a "company town" that was less critical of the Forest Service than Troy residents.
- Troy residents scored highest on a scale that measures social alienation (the social anomie scale) and Eureka residents the lowest with Libby in the middle. Clark interprets this finding as contributing to community responses to environmentalists.

Clark's survey results address the following topic areas: demographics, conservation standing, attitudes toward forest issues, and community stability.

- Libby, Troy, and Eureka are "distinct economic environments and should be treated as different sociological areas" (Clark 1994:9). An important implication of this finding is these communities have different development needs.
- Clark discusses "conservation standing" or "environmental tendencies" as indicated by responses to questions regarding, "1) whether one worked in the woods; 2) whether a household participated actively in public debates over natural resources; 3) how frequently a household used nearby wilderness areas; and 4) whether a family recycled often" (Clark 1994:10). The importance of Clark's work is that it notes that in the current environment there are differences and debates about who is really an environmentalist and how that is indicated. His criteria are "action based" and result in a view that is different than the results of this study which investigates values and beliefs. Examining values and beliefs suggests there are important similarities among groups in how they view and value natural resources.

- Troy shows a more negative attitude about Forest Service management of the KNF than does Libby. When these findings are critically examined, the important point is that Clark's work indicates concern with Forest Service policies. Such policies include road closures, lack of support for smaller logging operations, and the appeal process for timber sales. There are mixed findings about public attitudes to clearcutting, in part because of the compound nature of the question asked in the survey.
- Troy's more pronounced social anomie is associated with its demographic and environmental differences when compared to Libby or Eureka. Our interest in this finding is that it raises the issue of anomie and its distribution within the county and how this distribution may be related to concerns and issues regarding the use of natural resources.

Clark indicates that there is more analysis to be done of survey responses. However, he closes his paper with a point that we will address in some detail later in this report. He observes,

"The general population wants more local control and greater access to . . . forest land and materials while environmentalists want stricter grizzly bear management enforcement. In spite of much common ground the symbolic battle over federal grizzly bear habitat promises to keep the conflict going at a high level of intensity" (Clark 1994:18).

The nature of the common ground and the role, symbolic and otherwise, of the grizzly bear in stakeholder views about management of the KNF is an important topic that offers some insights into the nature of conflicts regarding management of the KNF.

4.0 TECHNICAL APPROACH FOR DATA COLLECTION

In the course of collecting data for this study, it was not uncommon for someone asked to participate to respond, "You're doing some kind of survey, right?" The technically correct answer to this question is, "no, this study is using an ethnographic interview methodology." The purpose of this chapter is to make explicit the methodological approach that resulted in the data used to produce this report. A succinct statement of the technical approach is as follows: ethnographic interview methods were used to collect qualitative data using an interview protocol that was administered to a targeted sample of individuals within the study area of Lincoln and portions of Sanders Counties. This statement needs some elaboration to specify the techniques used to collect data, the types of data gathered, and from whom information was collected. It will also be useful to clarify the difference between ethnographic and survey interview technical approaches. This presentation and clarification is organized around three major differences between surveys and ethnographic methods: (1) the purpose of using ethnographic or survey methods to collect data; (2) distinction between qualitative and quantitative data resulting from the use of each method; and (3) the difference between random and targeted sampling to recruit the subjects who participate in a study. An additional section outlines the framework used in the analysis of data and the presentation of findings.

4.1 The Purpose of Using Ethnographic Interview Methods

Ethnographic methods are used when a primary goal of a study is to identify how and why a phenomena is understood from the point of view of persons within a social setting. A significant aspect of ethnographic methods is that they are used to develop a description and analysis of events from the point of view of the persons being studied. Ethnography approaches a phenomena for study as something to be discovered rather than assumed. Ethnography is usually highly inductive: that is, the theories, axioms, or findings about a circumstance derive from an examination of data about it. Social scientists who use this approach often describe this strategy as the use of "grounded theory" (cf. Strauss and Corbin 1990) because theories or findings result from data about it and are therefore "grounded in the data."

Ethnographic methods are used to develop a description and analysis of phenomena from the point of view of the persons being studied.

Another important point about ethnography is that it is often used to study the relationship between a particular phenomena and its context. This relationship is explored to discover what meanings the phenomena has in a specific historical and cultural context. For example, ethnography develops how a tree is an important component of the idea of a National Forest; and how the meanings of "tree" and "National Forest" are affected by the socioeconomic conditions and historical circumstances of a particular community. That is, a tree can be interpreted as "100

board feet" or "woodpecker habitat," and a National Forest can be interpreted as a "tree farm" or "reserve for wildlife." The meanings of "tree" and "National Forest" are determined both by how people define each and by the interaction of those definitions with the economic, social, and cultural circumstances of a particular community context.

Ethnographic methods are designed to address the question, "What are the elements that compose a phenomena and what does the phenomenon mean to people in a particular time and place?" The goal is to learn, from the point of view of people within a particular setting, the component parts of a concept and how those parts are connected to each other and to a social context. Ethnography is about how and why people invest meaning in the ideas they have.

The "survey" as a technical approach to data collection is intended to produce statistical or numerical descriptions of a phenomena under study (cf. Fowler 1984:9ff) using telephone, mail, or in-person questionnaires. Questionnaires are often used to collect information about:

- (1) Attitudes or opinions about important issues of concern to the population being studied, e.g., "Do you approve or disapprove of clearcutting in the Kootenai National Forest?"
- (2) Attitudes or opinions about more general issues and concerns, e.g., "Do you agree or disagree with the statement, 'Government is too big'?"
- (3) Demographic data about the population being studied, e.g., age, sex, occupation, employment, etc. . . . (Weisberg and Bowen 1977).

Surveys may also collect information about reported behavior and other information about what people believe. Questionnaires often present subjects with pre-determined answers about pre-defined topics. This is highly useful when these types of data are required as opposed to methods such as ethnography that start with questions about what publics think about what are the important issues. The result of a survey is a set of

data that provides the researcher with information about "how many" people respond within the categories provided by the questionnaire. This is a very different approach than an ethnographic methodology. A survey provides numbers or statistics about the categories of response that can

An important difference between survey and ethnographic methods is that a survey provides the categories of response for the subjects for the subjects and an ethnographic interview asks the subjects for the categories and their meanings.

then be used to analyze relationships among the items within the survey. Note that an important difference between survey and ethnographic methods is that a survey provides the categories of response for the subjects, while an ethnographic interview asks the subjects to generate the categories and explain their meanings.

Ethnographic methods are among the most appropriate to discover what, from the perspective of the study population, is important about a study topic. Ethnographic

methods are especially useful when there are a variety of perspectives within a community or if the range of topics is to be discovered. A goal in this approach is to examine these various points of view, rather than finding the "average" response or the statistical characteristics of a response. Given the interest of the Forest Service in determining what people are concerned about regarding management of the Kootenai National Forest and why they are concerned, the use of ethnographic methods provides a rich source of data volunteered by the residents of the study communities about their views on the natural resources and management of the Kootenai. Note that this report does not contain percentages of responses to the interview questions because this would be scientifically inappropriate: these types of responses are about what key persons perceive the issues to be and not about "how many people" think one way or another about the issue. That is, the results of this study are primarily qualitative data.

4.2 Ethnographic Interviews Result in Qualitative Data

As noted above, another important difference between ethnographic and survey methods is the types of data that result from their use. Usually, ethnographic methods result in qualitative data while surveys provide quantitative data. Ethnographic interviews often address questions about the categories, types, meanings, and descriptions of a topic. The interviews conducted for this study resulted in qualitative data that represent how persons construct issues and the range of issues of concern within the study communities. The study was not intended to answer quantitative questions, that is how many people think one way or another about an issue. Simply put, quantitative data are statistics and qualitative data are usually more categorical. For example, quantitative data about the concept of a "tree" would take the form of the following statement: "Sixty-three percent of people surveyed agreed with the statement that a tree is a renewable resource." Qualitative data would be described as, "People in this area think that trees are renewable resources, wildlife habitat, raw material for lumber mills, and a place for recreation." The quantitative data describes how many people think a certain way about a predetermined topic and qualitative data expresses the categories people use to think about the topic. Neither quantitative nor qualitative data is inherently more scientific or preferable. The data used should depend on the research questions asked (Bernard 1988).

4.2.1 Qualitative Interview Data

Qualitative data and their analysis address process issues and questions about why things are the way they are and how things work. Questions about "how many" are not usually addressed by qualitative data and their analysis. In this study the issues addressed are not about "how many people think" but rather about what people think, and why.

Qualitative data come from observations, interviews, examination of records, and other data collection techniques (Bernard 1988; Pelto and Pelto 1970). This study used a combination of interview and observations to collect the qualitative data, but interviews were the primary approach we relied upon. An interview protocol was developed to

collect data to achieve the objectives of the study. A protocol is a listing of topic areas, and not a predefined set of questions. Such protocols are typically employed in ethnographic methods which are intended to pursue an overall strategy of learning what and how people think about a topic rather than supplying specific questions for response. These types of protocols are usually implemented by asking open-ended, non-directive questions. An open-ended question is one that does not present the subject with a choice of responses. For example, "What can you tell me about clearcuts?" is an open-ended question and is different from a close-ended question such as, "Do you think that clearcuts increase or decrease habitat for big game?" The open-ended question allows subjects to respond with whatever their ideas are about a topic, whereas the close-ended question provides the categories for response. Non-directive questions are neutral in the cues they provide to subjects about the interview topic. For example, a non-directive question style might occur as follows:

- A) Interviewer: What can you tell me about clearcuts?
- B) Subject: You mean whether or not they are good or bad?
- C) Interviewer: Whatever comes to mind for you to talk about them.

The interviewer's response in item "C" above is non-directive: it does not cue the subject to any particular content for response.

A directive style of questioning provides cues to the subject about the possible content of their responses. For example,

- X) Interviewer: What can you tell me about clearcuts?
- Y) Subject: You mean whether or not they are good or bad?
- Z) Interviewer: Yes, and maybe how they affect big game habitat, and how environmentalists think about them.

The interviewer's response in item "Z" above is directive because the subject is cued to talk about if clearcuts are good or bad, etc. The process of clarifying topics in an ethnographic interview often requires asking close-ended and directed questions, but the overall approach is to allow the subjects to define the topics which need to be clarified.

4.2.2 The Interview Protocol

The protocol developed for this study addresses three major topic areas:

- **Community Context:** The purpose of this portion of the protocol is to develop information to describe the geographic location, socioeconomic structure, and cultural orientation of the study area and its communities. The topics include information about : community lifestyles; cultural values, beliefs, and attitudes; social organization; and economic issues and concerns. The data from this portion of the interviews is used to develop the context of perceptions about the resources of the Kootenai National Forest and their management.

- Kootenai National Forest and its Resources: The purpose of this portion of the protocol develops information to describe how different communities and stakeholder groups define and interact with the KNF. This information is important because it will be used to interpret the responses of different interest groups to Forest Service management policies and practices. Topics addressed include: definitions of the forest, types and values of resources, and patterns of use.
- Management of the Kootenai National Forest: The purpose of this portion of the protocol is to develop public perceptions about the major management issues regarding the KNF as well as evaluations of the Forest Service and its management of the Kootenai. The topics addressed include: purpose and mission of the USFS; and major issues and concerns about forest management, ecosystems management, and public-input into management practices.

The protocol asked generally open-ended questions that were intended to allow study participants to respond in a way that fit their classification of the issues under study.

4.3. Selection of Study Participants for Ethnographic Interviews: Targeted Sampling

A third important difference between the ethnographic methods used for this study and survey methods is in how participants were recruited for the interviews, i.e., the type of sampling strategy used. Survey methods usually use a probability or random sampling strategy because their purpose is to select study participants that are representative of a sample population. These types of strategies are used when the research question asked and the methods used to address those question are intended to develop numerical statements about a population. Random sampling results in the ability to make statements such as, "Sixty-three percent of the population thinks (X)." Random sampling is intended to minimize bias in statements that could be generalized to a population from a sample of that population. These types of samples are based on calculations that results in sufficient numbers of persons so that the results can be generalized from the sample to the study population. Ethnographic methods often use non-random sampling approaches including, targeted, quota, snowball (network), and convenience strategies (Bernard 1988: 95 ff.; Pelto and Pelto 1970: 123 ff.). These methods are used when research questions addresses topics such as, "What are the ways that people in this community value a National Forest?" These types of sampling strategies are not intended to result in the ability to generalize from the sample to the population. Consequently, the criteria for selecting persons to include is not driven by the numbers of persons needed to generalize to the entire population, but rather by who knows about the topics of the

To collect data for this study, a targeted sample of persons knowledgeable about their community and natural resource issues was interviewed. This is the scientifically appropriate method for the purposes of this study.

Consequently, the criteria for selecting persons to include is not driven by the numbers of persons needed to generalize to the entire population, but rather by who knows about the topics of the

study. Consequently, the numbers of persons interviewed is less important than the categories of persons interviewed. Neither of these sampling strategies is inherently more scientific than the other; each needs to be used appropriately to address the research in question. For this study, a targeted sample of persons knowledgeable about their community and natural resource issues was used to collect the data. This is the scientifically appropriate method for our purposes.

4.3.1 Defining the Study Population

The study population includes communities in Lincoln and portions of Sanders counties as well as the Kootenai Tribe. Within Lincoln County, two major groupings of communities were: (1) Eureka, Fortine, Rexford, and Trego and (2) Libby, Troy, and Yaak. Within Sanders County the communities included are Thompson Falls, Trout Creek, Noxon, and Heron. These three portions of the study population were considered as separate entities that collectively comprise the study population from which specific individuals were selected for interviews.

In addition to residence, two other criteria were used to define the study population: (1) status as belonging to a stakeholder or interest group and (2) status as an opinion leader or as otherwise knowledgeable about the community or natural resource issues. Stakeholder groups were identified by examining previous studies, consulting information provided by the Forest Service, and reviewing information gleaned from the initial site visit to the study area. Status as an opinion leader or knowledgeable person is an important criteria for this study because such people voice positions and otherwise sway public opinion about issues of importance in their communities. Some opinion leaders may not be identified as representing any particular group. For example, an individual can be recognized as a community leader, or as someone who knows about the concerns and interests of his or her community, without necessarily belonging to a particular group. Similarly, knowledgeable persons within a community may be consulted by others about specific topics (e.g., timber harvesting practices), yet they may not be overall opinion leaders.

Determining the stakeholder groups to include in the study population was accomplished by consulting existing literature and conducting an initial scoping study. From that work four criteria were developed regarding the stakeholders to include in the study population: direct use, community structure, individual status, and special interests. Each of these is described below.

Direct Use. As the term implies, there are individuals or groups who directly use the resources of the KNF. These are among the most important stakeholders because of their potential dependence on these resources or because of the value(s) they attribute to KNF natural resources. This includes those individuals who, among other things, make use of the KNF for spiritual and related purposes. In the selection of informants, "direct use" stakeholders were among the most important to include in the study population. The Kootenai Tribe is included among

those categorized as direct use because of their treaty rights and patterns of use of the KNF.

Community Structure. Individuals or groups that represent the major formal institutions within a community are termed "community structure" entities and are important because they can speak to the socioeconomic and cultural context of the forest and its management. Elected officials, public safety volunteers, fraternal and service organizations, schools, church, media, economic, and health entities are some of the components of "community structure" category.

Individual Status. Within a community, individuals can be distinguished by one or more aspects of their status such as "long-term resident," "new comer," or "retiree." The characteristics of individual status include type of employment, work status, length of residence, age, gender, and religious affiliation. This resulted in the identification of individual status categories such as federal employees, long-term residents, retirees, Amish, and others listed in Table 4-1. These stakeholders are rarely represented by a formal group, but they nonetheless constitute segments of communities that may have perspectives that need to be considered in order to fully understand the sociocultural context that influences response to KNF management policies and practices.

Special Interests. Formal or informal organizations may form that have a focused interest in issues relating to the use of the National Forest. Such groups may take political or other actions that have direct or indirect effects on how the natural resources of the KNF are managed. This study identifies, as completely as possible, the special interest groups that are, or have been, active in voicing opinions and taking actions regarding KNF management. Starting points for this work included the following groups: Cabinet Resource Group, Kootenai Coalition, Citizens for a Great Northwest, Tobacco Valley Resources Group, Citizens for a Gated Environment, Montana Wilderness Association, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and the Rod and Gun Club. These types of groups may have very focused interests on the nature, value, and use of the natural resources of the KNF.

These four criteria were used to organize the stakeholder groups identified from the initial field visit and the information provided by the USFS. These listings were then the basis for identifying and selecting stakeholder groups and individuals within those groups. Table 4-1 indicates the stakeholder groups that were listed by applying the four criteria described above.

| Table 4-1 Classification of Stakeholders | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Direct Use | Individual Status | Community Structure | Special Interests |
| Timber | Retail Business Person | Elected Officials | Cabinet Resource Group |
| Ranching and Agriculture | Long Term Resident | Service/Public Safety Organizations | Kootenai Coalition |
| Mining | New Resident | Fraternal Organizations | Citizens for a Great Northwest |
| Real Estate | Female | Churches | Tobacco Valley Resources Group |
| Guides and Outfitters | Amish | Schools | Citizens for a Gated Environment |
| Kootenai Tribe | Retiree | Media | Montana Wilderness Association |
| Environmental | Displaced Mill Worker | Health Care Entities | Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation |
| Recreation Users | Forester | Economic Interests | Rod and Gun Clubs |
| Other Non-Consumptive Users (e.g. spiritual uses) | Federal Employee | Booster Organizations | Backcountry Horsemen |

4.3.2 Selecting Specific Individuals for Interviews

A total of 135 persons from Lincoln County, Sanders County and the Kootenai Tribe were interviewed in this study. The participants from each of these areas included individuals who are stakeholders, opinion leaders, or are otherwise informed about their communities. The process of selecting these individuals was guided by a selection technique called "snowball sampling." This technique is based on the idea that people are aware of others in their social environment who are knowledgeable about a particular topic.

A total of about 135 persons from Lincoln County and Sanders County and the Kootenai Tribe participated in this study. The participants included persons from the three major geographical areas of the study region who are opinion leaders or are otherwise informed about their communities.

This process usually begins by asking a small sample of persons, often public officials, a question such as "Who are some of the people in the timber industry that are informed about how the industry works and people's concerns with it?" Several persons are usually asked such a question to establish a list of potential study participants.

Individuals whose names are listed by several persons are then contacted for interviews. Those individuals are then asked the same question which then builds a "snowball" of potential informants. This strategy is intended to select some individuals who are likely to be informed about and invested in the research topics for the study population. Snowballing was used to both confirm stakeholder groups to include and to identify specific individuals to be interviewed in the study. Again, note that this strategy resulted in a pool of study participants that represent a spectrum of interest groups in the region and not a simple random sample of residents in the study region.

Table 4-2 indicates the number of people interviewed from each area. Lincoln County participants included 79 people from the two major areas of the County, and five additional people contributed their opinions to these interviews. The Sanders County portion of the study included 35 interviewees, and an additional 11 people were present and contributed their views during the interviews. Interviews were conducted with four people from the Kootenai Tribe.

| Table 4-2 Number of Participants by Area | | | | |
|--|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|-------|
| County | Area | Interviewees | Additional Participants | Total |
| Lincoln County | Libby, Troy, Yaak | 56 | 4 | 60 |
| | Trego, Fortine, Eureka | 23 | 1 | 24 |
| | Total County | 79 | 5 | 84 |
| Sanders County | | 35 | 11 | 46 |
| Kootenai Tribe [Flathead Indian Reservation] | | 5 | 0 | 4 |
| Total | | 119 | 16 | 135 |
| Note: In addition to the 135 participants counted in this table, contacts were made through brief "verification" interviews which were conducted to further develop and check specific issues. | | | | |

Interviews had a range of duration from about 45 minutes to several hours. Some interviews involved taking field trips with study participants to observe features of the forest which they indicated were important in order to understand their point of view. The distribution of persons according to stakeholder groups will be presented in chapters later in this report that discuss each region of the study area.

4.4 Field Activities for Data Collection

The data for this study were collected in a series of field visits to Lincoln and Sanders Counties and the Flathead Indian Reservation. After an initial scoping site visit Dr. Russell began fieldwork in the Libby-Yaak-Troy region of Lincoln County in late October of 1994. The initial field visit, approximately three weeks, was followed up by a second two-week trip in early December. The second trip also focused on the southern portion of the county. A third trip was made in the middle of January and lasted for

approximately two weeks with data collection taking place in the areas around Eureka, Fortine, and Trego. A final site visit was made after completion of the draft report in order to verify some of the data and their interpretations. Dr. Downs made an initial one-week site visit to Sanders County in late November and early December of 1994 and followed this up with a one and one-half week visit in January of 1995.

The ethnographic interviews conducted during these visits took place according to participants schedules. Interviews ranged from 45 minutes to more than three hours, and were conducted during days and evenings at offices, homes, and other locations. In addition to interviews, public meetings were attended and several field trips were made to observe forest sites and logging activities. To further develop and check specific issues, short verification interviews were conducted with those who participated in the longer interviews and others who had not participated in these interviews. These short interviews ranged from 10 minutes to an hour and were conducted with a wide range of persons throughout the study area. These contacts are not included in the total study participant numbers.

The study was explained to participants as an effort to understand public views about the natural resources of the area and Forest Service management of these resources. Procedures for maintaining confidentiality were explained and individuals asked if they would consent to participate in the study. Several persons declined to participate because of scheduling reasons and several others refused because they had no interest in participating in such a study. These refusals were replaced by individuals who were in the same stakeholder category.

4.5 Conceptual Approach and the Presentation of Findings

The presentation of findings for this study is organized by (1) the categories used for data collection and (2) the conceptual approach that is used for the analysis of the interview data. There are three major categories of data that are used to examine an independent-dependent variable relationship. Two categories of data, sociocultural context and natural resources values and beliefs, are treated as independent variables. The dependent variable is the category of data concerning assessments of forest management. The sociocultural context and natural resource values and beliefs are treated as factors that help explain public assessments of forest management. However, these data show a complex set of interactions: sociocultural context and natural resource values and beliefs are interconnected, and there is a feedback relationship from the assessments of forest management with the other two data categories. Nonetheless, we will present and discuss the findings by using the independent-dependent variable framework and note where appropriate other relationships among the categories of information.

As noted previously, the approach taken in this work is both ethnographic and sociocultural. It is ethnographic because we describe, from the point of view of people in the study area, the meanings about natural resources and their management. The approach used here is sociocultural because the emphasis is on describing the values,

beliefs, and ways of life that influence views about natural resource issues, and the social context of these cultural factors. By social context we mean a pattern of connections among the social institutions of a particular community. For example, politics, kinship, and economics can all be interconnected in one way in one place, but in another way elsewhere. In this report, our focus is more tightly set on those parts of the social context that are the most relevant for achieving the objectives of this study. The categories used for this presentation of findings for Lincoln and Sanders Counties are briefly developed below.

4.5.1 Sociocultural Context

The sociocultural context for each portion of the study area is described. The "social" in our examination of sociocultural context considers elements of community structure that are relevant for analyzing stakeholder values about natural resources and assessments of management of the KNF¹. The components of community social structure developed here have two purposes: (1) to examine how community social dynamics influence responses to natural resource issues; and (2) to describe certain key social issues that are especially relevant for interpreting public responses to management of the KNF. The topics developed are as follows:

- **Stakeholders.** An important variable for this analysis is the identification of stakeholder groups. Stakeholders have a vested interest in specific issues regarding the use of natural resources or management of the KNF. Stakeholders are sometimes formal groups, or they may constitute part of the community that is not represented by an organization. Furthermore, the relationships among stakeholder groups, whether formally organized or not, may affect the way people respond to issues. At times, groups may take a stance on an issue not because of substance of the issue, but rather because of their relationships with other stakeholder groups, and the influences of these groups on each other.
- **Patterns of Social Interaction and the Basis of Community.** A community consists of people living in the same place and socializing or interacting such that relationships are established that integrate them into a wider set of connections. Patterns of interaction and expectations about community are important for this study because they suggest how individuals and groups may align themselves on values about natural resources and their management.
- **Community Integration and Social Divisions.** Communities can be loosely or tightly knit. These types and strengths of connections among people living in the same locale can influence not only what they believe, but their willingness to act on their beliefs. Furthermore, divisions or factions within a community are an indicator of community "cohesion" that also has implications for how individuals

¹ A traditional ethnography would develop the full range of roles, statuses, mechanisms for social control, social groupings, political economy, and social institutions and their interconnections and functioning (cf. Parsons 1951). Such a description is beyond the scope of this study.

and groups respond to issues, including those concerning natural resources and their management.

- Leadership, Power and Authority. Beliefs and values can be influenced by the nature of leadership and structure of power and authority within a community. The actions that persons are willing to take regarding their beliefs may be affected by the views of those who have power and authority within communities.

"Culture" is a fundamental component of any community because it involves the values, beliefs, and worldviews that give meaning to a way of life. This notion of "culture," as incorporating a wide range of beliefs, orientations, and values, is too broad for us to consider here. We have focused our examination on "community culture" which refers to the values, beliefs, and worldviews that characterize the way of life in a particular community at a particular time. The aspects of community culture developed are as follows:

- Western Independence and Self-Reliance: There are certain orientations to living that are fundamental to American culture, including an emphasis on personal independence, and the value placed on a rural lifestyle which practices self-reliance. Francis Hsu, a scholar of American culture, has observed about this characteristic:

". . . American rugged individualism means that one is not only self-sufficient as a matter of fact but he must strive toward it as a militant ideal. The individual should constantly tell himself and others that he controls his own destiny, and that he does not need help from others" (1983:4).

The ideals of self-sufficiency and personal independence are components of American culture, and have been described as especially characteristic of those who settled the West. These values continue to be held by those living in rural communities of the West. These values contribute to a stance taken by individuals and groups in their response to others, and in the way they view rules, regulations, and other constraints upon their actions. The sentiments about independence are especially important for communities in northwest Montana.

- Sentiments About Community: Values and expectations about "community" orient individuals in their relationships with others. These sentiments are at once a guide for actions and a basis for evaluating the actions of others. These expectations and values about "what kind of place this is" also contribute to the way groups and individuals evaluate events as either threats or opportunities. Since such expectations and values can directly influence relationships within communities and evaluations of events, they are useful for both analytic

purposes and for description of the overall sociocultural context of the study communities.

- **The Values about Place and Natural Resources:** Another component of the cultural orientation of a community is the values its members have about the geographical and physical space in which they live. This is especially important for this study since it relates directly to the study objectives, namely to understand how people value natural resources. **Outdoor Values:** The culture of northwest Montana is one that values hunting, fishing, hiking, skiing, and various other outdoor activities. These "outdoor values" are a sub-set of those about place and natural resources, but they are important enough in affecting peoples' views about lifestyle and natural resources to deserve a separate discussion. These values are part of the culture of "westernness" referred to by Haugen (1984) who observed the importance of these issues for understanding communities in northwest Montana.
- **Major Issues and Concerns:** Information about the types and range of concerns of persons living in the study area provides some insight about their overall world view as well as how they view the threats and opportunities in their environment. This information is a back-drop to assess how forest management and natural resource issues fit into the spectrum of other issues and concerns in the study area. Collectively and individually these aspects of community culture are important because they concern how people think about the relationship between their community and the value and use of natural resources. How people think about such issues often contains implications for the way they will act, since belief can motivate behavior (D'Andrade and Strauss 1992).

Two related issues will receive some emphasis in presenting information about the sociocultural environment: consistency and conflict in cultural orientations and the social implications of these differences or similarities.

4.5.2 Values and Beliefs about Natural Resources and the KNF

Information regarding different views of the value and purpose of natural resources is important for assessing how publics believe these resources should be managed. Information is presented which describes what people value about natural resources and the meanings of these values within the social context of the different regions of the study area.

- **Sentiments about Natural Resources:** The sentiments people have about natural resources -- for example, feelings about what resources exist and their relative significance -- are important to characterize when considering the context of the Kootenai National Forest.

- Assessments of the Idea of a "National Forest:" The concept of "national forest" is one that needs definition and characterization by those who live in or near national forests, and by those who otherwise find forests significant. This information is developed in addition to the characteristics of the KNF that residents find important or meaningful.
- Uses of the Kootenai National Forest: Values and beliefs may have a direct relationship to personal experiences in using or otherwise interacting with the resources of the KNF. The range and meaning of uses of the KNF is developed for each of the geographical regions considered.

4.5.3 Assessments of Forest Management

Assessments of forest management are accomplished by examining three categories of information: sentiments about the USFS, USFS management of the KNF, and public participation in the forest management process. The intent of each of these categories of information is presented below.

- Sentiments about the Forest Service: The Forest Service is the agency that formulates and implements public policy for management of the KNF. Furthermore, historically the USFS has had a prominent role in the socioeconomic functioning of Lincoln and Sanders County. Residents' assessments of management policies and practices can be influenced by perceptions about the Forest Service and its role in the communities within each county.
- USFS Management of the Kootenai National Forest: This sub-section presents explanations by stakeholders and individuals about current management practices for the KNF as well as public assessments of the ecosystems management approach. Additionally, the issue of public involvement and communication between the USFS and community publics is addressed.
- The Public's Perceptions of Their Role in the LRMP Process: Ideas about the process of public-USFS interaction in the management of KNF resources emerged from the study data. This information about public perceptions was collected to directly address a major objective of this study.

These three categories of information will be presented in each of the chapters that follow, although the order of presentation will be structured to provide ease of reading. This presentation emphasizes identification of the range of issues and, to the extent allowed by these data, the geographic and social distribution of the issues. The strength of sentiment, or "emotional valence" attached to issues is also examined. Thus we describe not only the range of opinions among study participants, but also the strength of their sentiments.

Throughout this report, we have liberally used statements from study participants. There are two points of clarification about how these statements are used. First, we use either double or single quotation marks to identify statements by study participants. Double quotation marks indicate the exact wording of statements, usually taken from a taped interview. Single quotation marks indicate the substance of a statement, usually from interview notes. Each statement used is accurate. We distinguish "exact" wording from those interviews situations where in taking interview notes the a preposition or phrase may not have been recorded, but the essence of the statement is recorded. The second point concerns how these statements are used to illustrate points discussed in the body of the report. One use is to take a single quotation or statement to exemplify others that were aggregated for interpretation of a particular point. For example, statements about wilderness or clearcuts were collated, examined, and interpreted. The interpretation of the data offered then is illustrated with a quotation to convey to the reader the main idea of the statements as seen from the viewpoint of study participants. A second use is to illustrate the range of variation when a single interpretation about an issue is discussed. Then various statements are presented to illustrate differences in viewpoints. These two types of uses "ground" the interpretation of the interview data in the statements of study participants. We feel this assists the reader to achieve a better overall understanding of the issue being discussed. A final use is to illustrate a point without interpretation. This is less commonly used here, but there are instances where an interpretation is not indicated, but presenting a quotation provides information about a point that is noteworthy.

5.0 THE LINCOLN COUNTY CONTEXT OF FOREST MANAGEMENT ISSUES

This chapter presents information about the social conditions in Lincoln County and their relationship to how stakeholders perceive forest resources and forest management issues. Section 5.1 presents an over view of the socioeconomic trends in the county that is a further development of data presented in Chapter 2. Section 5.2 discusses the cultural basis for attachment to "community" and the social groupings within the county. Section 5.3 develops the perceptions about natural resources of the Kootenai National Forest and Section 5.4 develops perceptions about the management of these resources. Section 5.5 discusses stakeholder views about ecosystems management and Section 5.6 briefly reviews data concerning stakeholder views regarding public involvement in the forest management process.

5. 1 Lincoln County Geography, History, Social Environment

An examination of Lincoln County's population trends, socioeconomic characteristics, and historical highlights provides a useful orientation to the county and serves as a foundation for interpretations of the sociocultural data presented in the remaining sections of this report. In order to more directly establish such a foundation, this chapter reiterates and builds on information regarding the study area description presented in Chapter 2. A thesis of this presentation is that Lincoln County is in a period of socioeconomic transition. This transitional characteristic of Lincoln County is important for our description and analysis because it effects how people evaluate the present and future of their economic, social, and cultural status.

In research conducted in the 1940's on the socioeconomic conditions of south Lincoln County and its forest industry, the need for "community stability" was noted (Kaufman and Kaufman 1946). One half century later, this sentiment can still be heard in Lincoln County. While natural resource communities have a history of boom and bust cycles punctuated by periods of apparent stability, dynamic market forces have traditionally driven these changes which have lead to continued fluctuations rather than a new, stable socioeconomic status. In contrast, the present circumstances of Lincoln County may not represent just a point within a boom-bust cycle; it may be a transition to a changed socioeconomic state. The indicators of this movement toward a changed state are: trends in the demographic composition and population distribution within the county, workforce status, alteration in the forestry and mining sectors of the economy, efforts at economic diversification, and land use and ownership. These indicators of transition are presented in this section along with historical highlights in order to place the transition thesis in perspective.

5.1.1 Historical Highlights

This section describes some of the historical elements which have affected Lincoln County's boom and bust cycles. Table 5-1 displays highlights of exploration, settlement, and economic development as well as the county's population as reported by the U.S.

Bureau of the Census. A brief discussion of the county's history follows this table. For more detailed historical information, the reader is referred to the Historic Overview of the Kootenai National Forest by Miss et al.(1994).

Lincoln County's history is typical of many western communities where the development of natural resources played an essential role in its modernization. The earliest inhabitants in the region were the Flathead and Kootenai Indians. These groups used the region's rich environment and benefited from the numerous natural resources for centuries. Current evidence indicates that the Kootenai inhabited the area since at least the 1700's (Malouf 1974:121). The Kootenai lived as a number of autonomous bands but are reported to have considered themselves as one people (Turney-High 1941:23). Their range encompassed the drainage region of the Kootenai River, an area roughly 270 miles long and 200 miles wide at its broadest point. The river was "the thread which held them together" (Turney-High 1941:23). The Kootenai's center and most important village was located on the Tobacco Plains, south of the current American-Canadian border. The residents of this village, known as the "People of the Place of the Flying Head," were considered the oldest Kootenai group. From this central village, bands moved northward and southward along the Kootenai River Valley (Taylor 1973:8).

The earliest documented contact between these Native people and pioneer-western culture came in 1806 when explorer David Thompson first visited what is now northwestern Montana. Thompson, an employee of the Northwest Fur Company, built a trading post called the "Kootenai House" in 1807, approximately 10 miles east of the present-day city of Libby (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:2). The explorer wintered in the trading post but returned to Canada the following spring. In the fall of 1808, Thompson returned to what is now northwestern Montana, resumed the trading of furs and skins with the local Native American tribes, and expanded trading operations. Additional trading centers were established in the area, and these activities continued until approximately 1860 when the majority of the fur traders moved on to new territory (Hutchison 1940.:12).

In the 1860's gold was discovered on Libby Creek spurring a new phase in the development in the region which was to become Lincoln County. Gold pans and sluice boxes were commonly used in the earliest mines in the area. The placer method, however, gave way to hard rock mining by the 1880's (Hutchison 1940:12). During the early 1890's the area was further settled and developed with the addition of lumber mills, farms, and the construction of the Great Northern Railroad.

The first saw mill in northwestern Montana was built near Eureka in 1889. Libby's first sawmill was built in the winter of 1891 (Hutchison 1940:14). Numerous other small mills were built in the area before the turn of the century. Farming also took a firm hold during this era. The Tobacco River Valley contained a dozen farms by 1883, and numerous others were established in the region's river valleys in the following years (Hutchison 1940:13). The construction of the Great Northern Railroad in the 1890's greatly improved available transportation and increased access to the developing area. The new railroad line linked the settled East with the communities of Libby, Troy, and

Jennings. For a brief time steamboats flourished on the Kootenai River and formed a link between the railroad at Jennings and the mining camp of Fort Steele in Canada (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:3).

| Table 5-1 Lincoln County Historical Highlights (1800-1995) | | |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| Time Period | Major Events | US Census County Population |
| 1800-1809 | Exploration of the region by Western Frontiersmen First contact between Kootenai Indianans and Anglo fur traders David Thompson establishes "Kootenai House" | Not Available |
| 1810-1860 | Fur trade develops Numerous trading posts established throughout the region | Not Available |
| 1860-1889 | Gold discovered near Libby Creek Development of placer mining and eventually hard rock mining in the area | Not Available |
| 1890-1899 | Construction of first sawmills in northwestern Montana First farms in the Tobacco River Valley Great Northern Railroad built; links Libby with the East Kootenai River steamboat trade between Canada and U.S. | Not Available |
| 1900-1909 | Homestead boom; numerous farms established Lincoln County established by Montana Legislative Assembly | Not Available |
| 1910-1920 | A large forest fire- the "10 Fire"- sweeps area Large saw mills built in Troy Warland and Libby Metal mining boom; Snow Storm Company's mine near Troy established Vermiculite extraction begins near Libby Troy used as major division point for Great Northern Railroad | 3638 (1910) |
| 1920-1929 | Troy abandoned as major division point for railroad Major sawmills close; Libby mill remains in operation Mining efforts essentially stop at Snow Storm Mine | 7797 (1920) |
| 1930-1939 | Slight economic recovery Immigration of "Dust Bowlers" Rise of the "sustained yield" movement | 7089 (1930) |
| 1940-1949 | Discovery of Spruce Bark Beetle infestation in standing timber Beginning of Spruce harvest boom | 7882 (1940) |
| 1950-1959 | Rapid harvest of Spruce trees creates economic boom Numerous large and small scale logging operations flourish | 8693 (1950) |
| 1960-1969 | End of Spruce boom subsequent collapse of timber industry Columbia river Treaty signed between Canada and the U.S. Construction of the Libby Dam begins | 12537 (1960) |
| 1970-1979 | Construction of Libby Dam creates local economic boom Rapid growth in county population | 18063 (1970) |
| 1980-present | Asarco Corporation's Mount Vernon silver and copper mine opens and closes; it was at one point the world's largest producer of silver W.R. Grace Company closes vermiculite mine Libby sawmill purchased by Plum Creek | 17752 (1980) |
| | | 17481 (1990) |

The first decade of the 20th century brought additional growth to the number of farms in the area. Direct connection to the more-populated East by the railroad helped attract many individuals hoping to homestead to northwestern Montana. Almost any area within the recently-established National Forest that could sustain farming was opened to settlement. By 1910 the Census found 298 farms operating in the area (Hutchison 1940:13). This same decade was also important in Lincoln County's political history. On July 1, 1909, Lincoln County was carved from the western portion of Flathead County by an order of the Montana Legislative Assembly.

Despite population growth and political autonomy, Lincoln County was far from being tamed or economically stable in these years. Homesteaders, miners, and loggers suffered from a great fire that swept the forest in 1910. This fire consumed untold acres of timber and settlements in its blaze. The event was devastating, and even today, county residents refer to the "10 Fire" with great reverence. In addition to the effects of natural disasters, early residents of the region experienced calamity and instability in their economic ventures. In 1897, for example, the settlement of Sylvanite, located just north of Troy, reported had a population of 500 and a variety of businesses including a quartz mill, sawmill, post office, brewery, and several hotels, restaurants, stores, and saloons flourished in the community. One year later, the town was completely deserted, and after the 1910 fire, all evidence of its existence was destroyed (Kaufman and Kaufman 1946:11).

Industry in Lincoln County experienced a boom in the 1910's and early 1920's. Timber harvests in the county reached one of its high points during these years. Three large mills were in operation in the area: one in Libby, one in Warland, and one in Troy (Kaufman and Kaufman 1946:11). In 1917, harvests peaked for the period with a total of 137 million board feet of lumber cut by the four largest mills then operating. In 1923, production was still high, as 120 million board feet were cut by the larger mills (Hutchison 1940:14). Metal mining also expanded during these years. Total tonnage of lead, zinc, silver, and gold ore increased from 300 tons in 1916, to 62,000 tons in 1917. Much of this increase was brought about through the efforts of the Snow Storm Consolidated Company at its mines near the town of Troy (Hutchison 1940:12). Troy also benefited and grew as a result of the railroad which used the community as a major division point for its east-west lines (Hutchison 1940:14). Indeed, the whole of Lincoln County was benefiting and growing as a result of the expansions in farm settlement, railroad development, mining activities, and lumber production. This upward trend, however, was to be short-lived.

During the mid-to-late 1920's the Lincoln County economy took a sharp downturn. In 1926, the Great Northern Railroad abandoned Troy as a major division point for its line. More efficient engines and longer running distances eliminated the need for the Troy division point, and the town was subsequently by-passed. In addition, mining efforts were greatly reduced during this period. After 1922 the amount of ore produced by the Snow Storm mines steadily dropped, and in 1928 only 1,500 tons of ore were extracted. Lumber production also diminished as major mills closed in Troy, Rexford, and Eureka,

leaving only the Libby mill in production. To further the economic blows to the region, homestead farm settlements declined when much of the land that had been occupied in the previous decades proved incapable of sustained agricultural use (Hutchison 1940:15). These hardships resulted in the departure of many individuals who left in search of work and stability elsewhere. The 1930 census revealed that Lincoln County's population declined by approximately 9 percent (708 residents) since the previous census.

Lincoln County did experience some economic recovery in the 1930's. During this period, Christmas tree farming and vermiculite mining grew, and a resurgence in the price of gold also revived mining to a degree. In addition, Lincoln County's population recovered during this decade. Driven by the intense drought of the era, many families fled the Great Plains and Dust Bowl for the relative lushness of Lincoln County's river valleys (Hutchison 1940:16). Many of these new residents became subsistence farmers. A current resident of the area described this distinct period in northwestern Montana's history and its immigrants as follows:

" . . . Then came '28-'29. The drought in eastern Montana and North Dakota, people just moved out in exodus. This was the first green they saw when they came: north Idaho, Coeur D'Alene country, and western Montana. Usually they stopped. Man, any place that was a place to squat there was somebody. The relief, the WPA, and so forth, perpetuated that. They didn't move on as soon as they saw it was impossible [to farm what they did elsewhere]. . . Things kept getting bigger again. Times were hard. The only thing kept people here was that dole, we'll say, except for a very few. There were some . . . The Elk Creek had 4 families from east Helena . . . They could make it pretty good with big families. The kids all milked and so forth. They did all right."

These new residents increased the number of farms in the Lincoln County to approximately 700--an all-time high--in 1935 (Hutchison 1940:16). The number of farms quickly dropped as economic conditions improved elsewhere, and the "dust-bowlers" moved on.

It is interesting to note that in the 1930's the "sustained-yield" movement arose and gained prominence as an issue in Lincoln County. The movement supported the concept of managing forest resources with the goals of preventing excessive timber cutting, and insuring the forest and lumber industry with a continuous supply of timber (Kaufman and Kaufman 1946:11). In light of the calamities the county's residents had experienced during the 1920's and 30's, it is not surprising that a desire to carefully plan the long-term use of resources would arise.

Despite well-laid forest management plans, Lincoln County soon experienced an unforeseen change. In 1948 the Spruce Bark Beetle was discovered in standing timber. This discovery prompted managers to modify the harvest schedule in order to salvage the spruce. During the 1950's logging and lumber manufacturing increased remarkably.

One company alone, the J. Neils Lumber Company, harvested 334 million board feet of spruce from 1950 to 1956, inclusive (Lincoln County n.d.). Small-scale logging operations, known as Gypo loggers, also thrived during this period of rapid harvests. The county economy was strong and employment opportunities were abundant (Lincoln County n.d.). The County population increased by almost 4,000 between the 1940 and 1950 censuses.

By the late 1950's the threatened spruce supplies were nearing exhaustion, and the lumber industry took a downturn. Harvesters and processors, small and large alike, were again faced with a limited timber supply. Many local timber businesses failed as a result (Lincoln County n.d.).

The construction of the Libby Dam, which began in 1966, provided another economic boom for Lincoln County. A result of the Columbia River Treaty between the United States and Canada, the Libby dam provided numerous jobs for county residents. The population rapidly increased as individuals attracted by work opportunities associated with the dam moved, many with families, to Libby and the surrounding area. During the dam's construction, as much as 22.6 percent of the county's total workers were employed at the dam (Lincoln County n.d.). According to census data, Lincoln County's population increased by 5,526 persons (44%) between 1960 and 1970. This growth brought the total population of the county to 18,063 -- a population level unmatched prior to or since the dam's construction.

The 1980 and 1990 censuses have both shown slight decreases in Lincoln County's population. Since the completion of the Libby Dam, declines in mining, timber harvesting, and lumber and wood product manufacturing have weighed heavily upon the county's economy. For example, Asarco Incorporated operated the large and successful Mount Vernon mine south of Troy to extract primarily silver and copper. Lead and gold were extracted in smaller quantities. Using the room-and-pillar method, this mine was said to be, at one point, the world's largest producer of silver. In 1991, it was the fifth-largest silver-producing, 16th largest copper-producing, and 15th largest lead-producing mine in the country (Minarik and McCulloch 1992:324-325); however, despite the mines previous productivity, Asarco Corporation recently closed the Mount Vernon Mine. Vermiculite mining activity undertaken at the Rainy Creek Mine (near Libby) by the W.R. Grace Company was likewise once known as the largest of its kind. Due to a decline in demand of the asbestiform minerals being extracted, this mine was closed in 1990. While the area still holds the promise of rich mineral deposits, no large mineral mining operations are currently active within Lincoln County. Sand and gravel is extracted from areas in central Lincoln County for use in construction. Environmental concerns such as water quality, grizzly bear habitat, and land use have curtailed recent mineral exploration and mine development. Environmental concerns have also affected the timber industry. Timber production in the 1980's and 90's has undergone a series of fluctuations. Perhaps indicative of hard times in the timber industry, the sawmill in Libby, which is the largest in the area, has changed corporate owners several times in the recent past. Most recently, the Plumb Creek Corporation purchased the mill from the Champion Corporation.

5.1.2 Boundaries, Geography, and Land Use

Residents have observed that Lincoln County is one of the "last best places" in the contiguous United States because of its physical geography and social climate. Lincoln County is located between 48° and 49° latitude north and 114.5° and 116° longitude west. Its total land area is about 3,660 square miles (2,377,600 square acres). The Canadian province of British Columbia is directly to the north of Lincoln County, the Idaho panhandle is to the west, directly east is Flathead County, and to the south is Sanders County.

"This is a wild place, where there are wolves and bears, and places that just don't see many people. Even the people here are different, they aren't the tame types that live in the city. I guess you could say they are sort of wild too."

The topography of the county is characterized by several major mountain ranges, long river valleys, numerous small creeks, and Lake Kootenai. Of these topographic features, mountains are perhaps the most dominant. In the northern portion of the county, the Whitefish Range provides a striking backdrop for the Tobacco Valley, one of the primary settlement areas and the principle cattle range and farm land of the county. In the eastern portion of the county is the Salish Range. The Cabinet Range, in the south, contains the only wilderness area in the county. In the northwestern portion of the county is the Purcell Range, which is topped by Northwest Peak, elevation 7705 feet. The river valleys carved between the mountains in Lincoln County provide the major areas for settlement. The Yaak River Valley, frequently referred to as simply "the Yaak", is in the northwest corner of the county and contains a small population, as does the Bull River Valley which is in the southwest corner of the county. Libby, the county seat, is in a valley alongside the Kootenai River, southwest of the intersection of Fisher River and the Kootenai, just below the Libby Dam. In the north portion of the county are the Tobacco Plains which stretch northwest toward Canada and southeast toward Whitefish. Lake Kootenai, the county's largest water feature, was created as a result of damming the Kootenai River. The lake extends from north of the Canadian border in a southerly direction to the dam 13 miles from Libby.

A number of U.S. and Montana state highways pass through Lincoln County and connect the county's communities with one another, as well as with outside areas. U.S. Highway 93, in the northern portion of the county, connects Eureka with Canada to the north and Whitefish to the southeast. State Route 37 travels along the Kootenai River in a southerly direction from Eureka, and intersects with U.S. 2 in Libby approximately 67 miles away. U.S. 2 is a major roadway in the central and southern portions of the county. This highway connects Libby and Troy with Bonners Ferry to the west and Kalispell to the east. Near Troy, State Route 56 travels through the Bull River Valley and eventually connects with State Route 200 in Sanders County. Sandpoint, Thompson Falls, and Missoula are accessible using this route.

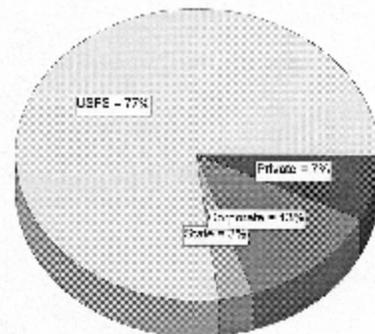
Lincoln County is noted for its natural resources. Among the most notable of these is timber: about 95 percent of the land area in the county is forested with various species

of conifers and deciduous trees (Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.). Conifers such as spruce, lodgepole pine, white pine, tamarack, and cedar as well as deciduous trees such as hemlock have forested the valleys and hillsides of the county. The county has ores that have been mined since the early days of settlement. The most important of these mining resources are gold, silver, and vermiculite. The water resources (rivers, lakes, reservoirs) of the county have been noted earlier in reference to county geography. Additionally, the county has a wide array of wildlife, including moose, elk, white-tail deer, caribou, black bears, grizzly bears, wolves, lynx, coyotes, bob cats, a host of additional fur-bearing mammals, bird life, and a variety of fish species. Several of the big game species present are valued as food sources for many persons in the county. Given the combination of mountains, trees, rivers, and lakes, it is not surprising that scenic beauty is an oft-noted natural resource of the county. The Cabinet Mountains, the Northwest Peak area of the Yaak Valley, the Ten Lakes Scenic Area, and Lake Kooconusa are only a few of the locally-valued scenic areas.

Lincoln County land use and ownership is also remarkable. Of the total land area in the county the U.S. Government owns 77 percent, the State of Montana 3 percent, corporate ownership (timber, mining, railroad) accounts for 13 percent, and the remaining 7 percent is in private holdings (Lincoln County Department of Env. Planning n.d.:96).

The lands owned by the Federal Government are almost entirely within the Kootenai National Forest. This Forest contains a total of about 2,245,000 acres, of which 2,163,000 (~96%) is forested. The ratio of public to private lands and the dominance of USFS ownership of the public lands is an important characteristic of the county environment. This significant county characteristic gives Lincoln County residents a direct stake in the substance of USFS decisions to manage the Kootenai National Forest.

Lincoln County Land Ownership



Throughout Lincoln County's history and development the major uses of land has included timber, agricultural production, and mining. Of these uses, the most dominant continues to be timber. The immense amount of forested lands and their extensive usage for timber, recreation, and other purposes is readily apparent in examining the county. On much of the available non-forested land, farming and ranching is pursued. Agricultural activities are located primarily in northern Lincoln County's Tobacco Valley. The characterization of agriculture activities today is much the same as it was when the Kaufman's did in their study fifty years ago:

"Agriculture in the area is characterized by either part-time or subsistence farming. Farming is confined to the narrow valleys and is limited by the

soil, short growing season and lack of rainfall. There are approximately 275 farms in the community, but only one operator in every seven (an estimate) makes the majority or all of his income from farming. Only about one-tenth of the average farm is plowable. Of the non-forest land in farms, probably 80 to 90 percent is either in hay or pasture and most of the remainder is in small grains. The chief source of cash income is the sale of beef or cattle" (Kaufman and Kaufman 1946: 16).

Census figures indicate that there were a total of 534 farms in Lincoln County in 1940. Today there are approximately 219 stockgrowers countywide, with about 55 (of mostly smaller size) in southern Lincoln County. Agriculture is currently the principal occupation of approximately 45.2 percent of all stockgrowers in the county. The average ranch size is about 229 acres with the largest ranch being about 1000 acres. There are about 4 major ranchers in the county who have herds between 150 and 300 head of cattle. It is interesting to note that the amount of private lands used in agriculture in Lincoln County has been declining over the past 5 years. According to the U.S. Census of Agriculture, the percent of total Lincoln County lands used in agriculture decreased from 2.7 percent in 1987 to 2.1 percent in 1992. Although this change may seem insignificant when considered as percent of the county's overall land mass, the actual reduction in farm land is substantial: over 11,167 acres have been removed from agricultural use. This reduction in acreage and other agricultural issues such as grazing on National Forest rangelands is noted in discussions later in this chapter.

In addition to timber and agriculture, mining has historically been a major land use. Currently there are no major mining operations in the county, although the Noranda Company is exploring the possibility of developing gold and silver resources in the south portions of the county in or around the Cabinet Wilderness. A large vermiculite mine near Libby and silver and copper mine south of Troy are each now closed.

5.1.3 Public Facilities and Amenities

The availability of public facilities and amenities has a direct impact on the well-being and general quality of life of county residents. Lincoln County's landscape and sparse settlement has led to a concentration of public facilities in the communities of Libby, Troy, and Eureka.

Lincoln County is served by 10 elementary schools, one middle school, two junior high schools, and three high schools. Of these, three elementary schools, the single middle school, and one high school are in Libby. Both Troy and Eureka have an elementary school, junior high, and high school. The remaining five schools are distributed throughout the rural parts of the county and provide education from Kindergarten through eighth grade (Office of the Lincoln County School District Superintendent, 1995 direct communication). In addition to public schools, two private schools are located in Libby. While many of these schools have student libraries, there is also a public county library. The main branch of the Lincoln County Library is located in Libby; branch offices are located in both Troy and Eureka.

Water sources within the county are varied. According to the 1990 Census, about 42 percent of the county's housing units are supplied with water by public utilities or a similar private operation. Wells provide approximately 47 percent of the housing units with water, and 11 percent are supplied by other sources. Sewage disposal is also accomplished through a number of means. The 1990 Census reports that septic tanks and cesspools are used by the majority of households (72%) for the disposal of sewage. About 24 percent of the housing units in Lincoln County use public facilities for waste disposal, and 4 percent use some other means (US Census 1990). Libby and other parts of the county are supplied with power by the Pacific Power and Light Company.

Health care in the county is available, but major medical service is generally sought outside the county. Lincoln County has approximately 10 doctors and 6 dentists. St. John's Lutheran Hospital maintains 29 beds and provides the region's residents with a number of medical services and emergency care. The hospital's facilities are supplemented by helicopter service to larger hospitals in neighboring regions. Nursing care is provided in the county by the Libby Care Center (Libby Area Chamber of Commerce n.d.).

Public transportation services to the area are limited. Lincoln County is serviced by several major roadways and by rail service, but there is no regularly scheduled air service. Via Libby, rail routes provide public and freight transportation through Lincoln County: Amtrak has two scheduled trains per day, one traveling east, the other west; and the Burlington Northern Railway travels through the county as well. Regarding other public transportation, there is no regularly scheduled bus service in the county. Locally available truck freight service is also limited. For example, in the Libby area truck freight service is confined to two-day service to Spokane, one-day service to Kalispell, and three-day service to Missoula. Airports exist in Libby and Eureka, but are only serviced by charter or private planes. Spokane, Kalispell, and to some extent Missoula, are the airport gateways to Lincoln County.

Residents of Lincoln County have access to a number of information sources. Two newspapers are published within the county, but daily papers from such cities as Missoula and Spokane are readily available as well. In the southern portions of the county the Western News and the Montanian are widely read newspapers; the Tobacco Valley News is popular in the northern portion of the county. Television stations broadcasting from Spokane and Kalispell reach most of the county. Cable television services are also available in some parts of the county. Radio stations broadcasting from within Lincoln County include KLCB on 1230 Khz, and KTNY on FM 101.7. Radio stations broadcasting from other communities in Montana as well as from Idaho and Washington can also be heard in Lincoln County.

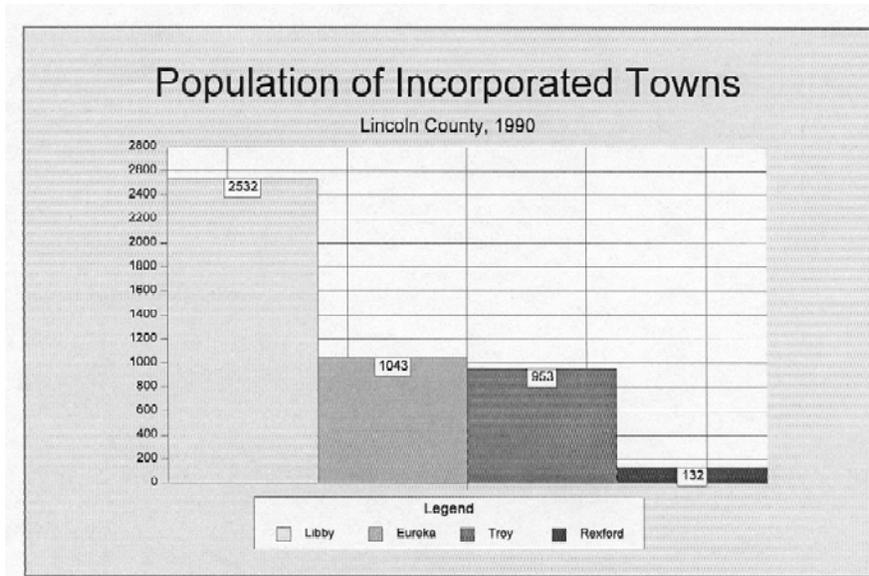
Recreational opportunities and tourist attractions are of growing importance within the county. Among these are several annual festivals to celebrate the region's history, culture, and heritage. These festivals include Logger Days in July, the Libby Arts Festival, the Libby Crafts Festival in November, Hot August Nights, Rendezvous Days

in March, and Nordicfest in September (Lincoln County Economic Development Council n.d.). Additional recreational opportunities found in the county include skiing, golfing, sightseeing, camping, and fishing. Specifically, the Turner Mountain Ski Area, 22 miles from Libby, provides alpine skiing with 2 lifts and approximately 8 runs. Cross-country skiing can be done in the winter on the a Cabinet View Country Club's 9-hole golf course and in areas throughout the Kootenai National Forest. Lake Koocanusa and the regions many rivers and streams offer a variety of fishing opportunities, including Montana's best Kokanee Salmon fishing.

Local food, clothing, and supply shops exist in Libby, Troy, and Eureka and provide for all the basic needs within the county's communities. Residents often travel to Spokane, Sandpoint, Kalispell, or Missoula for more abundant goods and services.

5.1.4 Settlement and Population

This section provides an orientation to major socioeconomic trends and characteristics of Lincoln County by reviewing settlement patterns and population trends. This discussion relies on 1990 census numbers. However, it should be noted that updated 1994 population estimations indicate that the Lincoln County population is increasing.

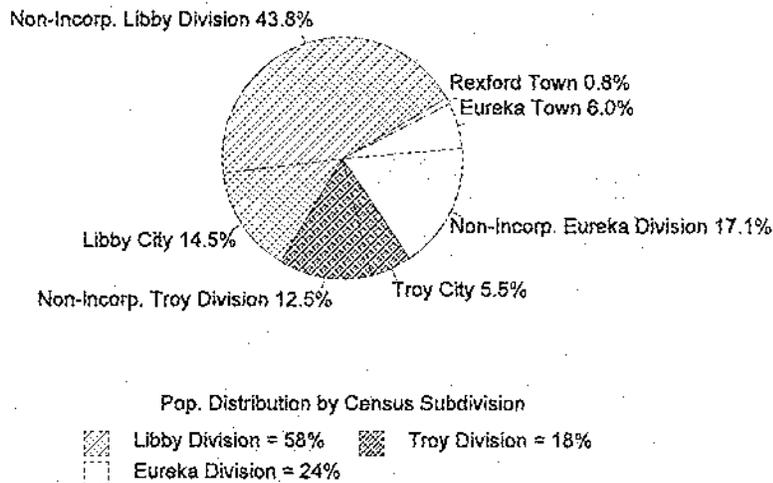


As noted previously, there are two major areas of settlement in Lincoln County: the northern area composed of Eureka, Trego, Rexford, Fortine, and Stryker and the southern area composed of Libby, Troy, Yaak, and the Bull River Valley. The most recent census data indicates that 13,315 persons, or about 76 percent of the total Lincoln County population, live in the Libby-Troy area. The distribution of Lincoln County population by incorporated community and county subdivision, according to the 1990 census, is depicted in the following pie chart. This chart and the accompanying bar chart indicate that the city of Libby, population 2,532, is the largest population center within the county. The second-largest is the town of Eureka with 1043 residents, and third is the town of Troy with 953 residents. While each of these incorporated

communities comprise at least one-quarter of their respective census subdivision populations, the majority of the county population resides in unincorporated areas. In both the north and south areas of the county, settlement tends to be in the valleys carved by waterways such as the Tobacco River, Pinkham Creek, Grave Creek, Fortine Creek, Fisher River, Bull River, and Yaak River. There is also settlement in the west Kootenai area where an estimated 300 people reside.

Lincoln County Population Distribution

County Subdivisions/Incorporated Areas



To further investigate the differences between areas in the county, census subdivision data is looked at more closely here. As seen in population distribution pie chart above, Lincoln County has 3 census subdivisions: Libby Division, Troy Division, and Eureka Division. The following tables display both similarities and differences between the population, housing, and income characteristics of these subdivisions. It should be noted that these tables are based on the most recent census data. Other distinctions between the division or community populations may have developed since 1990. Ethnographic data, discussed later in this chapter, indicate informants' perceptions regarding recent trends. It is interesting to note the numerous similarities in the data presented for the subdivisions. Visible differences, however, are found between the divisions in terms of age distributions, historical residence, and income levels. For example, the percent of Troy division's population accounted for by individuals under the age of 5 was smaller than for that of the other divisions. The percentage of Eureka division residents that had lived in a different county in 1985 was slightly higher than for the other two divisions. Additionally, per capita income, median household income, and median family income were uniformly higher in Libby division than in other county divisions. A similar discussion of county subdivision economic characteristics is included later in this section.

**Table 5-2 Lincoln County Subdivision Population by Age, 1990
by Percentage of Subdivision Population**

| Age Cohort | County Subdivision | | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------------|------------|---------------|-----------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| | Libby Division | | Troy Division | | Eureka Division | | |
| | Div. Total | Libby City | Div. Total | Troy City | Div. Total | Eureka Town | Rexford Town |
| Under 5 | 7.2% | 6.4% | 3.8% | 7.7% | 8.2% | 8.2% | 7.3% |
| 5 to 17 | 21.4% | 19.8% | 25.9% | 28.2% | 23.7% | 19.1% | 27.0% |
| 18 to 24 | 7.1% | 8.3% | 4.3% | 5.0% | 5.5% | 7.9% | 5.1% |
| 25 to 34 | 14.1% | 12.1% | 10.9% | 13.3% | 14.5% | 17.2% | 11.7% |
| 35 to 44 | 15.3% | 13.0% | 20.7% | 17.4% | 17.2% | 13.0% | 12.4% |
| 45 to 54 | 14.3% | 12.3% | 11.2% | 9.7% | 9.8% | 9.5% | 23.4% |
| 55 to 64 | 6.6% | 6.9% | 4.8% | 2.9% | 6.2% | 7.7% | 5.8% |
| 65 and older | 11.9% | 20.1% | 12.7% | 13.2% | 12.3% | 14.0% | 7.3% |

US Bureau of the Census, STF 3A Column totals may not total 100 due to rounding.

| Table 5-3 Lincoln County Subdivision Education, Housing, and Income Characteristics by Percentage of Subdivision Population | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|------------|
| Characteristics | | County Subdivision | | |
| | | Libby Division | Troy Division | Eureka Div |
| Percent of persons 25 years & over with a high school diploma or higher | | 74.2% | 71.9% | 72.1% |
| Percent of persons 25 years & over with a bachelor's degree or higher | | 12.9% | 12.9% | 11.4% |
| Percent of Persons 5 years and over who in 1985 lived in: | same house | 57.2% | 59.4% | 53.5% |
| | different house; same county | 24.0% | 23.3% | 22.8% |
| | different county | 6.5% | 3.7% | 9.1% |
| | different state | 12.1% | 12.9% | 13.6% |
| Percent of Housing Units Built in Year: | 1985-90 | 5.8% | 8.7% | 14.5% |
| | 1980-84 | 10.8% | 18.8% | 14.4% |
| | 1970-79 | 27.7% | 21.7% | 26.6% |
| | 1960-69 | 22.3% | 13.6% | 11.0% |
| | 1950-59 | 13.3% | 12.7% | 10.7% |
| | 1940-49 | 8.9% | 5.5% | 3.3% |
| | 1939 or earlier | 11.0% | 19.0% | 19.5% |
| Per Capita Income | | \$10298 | \$9,480 | \$8,881 |
| Median Household Income | | \$22,097 | \$18,333 | \$20,000 |
| Median Family Income | | \$26,420 | \$21,467 | \$22,521 |
| Median Non-Family Income | | \$10,870 | \$10,566 | \$11,593 |
| Percent of Persons Below Poverty Level | | 12.6% | 14.7% | 17.5% |
| Source: US Bureau of the Census, STF3A | | | | |

Population trends within Lincoln County as a whole are noteworthy, as indicated by Table 5-4 and the bar chart entitled "Population Trends, 1910-1990." The county has shown a steady rise in population from 1910 through 1970, an element consistent with the overall population trend within the state of Montana. The population in Montana continued to rise in 1980 and 1990, while in Lincoln County, population began to marginally decrease with the 1980 census--a trend that was also reflected in the 1990 census. The sub-total rows in Table 5-4 also indicate a similar trend for the distribution

of population in the incorporated towns shown in the table for the northern and southern portions of the county.

Population Trends, 1910-1990

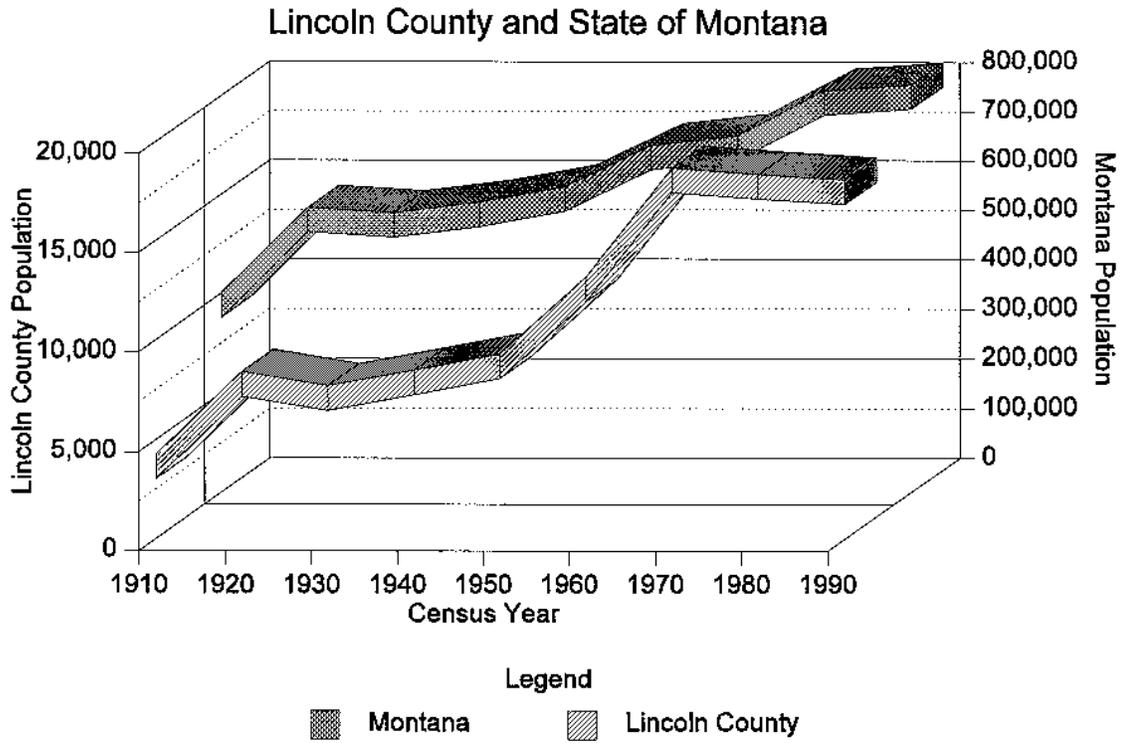


Table 5-4 Total Population by Year, 1910-1990

| Census Region | Year | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 1910 | 1920 | 1930 | 1940 | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 |
| Montana | 376,053 | 548,889 | 537,606 | 559,456 | 591,024 | 674,767 | 694,409 | 786,690 | 799,065 |
| Lincoln County | 3,638 | 7,797 | 7,089 | 7,882 | 8,693 | 12,537 | 18,063 | 17,752 | 17,481 |
| Troy | 483 | | 498 | 796 | 770 | 855 | 1,046 | 1,088 | 953 |
| Libby | 630 | | 1,752 | 1,837 | 2,401 | 2,828 | 3,286 | 2,748 | 2,532 |
| South Sub Total | 1,113 | | 2,250 | 2,633 | 3,171 | 3,683 | 4,332 | 3,836 | 3,485 |
| Eureka | 603 | | 680 | 912 | 929 | 1,229 | 1,195 | 1,119 | 1,043 |
| Rexford | No record | | 329 | 274 | 248 | no record | 243 | 130 | 132 |
| North Sub Total | 603 | | 1,009 | 1,186 | 1,177 | 1,229 | 1,438 | 1,249 | 1,175 |

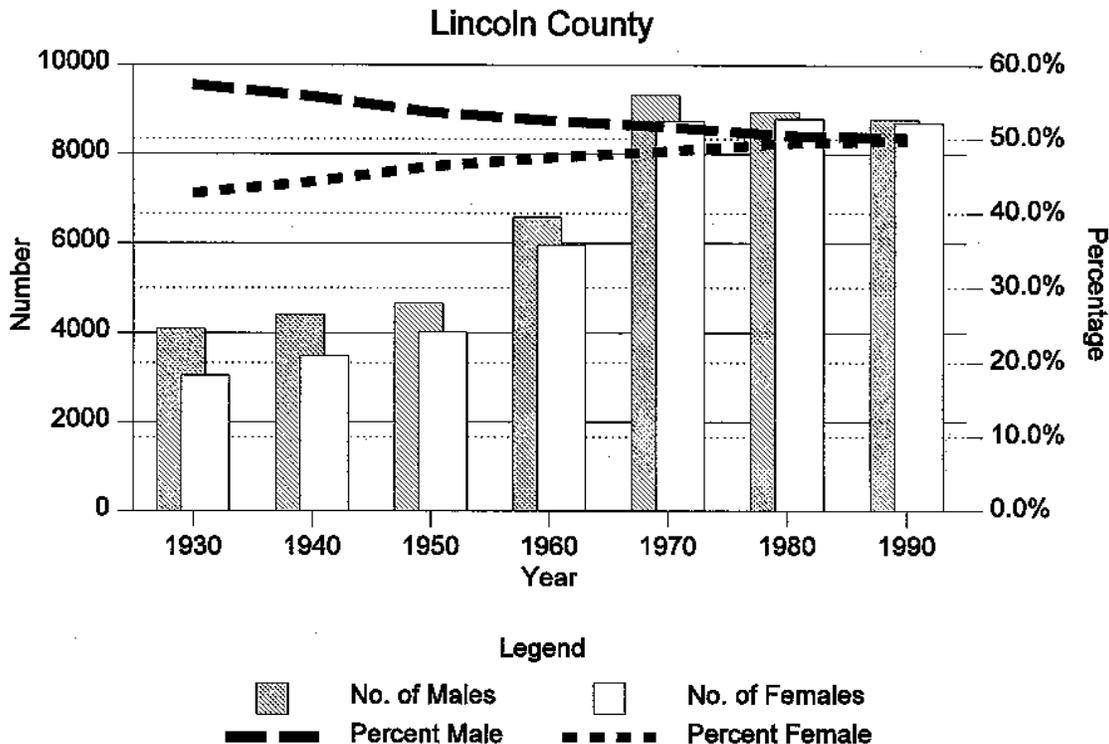
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Decennial Censuses 1910 - 1990. Blank cells indicate missing or non-available data.

Several changes in Lincoln County housing characteristics occurred between 1980 and 1990. For example, census data indicates that despite an overall decrease in the county's population, there was a 14 percent increase in the total number of housing units during this time. The number of occupied housing units also increased by 10%; their average value increased 4.5 percent from \$42,700 to \$48,900 (less than the state's 20.6 percent increase in the median value of owner-occupied homes). Despite these increases the total number of persons living in Lincoln County households decreased by 1.6 percent, and average persons per housing unit decreased by 10.7 percent. In short, it appears that in 1990, there were more households with fewer people living in them than was the case in 1980. This may be due, in part, to a net influx of non-families and retirees. These variances indicate new patterns in the region's demographics, resident living situations, and settlement patterns. There are several other trends in the population that are noteworthy, including the age and gender composition of the county population.

The figure entitled "Distribution of Population by Gender" displays Lincoln County's population distribution by gender since 1930. This data is based on decennial censuses. As shown in the figure, the proportion of males and females within Lincoln County's population has converged over this time span. The declining trend exhibited by the male population proportions is indicative of early Lincoln County's frontier atmosphere and economic dependence on a primarily-male workforce in industries such as trapping, mining, and timber. The development of the region and the establishment of towns led to the growth of the female population of the County. The construction of the Libby Dam

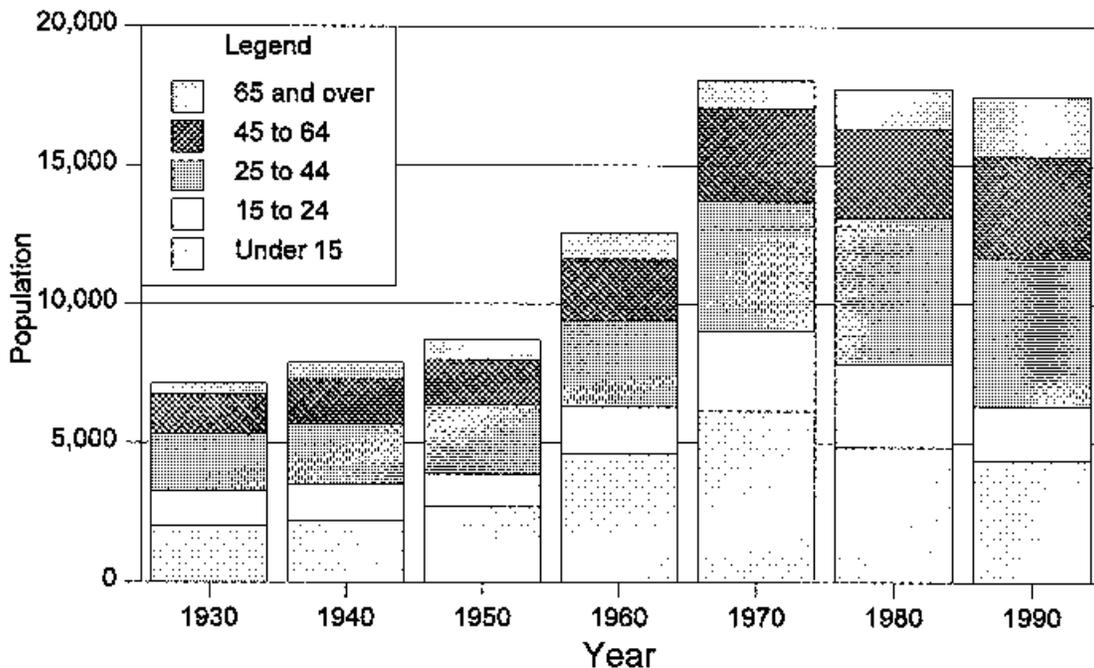
in the late 1960's created numerous jobs and attracted new residents to the county. It is likely that a large percentage of these new residents were single male laborers. The end of the Dam construction and the lack of other employment opportunities may have influenced such unattached males to leave the county, hence the decline in male population recorded in the 1980 census. The proportion of male and female populations did not become equal until the 1980 census.

Distribution of Population by Gender



The following figure displays Lincoln County's population distribution by age cohort over time. This data is also based on the US Bureau of the Census decennial censuses. In examining this figure two features are noteworthy: 1) the recent decrease in the size of youngest cohorts, and 2) the recent increase in the size of the two oldest cohorts. In 1970, the group of individuals under the age of 15 accounted for about 34 percent of the county population. In 1980 the same age group declined to approximately 27 percent of the population, and in 1990 the trend continued as the age group dropped to 25 percent of the population. The cohort of individuals between the ages of 15 and 24 was similarly reduced by about 5 percent over the same period. Older population groups within the county (individuals between 45 and 64 years of age, and those 65 and over) have grown more quickly in recent years than have other cohorts. The group of individuals 65 years of age and over accounted for 5.5 percent of the population in 1970; the same age group accounted for 8 percent of the county population in 1980, and 12 percent of the population in 1990. Ethnographic data suggest that this cohort may have increased

Lincoln County Total Population by Age Cohort and Year



in size since the 1990 census, but statistical information is not available at the present time to support this data. Similarly, the percentage of the county population accounted for by the group of individuals between the ages of 45 and 64 increased about 3 percent between the 1980 and 1990 censuses. Numerous informants indicated that this increase in the older population may be due to an increase in retired individuals building homes and settling in the county, a situation which has also affected private land values. Although no current statistical data is available, informants in the real estate and appraisal businesses provided the following generalizations about land values in the area.

Recent land values in northwestern Montana are reported to have changed in scope in both rural areas and towns. The driving forces behind these changes are limited land availability and an influx of a new residents. New immigrants to the north Lincoln County-Eureka region were typified as financially-stable, early-retired individuals 50-55 years of age or older from the state of Washington who wanted to buy 5-to-100 acre parcels of land outside of town on which to build a home. Similarly, the Libby area was said to have "had quite a boom in land values" which was primarily attributed to an influx of people "mostly from out of state, retirees, with a little to spend. They've discovered northwestern Montana . . ." The Eureka area, although less than 70 miles from Libby,

"They've discovered northwest Montana and want a chunk of it, and there's not too many chunks available."

was described as becoming "more of a retirement community" than its southwestern counterpart because, according to an informant, "Libby has more of an active economy. . . You can't afford to move here [to Eureka] unless you have money. . . there is no economy."

Private land values throughout the county have reportedly risen significantly in the most recent years; therefore, changes in community demographics and land values may have occurred since the 1990 census.

"You only need to look back a few years . . . you'll see the same thing looking back 3-5 years as you will 10 years . . . In 3 years a lot has doubled."

For example, an informant expressed that the average price of a house in Libby only 5 years ago was between \$45,000 and \$50,000; today \$70,000-\$80,000 houses are more common. Likewise, the lower-end range of housing costs has risen. According to an informant, there were many houses for sale 5 years ago in Libby for \$18,000-\$35,000, "and you hardly ever see one on the market now for less than \$35,000 -- there's a few in the 20s, but they're fixer uppers, usually old and very small."

The county has also experienced increases in the cost of land in close proximity to scenic and recreation areas. The highest priced lands are those adjacent to federal lands. Some properties near federal lands have doubled in value in recent years. Likewise, property close to lakes, creeks, and rivers has increased in value. Reportedly, there is "a big demand for water properties" in the county. It was estimated that "land values on the rivers have tripled in the last 4-5 years, and on the lakes they've increased even more." Informants stated that as waterfront property on the Flathead Lake and around Kalispell increased to \$100 per foot of waterfront (where there are some million-dollar summer homes), people began looking for lakes and waterfront property elsewhere in the region. This has caused the cost of property around Bull Lake, for example, to increase dramatically: some one-acre lots on Bull lake that sold for \$10,000 ten years ago are now listed for as much as \$80,000.

Because federal, state, and corporate land ownership within the county accounts for over 90% of the county's land mass, "private individuals don't have a lot of land, so it brings a premium price." Property prices are, on average, lower in surrounding regions, for example in the Idaho panhandle, or in Sanders and Mineral Counties, where more private land is available.

"It is difficult to find rural land that hasn't been logged over or reverted back to (National) Forest . . . Water front land is getting to be scarce, creeks and all. There are some areas available, but they are so remote – I can think of a place up on Callahan Creek, but you can only get in there part of the year."

In addition to new residents moving to the area, study participants describe "a certain turnover" of residents which may be attributed partially to local residents who move out of the county because they could not afford to upgrade or buy property. An additional phenomena affecting Lincoln County population turn over was described by another

study participant: "Quite a few [new residents] come from out of state, they tend to come for a change of lifestyle. . . and in a couple of years, they end up moving on [because of lack of jobs]. . . The economy is not too strong here. Mills have shut down, mines have shut down. . . many of the jobs available are minimum-wage service type jobs, so people can't even afford to pay rent on an apartment. . . . \$18-20,000 is considered a good income here, and those [higher-paying jobs] tend to go to the people who have been here a while."

In sum, Lincoln County has experienced changes in its population and settlement patterns in recent years. The county's total population has decreased from its peak in 1970. Age distribution within the population has changed as well: whereas the county's population below the age of 25 has steadily decreased since the 1970 census, the population above the age of 65 has steadily increased. Following a general decrease in the county's male population, gender distribution within the county's total population has become nearly equal. Additional changes in Lincoln County include a rise in land values in recent years. Ethnographic sources indicate that the price of land in areas near water and other scenic areas of the county has doubled and tripled in value in the past 5 years. Over the course of the last decade, an increase in the number of housing units in the county and a decrease in the amount of farmland indicates that new housing construction may be building in areas that, until recently, were used for agriculture. All of these elements of change in Lincoln County can be interpreted as indicators of socioeconomic transition. An examination of economic characteristics and trends provides additional indicators of transition.

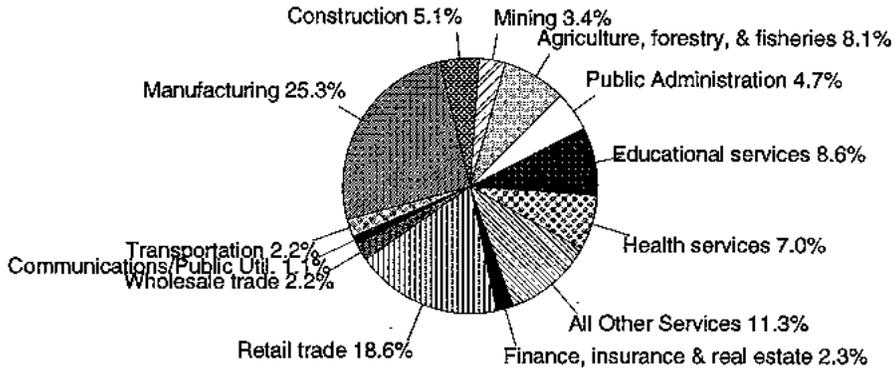
5.1.5 Economic Characteristics and Trends

The economy of Lincoln County has always been dominated by the development of natural resources. The trend in the recent past, however, is toward decreased production of timber and minerals and an awareness that a different economic future exists for the county that may not depend so heavily on natural resources. The economic characteristics which serve as context for this trend are examined in this section.

In the recent past the major private employers in the county were mostly those that developed natural resources, especially timber and mining resources. However, the closing of the Asarco mine south of Troy and the W.R. Grace vermiculite mine near Libby resulted in the loss of more than 600 jobs. Similarly, the sale of the Libby mill by Champion Incorporated to Plumas Creek resulted in a downsizing of that operation as the plant shifted to plywood production. The pie charts below depict Lincoln County employment by industrial sector and class of worker in 1990 (U.S. Bureau of the Census). It is likely, given the recent closures or downsizing of mines and mills, that mining, forestry, and manufacturing industries do not currently employ as much of the county workforce as they did in 1990.

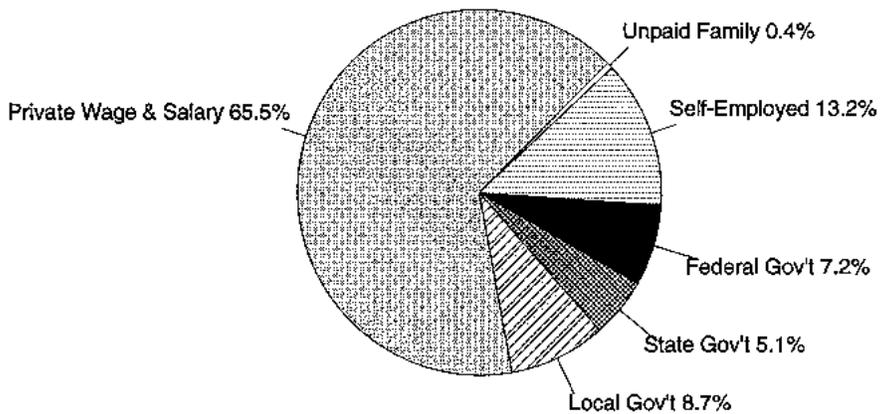
Industry of Employed Persons, 1990

Lincoln Co. Employed Persons Age 16+



Class of Workers, 1990

Lincoln Co. Employed Persons Age 16+

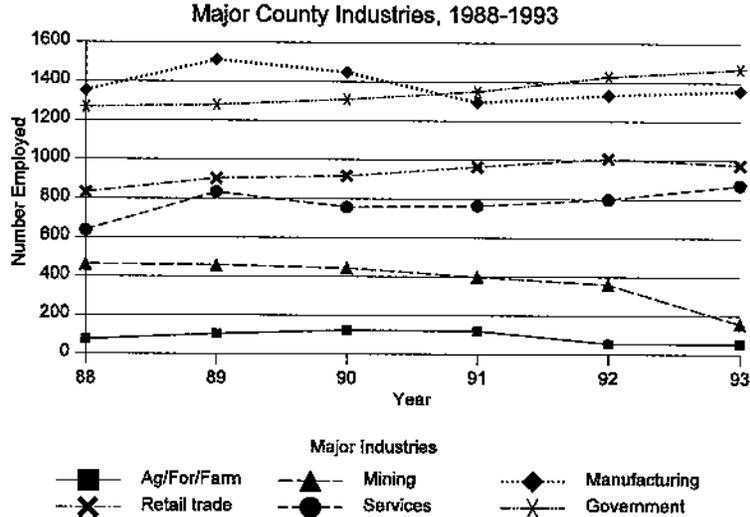


A comparison of employment characteristics by census subdivision (see Table 5-5) reveals that there is much similarity between the northern and southern portions of the county in terms of the proportions of population employed in most occupational and industrial categories. There are, however, a few notable differences. For example, the proportion of the Eureka Division's population employed in farming/forestry occupations (10.5%) and in the agricultural/forestry industry (13.1%) was approximately 5 percent higher than in either the Libby or the Troy Divisions. The Troy Division had a larger proportion of the population in service occupations (18.3%) and in the mining industry (8.7%) than was exhibited in the Libby or Eureka Divisions. The Libby and Eureka Divisions had the same unemployment rate (16.7%) in 1990, which was 3.8 percent higher than that in the Troy Division. In addition, a smaller proportion of the population age 16 and over is in the labor force in the Troy Division (53.7%); the labor force is almost 62 percent of the population in the Libby Division and almost 61 percent in the Eureka Division.

| Table 5-5 Lincoln County Subdivision Employment Characteristics by Percentage of Division Population | | | | |
|---|----------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Characteristic | | Libby Division | Troy Division | Eureka Division |
| Number of Persons at least 16 years old | | 7,646 | 2,272 | 2,972 |
| No. of Employed Persons at least 16 years old | | 3,936 | 1,064 | 1,500 |
| Percent of Persons 16 and over | in Labor Force | 61.9% | 53.7% | 60.6% |
| | Unemployed | 16.7% | 12.9% | 16.7% |
| Occupation of Employment | | | | |
| Executive administrative and managerial | | 6.9% | 7.7% | 12.9% |
| Professional specialty | | 15.4% | 14.6% | 9.1% |
| Technicians and related support | | 2.6% | 1.8% | 1.3% |
| Sales | | 9.9% | 8.9% | 12.9% |
| Administrative support including clerical | | 11.6% | 6.0% | 8.9% |
| Private household service | | 0.4% | 0% | 0.1% |
| Protective service | | 2.1% | 0% | 2.3% |
| Service occupant except protective & household | | 12.3% | 18.3% | 11.4% |
| Farming forestry and fishing | | 4.1% | 6.2% | 10.5% |
| Precision production craft and repair | | 10.8% | 15.5% | 11.6% |
| Machine operators assemblers & inspectors | | 8.5% | 7.8% | 6.7% |
| Transportation and material moving | | 7.9% | 8.1% | 4.9% |
| Handlers equipment cleaners helpers & laborers | | 7.5% | 5.5% | 7.3% |

| Characteristic | Libby Division | Troy Division | Eureka Division |
|---|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Industry of Employment | | | |
| Agriculture forestry and fisheries | 6.1% | 8.3% | 13.1% |
| Mining | 3.2% | 8.7% | 0.3% |
| Construction | 4.6% | 6.4% | 5.7% |
| Manufacturing non-durable goods | 1.7% | 0.3% | 2.1% |
| Manufacturing durable goods | 25.1% | 22.2% | 21.4% |
| Transportation | 2.2% | 1.1% | 3.1% |
| Communications and other public utilities | 0.7% | 0.5% | 2.4% |
| Wholesale trade | 2.6% | 1.3% | 2.1% |
| Retail trade | 18.4% | 18.0% | 19.5% |
| Finance insurance and real estate | 2.8% | 0.5% | 2.1% |
| Business and repair services | 3.5% | 3.3% 2.6% | |
| Personal services | 2.8% | 3.2% | 2.0% |
| Entertainment and recreation services | 0.3% | 0.2% | 0.4% |
| Health services | 8.3% | 3.2% | 6.5% |
| Educational services | 7.5% | 13.2% | 8.5% |
| Other professional and related services | 5.5% | 5.2% | 3.9% |
| Public Administration | 5.0% | 4.6% | 4.3% |
| Class of Worker | | | |
| Private wage and salary workers | 67.8% | 58.9% | 64.1% |
| Local government workers | 7.6% | 13.1% | 8.4% |
| State government workers | 5.3% | 7.2% | 2.9% |
| Federal government workers | 5.9% | 8.0% | 10.3% |
| Self-Employed workers | 13.3% | 12.6% | 13.3% |
| Unpaid family workers | 0.2% | 0.2% | 1.1% |
| US Bureau of the Census, STF 3A Percentages in this table, unless otherwise indicated, represent a proportion of each division's employed persons 16 years of age or older. | | | |

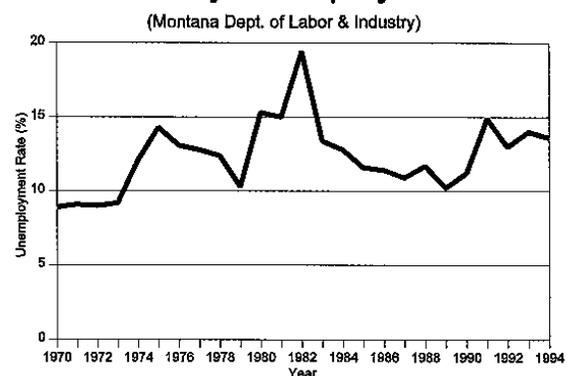
Annual Average Employment by Industry



More recent employment data is available through the Montana Department of Labor, Research and Analysis Bureau. The figure "Annual Average Employment by Industry" depicts the number of individuals employed in Lincoln county by several major industries from 1988 to 1993, inclusive. Industries examined include agriculture/forestry/farming, mining, manufacturing, retail trade, services, and government. As shown in the figure, employment in mining and agriculture/forestry/farming industries decreased noticeably over the years examined. Manufacturing employment peaked in 1989, declined to a low point in 1991, and then regained its 1988 level in 1993. Employment in government, retail trade, and service industries of Lincoln County increased notably.

Census data indicates that, for the county as a whole in 1990, 60.2 percent of the 12,890 persons age 16 and over were in the labor force. The majority of the labor force were civilians (7,749 persons), and of them, 6,500 were employed and 1,249 were unemployed (16.1%). While slightly less than half (49%) of the population aged 16 or older were males, this component comprised 57 percent of the employed civilian labor force and 64 percent of the unemployed.

Lincoln County Unemployment Rates

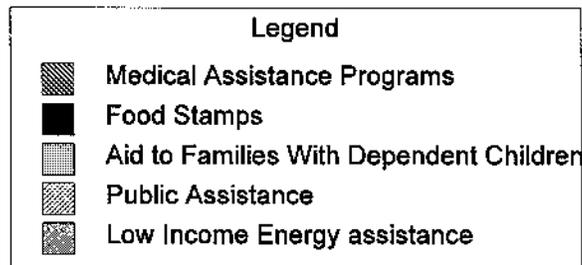
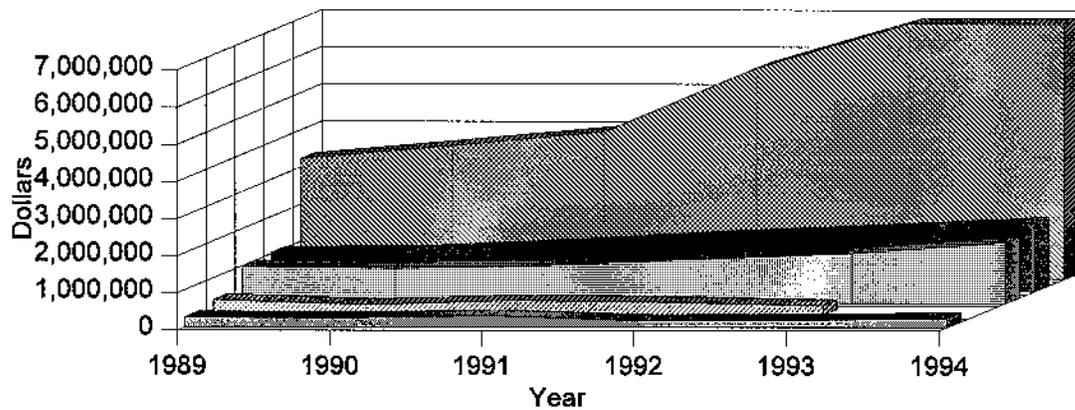


County unemployment rates since 1970 to 1994 are displayed in the table above. Many of the high and low points may be explained by specific events in the county's history. For example, the lowest levels of unemployment in recent years were during the early 1970's, during the Libby Dam's construction. The highest point in the county unemployment rate was experienced in 1982. A recent surge in Lincoln County's

unemployment rate came in 1991, the same year the W.R. Grace vermiculite mine closed. The significance of these data is that the county appears to have had a long history of relatively high unemployment. This same finding was noted in an earlier study of the region (Kaufman and Kaufman 1946). High rates of unemployment may be due, in part, to the nature of the timber and mining sectors of the economy which have seasonal employment. Additionally, some residents suggest that there has always been a segment of the county's population that "just don't want to work," and such a contingent could affect unemployment rate.

State-Administered Human Services

Aid Given in Dollars by Year



In addition to employment and unemployment characteristics, an examination of public assistance is helpful in viewing the context of socioeconomic transition. The type and level of public assistance provided to Lincoln County residents has shown increasing trends over time. The figure entitled "State Administered Human Services", as well as the following tables, indicate how the state-administered human service programs have increased over time. Most notable of these increases are in the levels of payments by medical assistance programs (Medicaid) where expenditures since 1989 have more than doubled and the average number of cases per month have risen by almost 80 percent. Payments by other programs, although small compared to Medicaid, have also increased over the past 5 years. As shown in Table 5-6, aid to families with dependent children increased by \$657,601 or 66.4 percent, over the time period examined. Likewise, food stamp payments increased by \$817,765, or 78.7 percent. The average number of cases for these state-administered human service programs is shown in table 5-7. The average number of cases per month have increased over the years examined by about 79 percent for medical assistance, 51 percent for aid to families with dependent children, and 44 percent for food stamps. The increases in the average number of cases per month and in expenditures by human service programs indicate a general downturn in the county economy and possible effects on the quality of life for county residents.

**Table 5-6 State-Administered Human Service Program
Aid Expenditures by Fiscal Year**

| Program | Fiscal Year | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 |
| Medical Assistance Programs | \$3,230,000 | \$3,585,549 | \$3,956,409 | \$5,682,720 | \$6,884,962 | \$6,884,030 |
| Aid to Families w/ Dependant Children | \$990,945 | \$942,388 | \$1,016,760 | \$1,192,451 | \$1,351,504 | \$1,648,546 |
| Food Stamps | \$1,038,907 | \$1,078,412 | \$1,265,252 | \$1,483,588 | \$1,661,175 | \$1,856,672 |
| Low Income Energy Assistance | \$267,642 | \$247,608 | \$314,143 | \$182,200 | \$196,586 | \$248,922 |
| Public Assistance | \$407,604 | \$271,944 | \$394,619 | \$343,677 | \$257,833 | Not available |
| Total Payments | \$5,935,097 | \$6,125,901 | \$6,947,184 | \$8,884,636 | \$10,352,060 | \$10,368,170 |

Notes: Public Assistance payments include general medical and financial relief, temporary relief, and burials. Only payments from State-administered public assistance programs are listed in this table. County programs are administered separately. Total payments includes all programs and does not equal column totals. Source: Montana Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (as reported by Montana Department of Commerce 1993: Table 8.5)

| Table 5-7 State-Administered Human Service Program Average Number of Cases by Fiscal Year | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|------|------|------|-------|------------------|
| Program | Fiscal Year | | | | | |
| | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 |
| Medical Assistance (Persons Monthly) | 684 | 666 | 752 | 927 | 1,028 | 1,224 |
| Families With Dependent Children (Monthly Cases) | 232 | 229 | 235 | 269 | 293 | 351 |
| Food Stamp (Monthly Households) | 570 | 537 | 588 | 662 | 738 | 820 |
| Low Income Energy Assistance (seasonal) | 740 | 675 | 701 | 683 | 711 | 769 |
| General Relief Assistance (Monthly Cases) | 78 | 45 | 25 | 32 | 40 | not available |
| Notes: Public Assistance include cases regarding general medical and financial relief, temporary relief, and burials. Only cases from State-administered public assistance programs are listed in this table. County programs are administered separately. Source: Montana Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (as reported by Montana Department of Commerce 1993: Tables 8.6-8.10) | | | | | | |

| Table 5-8 Social Security Benefits by Beneficiary Type and Year | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Beneficiary Age or Type | Year | | | | | |
| | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 |
| Beneficiaries Age 65+ | 1,871 | 1,945 | 1,970 | 2,015 | 2,120 | 2,205 |
| Retired Workers | 1,527 | 1,590 | 1,620 | 1,660 | 1,745 | 1,825 |
| Disabled Workers | 286 | 320 | 335 | 345 | 385 | 455 |
| Spouses of Retired or Disabled Workers | 328 | 340 | 325 | 340 | 350 | 355 |
| Children of Retired, Disabled or Deceased Workers | 298 | 295 | 305 | 305 | 340 | 360 |
| Widows, Widowers or Parents | 380 | 375 | 405 | 415 | 430 | 445 |
| Total Number of Beneficiaries | 2,819 | 2,920 | 2,990 | 3,065 | 3,250 | 3,440 |
| Notes: Social Security benefits are described for beneficiaries in terms of old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance (OASDI). Beneficiaries by age are not included in the Total Number of beneficiaries row to avoid double counting. Source: US Department of Health and Human Services, Social Security Administration and OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County (as reported by Montana Department of Commerce 1993: Table 8.1). | | | | | | |

Trends pertinent to the context of socioeconomic transition are also visible in the value of products produced in Lincoln County. For example, the line graph entitled "Value of KNF Timber Products Sold" depicts the erratic yet upward climb in total value of

products sold by fiscal year. The table below displays more specific data regarding timber product values by product type.

Value of KNF Timber Products Sold

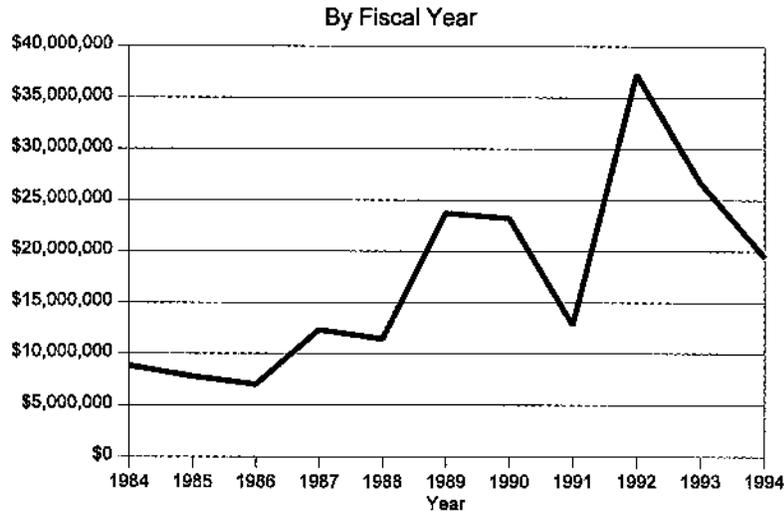


Table 5-9 Dollar Value of Kootenai National Forest Timber Products Sold by Fiscal Year

| Fiscal Year | Forest Product | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|----------------|-----------|-------|---------|-----------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| | Sawtimber | Pulp-wood | Poles | Posts | Fuel-wood | Christmas Trees | Misc. Convertible | Misc. Non-Convertible | Cull Logs |
| 1984 | \$8,762,707 | \$696 | \$230 | \$1,752 | \$2,561 | \$74,409 | \$13,119 | \$316 | Not avail. |
| 1985 | 7,653,399 | 48 | 605 | 1,927 | 13,294 | 65,480 | 41,791 | 579 | notavail. |
| 1986 | 6,923,299 | 0 | 672 | 5,915 | 16,166 | 37,048 | 27,654 | 205 | notavail. |
| 1987 | 12,238,915 | 0 | 854 | 3,267 | 12,830 | 21,735 | 15,449 | 110 | notavail. |
| 1988 | 11,286,551 | 20 | 621 | 3,253 | 10,334 | 17,681 | 105,669 | 359 | notavail. |
| 1989 | 23,657,586 | 2,096 | 560 | 5,317 | 13,294 | 10,323 | 29,125 | 9,800 | 673 |
| 1990 | 23,172,401 | 5,141 | 131 | 10,030 | 13,859 | 11,536 | 8,000 | 447 | 9,887 |
| 1991 | 12,697,859 | 44,756 | 797 | 4,766 | 18,516 | 11,681 | 5,894 | 301 | 5,167 |
| 1992 | 37,025,958 | 106,000 | 2,232 | 2,271 | 17,772 | 9,890 | 99,168 | 17,180 | 11,497 |
| 1993 | 26,497,656 | 189,248 | 1,310 | 9,366 | 16,003 | 19,848 | 4,820 | 670 | 8,140 |
| 1994 | 18,402,305 | 166,904 | 150 | 19,464 | 24,239 | 5,946 | 60,866 | 1,102 | 760,088 |

Note: The value of products sold in any given fiscal year is based on volume sold and price per board foot; it does not necessarily correlate to the volume cut in any given fiscal year. Source: Timber Cut and Sold On National Forests Under Sales and Land Exchanges (USFS Region One, Forest 14 Kootenai, Fiscal Years 1984-1994)

Local topography does not facilitate great growth of the existing agricultural industry in Lincoln County. Since settlement, the northeastern county-Tobacco Plains area has been the most substantial agricultural production area. While hayland, rangeland, grass cropland, and Christmas tree production have, in recent years, remained the largest components of the agricultural economy, the agricultural industry has also experienced some varying trends. The number and acreage of farms has declined since 1982, but the percent of farm operators for which the principle occupation is farming has increased. The value of livestock products has also increased. The value of crops, including hay, has decreased over 18 percent since the 1987 census of agriculture while the number of crop-producing farms decreased by 12 percent. The number of farms producing at least \$10,000 in sales has remained constant since the 1987 census of agriculture; however, the proportion of these farms to the total number of farms has increased slightly, while remaining below one-quarter of the total farms. The following table depicts these and other recent trends and characteristics associated with Lincoln County's agricultural industry.

Table 5-10 Trends in Lincoln County Agricultural Industry

| Program | | Year | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| | | 1982 | 1987 | 1992 |
| Number of Farms | | 264 farms | 245 farms | 219 farms |
| Percent of Total Land in Farms | | 2.4% | 2.7% | 2.1%* |
| Total Acres in Farms | | 55,391 acres | 61,387 acres | 50,220 acres |
| Average Farm Size | | 210 acres | 251 acres | 229 acres |
| Percent of Farms with Principal Occupation as Farming | | 36.7% | 41.6% | 45.2% |
| Farms with sales of \$10,000 or more | Number of farms | 45 farms | 50 farms | 50 farms |
| | Percent of land | 1.1% | 1.2% | 1%* |
| | Total acres | 25,435 acres | 28,202 acres | 23,286 acres |
| | Average size | 565 acres | 564 acres | 466 acres |
| Total Value of Farm Products | All Crops | \$191,000 (produced by 76 farms) | \$384,000 (produced by 83 farms) | \$314,000 (produced by 73 farms) |
| | Hay, silage, & feedseed crops | \$154,000 (produced by 68 farms) | \$299,000 (produced by 77 farms) | \$196,000 (produced by 60 farms) |
| | All livestock, poultry & their products | \$1,495,000 (produced by 198 farms) | \$1,906,000 (produced by 157 farms) | \$1,939,000 (produced by 140 farms) |
| | Cattle & Calves | \$1,183,000 (produced by 170 farms) | \$1,421,000 (produced by 129 farms) | \$1,519,000 (produced by 107 farms) |

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1992 and 1987 Censuses of Agriculture *Percent of total land in 1992 farms was estimated using Lincoln County total acres: 2,377,600 acres(Lincoln County Department of Environmental Planning n.d.:2)

Trends in the values of mining products are difficult to assess given the small number of mineral producers in the county in recent years. The 1987 and 1992 censuses of mineral industries revealed little data on Lincoln County due to individual-company privacy and disclosure suppression. US Bureau of Mines and Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology data indicate that statewide values of copper, gold, and silver -- minerals which were extracted from Lincoln County mines -- had decreased in 1991 and 1992. After the closure of the W.R. Grace and Asarco mines, major commercial mining has ceased to exist, although some residents are hopeful that the Noranda project may provide future employment opportunities.

The economic base of Lincoln County has historically been founded primarily upon wood products and, to some extent, mining and some agriculture. Recently, however, timber production has decreased, the overall number of mill jobs in the county has declined, and mechanization of the logging industry has resulted in fewer jobs in this sector of the industry. Collectively, these developments have resulted in a downward trend in the overall contribution of timber to the county economy.

These trends in agriculture, mining, and timber have suggested that the economic future for the county may have to include other types of industries. In fact, economic diversification is a major theme of observers of the county's economic condition. For example, there is hope that opening a ski hill in Libby and developing other recreation and tourism opportunities will help with economic diversification. In addition, there are efforts being made by the Economic Development Council to encourage different types of wood products industries, to organize artists cooperatives, and to develop the future of the county to include a wider range of community-based economic activities. Yet these hopes are set against a backdrop of people who have lost their jobs at the mill, in the woods, or in the mines. There is a mood of uncertainty and some fear that the economic future may be significantly different than the most recent past.

Not surprisingly, this mood of uncertainty is most prevalent in the timber industry. Stakeholders throughout the county perceive that the timber industry will be different, but predictions about what it should or can be vary dramatically. One theme in these perceptions is that timber production will increase and that in fact, the timber industry has the potential to thrive again. It may not necessarily thrive at the same level as in the past, but there is an expectation that there will be jobs in the mill and in the woods for the families of current timber workers. A second theme is that the timber industry will continue to exist, but it should do so as a small-scale, community based industry. In this view the industry should produce not only raw logs and lumber but also value added wood products. Proponents of this view argue that such an industry would sustain the lifestyle as well as the economy of the county and perhaps increase the overall number of jobs because of the potential for small scale, less mechanized operations that focus on selective harvesting of timber resources. There are few stakeholders who perceive that there will not be some form of the timber industry in Lincoln County. The actual form the industry will take is alarmingly indefinite in the eyes of county residents. The result of this situation is a current climate of economic uncertainty within the timber industry specifically and, more generally, throughout the entire county economy.

5.1.6 Summary

Throughout this discussion of Lincoln County's history, geography, and social environment, data have indicated that the county may be moving towards a new socioeconomic state. Recent changes in population demographics, land values, and major industries provide evidence of a major shift in the nature of Lincoln County. The effects of these changes may be exacerbated by the fact that the majority of Lincoln County's land is owned by the federal government. Given unique characteristics of northern and southern Lincoln County, the effects of these changes may not be uniform.

Lincoln County's population is not homogeneous. There are similarities in lifestyles, values, and beliefs among the various regions of the county, but there are also noteworthy differences that have implications for resident valuations of natural resources and their management. A division in the county may be drawn between the north and south: the Eureka-Fortine-Stryker-Rexford area has different land use patterns, a different pattern of growth and population change, and to some extent a distinct cultural orientation when compared with the Libby-Troy-Yaak portion of the county. The importance of these differences is noted here and discussed in more depth in the following section.

As stated earlier, Lincoln County's population demographics and settlement patterns have changed in recent years. Demographic changes include a decrease in the total population of the county, a decrease in the percent of the population accounted for by individuals under the age of 25, and an increase in the percent of the population accounted for by individuals over the age of 65. Gender distribution has reached near equal levels. In recent years county land values have increased significantly. Additionally, there has been an increase in the number of housing units in the county and a decrease in the amount of farmland.

The in-migration of new residents to the county is frequently noted by existing residents. These new residents are bringing with them different expectations and assumptions about community life. These new views are part of the mix that contributes to the current configuration of the county sociocultural context. Statistical as well as ethnographic data noted above suggest that many of these recent immigrants to Lincoln County are older, retired individuals. Although these individuals, if retired, are no longer a part of the workforce and do not compete for existing jobs, they may affect the local economy. For example, the property values have reportedly been affected by the influx of new residents. In addition, new residents may stimulate a higher or different demand for goods and services in the region.

Major changes in the economy of the county have arisen from recent decreases in timber and mineral production. These two industries have served as the core of the regional economy since the area's earliest permanent settlement. In the past, fluctuations in these industries have frequently offset one another, but the current situation includes a simultaneous downturn in both industries. New opportunities in either the timber or mineral mining industries are not readily available. Although these

conditions have broad affects, the greatest impacts will be felt in the area most dependent upon mining and timber harvests. Recent reductions in timber harvests, the recent sale and downsizing of the Libby mill, and closure of the W.R. Grace and the Asarco mining operations have changed the economics of the southern portion of the county.

In the northern portion of the county, agriculture plays a slightly more significant role. Agriculture, too, is changing in Lincoln County, although perhaps not as drastically as other industries. The overall number of farms in the county has decreased by about 10 percent in the last five years. The amount of land in the county used for agriculture has reduced by over 10,000 acres in the same amount of time. Given that the number of farms with annual sales over \$10,000 has remained fairly constant over the last 10 years, it appears that full-time ranch and farm operations are not a part of the trend. Reductions in the number of part-time farmers and ranchers with small operations seem to account for the changes in this industry. The rate at which the number of farms in the county is reduced may be heightened by increases in the price of rural lands. As agriculture has historically been focused in the northeastern portion of the county, primarily in the Tobacco River Valley, the affects of these changes may be most apparent in that area. Given that Eureka lies in this area, it may show more evidence of this trend than other communities in the county.

Overlying current socioeconomic conditions is the fact that the federal government is the largest land holder within the county. Since over 90 percent of the county's lands are federally owned and managed, the decisions made in regard to their use directly affect the residents of Lincoln County. Recent declines in timber and mineral production on private lands have served to heighten the significance of federal land ownership in the county. Large portions of the county's residents depend upon the harvest, extraction, and processing of resources taken from the National Forest. These individuals' socioeconomic status may be directly affected by management decisions made by the U.S. Forest Service. For example, timber processing facilities -- some of the largest employers in the county -- depend upon local raw materials harvested from the Kootenai National Forest. Additionally, the limited amount of private lands used for agriculture, timber and mining may be further reduced by expansion of the county's population and developed areas. Increased land values may influence farmers and ranchers to sell their land, an option that may provide a sizeable immediate profit, but which may deny them the opportunity for future earnings.

5.2 Communities: Values, Beliefs, Lifestyle in Lincoln County

"Community" is about the sense of belonging among neighbors in a particular geographic location. In technical terms, communities are sociocultural and geographical spaces. As a sociocultural space, a community is composed of beliefs, values, and social bonds that connect people. In this sense, community is both an idea and a pattern of connections among people. Equally important are the geographical attributes that may affect the social characteristics of a particular community. Lincoln County communities are thought of as very different places by their respective residents.

Without diminishing the importance of these types of distinctions and differences, this work has identified similarities in perceptions about the value of place and the nature of social relationships. These similarities, particularly the ideals that people have about their connections with one another and the values regarding the place they live, will be emphasized in this discussion. The purpose of presenting this information is to develop the connections between the social context of Lincoln County and public perceptions about the KNF and its management. This focus is intended to accomplish a specific task: to explain how values, beliefs, and actions structure local communities and how the structure and processes of "community" influence responses to issues about natural resources and their management.

The major finding developed in this discussion of community is that the processes which integrate these communities are more cultural than social. In these "cultural communities" the basis for community integration is more in the ideals and values about place and community than it is in the social processes or patterns of association and group membership. In fact, there appears to be discontinuity between the ideals about community life and the realities of social relationships. Some of this discord is attributed to the social changes related to the economic and demographic factors discussed previously. The outcome is an emphasis on the ideals about what people want their communities to be and a sense of discomfort with what they actually are.

This discussion about community is organized into five interrelated topics:

- The basis for attachment to community. The attachment to community is important because it expresses the feelings residents have about their place and its importance to them. Two components of attachment are discussed here: 1) values about the physical geography and 2) ideals about the nature of "community." These are the sentiments that appear to be widely shared and which function to create a sense of community in Lincoln County.
- Community and outdoor lifestyles. An important part of the forces of integration within communities is shared values about lifestyles. This section develops the local significance of an outdoor lifestyle for residents in Lincoln County. These common sentiments function to integrate individuals into a community.
- Social relationships and community integration. The types and balance of social ties within a community influence the cohesiveness of a community. This discussion develops the importance of the balance of cross-cutting and single interest ties. Cross-cutting ties are those in which individuals have multiple connections to others in diverse segments of a community. Single interest ties connect individuals to a more narrow range of persons and entities within a community. The basis for social groupings and the relationship of social groupings to cross-cutting and single interest ties is a key to understanding how Lincoln County communities can simultaneously appear tightly knit and loosely connected.

- Social conflicts. The history of conflict within communities is key to understanding present-day responses to current issues. Current community divisiveness, especially regarding natural resource issues, forms the context for response to future management decisions. The conflicts which occurred over the Kootenai Accords are used to illustrate the discontinuity between community values/beliefs and social realities.
- Community concerns about the present and future. Concerns about what Lincoln County communities are now and their potential directions reflect how cultural ideals and social realities are "out of sync." Furthermore, these concerns, primarily about the economic present and future of the county, directly relate to natural resource issues and management of the KNF.

5.2.1 Ideals and Attachment to Community

Residents value Lincoln County as a place to live because of both their attachment to its geography and their expectations and ideals about the nature of community life. These thoughts and feelings become a basis to assess the ways in which residents evaluate the USFS and its management of "their" place. Consequently, in this section information is presented about residents' expectations and ideas about "community" and the value of the geographical setting as factors that cement "an attachment to place" in these communities.

Ideals about Community

The ideals and expectations about "community" are generally shared sentiments throughout Lincoln County. The county is perceived to be "a good place to raise kids" where there is relatively little crime, the streets are safe, neighbors help each

"See, he knows that every time he goes to town with that truck, people are gonna know that is my truck. Whatever he does in that truck will be noticed and people are gonna tell me about it. I think it keeps him in line, not that he isn't a good kid, but this has always been the kinda place where people look out for each others kids..."

other as needed, and people "know one another." Face-to-face relationships are important as are "knowing" and "being known" because these characteristics attach people to each other. "Being known" signals belonging. The following example¹ is typical of statements about being known and belonging:

'This is the kind of place where you can go down to the Rosaurers for a loaf of bread and you come back two hours later. I always meet some one there that I know and we end up catching up on news and what not. It's just that kind of place where you know people. It's not like the big city, you know people here.'

¹ In this example and informants' comments throughout this document, direct quotations (i.e., excerpts from transcripts) are presented within double quotation marks (" "); comments extracted from written interview notes (i.e., not necessarily the exact words or an informant, but a reliable approximation) are within single quotes (' ').

A sense of connection and belonging is the consequence of "being known." People highly value this sense as an indicator of the nature of their community, even if only the result of an aisle-way conversation in the grocery store. This same value about community and the emphasis on knowing one's neighbors and being connected to others is expressed in the following excerpt from field notes about what is changing in some Lincoln County communities:

"I asked the young woman what has changed the most since she returned from working outside the community. She said that it was best expressed by a trip she and her mother took to Pizza Hut for dinner last night. She said that while sitting in the restaurant her mother said, ' You know I look around here and I don't see anybody I know. Used to be that you couldn't go out anywhere without running in to someone you know.'"

The ideals of community also include the expectation that "neighbors help neighbors" when there is a need. For example, study participants consistently describe instances such as the establishment of the "Sally Saurer" and "Our Amanda" funds in which communities pool their efforts and resources to help with catastrophic health conditions. The afflicted individuals and their families did not have the financial means to respond to these crises. Even though relatively hard economic times have affected the county, residents made contributions when needed to ensure the provision of necessary medical care. One person observed about these circumstances,

'(My husband) goes over to see her almost every week. He mows her lawn or maybe helps out with her garden, things like that. She calls us and we call her to make sure she is okay. It is just a thing that we look out for her, nothing special. But (my husband) and (my neighbor) they don't talk politics. They really disagree about politics, but otherwise it's fine.'

'Like the Sally thing, and the other girl that the kids raised money for. You know, this place is on hard times, people are out of work, and for the community to come together like that is something. It shows you what kind of people live here.'

Such highly visible events receive significant public attention because they express the ideals about "neighbors helping neighbors" regardless of the circumstances. They also express the expectation that, in times of need, help should be offered to those who belong to the same community.

This sentiment is also expressed in another highly visible event related by stakeholders in almost every part of the county, the "Great Northwest Montana Log Haul" that occurred when the mill in Darby, Montana closed. Lincoln County loggers and timber industry people worked together to haul logs to the Darby mill. This effort, which gained national attention, was organized by county Loggers and others in an effort to show support for another mill town that exemplified what could happen to similar communities in Lincoln County. The event itself may be considered symbolic and controversial, but it

nevertheless expresses the ideals and expectations about mutual support that bind people into a community. Such events also establish a basis for distinguishing those who belong from those who do not. This is further illustrated in an excerpt from field notes:

"(Name) was discussing a relative newcomer who has brought with him 'all the city ways' he was trying to leave behind. He noted that he is the kind of person that , 'If you see them off in the ditch on a snowy day, you don't stop to haul them out.' He went on to say he almost always stops when he sees a car off the road and he expects others will stop for him."

Another important ideal about the nature of Lincoln County communities is the ability to trust your neighbors. The relatively small and open communities of the county contrast with "the big city" where people do not know or have any basis to trust each other. The expectation of interpersonal trust is one of the most valued of all ideals that attaches people to their communities in Lincoln County. Lincoln County is a place where you, "never have to lock your doors or worry about leaving your car keys in the ignition." Trust in one's neighbors and the sense of safety that results from it is a basis for the foundation of "community values" that motivates people to live in Lincoln County:

"...The community values are just really strong here. In this world of blurring communication, a foundation in a place that still has community values that you can kinda count on is important to me."

"When we first moved here I had to go to town to get some sticky stuff for the bottom of the cupboards and some other things. I got to the check-stand and had my hands full and I didn't have any money. I had left my wallet at home. ... I put the stuff down and grabbed for my wallet it wasn't there, they said 'do you live in town?' I said, 'no I live way out.' They said well you going to be back sometime this week? I said 'yeah'. ... Those types of things ... the community values are just really strong here. In this world of blurring communication a foundation in a place that still has community values that you can kinda count on is important to me."

The importance of trust is highlighted in a different kind of statement that also demonstrates the link between trust and safety:

'Now you really don't know everyone here and that is a lot different than the way it used to be. When I grew up here, you knew everyone. Now, there are so many new people, retirees mostly, that you just don't know everyone. I won't leave my kids alone in the park now, but before you could do that because you knew that people would recognize your kids and look out for them.'

The expressed concern is about people that are not "known" and by inference "not trusted." Those who are not known and trusted may be a threat to personal or family

safety. This expresses the departure from the ideal of the tight knit community in which others are known and trusted. An person or government entity that is to be trusted should be "known" and part of the community.

Another important ideal about community is self-reliance and independence. This is a traditional value of American culture and is especially true of the culture of the west. On the surface the idea of self-reliance and independence may seem an unlikely idea about attachment to community. However, the apparent contradiction is resolved by the nature of these sentiments. Independence and self-reliance can be pursued in a context in which there is also an ethic of mutual support. Individuals can pursue the self-reliance ideal and, at the same time, expect that they will help and will be offered assistance if needed. These ideals about self-reliance and independence are readily apparent in the interview data from this study. For example,

d here.
overnment says you

'We have a good store of food, beef, deer, and elk, and we're pretty well stocked on other staples. We don't have to go out of here if we don't want to. We are pretty self-reliant in that regard and that is important to us, always has been.'

The pursuit of self-reliance and independence is exemplified in the lifestyle of residents in some of the more far reaching areas of the county such as the Yaak and Pinkham Creek. For example,

'There are people up there who have no electricity, no running water, no telephone. They have learned how to help themselves, they know what to do in the woods and how to survive. Those are the kind of people that live here and you have to respect that.'

These examples illustrate the ideal of at once being independent and self-reliant, but also being part of a social environment in which these ideals are truly valued as part of the reason people choose to live Lincoln County.

Attachment and Geographical Space

The attachment of residents to Lincoln County communities is partially attributed to the value

"People don't live here to work, they work to live here."

placed on mountains, lakes, streams, forests, and other outdoor spaces. These spaces are appreciated for their natural beauty and for the lifestyle opportunities they offer. The strength of these sentiments is based both on an appreciation of the aesthetics of this environment and how its use becomes a part of individual, family, and community experience. This attachment to place is embedded in "who people are" and "how they live their lives." That is, the appreciation of this environment and personal experience of that environment become integrated. Place and personal experience becomes a

complex set of interconnections that motivates the attachment to this place. More than one person observed: "People don't live here to work they work to live here." This meaning-filled quotation says that this place of Lincoln County is one where people are willing to sacrifice income for the amenities, spiritual rewards, and lifestyle that come from living within its boundaries. The most staunch environmentalist and the most ardent timber advocates that participated in this study share passions about this "place" that anchor them to its natural beauty and lifestyle. These shared sentiments contribute to sometimes-competing visions and intense arguments about what the future will be.

The sentiments about place that fuse personal meaning with geographical location are important to understand because they have the motivational force to influence the actions of individuals and groups about resource issues. These sentiments have two organizing themes. One theme, noted above, is that personal experience and geographical space become connected. The following statements illustrate this theme.

"I live out here for a reason. There is a wilderness over there and that's cool. There are grizzly bears and the game that I hunt. I can lie awake at night and look out my window at the mountains. All those amenities are here . . ."

"I want to stay in Libby, Montana. I can go hunt and take my kid fishin' in the summer and go out berry picking' and we can go skiing in the winter. I like those things. I would rather make do and live here and not be somewhere else doing' better. It's just that kinda place where it gets in your blood and you can't get it out. I had a good job at the mill before. I could go somewheres else and get something, but we are getting' by doing' whatever we can to make it here." 'You know, I used to go up into the Fisher River county with my husband. It was magical. Those trees were so big! I felt at home there. I would go there any chance I got, and when (my husband) could come with me, we both, well it just was a special place to us . . . That's why I hate to see what is happening to this place. I'm glad my husband can't see it now.'

The second theme is related, but it expresses an attachment based on the intrinsic and spiritual value of the landscape. For example:

'I was born and raised here and I just came back after being away for ten years in Seattle. I didn't realize how much I missed this place until I came back. I am not much of an outdoor person, I don't hunt or fish, but I just like the trees being there. That is important to me that they are there.'

"Its one of the reasons I'm here and maybe why a lot of other newcomers are here too. There is something about the spaciousness that, a scene like that (pointing to a view of the mountains out the window), it just takes me to a different place, it is like falling in love, it almost brings tears to my eyes. Not everyone has that reaction to it, but I do and it is real important to me. Even though a lot of times I don't get out into it because of my own

job or whatever, just it being there is important, its real, real important because it is there, because it is important."

"In some ways, if my life gets too crazy, or things get too tough, I can see all that ... out there and somehow it is still available and even if I never do anything about it, just the idea there is somewhere else I can go and ... have this place I can go. ... It is a wildness that isn't here...."

These statements express the fusion of personal experience with this geographical space. Individual and family experience are literally cemented to the place. This attachment becomes one of the components that gives residents a strong stake in the present and future use of the resources they value as both a community asset and personal treasure.

5.2.2 Community and Lifestyle: The Value of the Outdoors

The value placed on the outdoor lifestyle in these communities is illustrated by: (1) the types of material goods purchased; (2) the opportunity to participate in activities valued in the community; and (3) the significance of hunting in community culture. Individually and collectively these three elements of an "outdoor lifestyle" define a relationship between what people value in their lives and their community. Each of these points is briefly elaborated below.

The world view of residents in this area is not highly materialistic, but as one person noted, 'This is an area where the toys you have, have to do with being outside. Pickup trucks, chain saws, boats, fishing rods, guns, and things like that are the kinds of things people want. If they have the money, that is where they are likely to spend it.' The allocation of priorities to such possessions indicates the value of this lifestyle. That is, if what people find meaningful is expressed in the "things" they own (cf. Csikszentmihali and Rochberg-Halton 1981) then the priority given to "things" for outdoor activities indicates the overall importance of the out of doors as a lifestyle.

Participating in an outdoor lifestyle is not mandatory in these communities, but there is sentiment that, 'why else would you choose to live here if you didn't like to do outside things?' Residents are motivated to live in this region because of access to outdoor activities that are available in the national forests and other lands in the region, including hunting, fishing, huckleberry picking, hiking, horseback riding, and "viewing." Study participants noted that "just driving along and looking" is a favored outdoor pastime that anyone can and many do enjoy. Huckleberry picking and to some extent mushroom gathering are also activities enjoyed by individuals and families, and especially the older residents of the region. Indeed, the yearly cycle of work or recreational activities is described in terms of the outdoors, such as ski season, hunting season and fishing season.

The third expression of the value placed on an outdoor lifestyle concerns hunting. In part the significance of hunting is expressed in the place of hunting trophies in homes. Often one of the first conversations I would have when entering a home was about the owners collection of deer, elk, sheep, lion, or bear trophies. From the most modest to

the most grand homes, these trophies appear to occupy an honored place in these households. Indeed, one home owner noted with pride the trophy room he built even though the rest of his house was not remodeled as his wife wished. Hunting stories are another expression of the importance of this activity. Particularly during hunting season, and in other parts of the year as well, hunting stories are told wherever people gather. Stories note excitement, challenge, and the outdoors: the big white-tail kill, the bull elk whose rack was too big to be believed, or the ram that scampered over the rise before a shot could be fired. No matter how many times the story has been relayed, the tellers never seem to tire of their tales, and seldom do the tales fall on deaf ears. The importance of hunting is also recognized in the suspension of normal rules of how things work in the community. For example,

'Your boss down at the mill might give you a very hard time if you call in sick on a Monday, but he wouldn't say a word if you called up of a Monday during huntin' season and told him you had to pack out a bull elk you shot the day before. Wouldn't be a word said about it other than, 'how big was it?'

Another person observed,

'Hell, this is our culture here you know, and its important to us, you know. Hunting is important, fishing is important. This mill is closed down the first two weeks of hunting season so that people can go out for the deer or bull. It is that important to people.'

Expressed in interviews are several themes that portray the various meanings of hunting to people in northwest Montana: (1) it results in meat that is important to people for economic reasons; (2) it exemplifies self-reliance and the traditions of the community; (3) family, neighbor, and friendship bonds are reinforced by hunting together; and (4) it is another means to experience the woods that does not necessarily have to result in a kill. Each of these themes is briefly illustrated below:

Economic Dependence on Hunting

Game is believed to be economically important for families. There are some who are perceived to depend on killing game as their only source of meat and there are others for whom it is an important augmentation of their diet. This reliance on game was at one time considered a "norm:"

"When we were growing up what we ate was game. We depended on it. I thought that people that lived in the cites must be vegetarians, cause there wasn't any game there. I didn't know there was other kind of meat. Any bought meat was a ham and we had it at Christmas and that was about it. We were not an oddity, it was almost a community norm (for people to depend on game for meat)."

For other people there may not be an economic dependence on game meat, but there is a perception that it is more lean and healthy than store bought meat.

Hunting as a Community Tradition

The importance of trophies, the prominence of hunting stories, and the suspension of usual work rules in this community culture signal the importance of the hunting tradition. Hunting marks a point in the year of these communities, but it also marks a point in their lives that connects them with who they are and what is important in life. For example,

Hunting for us is a tradition, it is a ritual that indicates the coming and passing of a season. It indicates you can provide for your family. There were times when that was the only way we could have meat; otherwise we would have had to go on welfare.

Here there are multiple messages about what hunting means, but a core idea in the quotation above is that it expresses the ideal of self-reliance and being able to provide for ones family even in difficult times.

"Some of our dependence on (the resources) is mental. A lot of time I didn't have to hunt for the economics of it. But there is the mental consideration of you are doing it yourself."

And another person expressed a similar sentiment about how hunting marks the traditions of community:

"There are some important markers or high points in the year for me. One is when the hay is in the shed in July and the horses are provided for the Winter. Second is when the wood is in the woodshed and I have heat for the winter. And finally in the fall when the meat is in the locker, let 'er snow! Those are some things that the urban majority don't ever understand. For me, you get those things done and life is OK."

Each autumn, the community shifts gears to accommodate hunting schedules and allow continuation of tradition. It is almost expected that, in the fall, hunting is what people do.

Social Bonds Reinforced Through Hunting

Another theme in the stories told about hunting emphasizes the fellowship that occurs when people hunt together. These stories are about parents and children, husbands and wives, friends, and neighbors. A hunting partner is a social status that can sometimes even transcend the hierarchy of father and son. For example,

'You see my huntin' partner sittin' over there (referring to his teen-age son). He didn't get his buck this year, but we got a couple of good chances at it, didn't we (son). Yeah, looks as if he is going to be a good huntin' partner for me.'

Another person observed:

'You asked about special places, well there is this place, I won't tell you where, a hunter here will never tell you his special spot, but it is a place my dad and I used to go when he was alive. I took my first buck there and we hunted there for years. I pity the poor bastard that tries to clearcut that place, and I make my living in the woods.

. . . I went out with my dad . . . and that is almost as important to me . . . it is a heart thing, a spiritual thing. There is an incredible bonding with the animals and the plants. It something you don't get with a front yard and an apple tree in the city.'

When father and son bond in a new relationship, this integrates personal family history with the lifestyle expressed in hunting. Furthermore, when people form hunting parties, it signifies a sharing of values and sometimes a special trust between people. Hunting partners can cross social divisions and perceptions of class in these communities. In the activity of hunting, people express an egalitarianism about who they are and why hunting has such meaning for them.

Hunting as Getting into the Woods

Hunting is meaningful for the reasons noted above, and the fact that people simply enjoy the activity itself. In addition, a related theme in the stories about hunting is how it frequently results in other meaningful experiences. For example,

"I was with a hunting partner and we charged up a hill after a big horn and it was 20 below zero out, but it was very beautiful, all the branches were covered with ice, it was like a crystal palace. And here's this guy who you wouldn't think would have a sentimental bone in his body and he says, 'you get up here and there's no deer you always have an incredible deer. Yes its the meat and being able to depend on yourself, but it is being able to be out in the woods which has mental or spiritual components that are very hard to quantify, but it is the beauty of being out."

The overall importance of hunting and other elements of lifestyle in Lincoln County emphasize the value of the outdoors. Through this element of shared outdoor lifestyle, individuals in Lincoln County are integrated into a community. Social relationships, discussed below, are also an integrating force within the community.

5.2.3 Social Groups and Community Integration

Within these and other communities the social relationships that integrate individuals and groups into a community are often based on kinship, a common work place, and neighborhood. However, there are other bases for social interaction, described in this section, that also affect the integration of groups into a community. What is illustrated in this description is a combination of cross-cutting ties (connections with many different

persons) and relationships that segregate families and individuals into multiple sub-groups. This results in a community structure with both tightly knit and loosely associated parts. The tightly knit components have multiple cross-cutting ties whereas the more loosely associated components have ties that are more single interest. The tightly knit components of these communities have multiple associations with each other and perceive of themselves as the "insiders" and "real" members of the community. These individuals are the active participants in communities; and, they tend to be involved in multiple groups and activities: they belong to the volunteer fire department, they sit on the library committee, they coach little league and soccer, and more than likely they attend more community meetings than they do dinners with their spouses and families. Among these individuals there is an expectation that members "give back to the community" by volunteer efforts. The more loosely knit components of these communities tend to have single interest ties with others and noticeably fewer cross-cutting relationships. They participate in a more narrow range of events and they tend to belong to fewer organizations. The organizations or activities in which they participate also tend to be a major focus of their social lives. Within their sphere of interest and activity, these individuals have close ties, but their ties to the wider community are fewer and do not involve multiple cross-cutting relationships. These individuals are less likely to attend meetings, hearings, and other public meetings unless there is a special interest of theirs on the agenda.

The balance of cross-cutting and single interest ties within a community affect community integration at any one point in time. That is, when there is a predominance of cross-cutting ties with others in the community, then overall community integration increases. When there is a predominance of single interest ties, then community integration is more loose. These processes are expressed in the types of social groups and in the characteristics of social relationships within these communities. In the next two sub-sections we briefly describe different bases for social groupings and the characteristics of social relationships that affect relationships across groups. These are relevant topics for this study because social relationships, among other things, may affect how people group together or not in response to natural resource management issues. Again, the emphasis here will be on the common themes that characterize social relationships and community integration throughout the county.

Types of Social Groupings

Territory as a Basis for Social Groups

An important basis for social interaction is "territory." There are distinct geographical territories that are socially, and possibly politically and economically, meaningful. These territories generally correspond to the major community divisions within the county. Three major geographical territories exist in Lincoln County. The first includes Yaak, and to some extent Troy. "The Yaak" has always been a special place for county residents. It is used as a "get away" area for those who do not live there. And for those who comprise the less-than-100 residents, the Yaak has outgrown its not too distant image as a refuge for "hippies" and "back-to-the-land" types. The Yaak "has been

discovered." As one person observed, "It used to be that people who lived in the Yaak had more hair than money. Now they say that people who live here have more money than hair!" The Yaak remains a distinct territorial space whose population has a strong sense of "their territory." Troy and to some extent the Bull River Valley is a similar space. Troy has a historical step-child relationship to Libby, yet Troy residents have tended to perceive their community has always having a stronger sense of community. As one Troy resident observed, "We could get the community together to put up Christmas lights, but Libby has never been able to do it. There are no Christmas lights in downtown Libby." Troy has always had a diverse economic base, and unlike Libby, "Troy has never been a company town."

As the county seat, Libby is a distinct territory. Once a company town, Libby has an identity firmly set in the traditions of the timber industry. "The Libby Loggers" are the high school team and in the not too distant past Logger Days was the most important community event in town. The J. Neils family owned and operated "the mill" until its sale to St Regis. During the days of the Neils operation, Libby was about timber and timber was about the Neils family. There is a strong sense that when the Neils sold their interests in the mill, Libby changed from a close knit, if not class based, company town to a less integrated community whose future was more controlled by "corporate timber" than the perceived benevolence of the Neils family. The perception of Libby as a territory distinct from Troy or Eureka and their environs did not change during this transition. The rivalries in basketball and other high school sports continue to express how important these territorial differences are to the overall social make-up of Lincoln County.

Eureka, Rexford, and West Kootenai compromise the third major territorial division within the county. Eureka and Libby once fought for being county seat; Libby won, but Eureka received the county fair. Although the county provides important local services, Eureka has few other connections to Libby. There are families with kinship ties that contributes to some sense of connection, but there is more of a sense of separateness between Libby and Eureka than between Libby and Troy. Eureka is the home of the Tobacco Plains. Its history and traditions are varied and important. Agriculture and ranching has been more prominent in this portion of the county than elsewhere and today the traditions of the range and cattlemen remain socially if not economically important. As noted in earlier chapters, this portion of the county has experienced an immigration of new residents, some retirees, others seeking an outdoor lifestyle. Eureka also has a strong sense of connection to "the Flathead" region that is stronger than their sense of connection to Libby or other portions of Lincoln County. Similarly, the highway to Canada pours tourists through this portion of the county and imparts a modest village character to the town which otherwise shows its ranching and logging heritage.

Fortine, Trego, and Stryker are on the outskirts of the county. These are small communities that are defined more by river valleys than a town center. The merchandises, post offices, churches, bars, and schools are the major draws of "town," but these are rural territories. Like those who live in remote sections of south county, the residents of these outlying territories are country folk living in the northern part of the

county, along with the Amish and others who live in the West Kootenai. These are areas where "territory" is synonymous with being distinct and different.

The distinction of the "territories" described above provide an important basis for social interaction in that help define a highly local focus for resident interest and concerns. They also exhibit important historical and economic differences that contribute to distinct community identities that residents believe need to be respected.

Formal Organizations

A second basis for social relationships within these communities is formal groups and associations. There are several types of these organizations. Community booster organizations include Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Councils. Libby, Troy, and Eureka each have their own Chamber of Commerce, and Eureka and Libby have Economic Development Councils. Members from other communities are represented on these councils, but membership tends to be dominated by individuals from the territories where the councils are located. These booster organizations are important because they bring together many of the commercial interests and leaders. Fraternal and civic organizations, such as the Elks and Lions in Eureka, help organize specific events and promote community participation and pride. Traditionally, there have been some class-based differences in membership within fraternal organizations and to some extent these differences persist into the present.

Clubs

Clubs are another type of formal organization, although their purpose is usually to pursue common interests, often for recreational purposes. Entities such as the Rod and Gun Club, the Fly Fishing Club, the Gardening Club, and other such organizations gather a cross-section of individuals who reside in a community and share an interest in a specific activity.

Volunteer Organizations

Another highly significant group of organizations includes the volunteer fire departments, ambulances, and search and rescue teams. These organizations tend to be prestigious, and attract mostly male members who commit time to community service. They have a special place in the overall hierarchy of social relationships within these communities, and they represent the values about commitment to community and mutual support based on volunteerism that is an important sentiment that attaches individuals to their neighbors.

Parent-Based Groups

In almost any community there are groups and organizations that involve parents with the activities of their children. Lincoln County communities also follow this pattern, with both school-based and recreation activities. The school-based activities are ones such as the PTA, the booster clubs that support athletic activities, and Senior Parents that

sponsor banquets and parties for the high school senior class. The recreation based activities include Little League and soccer in which parents participate as coaches and overall supporters of these organizations. These activities are primarily volunteer and, like the Volunteer Fire Department and other volunteer-based organizations, such a contribution is valued as an overall benefit to the community. These types of social relationships result in ties within the community that are not based on the work, recreational, or other interests of adult parents. These cross-cutting ties broaden the base of social relationships that integrate individuals into a "community."

Informal Social Gatherings

Perhaps the most visible form of informal gatherings in the diverse territories of the county are "coffee clutches." Whether it is at Henry's in Libby, the Time Out in Eureka, or Jack's Cafe in Troy, there are small gatherings that meet for coffee or small meals. These usually have a regular meeting time and in some communities there are several clutches that draw different groups: some are business persons, others are "old timers" or the power brokers within these communities. In Libby the clutches are held at the White Knight, Henry's, and there are others at Beck's Montana Cafe. There are also after-hours gathering places such as the Red Dog Saloon and the Caboose Restaurant. Troy has its clutches at Jack's Cafe and the Silver Spur. In Eureka there are groups that congregate at the Time Out, the Big "E" and the Sunshine Cafe.

"Neighboring" or informal visits among individuals who live in the same proximity or who share common interests, is another process that results in gathering people together for social purposes. Prearranged as well as unannounced visits, usually to a neighbors home, constitutes neighboring. These visits are sometimes for purposes of assisting others with chores or tasks that need to be done, such as wood cutting or house repairs. Other neighboring is a brief and often unannounced visit to "say hello" or exchange news about family, friends, or community events. Neighboring sometimes involves dinners, either in the home or out. In the late fall and winter, especially around the holidays, neighboring visits usually increase. Through neighboring, social connections are established and reinforced. These types of social relationships are the basic building block of "community" especially in rural areas where neighbors may be some distance away.

Churches

Churches are a visibly important part of social life and personal relationships in these communities. Most of the major Christian denominations are represented as well as a variety of other Christian groups. Libby has approximately 22 churches for a population of about 2,532 persons (1990 census) or about one church for every 115 persons. Eureka has approximately 7 churches for its 1990 population of 1,043 persons or about one church for every 149 persons. Troy has 6 churches for its population of 963 or about one church for every 160 persons. The social relationships established by churches are based on shared moral and spiritual views. These types of relationships can integrate individuals into a community where these views are shared. However,

where moral and spiritual views are in conflict, these social relationships can segregate a community into small groups based on their particular views. More focused work is required to develop how religious based social relationships affect community cohesiveness. Nonetheless, these types of relationships are important as indicated by the numbers of churches in the county.

The most visible example of religious based association in the county are the Amish who live in both Libby and the West Kootenai. Estimates are that there are approximately 70 Amish in Libby and between 250 and 300 in the West Kootenai area. The Amish faith includes a lifestyle that tends to result in groupings of families that work together and share a common lifestyle and values. The focus of this lifestyle on family, work, and spirituality results in the Amish living apart from the rest of the community; however, they are considered part of the community. The Amish illustrate the process of how church-based associations can focus interaction around a specific group, but these associations do not necessarily exclude individuals from inclusion in the wider community.

Newcomers and Oldtimers

The distribution of "Newcomer" or "Oldtimer" indicate both an individual's status and process of becoming integrated into these communities. The "oldtimer" status is noteworthy because it is attached to power and access to power within these communities. Oldtimers have long term and sometimes wide spread connections. If they do not know someone directly, they "know of" someone. Oldtimers are often those who are believed to be in the "inner circles of power" because they can use their connections "to get things done." Knowledge of the associations among people and having connections such as the "oldtimers" do can accomplish a wide range of tasks such as getting a fire truck for a parade or a room for a public meeting. "Newcomers" do not usually have these types of associations, and they may not have access to these networks. This is because the basis for association and the values of newcomers and oldtimers can be different. Oldtimers tend to be connected by kinship, common work, recreation, and neighborhood relationships; the ties are cross-cutting. Newcomers can become part of these networks, but there is a certain "fit" of values and lifestyle that is the basis for acceptance. An important part of this "fit" is respecting local traditions and values and not trying to re-create "the big city" in Lincoln County, Montana. Newcomers can be different and still be accepted in the community, but may not necessarily associate in oldtimer circles. History indicates that there are individuals with diverse lifestyles who have moved and are moving into the county and practicing a lifestyle that is different than the mainstream and this is tolerated.

"It is a very open handed, open hearted community as long as you tow a certain line . . . It is also a community where individualism is supported and non-conformity is tolerated. The more anti-establishment you are the better. It's a contradiction, but it's the way it is."

Sub-Groupings

There are other distinctions within the county that are noteworthy because they form a basis for social relationships. These distinctions define sub-groupings that also focus interaction with particular groups of persons rather than establishing cross-cutting ties. These distinctions include: teachers, Forest Service, and the Militia of Montana. Teachers and the Forest Service are often described as "cliques." That is, they are understood as groups of people who prefer to associate primarily with each other. This sets these groups apart from others in the community in ways that are different from religious or other types of values and lifestyle-based grouping. The teacher group, and the Forest Service group are perceived to exclude others based on the preference for association with those in the clique. Note that this perception about the Forest Service is more common in Libby than elsewhere. And, the perception itself may not correspond to the actualities of how the Forest Service participates in community life. However, it is important to note that this perception exists.

The Militia of Montana is a different type of sub-group. Part of this difference is that the militia is a formal organization. But, this organization is built around a particular lifestyle and value system that focuses interaction around others who share the same views. That is, rather than promote cross-cutting ties, they promote association with their own group. Within the county, there is some interest in their meetings and some appreciation of their concerns about government control and intervention into personal life. Part of the culture of northwest Montana accommodates these types of concerns and facilitates coexistence with the Militia of Montana as a sub group within these communities.

Special Interests

Lincoln County has several "special interest" organizations that form around specific issues. These organizations tend to be concerned about natural resource issues or specific forest management issues. Citizens Against Gated Roads is not currently active, but it represents the type of organization that can develop around a focused issue. The Kootenai Wildlands Alliance is a similar group, also not currently active, but it focused on a single issue. Such groups tend to form with the emergence of an issue, and then dissolve after their issue wanes or is resolved. Other special interest organizations are more enduring, meeting and engaging in activities about a variety of issues that are within their sphere of interest. For example, Communities for a Great Northwest is concerned about promoting timber interests and the timber-based lifestyle of Lincoln County. It is centered in Libby, but it has members in the northern and southern regions of the county. Organizations such as the Cabinet Resources Group and the Tobacco Valley Resource Group are special interest groups concerned with natural resource issues. The Cabinet Resource Group is based in the Troy area, but draws members from primarily the southern portions of the county. The Tobacco Valley Resources Group has similar interests, is based in the Eureka-Fortine area, and draws membership primarily from the northern portions of the county.

Characteristics of Social Relationships

Some of the types of social groupings that draw people together and provide a basis for interaction are presented above. In this section we extract from interview data and from the nature of these social groupings several characteristics of social relationships:

- (1) There can be multiple connections between people who associate with each other;
- (2) Reference groups are local;
- (3) Social involvement is conditional;

Each of these and their significance for this work is briefly described below.

Multiple Connections in Social Relationships

Social relationships in the urban United States tend to be different than those in rural communities (Fischer 1981). Urban relationships tend toward single interest connections with a wide range of people: a few relationships with neighbors, a few with co-workers, a few with kinsmen, etc.... Rural social relationships tend towards those in which individuals associate with a more limited group of people, especially local people, but these relationships have multiple connections associated with them. In technical terms there are multiplex social relationships, that is, social connections which are characterized by having different types of relationships to persons in a social network. Such relationships are expressed by study participants in the following statements by informants:

"He's my hunting partner, my cruising partner, my boss, and he is my cousin to boot!"

'He came into my office the other day, he's a client, even though we don't agree eye to eye on things. But I go to him when I need some (work) and he comes to me. We're neighbors too, he just lives down the road.... I have had his kids on my teams and it is all very social, there's just things we don't talk about.'

People in Lincoln County are connected to each other in multiple ways and this has implications for how they manage face-to-face relationships. That is, because one's doctor may also be a neighbor, a fellow churchgoer, a club member, and maybe on the same committee for the County Fair, people maintain a level of civility in their social relationships that is demanded by the multiple connections that they have to any given person. This does not mean that people do not have conflicts; clearly they do. However, these types of relationships tend to act as either a break on social conflicts or an avoidance of those topics that may result in conflicts. This characteristic promotes the maintenance of social relationships and, in some regards, inhibits dramatic social cleavages. For this study, this is a significant characteristic of community relationships because it helps to explain public participation in events that can involve conflicts with one's neighbors. Additionally, such multiplex relationships can explain some of the

social complexity that Forest Service personnel need to keep in mind when interacting with stakeholders.

Reference Groups are Local

A "reference group" refers to those relationships that people refer or look to for a sense of who they are and what is valued in their community. Not surprisingly, reference groups in these communities tend to be those based on territory and focused mutual interests. This is not to say for example, that people in Eureka do not know and associate with people in Troy. Nevertheless, residents tend to associate based on kinship, neighborhood, church membership, a common work place, or on common activities in which they participate. These reference groups are more often than not the ones that people are concerned about when they evaluate issues of concern to them. Furthermore, because these reference groups are local, those influences that are external to these communities are viewed with some caution, if not concern. This is expressed in concerns about outside groups or entities that are perceived as trying to impose values or beliefs on the reference group. Government regulations are also seen by some reference groups as having potential to affect the lifestyles and nature of community. Local groups that have connections outside the community may thus provoke a greater sense of concern and suspicion than those for whom the reference group is solely local. Along with the "territorial" basis of community and the emphasis on "towing the line" the local reference group is important because it indicates how ideas and individuals can be evaluated as either providing workable solutions to problems or an unwarranted intrusion into local affairs. This has direct implications for understanding some of the past and current conflicts about natural resources issues in Lincoln County, and it is also directly applicable to how the Forest Service presents solutions to what are perceived to be "local issues" regarding natural resource management.

"I have never lived in a community where it was so popular to put down the government."

Social Involvement is Conditional

Crises, both individual and community, can mobilize a wide range of people in these communities because of a value on mutual support. However, day-to-day participation in community-wide activities is limited to a relatively small number of people who tend to be involved in a wide range of activities. These "community leaders" may be on the city council, the economic development council, the Volunteer Fire Department, the Ambulance, County Fair committees, and other committees or groups of the moment. These individuals tend to view such participation as a social responsibility, in part, because they are the ones who answer the calls that others in these communities do not. This means that most community-wide participation is limited by focused interest involvement, unless it concerns dramatic occurrences such as the Sally Saurer and Our Amanda events. "Focused interest" involvement means participation in clubs, groups, church, or other activities that are focused on the particular interests of the individual. This type of social participation segregates individuals into groups that focus on their

particular concerns and interests rather than on more community-wide issues. That is, involvement in community-wide events tends to depend upon the specific interests of a local reference group. This conditional involvement is expressed in the manner in which study participants describe the limited participation of residents in public hearings, Forest Service open houses, and a host of other

For me, I just don't socialize much, and I don't really care to either. For us, it is school, church, work, and the outdoors. We really like to camp, hunt and fish. Those are the things that we do with our lives. We aren't interested in going to meetings all the time.

events that are intended to gather public input. Attendance at these events is conditioned by the sphere of interest of a particular reference group.

There are additional explanations of public involvement which are related to the importance of informal social connections that, in the past, have governed "how things get done." These informal networks have been the basis for communicating about what issues are important and what should be done by whom. Currently, this is one of the functions of the coffee clutches. The structure of public meetings, formal committees, and other such organized means which are designed for community-wide involvement are out of sync with more traditional (informal) efforts to make decisions and determine what is important in the community. For example,

'You see a lot of new people on those committees. They like to join them, that is where they are getting some of the power here. The rest of us (long term residents) don't do things that way. It used to be that if you wanted something done you knew who to go to make it happen, you didn't have to go to some EDC or whatever meeting. That's changing some.'

In the past, community involvement was expressed by neighboring, participation in church, school, and organizations of personal interest. "Getting things done" did not require a committee or a hearing: it required knowing what connections were locally important. This traditional perception of "community involvement" is thus different than how some other and perhaps newer residents might view that process.

5.2.4 The Kootenai Accords and Community Conflict

Every community has conflicts when individuals or groups view issues differently. Some conflicts are resolved through processes that represent usual means of conflict resolution. Other conflicts may become resolved, but there is a legacy that later affects how a community functions. This section reviews such a community conflict in south Lincoln County. This conflict concerns the Kootenai Accords which was an attempt at a "community based" solution to a proposal for wilderness in the KNF. This event is historically important because it is significant for understanding stakeholder responses to forest management issues and public participation in the forest management

process. It is also relevant in a current context because it illustrates the processes and consequences of social conflict.

The Kootenai Accords were intended to develop a "grass roots" proposal for wilderness in northwestern Montana. The process for the accords grew from the concerns of several residents who were interested in the existence of wilderness within the KNF, but were also cognizant of how any wilderness proposal might be viewed by timber interests within the community. An organization called the Kootenai Wildlands Alliance was formed to promote the idea of wilderness as a type of land use in the Kootenai National Forest. Initially, this group did not necessarily consider themselves to be "environmentalists," rather they were residents with concerns about wilderness.

"Nobody in our group at that time really considered themselves an 'environmentalist' maybe a couple people did, but (not everyone.) ...We put together a proposal after looking at a lot of areas, looking at what was suitable timber and we went to the Forest Service and got them to tell us what was suitable timber in the area we were proposing. It turned out about 2 percent was suitable timber."

After this proposal was developed, the KWA group began efforts to inform other groups in the county about their ideas: " We started going to Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce and anybody who would listen to us." At one point the mill workers union was approached as well as the Libby Rod and Gun Club to support the KWA proposal. Some negotiation resulted in a revised proposal that soon gained national attention, in part, because it seemed to be a cooperative agreement between woods workers and environmental interests. However, some groups within the county perceived that they were not part of this process that was being described as a "community-based" solution. As one KWA representative observed,

"The opposition said, 'we weren't included' and for example there was a group up in the Yaak, the Yaak Rod and Gun Club and after this thing had been in the paper and tv and all this notoriety, that got them stirred up and we heard from them went up to see them and said, 'how come we weren't included?' Well we told them we never heard of them, but we talked to them and at that time our agreement with the mill workers had been made. A lot of people said, 'hey you didn't include everybody' and no we didn't, we made an agreement with the mill workers and anybody who wanted to jump on the band wagon we would have loved to have them. ... It wasn't like anybody was excluded, if they didn't like it they didn't have to be included."

Other groups in the county, particularly Communities for a Great Northwest, perceived they were excluded from the process and they became one source of opposition to the Kootenai Accords. Some segments of this opposition apparently made efforts to reverse the Rod and Gun Club approval of the Accords and ultimately some rank and file mill workers objected to the Union support as well. A contentious public debate and conflict

then developed over if the Accords would affect the timber jobs in the county and if in fact it was the right proposal for wilderness.

"Then opposition, well, I always thought it was political, it was not about jobs, because 2 percent of the timber base is not going to be a big deal. When the signs started going up that a vote for the Kootenai Accords was a vote against your job."

This public debate and social divisiveness continued unresolved until the county commissioners interceded to put the issue to a public referendum which contained the KWA proposal, a proposal by the Forest Service, and a proposal to keep the status quo. In this public referendum the Kootenai Accords proposal was defeated, with the majority apparently supporting the existing Forest Service proposal.

The outcome of the Kootenai Accords was a split within the community that accentuated the differences between "environmental" and "timber" interests. These accentuated differences have persisted to this day and they are observable almost monthly in the "letters to the editor" column of local newspapers. The animosity between the groups and sense of betrayal on either side of the issue has sensitized Lincoln County residents to view natural resource issues in terms of the differences people have with their neighbors rather than their shared values.

There are several outcomes of this event that are relevant for this study. First, the rancor of the debate resulted in highly contentious public meetings. There remains a perception that the tone of these meetings stifled effective debate then and now regarding these issues because of an unwillingness of individuals to engage in these types of public conflicts. Second, the leadership of persons on either side of these issues was observed by residents as suffering because of their involvement. This observation has resulted in a general reluctance among some leaders to get involved in community issues in general and natural resources issues in particular. Third, there is a perception that wilderness in particular and natural resources in general will have to be resolved by entities outside the community. The failure of the Accords exemplifies the loss of the option to resolve the issue within a community that has strong sentiments about the necessity for local control over issues and especially natural resource issues. This loss of hope for local solutions to these problems is perhaps the most distressing outcome of the events.

"It was like nobody had ever done this before. You know, talk to the local people about these things and see what they want, people saw into that and saw something . . . It would have been a neat deal if it could have been pulled off, because it would have been a local solution. It goes back to what I said earlier, it is "their forest" and it would have been neat to have a say in it . . ."

A fourth outcome of the Kootenai Accords is recognition of the importance of how diverse stakeholders need to be included in "community-based" solutions. There are

two related ideas about this outcome. One, is the perception that some stakeholders need to promote conflict in order to control natural resource issues and therefore their inclusion will necessarily result in failure. Second, there is a perception that some stakeholders will be unwilling to participate because of the social costs that might result. Thus, there is at once a recognition of the need for diverse stakeholder to be involved and some cynicism that such a process can worked based on past experience.

The Kootenai Accords represent important community issues that have influenced public responses to present day forest management issues. This complex event cannot be fully elaborated in the context of this report, but its legacy remains an important part of the present-day concerns about natural resources issues in Lincoln County that needs further consideration.

5.2.5 Community Concerns About the Present and Future

Community concerns about the present and future are a backdrop for discussion of public views about forest management issues. The types of concerns that people have about these other issues may offer some insight into their concerns about USFS management of the Kootenai because such concerns are often interrelated. That is, the sentiments people have about one issue may affect how they respond to other issues. This appears to be the case in Lincoln County where an over-riding concern is "the economy and jobs." As noted earlier, the closures of W.R. Grace and Asarco, the downsizing of the Stimson mill and an overall uncertainty about the future of the timber industry is the foundation for public concern about jobs and their overall economic future. These concerns are distributed differentially, with the southern portion of the county experiencing more direct job loss than the northern part of Lincoln County. However, throughout the county there is concern about the direction that the timber industry will take and the meaning of that direction for the numbers of jobs that will exist. Another major concern of residents is the nature of population changes that are occurring in the county. There is a perception, especially in the Tobacco Valley, that there are "newcomers" moving into, and to some extent changing, the area. This sentiment exists to some degree in Yaak, Libby, and Troy, but the rate of in-migration to these areas is not as high as that in the Tobacco Valley where it appears to be evoking a higher level of concern. The statement below may express what appears to be an extreme point of view, although the sentiment expressed is one recognizable through the Tobacco Valley:

"My mother, god rest her soul, used to say that **we just need to build a little wall around ourselves and keep everyone else out** (emphasis added). I know we can't do that, but you feel that way sometimes."

There are several ideas about how newcomers are changing the area:

- 1) They bring with them their values from the city and, importantly, do not respect the values and ways of living that people currently in the area have.

2) There are more unknown persons and a greater sense that safety in the community is not what it used to be. For example,

"I used to go out walking on our road, but I don't do that anymore without my husband. You just don't feel safe. And I don't drive the back road at night, because I don't have the same sense of safety that I used to have."

1) They are increasing land prices and the cost of housing.

2) New residents who are retirees may not be willing to support schools and education of the children of the longer term residents.

The distribution of public concerns is not random. Timber and business interests tend to be concerned about their economic future and the availability of jobs. These concerns appear directly related to forest management issues. Persons with community interests tend to be concerned about the changing nature of their lifestyle which is resulting from changing economics and a steadily increasing number of newcomers. As individuals concerned about their communities, they are also interested in efforts to support the economic base of the community; therefore, economic diversification is an issue of concern. There exists the realization that the timber industry is changing, and it will have a different role in the future. Recreation and tourism are considered as potential ways to diversify the economy.

County residents' concerns are focused on their economic future and their ability to control it. To some extent, the debates that exist about these issues center on how community lifestyle can be maintained. Those who support a fusion of timber culture and community lifestyle tend to express their concerns about issues in terms of maintaining the current community lifestyle.

5.3 Community Stakeholders and the Kootenai National Forest

An important task of this study is the identification of stakeholder groups that have an interest in natural resource issues and management of the Kootenai National Forest. For our purposes, a stakeholder is an individual or group that has a vested interest in their community and its relationships to the KNF. In one sense, everyone resident of Lincoln County is a stakeholder in the national forest: 77 percent of the county is owned by the federal government. Yet, when the interview data are examined for what people say about the identity of stakeholders and what interests they have, some distinct groupings emerge. Stakeholders can be grouped into several major categories that are each briefly described followed by a characterization of their views about natural resources.

5.3.1 Description of Stakeholder Groups

Timber stakeholders have interests in the use of wood products for economic purposes. Timber stakeholders reside in all regions of the county. They include mill operators, mill workers, loggers, truck drivers, and the array of other persons who work in the wood

products industry. Timber interests are represented by various industry groups, as well as local community groups (e.g., Communities for A Great Northwest) that are concerned about timber issues. Within the county there are some important distinctions about the types of timber stakeholders. "Companies" or corporate timber interests are perceived to have separate interests than the gypo loggers, truck drivers, and mill workers. Current "company" interests are described as "corporate" and are contrasted with the J. Neils operations that were perceived as "community" oriented. The loyalties of corporate timber interests are perceived to be with their share holders and boards of directors and not with the communities of the county. Loggers, truckers, mill workers and others in the wood products business are perceived to have community interests. At times "company" and "loggers" interests correspond and they work together on issues, but it is noteworthy that there are perceived differences about the loyalty to community of "company" and "logger" interests. There is some feeling among these stakeholders that both their industry and their lifestyle is threatened by interests within and outside the Forest Service. These interests are perceived to be limiting the volume of timber cut on National Forest lands. Many of their concerns about forest management stem from the perceived threat to the viability of the timber industry and the lifestyle that accompanies it.

Agriculture and ranching stakeholders reside primarily in the Tobacco Valley, but also exist in the Libby and Troy areas as well. The Cattlemen's Association to some degree represents these interests, but there does not appear to be a strong organizational representation of these stakeholders as a whole. These stakeholders have a vested interest in access to national forests lands for grazing purposes, but they also have interests in wildlife management practices, and control of noxious weeds that affect their agricultural operations. Rancher and Timber views about the use and management of the Kootenai National Forest tend to correspond: each sees the KNF as a resource to be used for the benefit of man. These views also emphasize that management priorities should focus on ensuring these interests can use forest lands for their needs. These stakeholders also recognize the necessity for accommodating other uses. However, any such accommodations should not preclude grazing on KNF lands. Like timber interests, ranchers are concerned about other interest groups that are perceived to be working against their use of the KNF. There is a perception that they are not supported by forest managers and that current forest management policies threaten their ability to make a living because of an "excessive" concern with environmental issues. Like timber interests, ranchers perceive themselves to be "true environmentalists" whose living depends on healthy forest lands and grasslands. Like timber interests, they believe the "so-called environmentalists" are in reality "preservationists" who wish to "lock up" the forest and in the process lock ranchers and their way of life out of these lands.

Guides and outfitters are located in almost every community in the county. They use KNF lands to provide hunting and fishing opportunities for their clients. Hunts are provided for elk, moose, deer, sheep, mountain lions, as well as for upland game birds. Similarly, guides access national forest lands along the Kootenai River to take in and put out boats that are used to float their clients down the river primarily for blue ribbon rainbow trout fishing. Guides and outfitters depend on this access to National Forest

lands for their business. Their interests are in maintaining and to some degree regulating that access so the resources can support their business interests. They are also have interests in management practices that affect game habitat and water quality . Guides and outfitters perceive they have a small voice in forest management decisions, and that overall "the forest is managed for timber and not for the concerns of guides." Business interests are located throughout the county. These stakeholders represent the entire range of businesses that exist in the county . They are represented by the Chambers of Commerce in their respective communities. They have interests in forest management decisions since these decisions affect the overall county economy and hence their ability to sell products and services.

Government Officials in the county and incorporated cities of the county respond to their constituent concerns about an array of forest management issues and their effects on the county. They therefore represent stakeholders who have a direct interest in how forest management practices affect county residents. Furthermore, since the county also receives a portion of revenues generated by timber sales, the county has a direct economic interest in practices that may affect the income received from this source.

Recreationalists use the KNF for hunting, fishing, hiking, viewing, skiing, and other types of pastimes. They are represented in groups such as the Rod and Gun Clubs, Backcountry Horsemen, ski clubs, and other outdoor oriented clubs that use the KNF. However, many recreationalists are not associated with formal groups. Rather, their stake is in their personal use of these lands to recreate with their friends and family. Their concerns tend to be about access, wilderness, overall environmental quality, water quality, habitat enhancement and protection for wildlife, and management of the forest so that recreation, timber, and mining interests can coexist. Recreationalists are not a single organized group and they therefore have several "voices." In general, these interests tend to perceive that the Forest Service has not seriously considered their concerns. This is in sharp contrast to the views of ranching and timber stakeholders who tend to perceive that recreational and environmental concerns have too much of a say in forest management decisions.

Environmentalists is a label that can be applied to diverse individuals and organized groups who have concerns about the use and management of public lands. Environmental stakeholders are concerned about multiple use management and especially about forest management practices that affect the health of the forest and the flora, fauna, and fish resources of the KNF. Generally, they perceive the Forest Service as favoring harvesting of trees and the extraction of minerals at the expense of other uses of the forest. A major concern within this group of stakeholders is ensuring no further over-harvesting or degradation of environmental quality within the KNF. They tend to favor the existence of more wilderness, as opposed to timber, ranching, and most other stakeholders who generally perceive there is "enough" wilderness in the county. Environmentalists are sometimes described as "preservationists" because they are perceived to favor management practices that "preserve" the forest in a natural state rather than a preference for management of KNF lands for harvesting trees and extracting minerals. Local environmental stakeholders reside in all areas of the county and may be either long term residents or more recent migrants to these communities.

These groups are represented by organizations such as the Tobacco Valley Resource Group and the Cabinet Resource Group.

Kootenai Tribe. As noted earlier in this report, the Kootenai Tribe has historical connections to lands in Lincoln County that are now part of the KNF. These lands still have cultural importance for the Kootenai which gives them an ongoing stake in management decisions that affect these lands. The interests of the Kootenai Tribe are in part represented in treaty rights the Kootenai have with the United States government that guarantee access to and use of these lands for traditional purposes. The Kootenai stakeholders are represented by their tribal government and by a formal liaison with the Forest Service. Their concerns are about access to the forest for subsistence, religious, and recreational purposes, the use of the forest for traditional purposes, protection of cultural resources, personal safety while using forest lands, and overall environmental quality.

Community stakeholders are ones whose primary focus is the current and future status of their community and its lifestyles. These individuals live in all regions of the county and they are sometimes represented in organized groups such as Economic Development Councils. However, the base of these stakeholders is so broad that the range of their views are not necessarily represented by a single organization. Such groups may support portions of both environmental and timber views about forest management, but the tendency is to view issues in terms of what will most benefit the future of their community.

The numbers of persons interviewed representing each of these stakeholder groups is presented in Table 5-11.

| Table 5-11 Stakeholders Participating in Study | | |
|---|----------------|--------|
| Stakeholder Group | Lincoln County | |
| | Male | Female |
| Timber Interests | 15 | 0 |
| Agriculture/Ranching | 5 | 2 |
| Outfitters/Guides | 5 | 0 |
| Business | 6 | 3 |
| Recreational Users | 6 | 1 |
| Government Officials | 8 | 1 |
| Environmentalists | 7 | 1 |
| Kootenai Tribe | 1 | 3 |
| Community | 12 | 8 |
| Sub-Total | 65 | 19 |
| Total | 84 | |

These groupings reflect primarily local interests in the KNF, although there are clearly interests outside of Lincoln County and Montana that also express interest in KNF management issues. However, from the perspective of many Lincoln County stakeholder groups, the "real" stakeholders are those who live adjacent to the forest and rely upon it for their livelihood. As one person observed,

"We don't mind people coming in and doing their thing. But then we want them to go home. We don't want them telling us how to take care of a place that they don't know anything about. We are the ones who live here all the time and use this place. We are the ones affected by how it is managed."

"Outsiders" have a stake, but clearly local residents perceive their stake is greater and should have more weight in forest management decisions. In fact, both timber and environmental stakeholders criticize each other for either being controlled by or using the influence of powerful "outside organizations" to advance their positions. This criticism is used to de-legitimize the views of either group since anyone representing the interests of an outside group do not have the best interests of the local community in mind.

5.3.2 Perspectives About Natural Resource Issues

Some perspectives about the management of natural resource issues are associated with specific stakeholder groups. However, when several types of stakeholders' views about the forest and its resources are examined, shared beliefs and values are also found. These similarities need as much attention as the differences. An excerpt from field notes illustrates this point:

"This morning I interviewed (x) who is a gypo logger whose family has been here for several generations. We talked extensively about what he values about living here as well as about logging practices. Later in the day I interviewed (y) whose family has also lived here for several generations, but he is a (non-woods occupation). He also spoke at length about the values he holds about the woods. Although they have different views about the use of the forest, they have very common values about what the forest means to them, their families, and their way of life. They both talk about the aesthetic values and amenities offered by the woods as something that is highly important in their lifestyles. What struck me as important is the similarities in what they value about living here and how they perceive the resources of the forest."

The commonality of values among stakeholder groups is important. So are the differences. In the past, the differences have been divisive and the commonalities appear to have been ignored. In presenting the views of stakeholders the focus here is on both the important commonalities as well as important differences.

Among stakeholder groups there are four perspectives that organize the views about the forest and its management. These perspectives can be characterized as (1) the economic precedence perspective, (2) the "forest as a managed farm" perspective, (3) the forest as "preserve," and (4) the multiple use perspective. These characterizations are necessarily generalized since they were constructed by aggregating statements into groupings within common meanings about forest management. These categorize thus represent a data-based categorization of views about forest management. Each of these themes will be developed in more detail later in this report, but here it is useful to provide an over view of these ideas that appear to organize many of the specific ideas presented throughout this chapter.

- **Economic Precedence.** The first view is that those whose livelihood is based in the use of the forest have the greatest stake in its management and therefore, from their perspective, their stakes should have precedence. Furthermore, since those who have an economic stake represent, from their point of view, a "majority" then the democratic principle of "majority rules" should apply. This "majority rules" argument is used more in reference to contrasting timber and environmentalist stakes than any other comparison among stakeholders. This perspective is held among timber, ranching, business, and other interests that rely on the National Forest for economic use.
- **Forest as a Managed Farm.** A strong sentiment among timber and ranching stakeholders is, in their words, that the forest is a farm that produces a crop that needs to be harvested. There are two important ideas here. One is that the forest, like a farm, needs to be managed for the benefit of man. Resources that could be used, but are not, are perceived to be wasted. In this view, forest lands and resources need to be managed: trees, plants, wildlife, or any other resource in the National Forest, must be managed and not left to "mother nature's whims." The second idea in this view is that the forest is a crop. Study participants used metaphors to describe the forest such as, 'it is like the farmer's field of wheat' or 'its a crop, just like corn is a crop that needs to be harvested.' Crops are resources that have value to man and can be used for economic benefit. This perspective is a corollary to the economic precedence view, but it tends to be held by a wider range of stakeholders, including some members of community, outfitters and guides, business, and recreational stakeholders.
- **Forest as Preserve.** This perspective views the forest and its natural resources as biological resources that need to be preserved. This does not necessarily mean these resources should not be used, but if they are used, then they need to be used in a sustainable way. This is much the same as the notion of "sustained yield" or not cutting more trees than can be replaced that is entailed in the "forest as a managed farm view." The preserve perspective values the precedence of "natural processes" in forest management, although there is also a recognition that timber harvests need to be managed as well. This view is more common among environmental and some recreational and community stakeholders. It is uncommon among other stakeholder groups.

- **Multiple Use.** In this view the forest is viewed as consisting of multiple resources that can be used by all stakeholders. Furthermore, those who make their livelihood from the forest have an equal stake with others and their uses, and while important, should not be considered at the expense of other uses. This perspective is often held by community, business, environmental, and some timber and ranching stakeholders.

5.4 Attachment to the KNF: Perceptions of Natural Resources and Types of Uses

Three topics are developed in this section to assess the nature of attachment of county residents to the KNF. These attachments will be used later in this report to assist in assessing stakeholder views about managing the resources of the forest. The first topic develops ideas about the concept of a "National Forest" as defined by county residents. This helps us to understand the boundaries of what this study is investigating. The second topic is the perceived resources of the KNF. Study participants were asked about the types of resources within the KNF to establish what may be of value from their perspective. The third topic is the types of uses of the KNF by county residents. This topic addresses how or if people interact with the resources they and others value. Collectively, this information is the foundation for understanding the attachments of stakeholders to the KNF.

The major findings of this section suggest that there is an intricate pattern of attachment to the KNF that results from how its resources are valued and how they are used. There is substantial variation in how these resources are perceived. However, even though there are different values placed on the same resources, these nonetheless result in feelings of attachment to the forest and its resources. These attachments are further reinforced by the patterns of use among stakeholders. Again, these patterns vary and stakeholders may use forest resources in one or more of the ways described in this section. The consequence is a combination of values and patterns of use that indicate strong and complex attachments to the KNF and its resources, regardless of the stakeholder group.

5.4.1 Perceptions About the Concept of a National Forest

Three strong themes and two weak themes were categorized from the interview responses about the concept of "National Forest." A "strong theme" is a cluster of statements that organizes the majority statements categorized about a topic. A "weak theme" is also a smaller or less intensely expressed cluster of common statements. The three strong themes are as follows:

"It's our National Forest." As one study participant expressed about the idea of a National Forest, "It belongs to everyone, but some people think that it is the Lincoln County National Forest." Proximity to the forest and dependence on its resources result in defining a National Forest as a local resource. For example, "We are the ones that live here. We are the ones affected by how it is managed, so we should have a big say in what happens." This theme is perhaps the mostly strongly felt sentiment about the idea of a "National Forest." And, even though everyone may not share this belief, the

idea strikes a cord within these communities that makes sense to a cross-section of stakeholders. This view of a National Forest also entails the idea that local stakeholders should have the most say over "their" forest. This view is held by a wide range of individuals, including timber, recreation, business, outfitter/guide, and some environmental stakeholders.

"It's a Place for Multiple Use." This is characterized as the "traditional" idea of a National Forest. A core of this idea is that a National Forest should accommodate a variety of purposes and uses, and no one use should exclude other types of uses. The following statements exemplify this view:

"Its a place for various types of uses and for various kinds of opportunities or potential opportunities. Timber, mining, wildlife, all these kinds of things should be there and be used."

"It is owned by all the people and its is available for multiple use. But it can and needs to provide as many of those as possible."

"Parks and preserves, those are places that have their own uses, but a National Forest is a place set up for work, for making use of it. But, now the move is to make it into a park."

In the last example above, note the contrast between a "park" and a "National Forest." A park is perceived as a preserve, but a National Forest is to be used in a working sense. Timber, ranching, and environmental stakeholders each ascribe to the view that multiple uses should be accommodated without excluding any particular type of use; however, there are differences in the perceptions about what constitutes "balanced use." That is, "balanced use" tends to mean different things to different stakeholders. It is important to clarify the differences of meaning about balanced use when discussing this idea with particular stakeholders.

"It's a Woodbasket." The woodbasket idea is a corollary of the multiple use theme. The National Forest as "woodbasket" gives precedence to uses that produce wood and wood products. A National Forest is "Timber to use to help build the nation's houses," but this does not exclude other types of uses: "Its to provide wood, and watershed. It is set up for multiple use." Another illustration of this theme indicates the importance of timber production coexisting with other use:

"(It is) an area of enormous size and amount of trees that produces a volume of timber for use as wood products. It is bounded by grass lands and streams that furnish enjoyment and all kinds of recreation. There is the freedom to look at nature there. There is an abundance of wildlife and plants that we don't always have the privilege of seeing."

As a woodbasket, the forest is intended to produce wood as well as jobs; thus, although other uses are accommodated, timber harvesting should take precedence. This

definition is consistent with the "forest as a managed farm" perspective noted in the last section since the very definition of a National Forest is one intended to produce wood. The two weak themes concern the Forest as "government ground" and as "a war zone."

"It's Government Ground." This theme about the concept of a National Forest is one that resonates with a wide range of stakeholders. The core of this notion is a "we-they" distinction that is similar to the idea of "our National Forest" described above. That is, "they" (the government) possess and control the land. One study participant's definition suggests the core of this theme: "[A National Forest is] Land owned by the government and the rules are dictated by the government about how they can use the forest." "They" control and "dictate" the use of the land that, in fact, belongs to "the people." As another study participant observed, "It's really Montana land, our land, that is owned and controlled by the [federal] government." Embedded in this definition is the view that local residents have little say in the management of these lands, and they are restricted from certain types of uses because of what are perceived to be arbitrary rules and regulations. Additional examples of this theme are as follows:

"It's mine and it doesn't belong to the government. It belongs to me and I get upset when they tell me I can't go there because of some endangered bullfrog or something."

"Well, we are all tired of not having a say in natural resources. Its not just timber. We are responsible people; we don't want someone else dictating how it should be."

This view of a National Forest is itself part of a larger set of ideas about Forest Service management. This definition and these ideas (described in other sections of this chapter) express alienation from the process of forest management. Another example more fully expresses this sense of not having a say in the management of a resource that is perceived to be of extraordinary local importance:

"It is supposed to be owned by the people, but in fact it is owned by the bureaucrats. It is managed to meet people's needs, but you have to ask which people? As a federal organization, the local people's needs are not considered. It s managed more from general needs."

This view of a National Forest thus emphasizes the idea of "government" land, the use of which is "dictated" by bureaucrats who see the forest as belonging to them.

"It's a War Zone." This is not a definition, but rather an "image" evoked by the idea of a National Forest. It suggests the idea is in flux and open to definition. In this view, the prevailing definition will be the outcome ongoing competition about the use and meaning of "a National Forest. " A quotation from the interview data that expresses this notion is one from which the theme title is derived:

"A public with uncertain values that owns . . . millions of acres that is owned by everyone. A large community forest where we are all supposed to be able to enjoy the offerings, whether recreations offering, spiritual offering, wood products, and other products that come from the forest. [It

is] set up to provide raw products . . . that is what it is supposed to be a community, working forest, but that is not what it ended up being. It is a war zone for competing visions. There are those who envision the only appropriate use as a holding tank for biodiversity that should be managed for only one value, natural processes to work themselves out. There are those who see that we have abused every other place on the planet and there are the last receptacles possible for biodiversity. They believe that with all their heart and that we should connect all these receptacles with corridors and that the holding tanks will continue to function over time. They have a right to their dream, to their vision, but that is a drastic change from the way forests have been managed and how they think about they should be."

This notion of competing visions is one that is not uncommon among ranching, timber, environmental, and community stakeholders.

5.4.2 Perceived Resources of the KNF

The KNF is a specific National Forest with particular resources that residents value. These valued resources offer insights about the attachments to the KNF and the interests held among stakeholders throughout the county. The themes about these valued resources focus on: (1) "its space," (2) usable resources; and, (3) "special places." These views about the specific resources of the KNF necessarily lump many responses into these categories, and each of these themes are sometimes present among any one group of stakeholders. Furthermore, these views tend to be distributed among various stakeholder groups without strong patterns of association, except as noted below.

Some of the most noteworthy responses to the view of the resources of the KNF are those about the idea of "its space." These responses reveal one of the ways that residents become attached to the forest as a space in their community and personal lives. The main idea of "its space" is straightforward: the KNF is a large, accessible space. It is the idea that this "space" extends the space in an individual's life beyond the confines of their home, neighborhood, and community. As one person observed, "I can walk out my door here, and in a half an hour I can be walking in woods where you would never know that anyone else had walked. Just being out in it is important." Another study participant's response suggests the notion of her personal space extends to the forest: "I live on a very small piece of land, but the whole forest is mine, that's the biggest resource to me, the space that I can get into. It's the biggest back yard there is for me to get away into whenever I can." Similarly, a snowcat enthusiast noted, "It's one of the most beautiful places there could be. You get up on those ridges in the winter time and you just wouldn't think the sky ever ended. Its just being able to get out and away and have access to that space." These same sentiments were expressed by a logger who

"It's one of the most beautiful places there could be. You get up on those ridges in the winter time and you just wouldn't think the sky ever ended. It's just being able to get out and away and have access to that space."

observed, "We work out in the woods all the time, and for a lot of guys they do that because they want to be out in the woods, that is what is important to them." Horsemen, hikers, loggers, skiers, and others seem to share a sentiment about the importance of a large space to which they have access for various purposes. This develops a tie between personal life experience and the perceptions of wide spaces that surround the varied lives of county residents. This is an important shared value that connects ranchers, timber interests, environmentalists, and other stakeholders who value the expanded space the forest offers.

"If you are going to live in this part of Montana then you either have to take it off the stump, dig it out of the ground, or get it out of the water."

The second theme about the natural resources of the KNF emphasizes harvestable trees, extractable minerals, grass for grazing, and game for hunting. This perception of the resources of the forest is consistent with the "forest as a managed farm" perspective noted previously. That is, the resources of the forest are ones that can be used by man for his benefit, financial or otherwise. In this view the tendency is to view trees as "board feet of lumber." This is not to say that the other values and uses of trees and the lands they occupy are not appreciated, but the first look at the forest perceives these resources as ones that can be and should be used. The forest resources are perceived to be abundant and to contain sufficient supplies to sustain a local timber industry, if there is access to National Forest lands. The plant resources of the forest are also viewed in terms of their potential economic benefit or as resources usable for subsistence purposes. For example, one study participant noted, "People here need to have access to areas where Huckleberries grow. There are people here who use the income from picking berries to buy the school clothes for their kids. Those berries are there for us to pick and we need to be able to get to them." The mineral resources of the KNF are perceived to be unique as are the possibilities of oil and perhaps natural gas resources in some parts of the forest. These resources are understood as a potential economic benefit to the region as a whole and, like timber resources, the non-use of these resources is perceived as "wasteful." The major wildlife resources in the KNF are those that can be hunted. Wildlife such as wolves and other predators that compete with hunters are controversial because they pursue these same game resources. This is not to suggest that this view advocates their elimination. In fact, there is sentiment that predators such as wolves can coexist with man and other wildlife if they are "managed." Similarly, grizzly bears are appreciated, but if bear management plans result in limiting the use of the forest, then the bear is expendable. This utilitarian view of the resources of the KNF sees some value in spaces such as wilderness, but because these spaces are "not usable," the total area devoted to such non-usable space should be limited.

The third theme about the natural resources of the Kootenai National Forest is its "special places" and abundant and diverse wildlife. This perspective views wildlife such as grizzly bears, lynx, mountain lions, deer, elk and other species as having an equal status in the wildlife resources of the forest. The coexistence and diversity of these resources are appreciated because of the contribution they make to the natural richness of the area. Other natural riches are some of the more recognized geographical

locations throughout the county. Places such as Ross Creek Cedars, Ten Lakes Scenic Area, the Northwest Peaks Scenic Area, the Cabinet Wilderness, Kootenai Falls, the Kootenai River, and Lake Koocanusa are widely recognized natural assets of the KNF. The forest itself is viewed as one of the truly "last best places." As one study participant noted, "There are trees all the way to the top here, we have the best National Forest in the nation." These spaces are not necessarily used by everyone, but the existence of a range of "special places" that coexist with the timber resources of the KNF are perceived as important to the character of this forest. However, there is another sense of "special places" that is as significant as these widely known geographical locations. These other special places are private spaces that vary from individual to individual and are usually tied to personal experiences in the KNF. That is, individuals may value the Vermillion, a small creek in the Yaak, the banks of the Fischer River, or a valley on the other side of Sheep Mountain. Often these special places are tied to experiences with other family members. Fathers and sons have hunted or fished these places, husbands and wives have walked their spaces, or other types of personal experiences in particular locations have made these places "special." Two statements briefly illustrate this point:

'I have worked in the woods all my life. I have cut trees and worked in the mills and I believe that there is plenty of timber here to cut. But, you know, there are places that are important to me, places that I have hunted with my dad and by God I wouldn't want to see that cut, its a place that I like to go, because even now, even though my dad is gone, its a place that means something to me.'

'You know I don't see nothing wrong with a clearcut. There's a time and a place for them, and mostly it needs to be in places where it is off the roads, back away from where people can see it. But there are places I wouldn't want to see them, places where my wife and I go. There is this hillside up (location) and I wouldn't want to see that clearcut. We want that place to be the way it is now, for our kids, so they can see it the way we have.'

Through personal experiences individuals identify special places that tie them to the resources of the KNF. These are spaces that people do not want to see changed because of their attachment to the personal memories and life experiences.

5.4.3 Uses of the KNF

The patterns of use of the KNF among county residents can be divided into four categories: (1) direct economic uses, (2) subsistence uses, (3) recreational uses, and (4) spiritual uses. Direct economic uses are those that are primarily concerned with the harvesting of timber and, in the recent past, the extraction of minerals. In the northern part of the county the harvesting of Christmas trees is still an important activity for some individuals and families, but it is not longer the major industry that it once was. Similarly, mushroom gathering is an important activity for some residents, but it also draws gatherer's from outside of the area. There are other small scale uses of forest products that result in economic benefit for local residents, including gathering of pine cones and

other plant materials. A related but slightly different kind of economic use is direct employment with the Forest Service. Seasonal employment and fire-related employment is an important economic connection for some county residents. The Forest Service employs approximately 300 people throughout the course of the year and an additional 400 temporary summer workers, not including fire crews (USFS Personnel Department estimates 1995). Outfitters and guides have a direct economic stake in the forest since they use these lands for guided hunts and fishing.

Subsistence uses include hunting, fishing, wood gathering, and berry picking. For some county residents these types of uses are a necessary part of their personal economic lives. Hunting puts meat in the freezer, gathering wood is a necessity for winter heat, and berry picking either results in an income or food for the table. These types of subsistence uses directly tie individuals to the resources of the forest by integrating the economics of their personal lives with the use of the forest.

Recreational uses of the forest provide a similar type of connection among county residents. Indeed, recreational uses are among the most important non-economic uses of the KNF that connect personal lives with forest resources. Recreational hunting, fishing, berry picking, hiking, snowmobiling, skiing, bird watching, photography, picnicking, and "viewing" are recreational activities noted by study participants. These types of uses are generally not surprising, but one, "viewing," needs clarification since it was noted in a study by A&A Research as the most frequent form of recreational use of the forest (Eiselein 1992). "Viewing" usually entails driving along forest service roads to observe wildlife or to otherwise just "view" the sights that can be seen from a car or truck window. This type recreational activity is practiced by all age groups and lifestyles. As a forest use, viewing provides a connection between people and the KNF by the ease and frequency in which they can access the forest and its visual resources. "Just being able to go out after work and drive along a quiet road means a lot to me" expresses the sense of pleasure and attachment to this activity that can connect almost anyone in the county with forest resources. Viewing is thus not only a frequent but important use of the forest for county residents.

"If I couldn't recreate here, I wouldn't live here. That is what is important to me about this place, the variety of recreation opportunities, especially the hiking."

Spiritual uses of the forest are clearly a part of what is meaningful to people about the KNF, but these are less easily defined than a hike in the woods or a drive along the Forest Development Road to view the lake or wildlife. Spiritual uses are those that evoke religious feelings or the non-material aspects of personal life experience. For example, being in the forest can be an opportunity to observe and experience God's works and in this sense, spiritual feelings are evoked. The other sense of "spiritual" is not necessarily tied to formal religious experiences. Instead, it concerns the non-material thoughts and feelings evoked in the course of any activity that takes people into the forest (hiking, viewing, or even working in the woods). Such thoughts and feelings can be a component of or result from any use of forest resources. Furthermore, these thoughts and feelings may be consciously pursued for themselves. For example, when

someone observed, 'Sometimes I just go out into the woods because it relieves a lot of the stress that I experience every day.' Or, 'There are days I just need to go out, float down the river, take a ride into the back country or do something. It gives me a feeling of being out of the usual routine, of being with myself, and I don't necessarily have to be catching fish or killing game. It is just being there that I enjoy.' These types of statements are not ones about "religion" but they do refer to intimate personal experiences that are pursued for the non-material benefits individuals receive.

"If I lived in – even say, as close as Spokane, I wouldn't have something like this as accessible to me. Sometimes I get up in the morning, get in the pickup, sometimes I don't even know where I'm going, just go up a road that leads to some trailhead, and just take off for the day. Just seeing things so easily, if I lived in Spokane I would have to plan for that."

5.5 Community Evaluations of the Forest Service and Forest Management

There are two major topic areas discussed in this section. The first assesses the role of the Forest Service in forest management and public views of trust in the agency and the its management style. These topics are fundamental to the assessment of forest management issues because the public's view of the role of an agency and the trust they place in it has implications for how management policies and practices will be evaluated. The second topic concerns specific management issues: timber sale appeals; timber harvest practices; fire and salvage logging; roads and gates; wildlife; and wilderness. These are "high profile" issues that are probably discussed at one time or another in every coffee clutch in the county. The intent of this discussion of management issues is to present the range of diversity in public opinions discovered by this study. Where feasible, the views of specific stakeholder groups are identified. However, it should be noted that this study indicates some diversity of opinions within and among stakeholder groups about any one issue. Generalizations about stakeholder group views should be read with this diversity in mind.

5.5.1 Public Assessments of the Forest Service

The Forest Service has been an important part of the Lincoln County social environment since establishment of the Kootenai National Forest. It is important, in part, because the agency makes a significant economic contribution to the county; and, it is also the steward and manager of lands and resources that are a major portion of the total land mass in Lincoln County. Not surprisingly, there are strong sentiments about the agency among county residents. These sentiments are relevant for this work since they address how residents evaluate the agency's actions and capabilities; and, these evaluations affect perceptions about the details of particular forest management issues.

Several ideas are developed here regarding public assessments of the Forest Service as an agency: (1) the nature of the agency as a government bureaucracy; (2) effectiveness of the agency as a manager of the KNF; (3) integration of the agency into local communities; and (4) public trust in the agency to manage the KNF; and (5) the nature of Forest Service's management style.

The Forest Service as Bureaucracy

There are two noteworthy concerns about perceptions of the agency as a government bureaucracy. These issues need to be considered in relationship to a social environment in the United States in which a trend in public attitudes is to down-size government and reduce its influence in individual and family life. These attitudes are especially strong in northwest Montana where there are established cultural values about personal independence and the relationship between citizens and government. Given this broader social context, the first notion to highlight is expressed in the following excerpts from interviews: "What do all those people do down there?" and, 'The size of the forest hasn't changed in a lot of years, but the number of people down there is a whole lot more than in the past! Why do they need all those people?' Related to these same attitudes is the idea, 'They just waste gas driving those green rigs all over the place whenever they want to. The whole place just wastes money.' There is a general lack of understanding about the work activities of the Forest Service and a general attitude that the agency is over staffed and wastes money. This breeds a certain subtle resentment about the agency that by itself does not necessarily affect agency credibility. However, for some stakeholders this becomes one among many issues that accumulate to influence the overall evaluations of the Forest Service. Again, it is important to remember that such criticisms are offered in the context of a social environment with a minimalist view of government and its place in regulating private life. This does not diminish the importance of the criticism, but it does suggest a need for public information about agency activities that can mitigate undeserved condemnation.

A second concern about the agency as a government bureaucracy concerns its activities as a regulatory body. Activities of the Forest Service that restrict public access to the forest (e.g., gated roads) or otherwise regulate use of the forest (e.g., charges for fire wood permits and Christmas trees) demonstrate "government control of people's lives." Furthermore, it also suggests to people that through such regulatory activities, "They act like they own it." This "we" versus "they" assessment of public-agency relationships is alienating for both parties. Such assessments of the Forest Service are not specific to the KNF, rather they appear to be more generalized concerns: although they might apply to any government entity, they are important here because of their cumulative effect in evaluations of the Forest Service in Lincoln County.

Effectiveness of the Agency as Forest Managers

A second grouping of issues concerns the ability of the agency to function as effective managers of the forest. There are four themes that emerge from the data. The first of these is how the biologists of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are "dictating" to the Forest Service the use and management of forest areas that are or may be inhabited by grizzly bears. This reasoning suggests that the Forest Service does not have the authority to manage these areas according to the "best and highest use." Instead the perceived "narrow" interests of the USFWS take precedence in overall management decisions. The second theme concerns how pressure groups, (e.g., environmentalists or the timber industry) influence the process of forest management. The result of this pressure is a perception that, "Their hands are tied." That is, the agency does not have

the power to effectively manage the forest because of the actions of pressure groups. A third theme is that there are personnel within all levels of the agency that have "personal agendas" that stifle forest management. For example, 'There are some of the worst timber beasts in the Forest Service right down there in the SO's office. All they see is trees to cut, and nothing else. How can you work with people like that?.' And, 'The big problem is that they have environmentalists in their ranks. They will stop anything that you try to do to get out more cut.' The observations of study participants about personal agenda with the USFS are both about the agency as a whole as well as about the KNF. Ultimately, the local actions and abilities of the KNF staff to effectively manage the forest is overpowered by other perceptions, developed later in this chapter, that groups and individuals have "tied the hands" of local managers.

Forest Service Integration into the Community

A third group of issues addresses Forest Service integration into the social fabric of Lincoln County communities. Dominant and minority themes about this issue were found. The dominant theme is that as an agency the Forest Service is generally aloof and only minimally involved in the important issues of Lincoln County communities. That is, the Forest Service is not evaluated as a "core" member of or major contributor to these communities. There is some regional variation in this observation. Communities in the northern part of the county have more positive assessments of the Forest Service as making a contribution to the community and being integrated into these communities. This perception may not be universal, but it is more pronounced than in either Libby, Troy, or Yaak. It is important to note that the data for this study are perceptions and not necessarily an indication of actual Forest Service involvement within these communities. Furthermore, study data also suggest some contradiction about agency involvement in the community. On the one hand there is criticism that the agency is not involved, and on the other there are references to agency personnel who participate within a wide range of activities. These issues need to be kept in mind when reading the remainder of this discussion about agency involvement in Lincoln County communities.

There are several characteristics of the Forest Service that contribute to this perception throughout the county. The rotation of personnel in and out of the KNF has fostered a sense that personnel within the agency have no ties to the community. Furthermore, there is sentiment that agency personnel "keep to themselves" and that, "most of them are in their own cliques. Just a few are part of the community." While there is acknowledgement of individuals who are highly visible participants in important activities such as the volunteer fire departments and volunteer ambulances, and economic development councils, they are viewed as the exception. The over-riding sentiment is that there is no institutional support for community involvement by the agency. For example:

"There is no institutional support for Forest Service personnel to contribute to the community. It is like the school system. The school system feels that because you coach or take care of these kids during the day that you have no obligation to this community. There isn't an institutional support from the schools and the Forest Service. It is hard on

the Forest Service people. I have lots of good friends that are Forest Service people, but their image is really bad. ... The institution needs to tell them, the leadership needs to tell them, leadership needs to be showing the way.

They are one of the groups of people, besides the schools, ... they are going to be one of the things that changes this community. Those people are going to have to start giving back to this community.... They need to take part in this community, they need to say that 'this is the Forest Service.' We have one or two people take part in (our organization), but it is not the (leadership), not the big players."

Note the strong desire expressed in this quotation for the agency to be part of the community and part of the solution to the problems facing Lincoln County communities: ..."they are going to be one of the things that changes this community." At the same time there is an expressed concern that although individuals are involved in the community, the agency is not. This indicates at once the perceived need for the Forest Service to be part of the community, but at the same time concern that they are not. These types of contradictions exist throughout the data about Forest Service participation in community life.

Where there is participation by Forest Service personnel in community activities, it is perceived as "part of the job." For example:

"I come across Forest Service people in my job and they are very community minded. But, it is part of their job to be (community minded). But, I don't know any other Forest Service people. Outside of those people I just don't know anyone. There are people who make contributions, the Ranger Stations contribute, but I don't know any of them."

These statements indicate a perception that although some individuals may participate in community activities, there is limited involvement by the agency. Furthermore, this limited involvement has an "institutional obligation" character to it. That is, it is not based on the same volunteer spirit that residents perceive motivates their neighbors to contribute.

The minority theme is a stronger acknowledgement of the Forest Service as involved with community activities and concerns. For example, as noted above, in Eureka the Forest Service contributed landing lights to a helipad that is used for emergency medical flights. In Libby there is recognition that the agency is supportive of a parkway project. Furthermore, the agency is perceived as a significant resource for the community. An example of this sentiment is found in a resident's statement: "Let's face it, they are a big source of personnel resources for this community. Without them we wouldn't have near the people to get things done here. Yes, they are involved in the community and they make a big contribution." And, "We're a small town, 55 miles down the road from anyone. We have to be self-reliant here and depend on our neighbors.

The Forest Service have been good neighbors. They participate in the Volunteer Fire Department and we have some good working relationships with them. We cover most structure fires and when its ok they help us. We worked together fine on the fires last summer." This institutional involvement is acknowledged and praised by some and ignored by others. There are also agency personnel that are highly involved in community activities; Rangers and other management personnel make more than a good faith effort to participate in activities on their Districts. Such participation is an important link to the social fabric of these communities. Nonetheless, these evaluations are subordinate to those that assess the agency as insufficiently involved in activities and concerns of Lincoln County communities. This perception, which again may be different than actual agency involvement, needs further consideration by the KNF.

Public Trust in the Forest Service

Trust is an essential component of the public's faith in the agency's ability to manage the forest fairly and effectively. Without trust, it is likely that decisions will be second-guessed and publics will feel alienated from the decision making process (Dunlap, Kraft, and Rosa 1993). The interview data reveal one strong theme about trust: individuals within the KNF are trusted, but there is minimal trust in agency, although there is more trust in the local offices than those outside of the county. Typical sentiments about trusting individuals but not the agency are as follows:

"They have a lot of morale problems. I trust some of 'em but as an agency, no. I want to be trusting, but I'm not. I would love to trust them ... their allegiance is to the agency, not the community."

"As a total organization I don't trust 'em, but there are individuals there that I work with that I do trust. On an individual basis they are ok."

"Oh, I trust a few individuals there, but collectively they have been led in a political manner. There isn't total trust right now and, you know, the overall direction is a problem. People are scared to death the Forest Service will not look out for their interests. There needs to be more open management, no hidden agendas. They need to tell us facts that are facts. No phantom forests."

There are several components that contribute to a feeling of mistrust of the Forest Service as an agency that will be illustrated with excerpts from interviews. The first component concerns the ability of the KNF staff to make decisions about forest management. For example:

'At the local level there is a lack of authority to make decisions and be in control of local issues. There is intimidation from the national level. People can see that you can't work out a problem from the local level. Centralized decision making about local issues does not work. What should be a simple local decision becomes 20 pages of comments from the Sierra Club in San Francisco.'

Without the perceived authority to make decisions, trust is undermined. Mistrust is also fostered because, in general, the agency is considered to be unconcerned about local issues and interests when management decisions are made:

"The trust level is going down daily . . . They have caved in to the environmentalists. They say they care about the community, but it is only lip service. Now there is no stability, no predictability, you just don't know from one day to the next what will happen."

"The Forest Service people are short term residents. We live here long term. They will not listen to us and until they start to listen who can trust them? They will listen to the Chicago school kids who write them letters, but I am ignored. It's my house that is going to burn down here. I will suffer, not the school kids in Chicago. Communities here love this forest and the Forest Service doesn't recognize it."

Another component of this mistrust is the perception of deception by the Forest Service regarding forest management issues. The substance of this perception ranges from a perceived deviation from the 1987 forest plan that has "broken a contract with the community about the harvesting of timber" to concerns that the agency has not been truthful about the actual level of cutting. This is illustrated in the concern of some citizens with "phantom forests," that is, trees that exist on paper, but not on the ground. These are perceptions that may or may not be accurate, but their cumulative effects are to undermine the sense of trust in the agency.

A final component of mistrust concerns a perception that Forest Service actions are based on expediency rather than a concern for good forest management. For example:

"They have the power over you to make decisions that affect your life, but they don't use common sense, they don't do what is right, they do what covers their ass."

"The good natural resource managers are stuck at the bottom. But if you are a good paper shuffler, then you move up. They guy with the muddy boots is just an annoyance. Management of the agency gets to be the priority and not management of the forest."

These statements represent the theme that it is not conscientious management, but the demands of the bureaucracy and agendas within the agency that dictate how the forest should be managed. The absence of "common sense" and too few people with local "on the ground knowledge" exemplify agency concern with issues other than effective management of the forest. By itself such a perception is not a major basis for mistrust. It is the aggregate of these themes that builds a sense of mistrust in the agency.

Forest Service Management Style

The Forest Service's management of the KNF is a concern of almost all stakeholder groups. Most of these concerns are critical of Forest Service management, but this should not be surprising given the contentious nature of natural resources in Lincoln

County. Furthermore, given the opportunity to discuss any issue about Forest Management, the tendency is not to praise the agency, but to first offer criticism. However, most of the criticism by study participants was offered in a constructive spirit. These themes, which are echoed in other sections of this chapter, are developed below.

The Forest Service favors big timber at the expense of small operators and smaller scale timber sales. This is a strongly felt sentiment among smaller loggers as well as some community and environmental stakeholders. The perception is that in the past the Forest Service has given a preference to larger operations and large scale timber sales. This perceived favoritism is believed to exclude consideration of the smaller scale loggers; and, it is believed to result in less consideration of smaller sales of timber that might be less environmentally destructive. This perception is important given the sentiment among various stakeholders that since J. Neils left Libby there are, with a few notable exceptions, few "company" timber interests that benefit the local economy in the same way that smaller scale logging operations do. For example:

"The Forest Service is oriented to big projects and dealing with corporations. They don't like to deal with smaller scale projects, but you see that is what we have to do here for the future. For us, its getting back to doing things on a smaller scale, but that isn't the way the Forest Service works."

"There needs to be a shift away from the big green timber sales. But there needs to be a change to more salvage logging and small scale operations. This would put a lot more people to work that what they are doing now. If they really are interested in the local economy and not the big company economy, then they should support more small scale, rag tag outfits like mine. With the smaller scale guys they are the ones that will back off and go light on the land. I'll do that rather than those things that favor the money."

"There was this fellow who got caught pulling poles out of a burn pile and the Forest Service prosecuted him They said it was an active logging sale. It really aggravates people. There isn't an allowance for smaller entrepreneurial use. The Forest Service doesn't want to bother with smaller uses, for smaller poles and posts. There isn't an allowance for personal use, for the guy who wants to get a few house logs. They are geared to deal with the big companies and not the community."

The 100 inch log program was noted as an important contrast to the preference for larger timber sales. While some acknowledge that this smaller scale program has its problems, it is highly praised as an important contribution to the local economy. It is also widely praised as one of the bright spots in how the attitude of the Forest Service may be changing to truly consider "the little guy."

The Forest Service manages with the "timber first" approach. Environmental, recreational, and some community stakeholders perceive the agency's management policies are dominated by concern for timber interests. Recreationalists perceive they have a small voice in the overall management of the forest and any concern they do have takes a back seat to timber interests. The "working forest" description of the Kootenai is perceived by some to exemplify the problem: the forest is working for timber interests and not for the diverse and multiple interests that have a stake in forest management. The perception is that other interests are not disregarded, but subordinated to timber concerns. The essence of this idea is expressed in a statement by one long term resident who has consulted with the forest on various management issues. His observation is as follows:

"Its always what can we do to get out some timber and not hurt sheep habitat. They never talk about how do you improve sheep habitat, its never thought of like that. It is just not where there heart is."

This statement expresses the central core of the idea that in management decisions, "timber comes first." All other considerations are subordinated to how they will be affected by timber harvest decisions. For many environmental and community stakeholders, this is the essence of what is wrong with the Forest Service management style.

Forest Service management practices are wasteful. Management practices that "waste" resources are as much a concern as the waste that is perceived to result from not logging trees that should be used. Small loggers, ranchers, community interests, and environmental stakeholders each expressed concern that some regulations and management practices appear to waste resources that could be used, especially slash piles that are burned but contain materials that could be used in some fashion. For example:

"Selective logging may be the way to please more people than they do now. What they need to look at seriously is smaller sales. Stuff that they now burn could be used. They could get posts out of the piles that they burn up and waste."

More than one study participant observed that they knew of persons who had been threatened with prosecution for taking materials out of burn piles. And in several group interviews, individuals had stories about how attempts to salvage usable materials from slash piles had resulted in "unreasonable" responses from agency personnel. The issue is that these materials are understood as usable and it is therefore wasteful of the resource to burn them.

The Forest Service does not respect local knowledge about the forest. Ranching, timber, community, and environmental stakeholders share a perception that they have substantial knowledge about the forest based on their long term connection with it. At the same time, there is sentiment that this knowledge is both disregarded and not respected by the Forest Service. For example:

"People here have a lot of local knowledge. We have been here a while and have been observant about local conditions. But they don't pay attention to us. They try to manage the forest by a book and you can't manage this place by a book. They need to talk to us and not talk down to us."

This theme of the precedence of "book knowledge" over local experience based knowledge is strongly felt among some stakeholders:

"Everything is not the same everywhere in this county. I don't think the Forest Service has always taken people into consideration. And there has been no continuity in managers of the forest. ... They need to realize that all areas of the forest are not the same and in the past they have managed all areas like they are the same. They need to take into consideration how things are different. The Forest Service needs time on the ground, they need more people with on the ground experience and less book knowledge. They just have to remember that they are here to manage the land. They don't own it, they act like they own it. Some of 'em down there have yet to realize that man is part of the ecosystem."

"The Forest Service doesn't take the local input seriously. If you don't have a sheepskin they do not take you seriously. They treats us as second class citizens. People here don't ruin their own land, you know."

Part of the concern about "book knowledge" is also that it is not based on "common sense." Almost every person interviewed had a story about something that Forest Service personnel have done or an example of a decision made that appears to be without "common sense."

"They really lack common sense. They have a lack of knowledge about how things are locally. So why does the guy in New York have so much more common sense than we do. We have been living here for a hundred years and we know this land more than they do, but they don't listen to us."

Part of the concern here is "who" the Forest Service does take seriously and, not surprisingly, there is a related theme that forces outside the community are more important than persons locally who are knowledgeable.

"We are the ones who are affected by the decisions that are made. We live here, we have been good stewards of the land and the animals we live with, but they don't listen to us. We don't have a voice with them, but the Sierra Club does. Right now there is no process to resolve the conflicts about the issues. We don't have any sense of connection to the process and how to resolve the conflicts. In lots of ways, the Forest Service has gotten out of touch with the people."

Yet, it is not only the issue of who has the ear of the Forest Service, but rather if those individuals have the breadth of knowledge it takes to be effective managers. And, this

breadth of knowledge is the kind that local stakeholders have based on their woods knowledge. For example:

"All we got now is bird watchers, there is no one out on the floor. I was born and raised in this country. That is what makes the difference between us and those that rely on book learning. Until you live here and can put it all together, then you need to listen to those of us who do know."

"We have to have managers that know the day-to-day changes in the environment. These long range broad plans may not be flexible enough to take into consideration local variations. There needs to be the flexibility to make appropriate decisions about wildlife, wilderness, agriculture, timber. All these needs must be considered."

Each of these sub-themes integrates into a sense that the Forest Service at times lacks the knowledge they need in order to manage effectively, and that the local sources of that knowledge are disregarded. At the same time the "Sierra Club in San Francisco," or some other entity outside the county, appears to be more effective in influencing management decisions.

Forest Managers are short term, but local residents have a long term interest. This theme is distinct from but related to the one developed above. The essence of this theme is that, in the past, Forest Service personnel have rotated in and out of the county while residents see that their stakes have deep roots. The perception is that long after the current manager is gone, the grandchildren of current residents will still be in the forest and therefore local residents have a responsibility to ensure proper care is taken in management of forest resources. As one rancher, whose family has been in the county for generations noted, "We are going to be here 10 or 20 years from now and the Forest Service Ranger or Supervisor may not be. We are the ones who need to make sure this place is taken care of." The issue of rotating personnel appears to be an especially troublesome one because it suggests that forest managers may not have time to develop sufficient knowledge to be effective managers.

The Forest Service is too cautious and too concerned with pressure groups. Most stakeholders in the county perceive that the agency is too susceptible to influence from outside agencies and groups. This pressure is perceived to adversely affect management decisions and, as importantly, it places influence about significant issues outside of the county. Furthermore, there is also the perception that this susceptibility to pressure results in agency personnel refraining from making decisions about issues because of fears of controversy. Those decisions that are made often appear to be a precaution against controversy. Some of the sentiments that express this theme are:

"They don't want to make waves, they don't take any changes, but they need to be stronger in their management."

"The Forest Service has slipped off their main track. They are not just managing the forest. You have to have a commitment to managing the

forest. They are too subjected to pressure from environmentalists. Its the longer term perspective about logging that is important"

'Public Input, doesn't make much difference because the overall direction comes from the top. So, why go to a local meeting? It won't do any good. At public meetings people just come to bitch about their issues.'

Related to this issue is a strongly felt sentiment that the Forest Service needs to be more aggressive in its own defense. This notion is founded in concerns that it is the local Forest Service that is supposed to manage the resources that county residents value. For example:

"They are not defending themselves. They opt not to say anything to defend themselves. They don't promote enough of what they have done right. I realize their hands are tied on some things. Most of the public doesn't realize what they have to do. But they don't promote what they do.... And, if they don't defend what they do, then it reverts back to us and it becomes our fault when they are the one's that caused it."

Decision making about managing the forest is too centralized. Interview data suggest that stakeholders perceive that forest management decisions should be made more at the district level than they are currently. The theme of "local control" echoes throughout most of the issues presented in this section; and, this concern is another expression of an overall concern about the locus of control of decision making. That is, there is a perception that current decision making occurs in the Forest Supervisor's office or at some other level outside the KNF. In either case, residents yearn for an opportunity for local control and for decision making to be in the hands of someone with whom they have a working relationship. Regardless of their overall criticisms of the Forest Service, most of the stakeholder interviewed in this study have a solid respect for their District Ranger. Given the preference for face-to-face relationships in this community, it is not surprising that many stakeholders would prefer more authority with the District Rangers. For example:

"It used to be that the most knowledgeable person about the woods was the local ranger. The SO (Supervisor's Office) had some influence, but it was the Ranger that you dealt with and trusted. Now, it is at the Regional level and the SO level that decisions get made about the forest. It is out of the hands of the local Ranger, the fellow who should know what is best."

"The single greatest complaint I have is that the power should be at the District. The Rangers need more power, the people who live in an individual area are the ones who know about how things are, not some person in Maine or New York."

Managers should just be allowed to do their job and base their decisions on good science. There is also a strong base of support and sentiment that the Forest Service should be the informed decision makers about forest management. These decisions should not be based on the influence of one power group or another, but rather on

objective science. The importance of this sentiment cannot be overstated: there is an over-riding need to find an acceptable means to resolve conflicts about the management of the KNF. There is a weariness about these conflicts. The "special interests" (environmentalists, miners, or timber company) are perceived to slant the debate to favor their own interests. In the words of one study participant, "who's looking out for the forest; who's making sure it will be here for my kids and their kids? Tell me, who is doing that?" The perception is that the agency should allow knowledgeable managers who are free from external influence to apply an objective, scientific approach to forest management decisions. Ultimately, the hope of most stakeholders is that the agency will "do the right thing."

Overall, there is a tone of alienation in the relationship between Lincoln County communities and the Forest Service. The agency is perceived to be a bureaucracy that is sometimes wasteful and an enforcer of regulations that limit public freedom to do as they wish in the forest. The agency is staffed by more bureaucrats than "on the ground people," and the latter have too little authority. Good forest management appears to take a back seat to appeasing multiple publics with the result that "nothing is getting done." Furthermore, there is little trust in the agency, although people who have had experiences with specific individuals tend to trust these face-to-face relationships. This tone of alienation exists alongside sentiments that the Forest Service is the only hope for effectively managing the KNF in a way that will resolve the dilemma of competing interests. This idea of the agency as the final hope to resolve current stalemates about use of the forest is developed in more detail in the next section.

5.5.2 Public Concerns Regarding Management of the KNF

The Forest Plan is the document stakeholders recognize as describing the goals and principles for managing the KNF. However, among the stakeholders interviewed, the Forest Plan was not often offered as the basis for their concerns about specific forest management issues. It is difficult to form a defensible assessment about how much stakeholders know about the actual plan. What did become clear is that within each stakeholder group there appears to be at least one person knowledgeable about some details of the Forest Plan, if not most of its overall content. These "experts" are sources of information for other stakeholders of similar views. The knowledge about and interpretations of the Forest Plan by these experts is thus an important source of information about the content of the actual plan. Similarly, discussions with friends, morning coffee clutches, information from the local papers, and other informal sources of information appear to be the origins of most public information about the details of the forest management issues of concern to them. This is not to say that the Forest Plan is not an important document in formulating public opinion about management issues. However, the more informal sources of information about the plan appear to be even more important.

The plan itself is a management concern among some stakeholders, especially timber interests. Some timber stakeholders perceive the plan to be a "contract with the community" and not a document that establishes guidelines. The specific concern is that the ASQ's for timber production should be viewed as a commitment to harvest the

volumes indicated. From their perspective, ASQ's are targets to be met and not guidelines or ceilings about harvest volumes. Failure to harvest the ASQ is perceived to be a violation of a contract the Forest Service made with local communities. For example:

"The Plan was kind of a promise to people that laid out what was supposed to happen and if that was not done, then what was the purpose of it all?"

"The Forest Plan was built around an existing industry and an installed mill capacity. The Forest Service recognized that private timber lands are being cut out and that would result in increased demand on the Kootenai.... That plan was kind of a contract and it has been broken. We haven't harvested what was supposed to be cut."

This theme is important because it states public expectations about what is "supposed to happen" with a Forest Plan. One effect of this perception is that it also addresses the credibility of the Forest Service to manage the KNF effectively.

Otherwise the themes about the Forest Plan itself are focused on more general concerns about a planning processes appears to be an end in itself. More than one stakeholder group noted some cynicism about the planning process as being too long, too complicated, and without noticeable benefits. However, there are also views that the plan sets the boundaries regarding management of the forest; and, it is important that the document exists so that it can be consulted if individual stakeholder groups have concerns about specific issues.

The Appeals Process and Local Control of Management Decisions

One of the strongest themes about any issue addressed by this study concerns appealing timber sales, especially appeals filed by "out-of-staters." The "29 cent" appeal (referring to the pre-1995 cost of a postage stamp) distresses county residents because, among other reasons, it represents how non-local entities can control local resources. Perhaps no other phrase occurred as often in the interviews as one variant or another of the following, "How screwed up are things when some guy from New York can mail in a post card and stop a timber sale on a piece of ground he's never seen?" This apparent contradiction of "common sense" exemplifies from local stakeholders point of view, everything that is wrong with the timber sale appeals process. For example, the case of the appeal of the Baby Grand timber sale on the Fortine Ranger District illustrates the reality of the problem for county residents.

A Jeremy Parker of New York City appealed the Baby Grand sale having never been to Kootenai or even the State of Montana. This sale, accounting for about 40,000 board feet of overstory was appealed by Mr. Parker as part of his activities with an organization concerned about logging activities on National Forests. Out of curiosity regarding Mr. Parker's appeal, the Eureka newspaper made a visit to the site of the proposed timber sale and observed,

"Standing on the Baby Grand looking around, our reaction was: 'This is it?"

This is what all the stink is about?' Granted, in this day and age, no one speaks lightly about cutting down trees. But really, seeing in this case is believing."

The newspaper found the appeal so appalling that it invited to pay for the expenses of Mr. Parker to visit the Baby Grand site in order to see the sale "on the ground." Mr. Parker refused this request and eventually dropped his appeal, but this event epitomizes for county residents the consequences of the current policy. This 29 cent appeal appeared absurd even to moderates in the county and illustrated by at least two issues: (1) resources which are locally important can be controlled from outside the sphere of influence of local residents by those who are not knowledgeable about forest issues; and (2) these outside influences are sometimes hostile to the way of life lived by some county residents. This last issue is illustrated in a statement attributed to Mr. Parker by the Eureka paper: "I don't think families should rely on national forests and public lands for their support.' This "guy from New York" represents, from the view of some stakeholders, all that is wrong with the appeals process: Such a process places local communities at risk from the actions of those who may be ill informed about local natural resource issues and also hostile to the lifestyle of county residents.

Appeals in general tend to be discounted because of cases such as that of Mr. Parker. There is some sympathy for the ability to appeal a sale, and certainly this sentiment exists among "environmentalist" stakeholders who see this as a usable tool to advance their interests. However, a stronger sentiment is the "lack of common sense" indicated by the appeals processes and thus a strong feeling that this process needs to be revised if any "real" progress is to be made in managing the forests in the future. As one person observed, 'Do you really think there is any hope that this forest will be managed right if the appeals process doesn't change so that any Tom, Dick, or Harry can stop a sale?"

It is no surprise that sentiments about the appeals process are among the strongest expressed in this study, given that for residents these appeals symbolize some of their biggest concerns: the attack on a way life by hostile faceless forces and the inability to control resources upon which communities depend to sustain that way of life.

Timber Harvesting Practices

Three themes about timber harvesting practices were categorized from interview data:

- past harvesting practices have stigmatized loggers and their lifestyle;
- clearcutting is an over-used harvesting technique;
- selective cutting is a preferred method for future timber harvesting.

Past Harvesting Practices Have Stigmatized Loggers and their Lifestyle

The Kootenai has long been known as a "working forest" that has "got the cut out" while other forests have faltered in meeting their ASQs. However, there is a latent feeling among timber stakeholders that, in the past, logging practices were aggressive and in

the words of a retired logger, "Maybe it (the forest) was cut too hard." Still another observed,

"People with families here have to make a living. We have a stake here, but some people keep saying that we have trashed the forest."

Another older, retired logger observed,

"I knew we were doing wrong, maybe not destroying the forest, but there was damage there. But they (the Forest Service) told us to do it a certain way and if you didn't do it, then you were out. You know we are the ones that have to live here and look at the land. I know it could have been done different then and sometimes it's bothersome to me, but we had to do it that way."

Who is to blame or if there should be blame assigned for past logging practices is an issue. In one of the above quotations, the blame for what is described as the destructive logging practices of the past is the responsibility of the Forest Service. Loggers were doing what they had to do to make a living. This acknowledgement that something was "wrong" but it was the Forest Service that is to blame is itself rooted in the perception of the Forest Service as the "experts" to whom loggers defer regarding decisions about forest management. Loggers may know the woods, but the foresters and the Forest Service has responsibility for how it is to be logged.

There is also a perspective that suggests that whatever the past abuses in timber harvesting, loggers and their lifestyle are blamed as the ultimate source of the problem. More than one study participant used the term, "mantle of guilt" to describe how loggers have been blamed for perceived "past abuses" in timber cutting. The following long quotation expresses how this mantle of guilt is understood as the unfair result of being blamed for simply "being a logger."

"My dad was told in this town by this school system ... he was told that if I ended up being a logger it was his fault. I remember the conversation that he and mom had when he got home that night ... and they talked about how to keep me from being a logger. For anyone that had hopes of a better life were told that better life did not include the culture they lived in, the better life was another culture that didn't work with their hands. ... If you stayed home and went to work in a ... logging company then you were dumb.

That message that was given to my dad was pretty clear; you looked down at your hands and saw dirt and that wasn't good, that used to be good, it built the town here . . . My dad's response to that . . . dad knew that logging practices had to change so if he was going to live here and pass something on to us, he knew some of the stuff they were doing was not right, they were just figuring that out, so he wore for thirty years a mantle of guilt around without realizing what he did and so did a whole generation of timber workers. I don't think they meant to put the guilt trip

on ... but that's sure what happened . . . Foresters and loggers have to regain pride in their occupations."

This statement is complex. It suggests that there is a perception, as judged by the elites of the school system, of "fault" in passing on the culture and lifestyle of logging to one's children. Passing a lifestyle to the next generation is the most basic act of a culture. The perception that it should not be passed on is a stigmatization of that culture. The blame for any perceived abuses of the forest environment thus becomes fused with blame of the logging lifestyle. Furthermore, the perception is that the "urban elite" and "environmentalists" have blamed loggers, their families, and their way of life for some practices that have been interpreted as "abusive" of the forest environment. The logging way of life is thus, in the minds of the accusers, the cause of the abusive practices.

These sentiments are made real for loggers in the words of the "Mr. Parkers" outside the county when they observe, "I don't think families should rely on national forests and public lands for their support." What has been a culture and way of life that is fused with family, neighbor, and other communal experiences is perceived as stigmatized. Concerns about forest management issues thus become equated with criticism of the lifestyles of timber culture. Part of the intensity of arguments about forest management practices is accounted for, in part, by perceptions (by logging stakeholders in particular) of unfair blame on a timber culture lifestyle. Then, the arguments about forest management issues are also arguments about the validity of this lifestyle and its future in Lincoln County.

Environmental stakeholders suggest that criticisms of past logging practices are not necessarily criticisms of timber culture. However, there is also a recognition that some timber interests equate opposition to cutting timber as opposition to timber culture. For example, one study participant observed:

'They wear this mantle of guilt around like some award. They have this idea that they can do this ghost dance and bring back the forest, put the trees back on the stumps if they can revive their life style. They are responding to some of the extreme environmentalists there and not the mainstream. ... But they still don't get the point that the national forests don't owe anyone a living. People think its primary purpose is to provide jobs and a way of life for them. The problem is that idea is embedded in the culture here.'

It is important to note here that local environmental stakeholders are not opposed to the ways of life of their logger, trucking, and mill working neighbors. Indeed, they share many common sentiments about the personal value of natural resources and their management. Nonetheless, they are opposed to some of the consequences of past timber harvest practices and they remain opposed to high-profile issues such as clearcutting.

In addition to the perception that there may have been abuses in the past, there is also the sentiment that loggers have an attachment to and investment in "the woods." In fact, more than one forest worker expressed their attachment to "the woods" in almost lyrical terms. These woods workers also suggest that they have a pride in "doing the job right" and not taking short cuts that would damage the landscape or the biological processes of the forest. For example:

"It's the little things in logging that can make a difference. Its an attitude that when you do this you are being kinder to the land. We have that attitude and we want to take care of the land so that it will be here for our children." "I know in my heart what the ground will do, how it will come back or not. I get enjoyment out of seeing trees grow back, You know loggers have a certain pride. There are times when it costs you to do something right... Its the pride of it."

This sense of attachment to the woods, pride in their work and lifestyle is in sharp contrast to evaluations that stigmatize loggers and blame them for the "destruction of the forest." This dissonance between how they evaluate their work and how that work is evaluated by others is a source of distress.

Clearcutting and Selective Cutting
Among stakeholders in Lincoln County as well as throughout the northwest clearcutting has been a

contentious issue. There is some agreement that this practice has been overused and its visual consequences have, in some instances, resulted in public opposition to logging on public lands. Among stakeholders there is disagreement about the overall costs and benefits of clearcutting as well as its viability as a harvesting practice for present-day forest conditions. What remains significant about clearcutting is that it symbolizes the differences between stakeholders that support environmental interests and those that support timber culture interests. As a symbol of these differences, the content of discussions about clearcutting is as much about how different stakeholders view natural resources as it is about the substance of clearcutting. Timber stakeholders have a view of forests and their resources as a "crop that needs to be harvested or it goes to waste." As we have noted previously, this view contains the idea that the forest is not only a crop, but also that all its natural resources need to be managed and benefit human beings. Some of the substance of timber stakeholder views about clearcutting are as follows:

The forest was put here for our use. It has been overbalanced toward those who don't have any stake in it. The economy of our area is subservient to those who fly over clearcuts and say 'Oh, isn't that terrible.' The only way you can keep a tree from growing is to cut it down repeatedly. All the hills around here were denuded but they all have grown back. Get the pendulum back in the middle. The pendulum has swung away from people who live here. We have had a historical dependence on the forest, but that isn't taken into consideration.

- Clearcutting is a desired form of harvesting by the Forest Service and big timber interests.

- Clearcutting is an economically efficient means of harvesting trees and it is not more harmful to forest landscapes than any other harvesting practice.
- Although this view may acknowledge, "there's nothing uglier than a fresh clearcut" it also emphasizes that "the trees grow back, it's a renewable resource."
- Clearcutting mimics fire as a natural process of this ecosystem.
- Clearcuts create wildlife habitat resulting in increases in the amount of game in Lincoln County.
- Clearcuts are not always the appropriate harvest method.

The view that natural resources should be managed by humans for their economic benefit is expressed in these ideas about clearcutting. Clearcutting is viewed as acceptable among those whose lifestyles are dependent upon forest resources and they see this as one tool among many that they do not wish to be prevented from using. Timber stakeholders are not unequivocal supporters of clear-cuts: they are acceptable, although not necessarily desirable. Clearcuts can be used when appropriate, but they have sometimes been used inappropriately because of the perceived preference of the Forest Service for this method of cutting. Timber stakeholders also realize that whatever their benefits, clear-cuts have resulted in adverse public reactions to the timber industry in general and specifically to loggers. There is also some recognition that clear-cutting also can be personally unacceptable. For example, one timber culture supporter observed, "Clear-cutting has its place. But, if that hillside was clear-cut (pointing to a hillside across from his house) I would move. It would ruin it for me." The benefits of clear-cuts are increasingly being evaluated by timber stakeholder supporters as not worth the social costs. However, even as these costs and benefits are evaluated, the issue of clear-cuts continues to be used as a symbol of the differences between the timber industry and "environmentalists."

If you live in Douglas Fir then you have to clearcut it to make them reproduce. It is like the farmer's field only on a long term basis.

Environmental and timber stakeholders share a profound appreciation of the natural resources of the forest, although they have very different views about what constitutes proper use of these resources. The environmental stakeholder view emphasizes the precedence of natural processes but recognizes a need for some management of natural resources. Humans are part of the equation in management, but human economic needs should not take precedence over natural processes. Views about clear-cutting are logically consistent with a worldview that gives precedence to natural processes. Among the themes in these views are as follows:

- Clear-cutting has been overused on public and private lands.

- Clearcuts damage watersheds and decrease overall water quality because of erosion.
- Clearcuts may create habitat for game, but it does not promote the existence of a diversity of species.
- Trees regrow in clearcuts, but they are not necessarily as healthy as trees that regenerate from other cutting methods or natural processes.
- Clearcuts are visually unappealing and can scar landscapes.

Environmental supporters do not uniformly oppose clear-cuts as a harvesting practice. However, the concern is that the practice cannot be used appropriately. "Once the cat is out of the bag how do you get it back in?" expresses the view that clear-cutting may not be controllable and therefore it needs to be opposed. "We have lost so much and now we are trying to save what is left."

Clearcutting is a harvest practice that continues to concern stakeholders, although for different reasons. Timber supporters and environmentalists tend to have different views about the acceptability of clearcutting, and other types of stakeholders view it in terms of its effects on the future of economic diversification efforts. That is, the view sheds and recreational resources are perceived to be ones that should not be compromised by clearcutting.

Selective cutting is a harvest practice that is perceived by most stakeholders to be the future of the timber industry in Lincoln County. This preference is acceptable to these varied stakeholders for different reasons, but most perceive selective

I'm an old time logger, but I can tell you that loggers support selective cutting over clearcutting. It is easier on the land and that's important to us.

cutting is more viable than clearcutting. Selective cutting is perceived to be less destructive, and it does not have the visual consequences of clearcutting. It also has the potential to employ more people in logging because it is perceived to be more labor intensive than clearcutting. Selective cutting is also understood to be practiced by smaller logging firms rather than "company" interests among timber stakeholders, and in the view of the loggers and woods workers it has been "company" interests that have championed clearcutting. Both loggers and other non-timber stakeholders prefer a timber industry in Lincoln County that accommodates smaller logging operations that can yield a stable job base. Selective cutting is also seen as less controversial than other harvest methods; and, it is therefore likely to result in fewer appeals of timber sales, which is perceived to be necessary for a predictable timber industry in the county. Selective cutting thus appeals to the interests of multiple stakeholder groups (again for different reasons) and among the participants in this study, it is preferable to clearcutting. The common ground of selective cutting is its acceptability to those logging interests who want to be environmentally conscientious and who also want to have a stable base of jobs in the future. Also, it is acceptable to some environmental interests that seek more "environmentally friendly" harvesting practices and a movement away

from large timber companies buying big sales of National Forest lands to clearcut.

Fires and Salvage Logging

The fires of the summer of 1994 resulted in an increased awareness of the vulnerability of Lincoln County communities to the devastations of wildfires. These fires also demonstrated the ability of the Forest Service to respond effectively, although there is a minority view that the Forest Service was wasteful and inefficient in how it did respond. Nonetheless, there is an appreciation of the ability of the agency to meet the challenges of fire and to protect the county citizens. Aside from evaluations of the agency's efficiency and performance in responding to these fires, there are two major themes about fire as a forest management issue: (1) there is a dangerous build up of fuels in the forest that threatens a massive wildfire; and, (2) the burned timber from the 1994 fires needs to be salvaged to avoid wasting this resource. Each of these major ideas and some entailed in these themes are developed below.

The 1994 fires demonstrate the potential for massive wildfires given the current buildup of timber on the National Forest. Fire has historically been a part of the ecology of this forest environment and managed fires have been used to increase wildlife habitat and for other management purposes. However, in the summer of 1994 wildfires became a reality reminiscent of the infamous fires of 1910. This experience has resulted in some concerns about the build-up of timber that in the future could result in more wildfires. There is a perception of increased threat based on the experiences of 1994 and the assessment that there is a swelling amount of forest fuels. This is, in part, perceived to be a consequence of appeals of timber sales and other management practices that have resulted in the perception of increased fuels in the forest. For example:

"What is going to happen is a massive forest fire. If we keep going the way we are now the conditions will be right for a catastrophe. It will burn down the forest, that will be the outcome of the preservationist policies. That 'lock it up mentality' will mean that the fuel is going to build up and the whole thing is going to burn down."

"There is a big problem with the dead lodgepole. It makes a lot of fuel for fire, but the environmentalists have been opposed to cutting it. Maybe the fire has changed their minds and how they think about it. The fire really put this community in danger and we are still at danger because of all that lodgepole out there."

Environmental stakeholders in the county are indeed concerned about the dangers of forest fires as are other stakeholder groups. However, the problems fires present should not be used as a reason to damage forest resources. For example:

"There are people who want to use the threat of fire to get into the woods and start cutting no matter what. I don't want to see fires like there were last year. We need to be sensible about this and evaluate things on their merits."

The concerns about fire are often couched in the terms of either the "forest as farm" or "use" perspective or as "forest as natural preserve" argument. These frameworks tend to overshadow the specifics about actual threats of fire. That is, the points of view about management of timber and other natural resources appear to influence the responses about fire as well as other issues. These frameworks structure responses to questions about fire and other issues so strongly that details beyond those noted above are not present in the interview data for this study.

The burned timber needs to be salvaged or else it will go to waste. The necessity to harvest timber burned in the 1994 fires is a strong theme among individuals who view natural resources as those that should be managed with a preference for human needs. There is the perception that this timber is a valuable resource that can and should be harvested without damaging any other resources. For example, one study participant observed:

"The dead lodgepole and all the dead timber, well somehow we need to make allowances for that. We need to take it out, but we just need to make sure that we are protecting watersheds and sensitive habitat in the process and then I can support that."

"If you tell them any one thing about what we think about management you gotta tell 'em that we need to get in there and harvest that dead timber. It is just sitting there going to waste. We can go in and take that timber without harming a thing. Why waste it when it can be used? "

"The dead lodgepole pine is a problem. The Forest Service has been forced to manage by appeal and the result has been the forest is at risk from the fuels on the forest floor. Use some of the timber that's there. "

This sentiment is strongly felt across stakeholder groups who see the potential for use of a resource that otherwise might go to waste. A second theme is that allowing harvesting of the dead timber might open the door for harvesting other timber resources that need to be protected. This view is based on a perception that, in the past, salvage harvesting has resulted in abuses of the forest and therefore any current salvage harvesting needs to be carefully considered. However, there is also the view among environmental stakeholders that the buildup of dead lodgepole and other timber should be harvested if it can be done in an environmentally sensitive manner. For example:

"The dead lodgepole and all the dead timber, well somehow we need to make allowances for that. We need to take it out, but we just need to make sure that we are protecting water sheds and sensitive habitat in the process and then I can support that."

The competing views regarding this topic are thus the idea of waste of a usable resource and the notion of using waste of resources as an excuse to access timber that would not otherwise be harvested.

Roads and Gates

Forest Service policies regarding roads is a concern to Lincoln County stakeholders. There are two major issues: (1) road standards are unnecessarily high and increase costs of timber sales, and (2) Forest Service road closures policies.

Standards for Forest Roads

The high visibility of timber sale costs and the effects of those costs on perceptions about government subsidy of the timber industry amplifies public perceptions about the engineering standards of Forest Service roads. For example, a study participant observed:

"The single most important thing they need to do differently is change the road standards that the Forest Service demands. It's the high standard roads that's the problem. That is what is getting the "antis" on us because of the cost of timber sales and what not. "

The high standards are also perceived to be illogical and a further example of how "book knowledge" takes precedence over "common sense and on the ground experience." For example:

"The problem is they just follow the book and not their common sense. The cost of the roads would be a lot less than [they are] if they knew about local conditions."

"Roads in the forest are a problem. There are just too many roads, and they are built to too high a standard. These million dollar culverts and such. You build roads like that and then close them off? What's the sense in that? Why not build roads that are usable, but you don't have to have these high standard roads that cost so much."

The nature of the road standards alone is problematic because the perception among publics is that these are excessive. The costs of the "million dollar culverts" also result in a perception that the timber industry is vulnerable to accusations of government subsidy, which some perceive can be used to further curtail logging in the KNF.

Road Closure Policies

In a typical interview with study participants one of the first management issues mentioned was road closures. This is an indication of the salience of road closure issues among Lincoln County publics. From the interview data there are themes both in support of road closures and in opposition to them. There is not a strong pattern of either support or opposition by stakeholder groups. The substance of support and opposition can be illustrated with selected quotations. For example, typical sentiments in support of road closures are as follows:

"You know we have our gripes about road closures, but in general we support it. The Forest Service has brought on themselves the problems they have with people about roads."

"Gates are important, they are necessary for game management purposes, I am all for them and I have lived here all my life. If you are a real hunter you don't worry about gated roads."

"I don't like em, but to a certain extent I see that we have to have them to protect calving elk and other wildlife. But they have an illogical system in the way they do these road closures and if they would just work with us on it there would be a lot less resentment. But they have been so inflexible that that has become the problem. They are pissing people off with how they do it."

"Its a very vocal minority that is opposed to locked gates for any reason. I hate to see the entire county roaded . A gated road is not a threat to me. The Forest Service has done a reasonably good job of managing locked gates."

Such statements express public support for road closures because of the protection such closures afford wildlife. However, "how" road closures have been implemented is perceived as sometimes arbitrary and illogical. Furthermore, there is sentiment that if publics were better informed and had more input into the nature of road closures, the Forest Service would have less opposition to its road management practices.

Opposition to road closures is highly focused on the fact that they restrict access to areas of use that are important to hunters, huckleberry gatherers, wood cutters, and those who like to just drive along forest roads for viewing purposes. For example:

"I'm against gates, I don't see any reason for them. If you put up a gate you might as well make it a wilderness area. It locks people out of the National Forest, people own that and they should be able to use it."

Limiting access to lands that people perceive they have a right to access is one of the strongest sentiments regarding road closures. Road closures become synonymous with being "locked out of the forest" and this connotation is perceived to be threatening to the persistence of a timber lifestyle. Also, being "locked out" is representative of the control the Forest Service exercises over residents. Given other local concerns about the ability to control circumstances that directly influence their economic future and way of life, these control issues become amplified. Furthermore, this sentiment is amplified by a perception that the gates are not closed to everyone: the Forest Service, scientists, and a few selected others may drive behind gates, but the people who live adjacent to the forest cannot. For example:

"The gate is supposed to mean the road is closed, but you see the Forest

Service driving their rigs behind the gates, and if you are disabled you can get a key and go behind the gate. Seems like it doesn't mean 'you stay out.' It means 'I have to stay out.'"

There is also a perception that road closures are illogical if their purpose is to protect wildlife. Personal experiences and the stories of knowledgeable woods persons suggest that logging can take place beside calving elk and a grizzly bear and cubs. Such experience suggest that "motorized vehicles don't disturb wildlife." The policy appears as contrary to personal experiences and a further example of how management policies can be arbitrary.

Wildlife: Grizzly Bears and Wolves

Wildlife issues represent a major area of public sentiment about the current management of the Kootenai National Forest. These issues coalesce many of the major themes that run through other management issues regarding government control, local involvement in decision making, and the threats to lifestyle and community economics. These concerns are also expressive of community worldviews about natural resources that inform public reactions to forest management policies.

Wildlife is an important attribute of Lincoln County. As noted earlier, there is a strong perception among some stakeholders that there is more game now than ever before. On the other hand, other stakeholders perceive that biological diversity takes a back seat to game issues when wildlife issues are discussed. Another strong theme is the value that wildlife contributes to the quality and way of life in the county.

"If we didn't have the wildlife in our area it would be the loss of our soul. The wildlife is the heart of what is here and I for one don't want to see it lost. We have lived alongside the wolf and the bear for along time and we want them here, but we don't want other people telling us that we can't protect ourselves from them. They aren't here, we are the ones who live with these animals."

The issue of management knowledge, local knowledge, and control of wildlife resources is also a component of the themes about how wildlife fits into the management concerns of residents about the KNF. For example:

"Part of the reason I live here is the bear, the wolf, the coyote. I just need to live alongside them. The wolves, well, they just need to be managed just like everything else. Let me give you a for instance. I have coyotes here on my place, but I only allow two at any one time. Any more than that and it becomes a problem, so I manage them. If a wolf comes in and I need to be able to take care of wolves who take my calves, then, well what should be done? Any wildlife has as much right to live here as I do. I think bears and wolves can coexist with us, but we have to manage them. You aren't going to get any public support here for managing bears and wolves unless you let people take care of the problem animals."

A strongly expressed concern that is echoed in themes about ecosystems management and other management issues in general is that wildlife management has taken precedence in management decisions. The consequence is that "man" and the communities of Lincoln County are suffering for it. This perception of adverse consequences is itself rooted in a world view that perceives the forest as a resource to be managed for man's benefit and when it is not, humans suffer. For example:

"Right now man has no greater standing in forest management than any other species, maybe even less than the others. That needs to change. The forest should be managed with man at the center of the approach. "

"Forest Service management need to be towards multiple use. When they say that bugs or bears are more important than people then I have a problem with that. I have never seen a dinosaur, but I haven't missed it either. We need to be reasonable about things."

A core issue in local concerns about wildlife management issues is: what place does local community interest have in relationship to wildlife when forest management decisions are made? These issues have coalesced around public concerns about grizzly bear and wolf management. But, perceptions about wolves are somewhat different than those about bears. Ranchers and others are especially concerned about wolves because of their potential to kill stock and pose a safety risk. Other stakeholders also see wolves as something of a safety risk, but more importantly they are fellow predators who feed on the same game that is important to man. There is thus little sympathy for programs that attempt to expand the numbers of wolves because this is direct competition with humans. On the other hand, there seems to be a core of support for wolves as part of the environment, even among ranching and other stakeholders. There is, however, a strong feeling that problem animals need to be taken care of and that the "interests of man need to be put before the animals."

Grizzly bear management, more so than wolves, has garnered significant public attention in Lincoln County. Indeed, the breadth and depth of public opinions about grizzly bear management are so rich and varied that it is impossible to adequately address these issues in this report. However, there is an important intersection of public concerns about bear management with overall concerns about forest management, and this theme is the focus here. The areas of intersection are as follows:

- Bear management is a problem because the USFWS is telling the Forest Service how to manage lands within the KNF and this lessens the agency's ability to effectively manage for timber harvesting and "true multiple use." That is, management that gives precedence to bears is out of balance and needs to place more emphasis on the consideration of multiple uses. Furthermore, because the USFWS has control over the Forest Service in this area, true multiple use management is being prevented.
- Bear management is resulting in reduced timber harvests. There is a perception that because of bear management restrictions on land use, the timber available

for harvesting has decreased significantly. Furthermore, there is some sentiment that all of Lincoln County is being managed in an "area 1" category and that this is not what publics were originally promised. There are other sentiments that mechanization, world wide timber markets, and many other market factors are affecting the timber industry and blaming bear management for reduced timber harvests is misplaced.

- Bear management is a pawn by environmental interests to control the forest. The theme of "local" versus "external" control is present in sentiments by some stakeholders that the grizzly bear is being forced on them. Part of the pressure is from environmental groups who wish to "create a park in northwest Montana for grizzly bears." The argument is that the Endangered Species Act is being abused by introducing bears (some of them thought to be problem bears from outside the region) into areas where they have not traditionally been located. This is perceived to be done to "lock up" the forest. The Endangered Species Act as applied to the bear is thus being used to shut down logging and favor non-extractive uses rather than a balance of uses. This point of view is refuted by other sentiment suggesting that bear management is not the most significant factor affecting forest management decisions: "The same guy who bitches about grizzly bear habitat shutting down the forest and putting loggers out of jobs is the guy who buys clippers and delimiters and puts six guys out of work. He is the one blaming the environmentalists for putting those guys out of work."
- Bears and humans can coexist without problems. Wolves and bears have been part of the environment in northwest Montana that has coexisted with humans since the earliest habitation of the area. Ranchers, loggers, and other forest users have and can coexist with them if the "bears are not forced down our throats." Bears and humans coexist here, in part, because the KNF is "not a park" it is a place where "the bears know that man is lord and master not like in Glacier where they don't fear man at all." The sentiment appears to be that people can coexist with the bears but not as bears are currently managed. As one study participant observed, "They are not really managing bears, they are managing people." The results are sometimes difficult for everyone to comprehend: "There is this feeling of the three "S"s: the shoot, shovel, and shut-up idea that -- I don't want to do that, but there is a bear on my land. I haven't told anyone about it, but if they try to manage my land for me because there is a bear on it, then . . ." Yet, there is also a strong feeling that bears and humans can coexist if management seriously considers local needs. The citizens advisory committee has apparently given residents some sense of participation in the process; and, some have observed that there is a trend away from the three "S" view of how to solve bear management issues.

Bear management in particular, and wildlife management issues in general, are complex and are affected by multiple factors, including views about the effects of wildlife management on timber harvest, preferences for a "natural" forest environment, and concerns about local versus external control over natural resources. Clearly, this is an area where more focused information might provide a broader context for understanding

the interactions between residents, forest management, and wildlife in Lincoln County.

Wilderness

The KNF has one designated wilderness area, the Cabinets, as well as roadless and scenic areas that have wilderness value for local residents. Most stakeholders perceive wilderness as a valued resource within the KNF, but there are complex views about wilderness that are partially related to past community conflicts regarding the Kootenai Accords. Despite these past conflicts about "how much" and "which places," there is a core sentiment that wilderness is a valued aspect of the overall use of the forest. There is some minority opinion that wilderness "locks up" the land and is, therefore, wasteful. However, the strongest sentiments are in support of including wilderness in the overall uses of the KNF. There is a strong theme that there is enough wilderness in the KNF and the addition of more is unnecessary. For example, "We need wilderness if we are going to show them (our children) what the forest was like originally. I think they are good, but we already have all we need, we don't need anymore." Among those for whom wilderness is especially valued, there is a perception that what currently exists needs to be protected as one of the last un-managed landscapes in what is perceived to be a highly managed forest:

"We have not been good stewards of the land. It is paramount that we change that and how the forest is managed. Right now it is being manipulated too much, everything is pushed to the edge and there is no room left. The environmental considerations need to have more importance. We have just been so abusive and heavy-handed in the forest that I think we just need to back off and have a hands-off perspective. That's the value of wilderness for us, as a place where there is a hands-off perspective applied and we need to keep it that way."

The themes about external control are also present in views about the management of wilderness.

"If we can just have a few places set aside so that I can see the way nature does it, then I am happy. We need a few places like that. But, ultimately it is not in our hands. We gave that away, now it will be the Sierra Clubs and forces outside our community (that determine what happens)."

Still others suggest that one of the lasting legacies of the Kootenai Accords is that county residents will not control the use of resources that are locally important. "There just isn't the ability to solve the problem here locally. We tried. It failed. Ultimately, the solution will have to come from outside, from forces more powerful than us because we here just don't have the power to solve the problem."

Aside from overall support for the concept of wilderness, and the debate about how much should exist, an important issue is the context in which the wilderness issue is resolved. If the solution is in fact "outside" the control of local interests, then the effect is likely to be a sense of alienation from the overall processes of forest management.

Appearance and Environmental Quality

As noted in the discussion above of perceptions of natural resources, residents in Lincoln County value the appearance of their county and its overall environmental quality. Furthermore, there is a strong sense that this quality is the result of a history of local residents being good stewards of the land:

"We got the last best place because we took care of it. We got good air quality, the best water in the world, and more wildlife than anywhere in the lower forty-eight. It's that way because we took care of it, those of us who are out in the woods everyday working, we took care of it."

There is also a theme in these data that the stewardship practiced by county residents has resulted in the ability to somewhat balance environmental quality and economic necessities. Now, this balance is threatened because of external interests trying to replace what has been lost in other places: "people have used up theirs and now they just want ours to be how they want it to be."

Some of those who are woods workers also note that in those places where there has been a heavy use of clearcutting there has been a degradation of both viewshed and watersheds. For example:

"My son and I use to go over to a place in the Yaak and fish. We could catch nice brookies all day long, but now that stream is just sterile, there isn't anything in it. It was the clearcutting that did that, the erosion did in the fish. My life has depended on the woods, I worked in the mill for all my life here, but we can't let those kind of things happen."

There are others who argue that the county environment has been degraded by the consequences of overcutting forests and extracting minerals, and that there is a need to return to a balance of environmental quality and the economic benefits of harvesting and extracting natural resources. Although the dominant theme is the need for balance, there is also a minority view that the economic future and the way of life it supports should take precedence over any concerns about environmental quality and appearance. For example:

"This woman was like my mother to me, we were good friends and we talked all the time, but she thinks different about the woods than I do. I said to her ... 'how will you feel when there aren't the deer and the trees that we have now, what will you tell your grandchildren?' She said to me, 'Well, dear you don't miss what you don't have and you don't see.'"

Embedded in this statement is the notion that the environmental quality of the future can be sacrificed for the economic benefits of the present. There are stronger statements of this perspective, but this quotation illustrates what is a minority view, as indicated by this study, that overall environmental quality can be compromised if necessary.

There are two strong and interrelated themes about the appearance of the forest environment: (1) it should have a park-like appearance without the clutter of fallen trees and undergrowth and (2) a natural, i.e., un-managed environment needs to exist in the KNF. The park-like appearance refers to a managed environment in which the forest floor is free of clutter and there is open space between trees. This environment is one through which people and animals can travel freely without being impeded by brush and fallen trees. In this view, clearcuts, especially how they appear in the winter, are tolerated as a necessity. In fact, there is a value placed on how clearcuts appear as they regrow trees: "I love the way a clearcut looks after five or six years, the green of the new trees all growing up, I get pleasure out of looking at that." The preference for "natural" viewshed is one that prefers to see the forest in what ever conditions result from natural processes, including dead falls and significant undergrowth. The "beauty" of this environment is in part derived from its being un-managed.

The interview data for Lincoln County also suggests concerns about air and water quality. In both northern and southern parts of the county air quality is an issue, especially as it relates to the effects of controlled burns and dust. Water quality and stream management are of particular concern to sportsmen, recreationalists, and others who use the abundant water resources in the county. Additionally, there is a sense that the Forest Service neglects these resources and this needs to be remedied. For example:

"They need to have someone dedicated to stream management and stream watch. They need to take a more active role in management along the river. The fisheries biologist there is helpful, but if you have any issue that isn't fire related or logging, then you are out of luck. Then there is the issue of water out of the dam. It is killing the fishing in the river and that is important to us and our future."

The legacy of the past activities regarding the Kootenai River has sensitized residents to water quality issues and the effects of water management on fishing. The Libby Dam, efforts to develop a reregulation dam below the existing dam as well as attempts to develop a dam at the Kootenai Falls each have sensitized recreation and environmental stakeholders to maintaining current water quality. These stakeholders express strong opinions about the need for the Forest Service to be more attuned to water management and water quality issues.

5.5.3 Public Understandings about Ecosystems Management

Ecosystems management is a strategy the Forest Service is implementing in its administration of the Kootenai National Forest. Identifying public understandings of this concept is useful since these can provide the Forest Service with some insights about what residents know and how they evaluate this management approach. This section describes how the concept is viewed and its implications assessed.

There is one dominant theme in the data regarding public perceptions of ecosystems management: the public is uncertain about its definition and meaning. It is described as a "buzz word" or as an "unknown" or "fuzzy" idea that can be troubling. For example:

"Ecosystems? Most people do not know what it is. It has to do with putting several drainages together. I don't know the specifics, but I'm scared of it."

". . . I think the verdict is still out on what it means. Ecosystems management. I hear a lot about it, but there are some real hidden zingers in there. There is a veiled meaning there. "

"Ecosystems management is just a new buzzword, but there seems to be some merit in it. Where does this ecosystem start and stop? It can also be an excuse to tie up more wilderness. Sometimes I think it is a plan to just turn this area into a park.

In some instances publics define the concept in terms of past management approaches: "It is just another name for multiple use management. That's what they (USFS) have always done." It is also interpreted as being defined by past and existing community conflicts about how natural resources should be used and managed:

"Ecosystems management You get two different views on that. One from (timber supporters) and the other from the environmentalists. It is going to take 10 years for each side to agree on a definition of it."

There is also a view that ecosystems management is about a balance of uses that includes a sustainable yield from the forest. This is perceived as ensuring survival of a local timber industry, promoting coexistence with grizzly bears and wolves, and accommodating environmental interests. For example:

"What I want it to mean is that there will be a long term timber industry. There will be a basis for recreation. There will be some grizzly bear, some wolves, there will be a good healthy crop of elk and deer and mountain lion. You take what it is capable of and try and take the highest value for it. There has to be wilderness . . . There has to be primitive recreation . . . But the verdict is out on it. Part of it I like and part of it I don't. I want to read everything I can get my hands on about it."

This "silver bullet" definition of ecosystem management raises high expectations about what the concept should be: a resolution to existing conflicts between timber and environmental interests.

Another component of the public views about ecosystems management implies that the Forest Service is itself unsure about the concept. Furthermore, individuals feel that if the agency is unsure, then how can residents be informed about its meaning? This sentiment is illustrated by observations such as:

"Ecosystems Even the Forest Service doesn't know what it means. Everyone has their own definition of it. And the definitions always seem to change."

"It's a 'buzz word' and the Forest Service doesn't know what it is anymore than we do."

There is also an expectation that Forest Service and public definitions of ecosystems management will conflict. For example, "But, I'm worried about it and its interpretation. You get some of those Boston College kids in here and how they see it and how we see it is two different things. I don't see how you put fences around what it means."

Publics are also concerned that implementation of ecosystems management will favor some stakeholders at the expense of others. This view exists among all stakeholders, but the real issue condenses to how the timber industry (and related interests) and environmental interests will benefit or be harmed. Environmental stakeholders tend to be concerned that ecosystems management is intended to result in more timber harvesting regardless of other biophysical considerations. For example: "I think it is a rationale to support the timber economy. I am not sure of what the definition is. I'm not sure what the Forest Service has in mind. I hope it will take into consideration all of the resources of the forest."

"I think they will use that concept to get out more trees. How can you get the timber out and not hurt the rest of the landscape? The focus is timber and other things will get compromised. A red flag goes up for me. It ought to be about what it says, but it is about getting out the cut."

"I have only a vague understanding of it. There seems to be disagreement within the Forest Service about it. It is spooky to me because it could be used as an excuse to harvest trees according to what the conditions were in the past." "It seems like the mistake the Forest Service has made is saying, 'you know ecosystem management is probably going to allow us to do more timber harvest than we have ever done in the past.' From the word go it was like they were putting ecosystem management in the context of timber harvest and not in terms of what's best for the land. It maybe true that they'll be able to do more timber harvest than by doing a piece meal one side drainage at a time."

On the other hand, timber interests tend to view ecosystems management as a means to "lock up" or "close down" the forest.

'They (the environmentalists) just want to use it to close down the forest.'

"Ecosystems management most has to do with grizzly bear management. The most I heard about it was with grizzly bears, the Yaak ecosystem and the Cabinet ecosystem. it is mainly to do with grizzly bears. I think it is an

area they are trying to make for wolves and grizzlies. Back in the late 80s when all this was coming about with the timber industry, they wanted to shut off this whole area and make it just a big park. The environmentalists were trying to close it all down."

Related to this notion is the perception of ecosystems management as giving preference to "natural" processes. Among timber interests this implies that the forest will not be "managed." For example:

". . . there are those who envision the only appropriate use is as a holding tank for biodiversity that should be managed for only one value, natural processes to work themselves out. There are those who see that we have abused every other place on the planet; and, there are a few last receptacles possible for biodiversity. They believe that with all their heart and that we should connect all these receptacles with corridors and that the holding tanks will continue to function over time. They have a right to their dream, to their vision, but that is a drastic change from the way forests have been managed and how they think about they should be.

"There is no benefit to people of ecosystems management. Its about no management and letting nature do some holistic thing. Fire is a part of it, but it ignores disease and bug infestations."

Timber interests tend to interpret the concepts of "ecosystems" and "biodiversity" in political terms. That is, these terms appear connected to ideas such as "the biodiversity treaty" which is perceived as undermining the autonomy of the United States. Also, the terminology of "ecosystem" is perceived as connected to the "ecology movement" which itself is a notion that is associated with "environmentalism" and the idea of preserving nature rather than conserving nature through wise use. The concept is also interpreted as resulting in undermining personal property rights because the ecosystems under consideration include private property. For example:

'I think they are going to try and use it to get on my property. I have seen a grizzly bear there and I won't tell 'em. If they know that, then they will designate it grizzly bear habitat and I will be out of luck. That is what ecosystems is all about.'

'How they gonna draw boundaries around these ecosystems. What if my property is in their ecosystem? Does that mean they are gonna tell me what to do with my property? That is what I am afraid of with all this.'

A more generalized theme about ecosystems management is that it gives precedence to biological processes without taking into consideration the economic and other needs of communities that depend on forest resources. For example:

"It is kind of a warm-fuzzy idea, defined as they go along. It isn't provided for in the current forest planning process, so why is it there? They seem to

be using the pre-white man condition of the forest, the historical range of variability, as the definition of what the forest should be. Well, where does the human element fit into that? Man should have a greater standing than any other species. Man should be at the center of the approach, but now people are not at the center of the approach. You know at the ecosystems open-house the only mention of man was about the Native Americans. They want to go back to nirvana! The premise is backwards toward a historical ideal."

"You have to look at the big picture, yes. Do you look at an area and say that this area is going to be managed for deer and this for elk. If you do that every little community in that area will be killed, they will be slammed dunked."

"And we've heard stories about Forest Service type personnel when confronted with these sorts of authorizations making remarks like "well, sure those trees will just stand there and die and fall over, and then rot into the ground, but the bugs need something to eat too." And we would maintain that while this perhaps shows a ecological awareness of ecosystems and the total components right down to microscopic organisms, we would kind of maintain that this also shows a kind of callous disregard for waste from the human standpoint. We're a little bit concerned that in this attempt to staff forests and that with specialists. And to get a handle on these whole ecosystems from the standpoint of every owl and every bug and every mammal on the district, that humans and specifically that the local native human population is getting short treatment by this approach."

Despite open-houses and other activities to explain ecosystems management, publics in Lincoln County remain uncertain about the concept and perplexed about its possible consequence. Its consequences are perceived to be everything from the solution to community problems to an approach that will exacerbate existing tensions between timber and environmental interests. One significant implication of this current public explanations is stated best by a study participant:

"They haven't told their story (about ecosystems management). They talk about a buzz title like that and they turn it off . . . They can't just talk about it, they need to take a multimedia approach, they need to use pictures to tell stories, they need to be very visual, they can't write it down in paragraphs. It needs to be geared to increasing the knowledge of people about it. They can't just let it be a buzz title that is about trees, water, deer, and elk. They need to educate people about what it is or else they will reject the idea before they can ever get started."

5.5.4 Desired Future Condition of the KNF

Study participants were given the opportunity to express their views about the "desired future condition" of the Kootenai National

"You gotta remember that multiple use does not mean logging. Multiple use means some areas are set aside for logging and some for other uses. That is the point that is missed."

Forest. Four themes emerged from the responses to these questions: (1) the future condition needs to focus on "true" multiple use management of the forest; (2) sustained yield needs to guide timber harvesting; (3) recreational concerns need a higher priority in forest management; and, (4) there needs to be a community that retains its culture without overcutting the forest.

The notion of "true" multiple use varies by stakeholder group. The concern about multiple use among various groups appears to be based on a perception that forest management is currently "out of balance." The perceived need is a return to balance for managing the future condition of the forest. Examples of this sentiment are as follows:

"It should be open for multiple use, timber, mining, existence of wildlife, and not having areas closed off where public cannot get into them. I think some people just want it shut down and no one will have access."

'This has always been a commodity oriented, get the cut out oriented forest. That has to change in the future. The future isn't commodities, its recreation and wildlife and a real diversity of uses. What needs to happen is real multiple use management that doesn't just look at other uses after the needs of the timber industry have been met.'

These quotations indicate the need for multiple use. Timber and environmental stakeholders tend to see that current conditions favor those with views opposing theirs. Similarly, recreation and community stakeholders perceive management and forest use is somehow "out of balance." Yet, most stakeholders share the sentiment that recreation, wildlife, wilderness, timber, and other uses need to coexist. The sense of conflict and resignation about the inability of the conflicting parties to resolve the issues about multiple use to the satisfaction of any party has resulted in a perception of the "desired future condition" as being one in which the conflicts are resolved.

"(The Kootenai is) a large community forest where we are all supposed to be able to enjoy the offerings, whether recreational offerings, spiritual offerings, wood products, and other products that come from the forest. It is set up to provide raw products . . . that is what it is supposed to be a community, working forest, but that is not what it ended up being. It is a war zone for competing visions . . ."

The subordination of other issues about the desired future condition of the forest in favor of emphasizing the need for a return to balanced use and a resolution of conflict suggests the degree of current social disruption caused by "competing visions" of what the forest is and should be in the future.

The second major theme in the data concerns the importance of "sustained yield" in the future of timber harvesting. This concept, one that has been of concern to county residents since the Kaufman's study of the 1940s, is generally interpreted as "don't cut more trees than can grow back." This view of timber harvesting appears to be one held by all stakeholder groups, with only a minority suggesting that the future condition

should include the maintenance of timber harvesting at whatever levels are necessary to sustain the county's economy. A stronger theme is that sustained yield timber harvesting will result in a viable local economy and, importantly, it will result in a predictable harvest levels. Those involved in timber emphasize the disruptive effects in their lives and in the social order of the community of the current uncertainty: "It would really help to have some predictability about what will be harvested. Without that our lives seem always up in the air." Those stakeholders who are more environmentally oriented do not discount timber harvesting as part of the future of Lincoln County, but, in their view, the form of this harvesting should be different that it is current. More small scale operations that employ larger numbers of local people using selective harvesting, as opposed to clearcutting, is the theme expressed by these stakeholders. This same theme is also present among loggers. For each of these groups, the certainty of a workable timber plan that meets the needs and interests of all groups is the common ground regarding public perceptions of the future condition of the KNF.

The third theme about the future concerns elevating the priority of recreational uses of the forest. Recreational, community, and environmental stakeholders tend to hold this view more than others. Their concern is balance: current management is perceived to favor extraction and harvesting uses of the forest at the expense of recreation and other non-consumptive uses. For example:

"What it's gonna be? Well, there should be some logging here, it is going to be scaled back because we can't sustain what we have done the past twenty or thirty years. There should be a place for resource extraction, but there needs to be a far greater emphasis on recreation . . . The Forest Service needs to focus on the so called recreational uses of the forest. It will be good for us economically, because people aren't going to want to come to a place where all you see is a clearcut. They need to emphasize recreation more."

Recreational uses are perceived to benefit local users of the forest as well as enhance the desirability of the region as a tourist destination. Tourism is perceived as a component of future economic diversification and a source of potential income. Timber stakeholders tend to discount this view, arguing that tourism will result in only low-paying jobs, therefore developing tourism at the expense of extraction and harvesting is not desirable. Yet, despite these latter views, recreationalists and community stakeholders suggest that the Forest Service should seek ways to enhance recreational uses of the forest that will have benefits for local users and tourists as well.

The fourth theme is related to the first, but emphasizes restructuring the nature of logging without changing the culture of the community. Environmental, community, timber, and other stakeholders value the culture of their community and, in general, wish to see it survive. However, there is also sentiment that if it is to survive, then the nature of logging needs to change, and in the future its over-all place in the economy may be different. This idea has been noted earlier in this chapter, but it is important to emphasize it here because of how it emerges in connection with preserving the way of life in the community. For example, one expression of this view is as follows:

"Teams of drag horses, individually cutting logs, pulling them out in an environmentally safe manner, milling them, making something out of them and having this entire community behind the marketing and promotion of this place as the forefront of timber management . . . from an environmental standpoint. Promoting value-added materials rather than raw timber."

Similar sentiments that are a part of this theme are also expressed in the following quotation:

"There needs to be an integration with nature and not the attempts to control it so much. I want to see this community keep its heritage, that is part of why I moved here. But that heritage has to integrate with nature too and so that people who live off natural resources can be here. They need to change their view of themselves and the place, but we want to keep the heritage..."

This theme includes the idea of small-scale logging that will preserve the local character of community culture.

5.6 Public Participation in the Forest Management Process

Publics in Lincoln County want to be part of the decision making process for the management of the Kootenai National Forest. However, the form of this participation is an issue of concern and frustration. The concern is derived from the perception that increasingly, groups and interests outside of the county are influencing forest management decisions more than are local groups, even though local publics have what they perceive to be a greater stake in the outcome of these decisions. The frustration regarding local participation derives from several sources, including (1) the confrontational nature of some past public meetings and (2) concern about a forum in which effective input can be provided. Public perceptions about how interests outside the county influence the management process have been described earlier in this chapter. The effects of this perception is a feeling of helplessness and alienation from the forest management decision making process. This alienation and helplessness reinforces a tendency in this social environment of non-participation in social comment unless it is demanded by a crisis or significant self-interest. The sources of frustration about participating in the process need a brief elaboration.

There is a past history of intense public meetings regarding natural resource issues, including those about the reregulation dam, the Kootenai Falls dam, the Kootenai Accords, and other forest management issues. The sometimes contentious nature of these meetings is perceived as counterproductive since, "a few people just stand up and yell at each other and nothing else gets done." Furthermore, in some instances, such argument and its consequences

"I'll call 'em up and let them know what I think. You can't fault them about being accessible."

have deterred individuals from commenting because of their concerns about offering comments in this forum. This has resulted in frustration about public meetings as an effective forum for this purpose. At the same time, publics are interested in information about forest management issues. They are seeking new ways to contribute that do not have the social and personal consequences that they have observed as associated with other public forums.

On one hand, residents perceive the Forest Service is listening and making a good faith effort to elicit public input. On the other hand, there is substantial frustration about the right method to provide effective input. The problem is also acknowledged to be one that cuts across different public-input issues and the agency appears to be providing more than sufficient opportunity for publics to contribute. As a study participant noted:

"After the fire they sent out invitations to come in and they got 40 RSVP's but only 15 showed up. They did a good job of preparing, but it is a general problem of getting people out to meetings. It is often just a few people that come out . . . and its over their own issue. How to get the public to participate is a community-wide issue."

One theme that emerged from the interview data is the notion of a "citizen advisory committee." As part of this concept, representative stakeholders would comprise this advisory committee and work with the Forest Service to provide local input about forest management issues. It is beyond the scope of this study to ascertain how wide spread is the appeal of this idea, but individuals representing timber, environmental, recreational, and community stakeholders suggested a version of the advisory committee as one means to effectively provide input regarding issues of importance to communities in Lincoln County. This perceived need is an indication that despite Forest Service efforts to involve residents and to obtain input, publics feel they are not an effective part of the process. They are now seeking a different, possibly less contentious means of asserting local interests in the management of the Kootenai. The legal basis for such committees may be questionable, but the perception of the need for different channel for public input is suggested by the presence of this concept.

6.0 THE SANDERS COUNTY CONTEXT OF FOREST MANAGEMENT ISSUES

6.1 Sociocultural Context

In this section an overview of the Sanders County sociocultural context is provided. Quantitative information presented in chapter two is not recapitulated. Here the focus is on issues rather than numeric indicators. For example, the issues associated with demographic change are discussed rather than representing a chart of historic population growth. Also, it is important to note that for a characterization of the communities adjacent to (and essentially "within") the Kootenai National Forest in the western Sanders County area, county-level analysis or analysis of county-level aggregated data is of limited utility. Little in the way of available secondary data exists for these communities, and there is no county comprehensive plan or similar planning document with standard categories socioeconomic information disaggregated to the community level.

In general, Sanders County is rural in nature. In the words of one long-time resident, the county as a whole "has one flashing [traffic] light, no 'chain' outfits [with the possible exception of one petroleum company with two outlets], and no 'fast food' places." The western Sanders County communities immediately adjacent to the Kootenai National Forest are all relatively small; the larger incorporated community of Thompson Falls, while not immediately adjacent to the Kootenai, is also included in this chapter for reasons that are developed below.

6.1.1 Communities in Socioeconomic Transition

Population Trends and Distribution

Population trends have been changing in the area over the past several years. While there are no hard data to present on this issue¹, interview data are suggestive of local perceptions of the changing nature of the population, both in terms of increasing numbers and in terms of the demographics of those coming in. According to an interview with an individual involved in building homes in the area:

"I've seen a lot of people from Washington, Oregon moving into Northwest Montana, and . . . I've asked . . . why [they are moving here] and they said because 'Californians started moving in to where we used to live.' They come in looking for some of the quality they used to have in Washington and Oregon."

¹ As noted previously, most available data are aggregated at the county level, which is of limited utility for the discussion of the section of western Sanders County relevant to this analysis. Among census data, only Thompson Falls is listed as a separate "Census Designated Place" and, as developed in this section, Thompson Falls is less directly related than the other communities covered herein.

As implied by this quote, it is understood that people are moving to this area primarily because of what are variously termed as "way of life," "quality of life" or "lifestyle" issues. Further, the individuals moving to the area may not be interested in the same attributes of the area that drew and sustain long-time residents, and those differences are reflected in the interview data as well. Specifically, there are number of issues that are discussed in the communities that revolve around the widely held idea that a higher proportion of the more recently arrived residents are not involved in extractive industries that rely on local resources than earlier arrived individuals and families. This section presents an overview of the location of the communities in the area; subsequent sections develop the issues associated with population growth.

Heron, Noxon, and Trout Creek

The primary study communities in Sanders County for this analysis are Heron, Noxon, and Trout Creek, as these are the communities within the county area immediately adjacent to the Kootenai National Forest. These communities are situated along the Clark Fork River and its reservoirs², which runs along a northwest-southeast axis, with Heron to the northwest, Trout Creek to the southeast, and Noxon situated between the other two. This linear distribution, and the fact that the relatively narrow strip of valley floor land upon which they are located virtually encompasses all of the privately held land within the immediate area, has a number of implications for area socioeconomics that will be developed throughout this chapter. Public lands to the north and east are within the Kootenai National Forest; those to the south and west are within the Kaniksu National Forest (but are administered by Kootenai National Forest). The distance between Heron and Noxon is approximately 13 miles; the distance between Noxon and Trout Creek is approximately 15 miles.

These communities represent concentrations of housing and businesses that are recognized as communities by local residents, but additional residences may be found along the highway and on various back roads throughout the private lands in the Clark Fork River Valley, with marked clusters at White Pine (approximately nine miles southeast of Trout Creek) and Bull River (roughly equidistant between Heron and Noxon). Both of these places have an identity of their own, but they are not considered "communities" in the same sense as the three primary communities in this area. Over time, individual settlement size, both in absolute terms and relative to other communities in western Sanders County, has fluctuated with changes in local industry and various construction projects, and sometimes place names in common use today for sparsely populated areas have their origins in a time when the associated residential area was more distinct or was the location of a townsite of sorts. Additionally, there are now names of particular drainages that are commonly used to refer to housing areas, as there is some growth concentrated in a limited number of drainages away from present or former townsites, such as in the Little Beaver Creek and Big Beaver Creek drainages near White Pine.

² The local reservoirs are formed by the Noxon Dam (southeast of Noxon) and the Cabinet Gorge dam (west of Heron) on the Clark Fork River. The Cabinet Gorge Reservoir is between the two dams; the Noxon Reservoir is to the southeast of the Noxon Dam, and extends beyond Trout Creek. The Clark Fork River flows through the study area from southeast (Thompson Falls) to the northwest (Heron).

Thompson Falls

The community of Thompson Falls was added to the list of fieldwork communities at the beginning of the field research period, for several reasons. In the original research design, Thompson Falls was not included on the list of study communities due to the fact that it is not immediately adjacent to the Kootenai National Forest. Located approximately 20 miles to the southeast of Trout Creek, Thompson Falls is also in the Clark Fork Valley. In this valley, privately held bottom lands, such as in Heron, Noxon, and Trout Creek, are bounded on both slopes by Kootenai National Forest (to the north and east) or Kootenai National Forest-administered lands (on the Kaniksu to the south and west). In the case of Thompson Falls, however, the bordering public lands are part of the Lolo National Forest, and a portion of the Kaniksu National Forest is also closer than the nearest portion of the Kootenai itself.

The overriding reason for including Thompson Falls as a study community was its relationship with the other study communities. Thompson Falls, the county seat and largest community in the vicinity, has many ties with the smaller communities in the region. A component of this relationship is derived from the structure of the local Forest Service administration. According to Forest Service staff, when the Thompson Falls Ranger Station moved to Plains (another Sanders County community, approximately 25 miles to the southeast of Thompson Falls) in 1982-1983, there were changes in the relations between the communities: "since then, there has been closer ties to Thompson Falls." Given that the Forest Service is a major employer in the area, it is not hard to understand how changing the composition of administrative units can change employment and social relationships between communities that are either divided between or combined within these units. Clearly, administrative decisions of the Forest Service influence life in the communities not only through the residential patterns of Forest Service employees, but also through the amount of direct involvement in the various local communities.

Beyond Forest Service activities, there are political, social, economic, and recreational ties between Thompson Falls and the other study communities. As the seat of county government, Thompson Falls has political ties to the other communities, and residents from those communities must travel to Thompson Falls to transact some types of county business. Thompson Falls also has a business district that is much more distinct than those found in the other communities, more types of businesses and a greater number of businesses than are found in the other communities. This concentration draws commerce from the residents of other communities to a degree, particularly from those who live between Trout Creek and Thompson Falls and from the Trout Creek area itself, according to interview data.

Also providing ties are a number of service, civic, and social organizations in Thompson Falls that draw members from the other three study communities, but particularly from Trout Creek. One example of this is the local Lions Club. Like a number of other organizations, the Lions Club is based in the relatively large community of Thompson

Falls, but it draws participation from the smaller communities in the valley. Other types of organizations in the area are discussed later in this chapter (section 6.1.3).

Additional ties exist between Thompson Falls, the Kootenai National Forest, and the Forest's immediately adjacent communities. In terms of ties created by the timber industry, according to one senior Forest Service employee, "timber from here [the Sanders County portion of the Kootenai National Forest] goes to Thompson Falls. Approximately 70 to 80 percent of the timber from here goes there." There are two relatively large mills in Thompson Falls, one of which employs approximately 130 people, making it the largest mill in western Sanders County, while the other employs approximately 70 people, making it roughly the same size as the mill in Trout Creek. These are, by far, the largest mills in the area. In addition, one of the larger "small/family" mills in the area is located near Thompson Falls. Not only do resources flow from the Sanders County portion of the Kootenai National Forest to users in Thompson Falls, residents of Thompson Falls come to access resources on the Kootenai. According to a number of residents and Forest Service staff members, Thompson Falls residents travel to the Kootenai National Forest and adjacent lands to recreate, cut wood, use the reservoirs, and partake in other activities.

Additionally, the linear nature of the distribution of the communities along the main road through the area, Montana Highway 200 in the Clark Fork Valley, channels some types of interaction between the communities. For example, it was noted in one interview that people from Thompson Falls who shop in Spokane (where local residents reportedly tend to go for a number of their larger purchases, such as appliances) "go through here [Trout Creek] and may stop" to patronize local businesses, with the implication being (based on this and other interviews) that Thompson Falls residents would less frequently trade in the smaller communities if they were not "on the way" to somewhere else. Highway 200 itself also reportedly brings tourists to and through the area by way of its designation as a scenic highway. According to local residents, obtaining this "scenic" status has significantly increased traffic, although no specific data were cited. Another example of ties between Thompson Falls and the other study communities in Sanders County is seen in the school system. Both Thompson Falls and Noxon have high schools. Noxon draws students from Heron, Noxon, and Trout Creek; Thompson Falls also draws students from Trout Creek. Thus, the Kootenai-adjacent population is effectively divided between the two schools, with families in Trout Creek being given a considerable latitude as to which school their children will attend. As noted below, like many rural communities throughout the country and particularly the west, the local high school basketball teams are the focus of considerable community pride and identity. The Noxon and Thompson Falls basketball teams play each other, but there little connection to other "Kootenai-adjacent" communities to the north, for example, the teams do not play against teams in Libby.

Thompson Falls was characterized somewhat differently than the other three communities in terms of the rate of turnover of residents, and this is seen as influencing the social structure or social continuity of the community in a variety of ways. In the words of one long-time resident,

"I would say that . . . Thompson Falls is the most unusual community I've ever lived in from the standpoint that it is very transient. We have a lot of folks moving in and out of the area. So you know the joke is always, how long do you have to be here before till you're considered to be a native or a local.' I think that a lot of people come in from other areas . . . with some good ideas on [how] they want to become involved and change things. The other type of folks come in and they don't want to participate in anything, they just want to be here and live here and enjoy, but they don't want to participate. The volunteer organizations are very [fluid] . . . people come and go. People get burned out. Generally what happens in a lot of the civic organizations is . . . the ideas . . . are shared [but when the] . . . work [is] to be done, it falls on a few shoulders. And most folks burn out, and the next group of people come in with those same kinds of good ideas, but it's a very difficult town. Well, I guess I've painted you a pretty bleak picture; I don't mean to be doing that . . . [people] come here and they've said, 'gee, I'm going to be here, live here, I want to participate and be involved.' And that happens -- for a while."

The Idaho State Line

Whereas the "southeast end" of the study area is less-than-clearly defined by Kootenai National Forest boundaries with the inclusion of Thompson Falls, the Idaho-Montana state line, approximately four miles to the east of Heron, provides a sharp delineation on the "northwest end" of the study community/private land/Clark Fork Valley axis. Speaking of social interactions between communities, as well as of commerce related to Forest Service activities, one senior Forest Service employee offered the opinion that "the state line [Idaho/Montana] is an impenetrable barrier." Reportedly, timber sales from Forest Service lands on Idaho side of the border tend to go to mills in that state, and those on the Montana side tend to stay in Montana. Social interactions across the state line are reported to be few and, particularly for organizations, there are few if any active groups that span the line. Local residents, however, particularly from Trout Creek west, sometimes travel to Sandpoint, Idaho, for large purchases or specialty items not found in the smaller communities.

Present Economic Base and the Potential for Economic Diversification

Timber and Mining

The present economic base of the communities is in a time of transition. Timber, and to a much lesser extent mining, traditional mainstays of Forest Service-associated industries, in particular are in transition. With the changing nature of timber sales, and the changing nature of the timber industry, there has been considerable change in relationship between timber and the communities in western Sanders County. As noted below, there is only one moderate size mill in the Heron-Noxon-Trout Creek area, and most of the timber from the adjacent portions of the Kootenai National Forest goes to mills in Thompson Falls and beyond. There are, however, a number of very small scale

mill operations scattered throughout the area. According to one senior Forest Service employee, there are "perhaps half a dozen" of these mills in the general area. He noted that they are not obvious, and you literally "have to follow the log trucks to find them." He further noted that even as a long-term resident and someone interested in local timber issues in general, he did not know where all these mills are located. In addition to finding them, ascertaining the particulars about their operations is not easy; for example, a number of years ago, there was apparently an effort by the Forest Service to informally survey and characterize such operations, but reportedly the owners were not comfortable with the effort. Given that these were private operations on private land and did not bear directly on Forest Service operations, the matter was dropped. Like other family- or individually-operated small businesses, these types of operations probably make a significant contribution to the income of a number of families in the area, but they tend not to appear in formal economic characterizations of the area. They could be said to be a part of the local "invisible economy" (those portions of the economic base that do not show up in quantitative characterizations of the area) that may rely at least in part on National Forest-derived resources, but this portion of the economy is not well understood.

One lifetime resident of the area described the decision making process on operating their small family mill versus selling logs directly off their property:

"The way the timber price is, and the way our mill's set up, it's got to the point where it's not efficient any more, [it would] take quite a bit of modernizing to get it to where it's an efficient operation. We price the logs and see if . . . we can take out a smaller volume of timber and come out ahead selling logs, as to what we could sell in lumber . . . if we had an efficient mill, then it would be different, but we waste too much to sawdust that it's just not efficient for us to run right now with prices the way they are."

This same individual noted that local use of local wood products has also changed over the years:

"Ease in shipping logs, [and] prices [have changed things]. It used to be that . . . somebody'd have a little mill in their backyard, and all the neighbors would haul their logs in and cut it up for building a barn, or a house, or whatever. And it's just pretty much got away from that, anymore it seems like, it's easier to run into Coeur d'Alene and buy a truckload of plywood than to mess around with the uncut lumber."

At present, there is no mining activity on the Kootenai National Forest that is of direct relevance to the western Sanders County communities, but the potential for future mining is discussed by residents of the area as an issue. The most frequently mentioned is the potential Rock Creek Project that would access, in the words of a knowledgeable interviewee, a "world class deposit of copper and silver." Exploration of the mineral potential of this area was done a over a decade ago, but a mine has yet to

be developed. One of the complicating issues in the local debate about this project is the fact that the deposit extends under the Wilderness area. This, combined with a reputation mining operations have locally of creating adverse environmental consequences, results in ambivalence toward the project, as gleaned from interviews in the study communities. On the one hand, the potential for the area getting perhaps 500 construction jobs, and perhaps 300 operations jobs over the operating lifetime of the mine (figures mentioned in interviews), are desired by a number of people, particularly with the apparent decline of the local economic contributions if not importance of timber. On the other hand, a number of people question the environmental trade-offs of the project, particularly threats to water quality from mine tailings, that would potentially accompany this employment. Additionally, there is some concern that a great majority of the jobs created by the mining operation would be filled by individuals moving into the area, resulting in potentially adverse changes to the area. Interestingly, one long-term resident drew an analogy to the times when the Clark Fork dams were built. At that time, the people who moved into the area were considered "outsiders" in a similar fashion, but they are now considered "pillars of the community."

Another potential development in the local mining industry concerns an operation that has, in recent years, focussed on processing rather than extracting antimony ore. Interview data suggest that ore extraction may be added to the operation. However, it must be noted that decisions regarding mining are complex and depend on a number of factors, including policies and economies overseas. As an example, according to one interviewee knowledgeable about the local antimony operation:

"Just last month there was some talk that they could re-open that [local mine], because it's one of the few sources of antimony ore in the world. The problem is that it's still a room-and-pillar shaft type of operation. The owner always said you could mine, and you could get a lot of ore, but then you would spend the rest of your week building tunnels and reinforcing everything. During that period, you wouldn't have any ore. So he ended up having a deal with China. They would ship him ore, because China didn't have any environmental constraints, and they would just open pit mine over there. He could buy the ore as cheap, or nearly as cheap as he could mine it, and it was always there when he needed it. It was a reliable supply. Now there's some problems in China, that supply isn't as reliable as it used to be. He's talking about re-opening his mine."

Although there may be some future in mining in the area, there are strong local concerns about the impact of mining on water quality. While timber harvest practices are seen as having water quality issues accompanying them as well, interview data suggest that those issues are much more easily addressed, from the local perspective, than mining-related water quality issues.

Other Economic Sectors

Interview data indicate that the economy of the area is based on a number of different types of employment with the predominant sectors being related to various government activities (such as the Forest Service on the federal level and the schools on the local level) and logging. While farming or ranching has been a traditional, if small, component of the local economy, this is changing somewhat as farm or range land is developed to meet the demand of an increasing population. In addition to the primary industries that exist in the area, a number of "cottage industries" have emerged, but the potential for these is seen as somewhat limited. According to one interviewee:

"There could be more cottage industries [in the future]. There have been a few that have been successful, but those are few and far between. There's people that make somewhat of a living making Huckleberry jam, but that's never going to be a big component of the economy. They're never going to employ somebody for eight bucks an hour and pay medical insurance and those kinds of things."

In view of the limited present economic base, economic diversification was an issue raised in interviews. A number of residents expressed reservations about how realistic economic diversification could be in terms of attracting new industries to the area that do not depend on local resource extraction. The words of one resident are an example of the sentiment that desiring this type of economic diversification isn't realistic:

"I think in the '70s and '80s there was this myth put out there that all you had to do was put a brochure together and go knock on IBM's door and they would relocate a multi-million dollar plant to your community, and that you'd have all these high paying jobs that were clean. It just doesn't happen."

Despite the reservations expressed in interviews, there have been efforts directed specifically at economic diversification for the area. A local bank official described such an effort:

"[T]he bank, in concert with, or at the suggestion . . . of, Washington Water Power, about five or six years ago . . . maybe even longer than that, helped form the Sanders County Economic Development Corporation [EDC] . . . with the goal to look at diversification. The reason for its formation [was that] Washington Water Power convinced us that in order to actively involved in [an economic] development diversification [effort], or to be involved in issues as they relate to timber, or mining, or anything . . . biggest concern was that we had to be broader based than just a Chamber of Commerce . . . We had to develop a broad-based organization. So we did that, and the EDC is still going strong. We've conducted meetings, and surveys, and all kinds of things, and really have tried to make an effort for diversification. The fact of the matter, however,

is that it has had limited success. We are a tourist area and I'm not certain that the EDC had anything to do with bringing tourists in the area -- I mean they are going to come here, it's pretty. And we have, we've tried to be supportive of diversification efforts and that kind of thing but, our folks for the most part don't have any money, don't have any capital. . . . transportation is always a problem and marketing of products is a problem . . . We're pretty remote and isolated . . . with the major road through here being Highway 200, it really prohibits us from diversifying too much. I mean, it's just [that] transportation, as it is, is probably the biggest problem. In the marketing [end of things], we've had people try to develop some good products, but trying to market those to a market beyond Sanders County is real difficult. Yeah, we'd like to diversify, but that's difficult, extremely difficult. A lot of governmental organizations have identified Sanders County . . . as qualify[ing] on most of the government lists for all kinds of things . . . a lot of governmental funding to study diversification and how we create jobs and that kind of thing. That's met with pretty limited success actually . . . Everybody is well intentioned but, the first thing that happens is about six governmental agencies give us money or want to give us money but they want to do it through [the] bureaucracy, and by the time it filters down there is very little that can be spread around to do anything significant. So it has limited success that way."

Given the present economic base and potential for economic diversification, some interviewees expressed concerns about a questionable economic future for the young people of the area. In the words of one resident:

"I don't see that there is a lot for young people, in my view . . . if you aren't born here and consequently kind of 'follow dad' into [a family business] . . . there isn't a great deal open. Now, that isn't to say that there isn't any [opportunity]. . ."

The current economy prompted one person to note the flexibility required to make ends meet locally, stating that local residents "do a combination of things -- there are very few people who have one single job who make a really good living out of it . . ." This also holds true in the logging industry, where, for example, there are a variety of other jobs in the area that are mobile. While some timber industry work is in fixed-site mills, other local residents work for a variety of operations, and their work sites are determined by where timber is being cut. In the words of one resident:

"If you're working in the woods as a sawer, or what have you, you'll work anyplace in the county, or far away as Flathead. Even over into Idaho. You'll go where to job is . . . [the location and the amount of work] fluctuates, drastically, depending on the price of lumber."

There is a strong local recognition of how monies earned in or brought into the community circulate in the local economy. As an example, one local business owner noted that

"[A]bout two or three years ago, there happened to be a \$20 bill floating around town that had a red [mark] on it, and I talked to [another business owner]; that [bill] went through both our businesses eight or nine times. So, when they say that you get an extra dollar in the community, it goes through eight people's hands before it leaves the community . . . there's a lot of truth to that."

There is some concern expressed that new persons moving into the area spend money outside of the study communities more often than longer term residents; others saw this as simply a change in purchasing patterns that may or may not be related to new arrivals. Although no hard data exist, there was an impression among a number of people interviewed that in recent years people have tended to go farther for their purchases as the result of transportation being easier, resulting in a smaller multiplier effect for dollars in the local economy. However, with people moving into the area, according to opinions expressed in interviews, real estate sales have come to represent more local income than in the past. The actual balance of the economic effects from in-migration is undetermined.

The economy of the area varies seasonally, due to the annual cycle of logging and tourism, among other factors. According to business owners, the active tourist period extends from Memorial Day through Thanksgiving. While depending somewhat on local attributes, the tourism-related segment of the economy would appear more directly tied to the larger national economy, and even the world economy, than to the local economy. Business persons in this sector indicated that disposable income of people who travel to the area from elsewhere is the critical factor in this arena.

The economy of the area also varies subtly by community. Nuances in the variation of economic bases between the communities are briefly summarized below.

Heron

Heron was generally described in interviews as a "bedroom area" where "people who live there work elsewhere." Residents of the area stated that Heron has "no manufacturing except for one operation that does custom beam sawing" and "a high precision machine shop that employs five or six workers." The machine shop provides an interesting example of an operation that is not directly dependent upon locally-obtained resources: it produces parts for an overseas automobile manufacturer -- the company sends cast parts to the Heron shop, the shop machines them and sends back the finished product. While there is some local ranching, cattle "grazing is only a very minor activity in Heron," in the words of one knowledgeable resident. As noted elsewhere, when the school in Heron closed several years ago, the residents felt the community lost a significant local institution, in addition to the loss of employment its closing represented. Still maintained in the community is a post office, a small store,

and a number of small businesses operated from individual homes. In addition, a number of residents reportedly work for Washington Water Power, a primary utility company in the region.

A factor in Heron's economy relative to the other study communities is its geographic location. For example, according to interviews, there are consequences of being the most distant (westernmost) community from the county seat in Thompson Falls. The lack of, or slow reception of, county services may have an effect on the amount of money or jobs in the community economy. The words of one resident exemplify the locally perceived county view of Heron:

"We've noticed that from [talking to] a lot of people . . . [who] have been here for a long time . . . that they're tired of always being forgotten about. Thompson Falls is the county seat . . . and [us] being almost in Idaho . . . we're the 'last one on the totem pole' to get anything, and I think that's what people get very offended at, because I hear people say all the time we're paying the same taxes' . . . we're always forgotten, and we have always been forgotten out here' . . . I've seen it myself in the three years we've been here -- it's kind of like some people in Thompson Falls don't even know where Heron is, and these are people that are in the courthouse [the governmental administrative building] working, that should know where their constituents are. But they don't. So you just kind of go okay . . .' [and] laugh about it, but people that have been here for years don't laugh about it -- they find it very offensive . . ."

Noxon

Noxon is somewhat less of a "bedroom community" than is Heron. In addition to a grade school and a high school, there are a number of other local employers. Sanders County has a rural maintenance yard located in Noxon, and the State of Montana has a highway maintenance facility there as well. Washington Water Power provides local employment, particularly with one work site (Noxon Rapids dam) being very close to the community. Additional employment is provided by the private sector in a small saw mill, a grocery store, a building supply store, a small motel, a highway gas station, three restaurants or taverns, and a number of smaller businesses that "come and go" in the words of one resident, including those run out of individual homes. There are also a few businesses, such as two restaurants, a gas station/convenience store, and real estate offices, that provide local employment along the highway between Noxon and Heron, including the area shown on maps as "Bull River" (which has a few houses and businesses but is not locally considered a "community" in the same sense as Noxon and Heron). Noxon used to have a Physician's Assistant who provided health care services to Noxon and nearby communities, but that person was "starved out," in the words of one resident, because there simply wasn't enough demand to support the position. Today, definitive health care in the region is provided by the hospital in Plains; this hospital runs a clinic in Thompson Falls, and they have a "visiting clinic" on an episodic basis in Noxon.

Trout Creek

Trout Creek differs somewhat in physical layout from Heron and Noxon. Among the three communities, only Trout Creek straddles both the highway and the railroad, each of which runs along the south side of the river at this point. In terms of transportation and travel, Trout Creek was characterized in a number of interview as the "break point" in Sanders County. For major shopping, people reportedly go either to Thompson Falls or Sandpoint (Idaho), with Trout Creek being perceived as being in the middle -- those who live on the Sandpoint side' of Trout Creek along the Clark Fork tend to go Sandpoint, with the opposite being the case for those on the Thompson Falls side.' (Of course, this is a rough generalization, and the much larger community of Sandpoint draws consumers from well beyond Trout Creek for some specific types of purchases.)

According to local residents, the Forest Service and a local mill are the major employers in Trout Creek. Although this is a small-scale mill compared to some of the major mills elsewhere, including one in Thompson Falls, the Trout Creek mill represents the largest operation of its type in the Heron-Noxon-Trout Creek area. The mill in Trout Creek employs between 60 and 100 people, according to interviews. Until recently, this mill specialized in cedar, but over the last few years, it has diversified its processing capabilities, including expanding into a chipping operation, and can produce a number of different products. Two motels, one restaurant, and two bars (one of which provides food service) also provide some local private sector employment, along with a gas station/store, a sporting goods shop, and a handful of other small businesses. Other fixed-location local employment (i.e., excluding variable-site jobs in the woods') is generally government related and is available through the post office and the school. The school in Trout Creek runs through the eighth grade, after which students go to either Noxon or Thompson Falls for high school. (According to interviews, however, it is not uncommon for students to begin attending school in one of these other communities as early as the fifth or sixth grade.)

The economy of the community does vary seasonally. For example, one of the motels is a year-round operation, while the other is open only during the summer and fall, drawing its guests from tourism, fishing, and hunting seasons. According to one motel owner, the two mutually agreed that there was not enough business to support two enterprises year round, and rather than try and compete with each other to their mutual detriment, the present arrangement suits both of their needs. For the motel that stays open year round, off-season bookings are provided primarily by business-related guests or others not related to tourism. Hunting season, along with the local Huckleberry Festival, would appear to be the periods of greatest activity. One local bar owner interviewed during the winter noted that "since hunting season stopped, business has dropped 80 percent." According to interview data, there is an increase in activity with bass fishing picking up in May, and the summer tourist season continues through the end of the hunting seasons (around Thanksgiving).

One type of business that has developed in the area recently, according to several interviewees, are "alternate education" schools. These schools house the students, who may have special needs or be "difficult" students, and use Forest Service land for

recreation and part of the educational process. According to one knowledgeable individual, there are "three or four" of these operations in the area.

Another type of business that has grown in the past several years, according to multiple interviewees, are in-home computer-based businesses. Some of these are associated with "retirees," while others have been developed by people who moved to the area because of any number of positive attributes of the area. This type of business is not dependent upon any particular local resource or set of resources (other than access to phones and power). Two commonly cited successful local examples of this type of business are an import-export business and a fresh-cut flower brokerage business. Interviewees held a range of opinions as to how common this type of business was likely to become in the area in the future.

Land Use and Ownership

The predominance of the public lands in western Sanders County is visible in many aspects of the area's socioeconomic context. As noted elsewhere, the private land in area (other than commercially held timber lands, which is a separate issue) tends to be aligned in a linear fashion following the river bottom lands. This linear arrangement has a number of implications for the social and economic organization of the county. For example, residents cannot strike off in all directions for different communities; they can only travel one way or the other, driving through communities in sequence. The primary road (Highway 200) channels this transportation, commerce, and social interaction. This band of private land arrangement also serves to magnify the influence of Forest Service management decision making on local residents. In the words of one long time resident:

"we kind of live fairly close to the land and have a vested interest in what goes on around us in this Forest Service/federal land base that surrounds us . . . [if] you . . . look at the maps for an overall overview of the area . . . you notice that the white -- the private land -- going up and down these valleys is very narrow. It's a little white ribbon of private [land] in a very green [government land] map, which constitutes the bulk of the real estate around here. So, whatever happens, in these management plans that the federal agencies come up with, has a potential to affect us local folks . . . in a very big way."

The small proportion of private lands in the area, in combination with a traditional reliance on logging-related industry and a decline in local National Forest timber sales, has led to a local perception of increased pressure being put on private lands in the area. Other pressures being put on private land use include those associated with rising real estate prices, that are themselves caused by a variety of factors. With an influx of new residents to the area who are able to afford what are locally perceived to be steep prices, the value of local real estate has increased significantly in recent years. In the words of one resident,

"Land prices, they're exponential. It's almost like, if I came [to this area] now, I probably wouldn't be able to afford my own land. Just like this next piece right here, 233 acres in 1978 sold for \$78,000 and it just sold two years ago for \$400,000. Right now, if you have 20 acres and a decent house on it, there's no reason you can't get \$150,000 for it. As a matter of fact, that's probably the starting price that people are asking . . ."

That current residents could not afford their own land was a theme that ran through a number of interviews with long time residents. There were a number of things that were cited as contributing to this price escalation, including various pulses or groups of people moving into the area. One such group frequently mentioned is retirees who have sold expensive real estate elsewhere and moved into the area. This has tended to escalate local prices, accelerate local development, and change the nature of land use. Overall, land is moving out of agricultural categories, such as ranching, and is being subdivided for housing development. This trend tends to 'feed on itself,' in that as land prices increase, assessed value increases, taxes increase, and residents with substantial holdings that provide little income may feel forced to sell at least a portion of their land. As for the tax increases, one interviewee noted: "Couple years ago, people got tax bills that were real high, they were increasing twenty and thirty percent. Last year's round, [there] didn't seem to be [as] much talk about it, so they must have held steady." Regarding changing land use and development, another resident explained:

"Well, there's less and less [agricultural land]. I mean, a lot of it's being subdivided. You take people that have lived here all their lives, and the cattle industry is up and down and back and forth, and [the land prices] provides them with an opportunity to sell their place. Most of them have taken the timber off of it and, you know, they're going to get a price now . . . they never dreamed that they'd get. I mean, this thing in the last four or five years has doubled, tripled, quadrupled as far as [what] outside investors are subdividing. And so we have less cattle now than -- well, I won't say that either, we probably had less cattle in the 80s -- but obviously we are losing a lot of the big ranches. Fish and Game are buying to provide habitat, and then we have people just simply subdividing it. But, it's still viable industry and . . . there's a group of us that live within the Little Beaver Creek drainage on both the Kootenai and Lolo Forests . . . [who] have family or sons involved [in our operations]. . . [so] we're going to be here. If you sold this and took the money, what would you do? Where would you go? [There are only] so many beautiful valleys, fertile valleys like this one -- it may not look as affluent as many areas, [but] it's still average for Montana -- as far as the cattle industry [goes]. I think it would be very short-sighted for a lot of people to subdivide . . ."

According to interview data, few ranches in the area were or are major or exclusive sources of income in and of themselves. That is, ranchers and their family members tend to do a variety of things, such as seasonally logging, to provide for family income. Some have small sawmills on their property and, depending on price, harvest timber off

their property and either mill it or sell logs. Some take seasonal positions with the Forest Service, including firefighting, to produce additional income. Traditionally, ranching and farming was apparently most often a component in a diversified strategy to make a living off of local resources. As farms and ranches shrink with development, they are even less able to be prosperous or even to significantly contribute to the income of owners as before. Other factors have contributed to the loss of ranch and farmland, with a primary one being the seeming irreversibility of the process. There are only a limited number of private landholdings large enough to maintain viable, self-supporting agricultural uses; when those break up for any number of reasons, including inheritance, they stay broken up. One can make money subdividing land, but it is not economically feasible to reaggregate pieces of land that are being used for housing and return them to agricultural uses. One long time rancher offered his opinion on the dynamics of land sales:

"We have one big ranch down here, about 2,000 acres -- that's pretty big for this area -- and it was the inability of the family that owned it to do good estate planning [that led to its breakup] . . . so finally it ended up in court and then somebody bought it. He wasn't able to make it, and so somebody else bought it, and I think this guy that bought it this last time, if you can believe him, came in here to ranch, but he had some deals going on that he was betting on to work, and they didn't work for him, and it was like the domino effect. So he was going to lose this place, and so, well, he was either going to sell it or his option was subdivide it and of course, subdivision always looks more attractive. I think probably there's a lot of people that have been waiting to buy land like this, but they never had the opportunity, and so as soon as these ranches are being subdivided they don't seem to lack the buyers. But also what happens is they buy a lot of this stuff for a minimum down payment and they . . . subdivide it and they get enough income spread out over a year to get along, they may finance it for 20 years or so and everything works out all right, but the majority of these places -- a guy will buy 20 acres, and you find that he's got other problems and he can't make the payments and so then he subdivides it. And so you buy . . . 20 acres, and you think, this will be great my neighbors won't [be] too close' and the first thing you know, the guy next to you has divided his into five acre plots and then you may get into a situation where you have to split yours up. Maybe the wife wants something that you just don't -- and you have that piece of land so . . . [you sell]."

One individual also expressed the opinion that as land in the area is further subdivided, social pressures to accelerate the process may increase:

"The people that buy in here today, and they have me as a rancher [for a neighbor], and I'm running cattle [and] they accept that. Well, maybe 20 years from now, the next group that comes in they don't like the smell of cattle and they don't realize that cattle do get out [of fenced areas and go

onto neighbor's land], and they aren't willing to accept [that] so then they get together to put as much pressure on us that they can to get rid of us. The whole thing changes. There's nothing for certain."

With the breakup of farms and ranches, there is lessening reliance on local resources for local income, and this, combined with a lack of timber sales on public lands, is a concern expressed by some local residents who feel that in the long run the local economy has to be dependent on the use of locally available resources. While tourism is frequently mentioned as a potential solution to this type of problem, few of those interviewed felt that the local tourism potential would develop into an industry that would support large numbers of local residents at a reasonable income level; others, however, strongly believed that tourism was the key to the future economy of the area both through providing local employment directly related to tourism as well as bringing in monies to the area (e.g., in the form of tourist spending -- money earned elsewhere and brought to Sanders County) that would provide opportunities in less direct ways.

A land use issue that is particularly salient in the area revolves around matters of private land bordering reservoirs operated by Washington Water Power. Interview data indicate that the policies governing restrictions of these lands are particularly contentious. It should also be noted that the creation of the reservoirs themselves was a cause of changes in the land use pattern in the valley. According to one lifetime area resident:

"A lot of the ranches, the older ranches, are under water [now] . . . the reservoirs up by Trout Creek took out a lot of the farm country on the lower benches. You know, that was all pretty much farm land. And, of course, the timber grew into a lot of the fields that used to be here. A lot of the old fields have got 20-30 foot trees on them now, so the ranches have become more consolidated."

One lifetime resident offered the opinion that the loss of agricultural land has increased dependence on the timber industry:

We're more commercially dependent on logging right now than we were back in the 40s and 50s, really, because back in the 40s and 50s there were so many little individual 40- up to 160-acre pieces of property that people were living on. Had cows and chickens and gardening, and stuff like that to help supplement a lot of their stuff. There was an awful lot of those types of places here in the valley. Then all of a sudden those places started to dwindle; selling off to the larger places.

Employment, Unemployment, and Welfare

While it is commonly discussed locally that Sanders County is "in the top two or three Montana counties" in terms of unemployment, interpretation of this information for western Sanders County is not straightforward. According to interview data, unemployment and "under-employment" are often the result of a "lifestyle choice" in this area. Long-term residents support this view by referring to periods when local

employment opportunities were relatively plentiful but there were still significant levels of unemployment reported. In the words of one interviewee, explaining why there is always seemingly some unemployment locally, "people don't move here to get rich." In general, a number of respondents indicated that of the people who move to the area, a substantial number want a high degree of independence, including independence from the constraints of regular employment to the extent possible. Episodic employment, which would show up in statistical reports as periods of unemployment, could provide for "essentials," particularly in an area where the cost of living is relatively low. It is also frequently noted that long-time residents engage in a variety of jobs over time in an effort to make ends meet; this type of fluidity also makes analysis of employment statistics problematic. Although no firm information exists, interview data would also suggest that a number of individuals moving to the area, who may be counted as part of the local labor force in census or other types of socioeconomic data, derive their income from elsewhere, such as in the form of investment returns or early retirement income. A significant number of new residents to the area are characterized as "retired" but are not chronologically "seniors." Social issues that can accompany an increasing retiree cohort fueled by in-migration that have been reported for other areas -- such as, for example, concerns over newly arrived retirees voting differently on school issues (i.e., they have already raised their children elsewhere and do not desire to pay increased taxes now), thereby thwarting the desires of longer term residents with children (i.e., individuals who have a more direct stake in improving local education) -- have apparently seldom surfaced in this area.

The employment in the area has also varied over the years with a number of large projects that have both drawn people to the area and increased employment opportunities for those already in the area. In the words of one resident:

Then the railroad down here, they employed several more people locally here than they do now . . . We had a crew out of Belknap, we had a crew out of Thompson Falls, we had a crew out of Plains and Noxon and all these tiny little places through the valley. Well . . . those particular types of jobs are gone now. Then . . . they employed quite a few of the local residents when they put the Bonneville line in through here. But that was only for maybe a year. Then, the dam come in here -- the one in Idaho, on the Idaho line -- which hired a few of the local people. And then the Noxon dam, which also hired several local people for riprapping all the rivers, and building roads and stuff like that. After that left, it went right back to the old original thing again. Here in the last few years, really everything has dropped off . . . some of your sawmills are left the country. Like the big Diehl lumber company there in Plains; it closed down in the last several years. The LP here in Trout Creek, which employed probably a hundred people right at the mill, plus all the people working in the other end of the forestry part of it. And that's gone now.

Other residents spoke of the difficulties of those who move to the area and who do desire or need employment:

"[W]e do have people who move in here who are not at the retirement age. And they have a very difficult time, because [typically they are young and] they're not people who are financially stable enough to make it . . . So we really have both populations [people who need work and people who don't]. We probably don't have as much of the middle population, the people who are [still working and] fairly stable in their life-styles [who] move here . . . the big problem is, one of the largest problems, people that come here expecting to go to work. If they do find work, they have to travel at least from here to Sandpoint, which is 35 miles one-way, and Sandpoint isn't a town that pays big wages. And so they kind of get discouraged and other than that, next place is Coeur d'Alene or Spokane, there's nothing in Thompson Falls, so it's kind of hard for them to find work. [It is] practically impossible, to make enough to sustain a family. Where a single guy could probably do it . . . for a family it's kind of hard."

Another individual offered that the overall job situation had changed for the worse in recent years:

"And it's a lot rougher to make a living here than it was 20 years ago. [When] I moved here in '72, if a man wanted to go to work, he could get a job the next day. Now there's times that work is a long ways in between times.

Further complicating area's unemployment picture is the seasonality of some traditional types of employment, particularly jobs in the woods. By the nature of operations, some (but not all) segments of the timber industry are slack during at least part of the year. According to other interview data, the fact that western Sanders County abuts the Idaho state line creates some difficulties in interpreting unemployment data as well. Some residents report that there are those who unfairly take advantage of unemployment and welfare programs in both states; the extent of this practice is unknown.

6.1.2 Cultural Orientations

Independence and Self-Reliance in Rural Lifestyles

According to interview data, values related to independence and self-reliance are what attract a number of the people who have recently moved to the area. However, at least a portion do not have accurate expectations regarding what they are getting into. For example:

"We were a little naive . . . when we moved up here. I had this vision of 'living off the land' and, well, it's not real realistic . . . it was a city slicker's view point, even though I was raised in the country, . . . of what could be done."

One long term resident spoke about the notion that many people have when they move to the area of running a few head of cattle:

"Well, you know, everybody always likes to be a rancher and a cowboy, and have a few cows and everything. The prices, we've had good prices the last five or six years, and you see more cattle around here right now -- anybody's got a little grass, he's got a couple critters on it. There's just a lot of people that like to come in and do this. We have people who have never been in a business before come in and they want to run a few cattle, and usually what they do is take a big bath. It's just really hard to get into this business. Everything is on averages, and you've got to be in it about 10 years to [make it]."

This type of discordance between expectation and reality of rural living has resulted in a certain degree of turnover among newly arrived individuals. In the words of one resident:

"I've known of two families that they came here, fell in love with [the area], built [homes], and in this case it was both the women that couldn't handle living this isolated, and they are no longer here. You know, it sounded good, and it's great for the summer. We have a lot of . . . what they refer to as your 'snowbirds,' people who come here and spend the summer and then leave for the winter."

On the other hand, there is a strong emphasis placed on values related to pulling together for specific events or causes. As an example of people "pitching in," one interviewee offered the following:

"We do have quite a few community events, and it don't take a whole hell of a lot to get one started. Just somebody comes up with an idea, and you'll have plenty of help. We started the Winterfest, let's see, this will be the third year, I think. It's four of us started it and it's pretty well on its own right now. We usually have -- the way we got it started, we just wrote letters to everybody who had a business. If you had a logging truck, or did custom logging, or what have you, you were considered a business. And we just asked for \$10 or \$15 donations for prize money and whatnot. That first year we collected over \$1,800 . . ."

There are economic pressures to change land use patterns, but some interviewees expressed the values or orientations that guide their resource use. In the words of one long-time land holder:

"So here comes this assessor, [and he said] How can you stand it to live out here and not cut down some of those trees? [I can't believe] you don't want to sell off this land? Don't you know what you've got?' I'm telling you, I was so angry . . . I didn't want to have anything to do with him. How much of a country-bumpkin' was I, that I didn't put [a] dollars and cents [value] on it after we struggled 40 years to get it, you know. I don't know, you see, I can't understand those kinds of people's thinking . . . It's much more important to make it and use it instead of stripping everything off . . ."

the other heartache to me is that we cannot seem to make people understand, these people who are coming by, people coming in here buying land, that you cannot cut all the trees off to pay for it, and then expect other trees to grow so quickly that you always have money to pay the taxes. It just won't work that way."

Building and housing costs are also an issue locally, as they have increased along with the land prices, and this, in combination with the fact that the few employment opportunities pay low wages, produces trends that are worrisome for a number of residents. A commonly voiced concern is that young people growing up in the communities, some of them in families that have been in the area for generations, may not be able to afford to stay. In the words of one resident:

"Housing availability [is extremely tight] and prices have skyrocketed . . . part of my job . . . is to do real estate appraisals, and I think it is safe to say that in most cases . . . real estate prices probably have tripled or more, but at least tripled since 1991 . . . in 1991, you could get a decent home built for \$40 to \$45 a square foot; now it's \$70 a square foot. That sounds, maybe in California prices, that's cheap, but that's pretty expensive for the local folks. That is the one area that I am most concerned about, I don't know where it will end, if it will end, or what the trend is going to be . . . real estate prices have now exceeded the ability of local folks [supported by] local income to manage. It is really difficult. There has been some spec' home building over the last couple, three years, but we are talking spec homes from \$150,00 to \$200,000 dollars in price which is beyond a mill worker's ability to pay. We are seeing . . . \$3,000 to \$4,000 an acre for bare land . . . but there is a lot of trees . . . It's almost impossible to find a rental here in town . . . And . . . in 91 you could have rented anything in town for \$300 a month, and now a decent house will be \$500 or \$600 a month. Mobile home prices have gone up the same way . . . I've been here 14 years, and in 13 and a half years of that we had not had a house in town sell for more than 100,000 dollars, and we've had a couple of them now in the last six months, so they've penetrated that barrier, that level. So again, based upon what is happening in the other parts of the country, a \$100,000 dollar house in California doesn't sound like much, but here it is pretty significant. And here, it is my opinion, that people working for the local mill, [or who are otherwise] depending upon the local economy for jobs, probably can't afford a house for more than \$75,000 . . . [naming a young, married, dual income couple as an example,] they just bought a house a year ago for \$66,000, they panicked basically, houses were just skyrocketing . . . But that was basically their limit as to what they could afford . . . and there is very little that is not beyond that these days, and that's scary."

Outdoor Values and Lifestyles: Hunting and Fishing Culture

In general, "the outdoors" was often mentioned in interviews as a primary attraction for residents, both newly-arrived and long-term, to live in the area. In the words of one interviewee:

"[If] it's daylight, I'm usually outside . . . I think a lot of people, unless you are older and incapacitated, [are] outdoors [most of the time] whether you're gardening, you're hiking, [or] you're working in it. I'd say the biggest element of the outdoors . . . [is] enjoying it in one form or another, recreation or work."

Hunting and fishing are also cited as activities people from a wide variety of perspectives can agree upon. When asked about the local perspective on National Forest use, one long-term resident responded:

"You talk to loggers and it's 'take the trees out.' You talk to recreationists and it's 'save it.' One common ground . . . between the [two] is probably hunting . . . they both want it . . ."

Fishing is a popular local summer activity. As discussed in a subsequent section, there are some formal sportsmen's organizations to be found locally, such as a bass fishing association in Trout Creek, but many more residents pursue fishing as an individual or family activity than participate in organized events. According to interviews, most of the fishing in the area takes place on the reservoirs outside of the National Forest. One resident voiced a common perception that on the National Forest, there is "not too much fishing -- fishing in these tributaries isn't that great, mainly because a lot of the streams are intermittent, they don't run year round." While not many streams may run throughout the year, there are, however, some small mountain lakes on the local portion of the Kootenai National Forest that do attract fishing interest, and a number of interviewees mentioned these as favored hiking destinations.

Local fishing opportunities have drawn interest from outside immediate area. For example, in the summer of 1994, the Noxon/Trout Creek area was host to a western states regional bass tournament. As part of a national tournament series, it drew participants from a wide area, including a number of different parts of the community. The event also brought participation from a number of local entities. The Forest Service, for example, participated as an entity, and some of its employees participated as individuals as well. The Forest Service also collaborated in producing underwater topographic maps for tournament use and provided some administrative support.

In addition to fishing, hunting is a popular outdoor activity for residents, and it is a significant draw to the area for those from outside. In the words of one long-time resident, "elk hunting is big here. This is the only place in the state where you can still take either a bull or a cow the first week of the season with a general permit. Whitetail [deer] hunting is good too." In addition to the availability of game, the local terrain and weather are seen as conducive to quality hunting:

"We get a lot of out-of-state people that just enjoy coming in here and hunting, and just to get away, even if they don't get any game. This is an

area with relatively low elevation and the weather isn't as severe as . . . you get in . . . areas of higher elevation. We live on the west slope of the Continental Divide, like we're 2,200 feet here, and it appears to be a lot higher than it is, but it provides a lot of opportunity."

The renowned quality of the hunting, however, does produce some ambivalence among local residents. It is part of a locally valued lifestyle; indeed, it was cited in many interviews as being a major facet of the attractiveness of the area to residents. Judging from interview data, it is very common for families to supplement their diet with locally taken deer and, to a lesser degree, elk. Deer are extremely plentiful in the area, and relatively easy to hunt compared with elk, so it is not surprising that they appear to play a greater role with respect to local subsistence. With respect to the area's reputation as featuring very good hunting, the commercial value of the draw this provides for people from outside the area (business is generated for the motels, restaurants, bars, stores, gas stations, outfitters, etc.); however, there is also the feeling among some residents that these "outsiders" are taking "their" animals. In particular, the cow elk permit process is a matter of some debate. According to one local business owner:

"Bow hunters, you never see them. You'll see a few, but not a lot. It's not like gun season. Then the first week of gun season is open to either sex elk. That first week, we'll have a camp on every flat spot and every drainage in the country. In fact, we've got a petition going around trying to close that either-sex first week. We're the last area in the state that does that, but we [locals] don't seem to have much say-so around here on it. It's the other parts of the state and country that seem to control that."

There is also a particular concern held by some residents that while guiding is a worthwhile local industry, it has the effect of teaching others from outside how to hunt the area so that they can return on their own later. This has the potential for substantially increasing hunting effort to the detriment of local game and local hunters, while contributing little or nothing to the local economy. According to local interviews, it is easy to "road hunt" deer (that is, hunt near roads or even from the cleared roadway area itself), while elk hunting often requires more work in the "back country." Although interviews would indicate that both "subsistence" and "sport" hunting involve deer and elk, there was an implication that there was some differential distribution of effort between the two pursuits across the two species, with subsistence activities being relatively more focussed on deer. However, these terms do not necessarily represent distinct categories of activities, particularly when applied to local hunters, so any meaningful analysis of this type would require much more comprehensive data than is available at present.

Management of local game is a frequently discussed issue, and the complexities of the jurisdictional issues are well known to local residents. In the words of one interviewee:

"It's real funny the way things are mixed up. The State owns the animals; the habitat is the [responsibility of the] Forest Service. You know, there are some real concerns in there that hopefully will get addressed . . . we have

an overabundance of deer . . . [and] depending on who you talk to . . . we've probably been seeing a decline in the elk numbers. So, people are concerned . . . because a lot of people out here hunt, but they don't just hunt, they hunt for how do you say it -- for sustenance. That's something that's dear to people's hearts, it's always on their mind anyway."

Interestingly, there would appear to be more concerns over "near" non-local hunters than "far" non-local hunters using local resources. A possible facilitator of this distinction between outsiders from relatively near locations and those from farther away may be the numbering scheme for Montana vehicle license plates which enables people to easily recognize a vehicle's area of registration. Interview data would suggest that there is more perceived "competition" with hunters from the Libby area using local resources than with hunters from farther afield, and that this is, at least in part, based on recognizing license plates from that area during hunting season. While this may simply be a function of the relative number of plates seen from any one area, there is a sentiment held by a number of area residents that there is a closer dependence on local game by local hunters in terms of their daily lives, or as a subsistence component of the local lifestyle, that should be recognized in management preferences over the "trophy" hunting of those from outside of the area. This, of course, is a common issue with regard to the local relationship to resource management on public, and particularly federal, lands throughout the region and beyond. Another view concerning "near" non-local and "far" non-local hunters was expressed in terms of community economic impacts: near non-local hunters, according to this perception, are more likely to come in, take game, and return home without contributing much, if anything, to the local economy; non-local hunters from more distant places are seen as more likely to spend money on lodging and in restaurants, to buy groceries or other supplies, and to otherwise patronize local establishments, thus contributing to the local economy. All types of non-local hunters may be seen in a negative light to the degree they represent competitors for local game, but at least those who spend money locally are viewed with more ambivalence. (Indeed, non-local hunters who spend money locally on their hunting directly support some local employment, such as outfitting, so non-local hunters are actively sought and encouraged by some segments of the community.)

Other species that are reportedly taken locally with some frequency are mountain sheep/goats, mule deer, and mountain lions. "Photo hunts" of mountain lions (where chase is given, but animals are not actually harvested) are also popular, with a season set aside for this activity. In 1994-95, there was local concern expressed over the way mountain lion hunting quota was set and how the season was concluded with a reported take apparently in the neighborhood of 50 percent over quota. A community meeting, held in Noxon, seemed to address these concerns for nearly all involved.

Trapping is not a particularly common activity in the area. According to one knowledgeable individual, "there are only a handful of trappers in the area . . . a half-dozen or less." Reportedly, for those who do trap, beaver and muskrats are the game of choice. Marten are present in the area, and fisher have been reintroduced into the Bull River area, but at present they are only a "marginal" population.

One local resident noted that ironically, locals have less opportunities to enjoy local outdoor resources than might seem to be the case, no matter how they would value doing so:

"But the sad thing about being a local is that you are so busy trying to eke out a living that you don't get to enjoy the hiking and the camping and stuff like you should. Isn't that terrible?"

Another long-term resident noted changes in the hunting and fishing orientation versus other uses of the National Forest over the past few years.

"Thirty years ago hunting was close to 80 percent [of what] took place on the National Forest as far as recreation. Now it's only about 20 percent . . . we're finding 80 percent is not really hunting and 20 percent is hunting. Basically what the people are looking for, they're looking for that moment to touch the wild."

The Values About Place and Community

As discussed above, hunting and fishing are components of the outdoor values and lifestyles of western Sanders County. Similarly, there are values about place and community that are discussed in this section. Among other things, what people value about a place and a community can attract people to and keep them in the area. These values reveal what is at risk when a place or community changes or is threatening to change.

One resident offered that the same attributes that draw tourists to the area also make the area attractive for residents:

"Well, the people that come here to visit are probably wanting to get away from home, and work, and the city, or whatever. [To] tour through an area of scenic beauty. That's more than likely the main attraction. And then, of course, hunting season is a really big thing here, a lot of outfitters and we're really crowded during the hunting months . . . the weeks of hunting around here. Not only with outfitted hunters, but also with hunters that come in on their own to spend some time. So they're attracted by the wildlife. We've got good populations of wildlife in this area. The rural setting is a feeling, I am sure to a lot of folks, that come through [want] to visit an area where you're not too crowded and . . . [have some] open space . . . A lot of tourists come through here. You know, we're not Glacier Park or Yellowstone or anything, but nonetheless, a fair share of people travel through this area. And then [there are] the people like me who came here and stayed . . . we decided that we wanted to stay rather than go back to where we came from for those very same reasons: the scenic beauty, the [abundance] of wildlife, the generally clean waters that we have, fresh air, all those types [of] aesthetic things [that are] here. We certainly didn't come here to get rich or make lots of money or that sort of thing."

When summing up what is attractive about the area, one long time resident noted that it was a balance between the type of community and the degree of independence that the local social context allows:

"I guess for me is still the small town, basically you can trust your neighbor' type thing . . . and, of course, the scenery and . . . the quality of life is still pretty good. And the fact that you can live on not very much out here . . . you can still be self-sufficient, I mean [for] most Montana people that is a big deal for us. [There is an] independent spirit here."

Some long-term residents see this changing, however, as more people move into the area. In the words of one lifetime resident:

"But there's also there's no doubt in my mind that we're going to get more and more developed . . . there'll be as many changes in my lifetime as there was in my dad's lifetime in the area . . . [it used to be that] you knew everybody between here and there, and if you broke down in the middle of the night, you weren't afraid to walk up to somebody's house and knock on the door, that sort of thing . . . that's changed quite a bit. [Now] if you walked up to somebody's door, they're probably not going to answer the door anyway. They'll call the cops (laugh). It's sad, you hate to, I hate to see that kind of thing happening. We're getting more and more weirdos and wackos, so can't blame the people either."

Sanders County, according to some residents, has the reputation of being a fractious area. One interviewee related the following story of how negative outside perceptions seem:

"I think you've probably got religious sects and political factions who have moved here, for whatever their reasons are, whether it is more isolated and they can do their thing without much interference, or what their reasoning is I don't know, but they're here. There [are] people of all kinds of persuasions like that. It is interesting that Sanders County is kind of notorious [in this way] and it is a sad thing for being [known as] a fractious community county wide. And we just had the Sanders County Community Theater do a production of *The Music Man* and they performed it in several areas. And it was wonderful. And so the *Missoulian* did the large write-up about it . . . But . . . the reporter from the *Missoulian*, he began the article on the community theater with how fractured and how disagreeable people in Sanders County are with each other, not with those outside our borders but with each other inside the County. And he called it the most fractious community this side of Bosnia-Herzegovina,' while writing up this article on the theater! You know, so he even put a political twist to our efforts that culture and entertainment. It was quite interesting the way he wrote that up."

Another resident noted that the community tends to come together in times of crisis, while remaining less tight-knit at other times. In her words:

"It's funny. It's not so much social unless something happens. Like recently a friend of ours died, and it was like everybody really pulled through, and that's what the people from outside Trout Creek were amazed at, they were really impressed at that . . . [of] course there's . . . different crowds, there's . . . the bar crowds who socialize of Friday and Saturday and then there's the people who socialize through their church or groups like that . . . I don't know how to explain it exactly . . . I wouldn't call it social, there's not that much to do as far as being social [on a regular basis]."

Other interviewees made strong points about when the communities have pulled together for particular projects. One long-term resident gave the following perspective:

"Probably one of the more notable community organizing efforts in this end of the county for certain was the Heron Community Center. You know, Heron is one of the smaller communities in the county and there is the old Heron school there which is an elementary school that closed down in mid-80s because there weren't enough students. And the Noxon School District, as I understand it, owned the premises and they sat unused for seven or eight years or something. And then some folks in Heron finally decided it was time to put those buildings back to use and they pulled together and formed a community center board and we have had a number of activities out there. Ranging from public meetings on natural resource issues to just good old entertainment and they just had their Christmas, community Christmas party the other day. And it's drawn together over a 100 people, you know and the area is probably only populated by 120 people or whatever. The point being that that is just one example of a community oriented activity that does draw people together. There is other things like the community theater, which drew, I don't know how many people they figured had come to their production in the four times that they did it. Last year when they did it they had over 1,000 people attended through the three communities where they did it. Then there is the groups who have specific, for instance the Cabinet Resource Group . . . has sponsored meetings now and then . . . primarily in the Noxon area to draw people together to address and discuss some particular issue . . . And had Washington Water Power people come out and give an update on their research along the Clark Fork and the two reservoirs. And that drew quite a large number of people together. So there is some examples, there is a lot more as well, there is always, there is always something going on . . . it just seems to me for such a rural area, with few people, there is always something going on and you can't just schedule something and say we'll do it this day,' you've got to check with a dozen other groups to make sure that you're not conflicting with something that they are doing, and inevitably you do. So it is an active bunch of

people who live around here. Which is interesting, because I mentioned the hippies,' which kind of labels those people who moved here, and the history of it was to get away from it all' and to get back to the earth' and that sort of thing. And . . . a lot of these people are out here . . . were like that at one time, and now here we are we can't find enough time for all the different activities that we have involved ourselves in. And of course there are the biggies' in the county like the Fair and the Huckleberry Festival; the Noxon 4th of July weekend is always a big event . . . I guess it's an active bunch of folks who live around here. They seem to like coming together with each other. Well, that's a different side. You know, it's interesting when how you don't think of things until you start articulating them."

6.1.3 The Social Basis of Community

As developed throughout this section, there are organized and unorganized social groups and stakeholders that have interests in the local communities and related viewpoints on appropriate management of the adjacent National Forest. Among these are timber interests, which are characterized as the largest commercial user group; ranching, which is waning locally, but is still considered to be an important part of the fabric of the community; guiding/outfitters, which are estimated by a senior local Forest Service employee to consist of "around twelve local hunting outfitters" that utilize the adjacent areas of the Kootenai National Forest, which is considered to be near capacity for this type of effort; and, those concerned with forest and resource conservation or preservation. These groups help comprise the social basis of "community" in western Sanders County, and are discussed throughout this section. In addition to the overall context of the area's social interaction, an important element of "community" is where and how leadership, power, and authority is situated, thus this is also discussed below.

Local Political Structure and Authority

Local government is one form of leadership, power, and authority. In the communities of western Sanders County, there is a strong local sentiment to keep local governments limited in their scope of power and authority. Heron, Noxon, and Trout Creek do not have city governments. The county seat, Thompson Falls, is an incorporated community and does have a city government and a range of city services, including its own police department. The rest of the area is administered directly by the county, and the politics of county government have been volatile in the recent past. In the words of one resident,

"County government has been a hot point of discussion for about a year. We had a recall election . . . in which one commissioner was recalled and one got off on a court decision. Now we've, as of January first [1995], we've had two new commissioners, even though the one was still there. I think that has changed the balance of power, so I think things are going a lot smoother now."

There are no planning and zoning entities for Sanders County. As developed in a number of sections, there is marked ambivalence to any further development of governmental functions in the area.

The Context of Social Interaction

There are a number of formal organizations as well as informal contexts in western Sanders County that provide the basis for a wide range of social interactions. The types of organizations that were noted in interviews include volunteer emergency services, community committees, churches, other service organizations, resource interest groups, militias and separatist groups, and sporting/recreation organizations. These types of formal organizations are briefly outlined in this section. In general, a wide range of residents participate in these organizations. One long-time resident expressed the opinion that the vitality of some organizations could be attributed to people moving into the area:

"I think we're starting to see a little more growth in that, because some of these people that are moving in, they want to be involved. They want to be a part of the community. I can think of some specific individuals that have been real active in joining organizations. I think that's helped the community. Kind of like the 'new blood' as they say, stimulated activity. So that's been good."

On the other hand, other interviewees held the opinion that, like in many small communities, one tends to see the same individuals active in a variety of organizations, and that it is easy to "get burned out" by the demands of volunteer work.

Volunteer Emergency Services

As in many other small rural communities, volunteer fire departments are important social and service institutions in Heron, Noxon, and Trout Creek. Organized for, and serving the purpose of, addressing the emergency needs of the communities, these departments are also seen as more broadly serving the needs of the community. They are sources of local identity and pride, and community events are sometimes held by them or for their benefit, such as annual community picnics/parties. Thompson Falls has both a city and a rural fire department to serve its and the surrounding area's needs.

Volunteer ambulance services are less common than volunteer fire departments in the area. Volunteer ambulance services are based in Noxon and Thompson Falls, but are not found in Heron or Trout Creek. The two ambulance services serve the needs of the Clark Fork Valley contained in the study area, with the local clinic being located in Thompson Falls, and the nearest hospital being in Plains. There is also a volunteer Search and Rescue organization that serves the area and draws its members from local communities.

Community Committees

Community committees for various projects offer another context for social interaction. Such groups come together either to stage regular community events or in times of

community need. An example of the latter type may be found in the words of one respondent,

"There's probably a lot of groups that people can join . . . and they come together for different things, like one of the big things in Heron is we closed down the school about six years ago, and it just sat there idle and it was like tearing the heart out of the community . . . there have been two efforts, the last one was last year actually, to utilize the . . . [the] school building in the community . . . so the community pulled together. As a matter of fact, we did a rather massive research project in the community to identify some of the needs, and one of them as to reactivate the old Heron school as a community center. And so, we've gotten it. Right now . . . senior citizens can use the old lunch room for their meals. There's a day school and then there's the physician's assistant comes from Thompson Falls. They hold a clinic there once a week. There's a number of -- it seems like every two months there's . . . some kind of a 'big feed' to raise funds for the community center, but it's also a real good opportunity for people that don't normally meet . . ."

Examples of other types of community committees are organized for such things as the Huckleberry Festival in Trout Creek.

Churches

Churches represent a focus for social interactions in each of the communities in the area. In Heron, the church (in this case a Protestant denomination) represents one of the few formal social organizations in the community. Like a number of the other communities, some denominations without a church building of their own make arrangement to hold worship services in the community, and some groups share clergy between communities. With the closing of the school in Heron, the church and the community center (housed in former school facilities) provide foci for social interaction (although, as is common in small towns, the post office and the store also see their share of social interaction).

There is one "established" church in Noxon, but similar to the Heron church, a number of other denominations hold worship services there. Additionally, there has been some religion-related migration into the Noxon area. For example, one new congregation came to the community from California over "the past two years or so." It is not clear how many people associated with this congregation moved into the area, but one resident indicated that, "depending on who you talk to, there are 50 to 100 families." While this number may be an overestimation when considering the small geographic area, it is clear that regardless of the actual numbers, the impact of this in-migration was felt in the community, particularly with respect to available housing. For example one long-term resident stated the following about the impact of this move:

"They took up whatever housing slack there was -you cannot find a rental now anywhere in the area. They had people living in shacks. There were even families that spent the winter in tent trailers, and with the wet winter

snows around here, that is a pretty miserable way to spend a winter."

Aside from the housing shortages, the area seems to have absorbed the group without much obvious strain. According to one resident:

"They are quiet people, it's not like they're 'far-out evangelicals.' It would be easier, perhaps, for people if they were. Then people could 'look down their noses' at them, but they are just normal folks."

There are three congregations that have church buildings in Trout Creek, and these represent, in the words of one resident "quite active churches." They represent two Protestant denominations and one inter-denominational (Protestant) group. Like the other communities, there are a number of other groups that hold services but do not have their own buildings. It is not clear why Trout Creek, which is smaller in population than Noxon, has more established churches, but a contributing factor may be Trout Creek's location astride the area's main highway.

Churches also serve dispersed residents outside of the main communities. There is a church at White Pine, and another in the Bull River Valley approximately four miles off of Highway 200 that serve congregations in those areas.

Other Service Organizations

There are some service organizations that are multi-Sanders-County-community in nature, although they are based in a single community. For example, among organizations for adults, both the Lions Club and the Rotary Club for the area are located in Thompson Falls, but draw members from the smaller communities. An example for youth groups may be found with the Boy Scouts, the local organization of which is located in Thompson Falls as well, but like the Lions and Rotary, it draws participation on a "local region" basis, particularly toward the Trout Creek area. There are 4-H Clubs, Girl Scouts, Future Farmers of America, and other youth-oriented groups. Reportedly, a homemaker group and a number of church-related service organizations with different degrees of activity are in the area as well. A relatively large group, the White Pines Grange, a farm fraternity, is reported to draw its 80-plus members from farms from Heron to Thompson Falls. As in other rural areas, there are many opportunities for volunteer service as a result of both the values and community commitment that underlay such service and the relative lack of professionally provided services in the area.

Given the small communities and limited population in this area, there tends to be only one of each of the types organizations mentioned above, which has implications for community involvement of individuals and entities. In the specific case of the Forest Service, for example, individuals can be a part of various organizations without the difficulty of seeming to show favoritism by joining any one group in particular. It was noted in one interview that if you are a senior Forest Service staffer in a more urban context, there is a problem with joining a particular Lions Club in a community that has more than one. In western Sanders County, where there are a limited number of organizations of any one type, it is possible for Forest Service personnel to be involved in any or virtually all local organizations.

Resource Interest Groups

There are a number of resource interest groups that are active in voicing an interest in resource use on the Kootenai National Forest area in western Sanders County. A number of these groups are not based in the immediate area. Examples of these, according to one interview, are:

"[T]he timber industry through its various voices [such as] Communities for a Great Northwest . . . [and] the Intermountain Forest Industries Association . . . [is also] active here [although these groups are not local to western Sanders County in origin]. There is a snowmobile club out of Thompson Falls, and naturally they are going to vocalize their positions. There is a thing called Adopt A Stream, which is kind of an outgrowth of the Kootenai River Network, which is really promoting strong water protection and monitoring and that sort of thing. And, of course, there's lots of other groups that are active on this Forest like Montana Wilderness Association, Alliance for the Wild Rockies . . . [and] those bigger, statewide or national groups even. And, of course, the mining industry is vocal here, because we have two mines going in locally, [or] that they are trying to get going locally. They certainly have their two cents' or more.

One group that is characterized as a local group with a particular set of resource interests is the Cabinet Resource Group (CRG). This group is quite vocal on local Forest Service management issues. One member who has been active with the group for a long time provided the following history:

"It originated with . . . the so-called hippies that moved here in the 70s . . . I think the thing that kicked it off was possibly the proposal to build a . . . dam below Libby Dam up on the Kootenai . . . that started to draw some people together who formed CRG back in the mid- or late-'70s. And then they began, they got real involved in that and they were real involved in the wilderness issue back then . . . As time passed they broadened out to getting involved and interested in forestry practices. Cause . . . through their first few years . . . a lot of these guys were tree planters and they would get these tree planting contracts on the forest and apparently as they began to see more and more of the forest and discover just how much was being clear cut and roaded and that sort of thing. It developed a concern . . . that helped congeal CRG into a group . . . to the point where now CRG is largely a group of not preservationists -- [although] there are probably a few individuals in the group who would like to see pretty much all activity on forest lands ceased -- but the CRG [is not a group of preservationists], despite the reputation that they seem to have . . . [which probably came to be] because they are very vocal folks, and very passionate people who don't mind speaking their mind, sometimes without thinking it through all the way, and so that causes problems or misperceptions I suppose. But the heart of the group's philosophy . . . is to

try and direct our thinking and try to help the with the agency's thinking into let's do what is best for the land.' And that doesn't . . . mean at all [that we should] stop all logging on public lands, cause that can be good and it's needful for the economy. However, the group strongly believes that past management practices have left us with some serious problems in the woods and in our streams and with wildlife . . . And so CRG developed and grew and has become a bunch of people who are very loosely knit together and [who] often have disagreements amongst themselves as to what we stand for or . . . what positions we should take on various issues. But [we] still . . . share a common bond of wanting to try and figure out -- and then do -- what is best for the land, because we believe that will translate into what is best for people."

Membership in the CRG is reportedly drawn primarily from Eureka, Libby, Troy, Heron, Noxon, and Trout Creek. While acknowledging that some membership is drawn from outside the area, one knowledgeable member stated the following about the group:

"[T]he heart of the membership is people who live on the Kootenai . . . many [of whom] have worked on the Kootenai in some form or other through timber stand exams or tree planting, thinning, logging . . . So most of them are people who have first-hand knowledge of what is going on on the Kootenai."

Militias and Separatist Groups

In addition to there being a good deal of anti-big-government' sentiment in the area in general, there are also formal groups that have coalesced around these ideas. The Noxon-Heron area is a "gathering point," in the words of one local resident, for a number of groups that described under a variety of labels, but have in common an ethos of local control and distrust of national and international politics. The best known of these groups is the Militia of Montana, headquartered in Noxon. The Militia of Montana terms itself a "patriot" or "constitutionalist" group that apparently feels a need to prepare itself for the possibility of armed conflict with the federal government or some of its agencies. Federal law enforcement actions in recent years that have lead to deaths in Idaho (the Randy Weaver siege at Ruby Ridge involving the FBI) and Texas (the Branch Davidian incident in Waco involving ATF) are taken as precursors of the possibility of wider actions against the general populace. According to one long-term resident, the Sanders County area, and the western Sanders County in particular, is attractive to these groups "because of the 'thinness' of the law enforcement in the area." (One knowledgeable individual related that there are only approximately eight law enforcement officers in the entire area: five with the Sheriff's Department and one each with the Forest Service, Fish and Game, and the Montana Highway Patrol.) In addition to the Militia of Montana, there has also been some reported local activity by a variety of other groups whose rhetoric includes the potential for violence against the government or various ethnic groups; these groups have previously been associated more with adjacent areas of northern Idaho rather than Montana. According to interview data, these groups include the "Aryan Nations" and "skinheads," among others. According to one long-term resident, the increased presence of these groups in western Montana is a

direct result of increasing pressure being put on them in the Hayden Lake-Sandpoint area in Idaho (accompanied by fissures internal to the groups themselves), and when they were seeking a more favorable place in which to relocate, Sanders County was "just around the corner."

Local residents hold a variety of views on the Militia of Montana and like groups. One resident expressed a common view by noting that you "don't [want] talk politics to anybody your first year here" because you don't know where individuals stand on these issues and "there are some pretty nasty characters about." Another resident expressed dismay over the fact that some groups close off areas to other residents:

"I have concern for the people who are coming here that think that they can come and have their militia [up a] canyon and their own commune, so to speak. Those things have been going on in many other places but they have . . . moved . . . here [too]. I helped take the census and I cannot tell you how appalled that I really was [that] I couldn't go, I couldn't drive to the meeting place up this canyon . . . with the [other person who was working on the census] and that they wouldn't tell us you know, how many people were there and so on . . . But that one [group has now] more or less disintegrated."

This same person also expressed concern over the divisiveness these types of groups can cause in the local communities, and how they have remained, at least to a degree, separate from the rest of the community.

"Then we had these other people who were coming out here wanted to build a [new] state [out] of western Montana, [the] Idaho panhandle, and eastern Washington. They even went so far as to approach the legislatures of those three states. It was an amazing thing to me to watch them working. We had the John Birch society [active here] years, and years, and years go. So we watched them, you know, the tactics they used to divide a community. Oh my, it was horrible. Just horrible. The [new groups have] used some of those [same] tactics . . . the ones I'm meeting particularly around here . . . are [mostly] retiring people . . . [but there is] one canyon where you just don't even go up there, [and] there are [apparently] a couple of places around Trout Creek that apparently have the same kind of people. They home school their kids so the school authorities don't know what's up there [either]."

Estimates of the popularity of the group with local residents vary. One interviewee cited the following example:

"They just had the Militia of Montana meeting here . . . I think that mostly drew outside people. There were a few locals. I was only at the meeting for a short time, and I only saw a half a dozen cars . . . with Sanders County plates out of 100 cars in the parking lot."

Another resident provided a common view on the groups from a local perspective:

"They, for the most part, they seem to be just [saying] 'leave us alone.' They don't hassle the locals that much that I'm aware of. Of course, being blond haired, blue eyed they like me anyway, so (laugh) . . . they're mostly home schooled, I think, and don't support any school functions or community functions, that sort of stuff. [They've been coming here] in the last five years I guess, and . . . I could be wrong, but to my way of looking at it, it's [like] in the early '70s [when] we got overrun by the hippies, the California drop-out crowd, the Berkeley bunch, whatever [you want to call them] . . . they moved here, and they were going to live off the land' . . . they lasted five years and ten years, they all starved out and either left the area again, or went and moved back into mainstream life and got real jobs. And I kind of see that happening [with the militias], cause you, sooner or later, you've got to start doing something to generate a little income and feed the family."

Sporting/Recreational Organizations

There are at least some more-or-less formal sportsmen's organizations in the area, and the popularity of these organizations fluctuates over time. One example is the Marten Creek Sportsmen, which according to one knowledgeable individual, is at "a low ebb" in terms of present activity. An example of a fishing-oriented organization is found in Trout Creek where there is a small bass fishermen's organization, which is an affiliate member of a national organization. In the summer this organization is involved in local bass tournaments. In the words of one member, it is not a big organization but is "sputtering along." Apparently, this group has some of the same types of difficulties with consensus among its local members as other formal and informal sportsmen's associations regarding the use of local resources. In the case of the bass fishing organization, this would appear to revolve around a dialog concerning whether the organization is for "locals only" or if it should be promoting local bass fishing to outsiders. The latter stance is seen by at least some members as encouraging others to catch "their" fish, and having the potential to change the nature of the very thing they are interested in as an organization. On the other hand, others see interactions with outsiders as beneficial to the sport and the local communities in general. This type of dialog -- the wish to encourage economic and other benefits through the promotion of local resources to outsiders, versus concerns that significant levels of local resource use by outsiders would change the essence of the area that local residents highly value -- is by no means confined exclusively to those with fishing interests. In fact, this is a central resource use issue for many local residents.

Other area hunting and fishing oriented associations, according to interview data, include a rod and gun club based in Noxon which owns a building and some property, and an archery association. There is an indoor archery range located in a sporting goods store in Trout Creek, which in the words of one resident is both humorous and reflective of the local importance of hunting:

"[The] indoor archery range in Trout Creek . . . is kind of a joke, because here you have this tiny town and I mean, literally, you can't buy a pair of

pants here and there is an indoor archery range? And that is sort of part of the quality elk hunt' kind of mind-set. You know, the archers are people who want to get out of their pick up truck, and a lot of cases they are interested in wild country, and sort of unhunted areas and the big blow outs and stuff. Anyway, they're pretty active."

Other local recreation-based organizations in the area include a group of horse owners who meet for wilderness rides, and a group of snowmobilers who ride together. There is some attempt to link the formation of a snowmobile club with increasing snowmobile-related tourism in the area. In the words of one local businessman:

"We're trying to generate snowmobile business here. There's a bunch of guys in the community, and that's just what it is, a bunch of guys' . . . kind of got a loose-knit club, but we haven't really organized anything yet. We talked about, but we're having a hard time finding anybody that wants to be the [leader] on it. [We want to] see if we can start promoting some snowmobil[ing] in the area. It may or may not go."

One resident noted that there is little in the way of organized team sports in the area, and for those opportunities that do exist, the type of competition is different than in most places. This could be taken as an indicator of a cultural orientation. For example:

"[People here] tend to stick to themselves, very much. . . . having lived in various parts of the world, I think that it is pretty outstanding here . . . how difficult it is to get people to work together in groups . . . In my life experience . . . [it is unique] to this area. I have always been interested in sports and everywhere else I've lived, I've played on sports teams . . . and when you play a sport . . . you have to have a team, and you have to have team work, and the goal of the team is to win, right? I mean, that's given. That's always been given, whenever I've played sports. But not here . . . You don't necessarily play to win, and you got to find out . . . how they plan to [play] . . . it's just a whole other game, it is not necessarily the game of basketball or softball or . . . volleyball, it's hard to describe . . . it's weird, definitely weird. Everybody is, maybe, a strong individualist or something. But team work is not a strong ethic."

It is important to note that formal organizations, whether they be sports-oriented or coalesced for other purposes, do not provide the basis for all or even most social interactions in the communities. Rather, those organizations provide a context for interactions based upon particular sets of shared interests and orientations. As in other small rural communities in the region, much of the ongoing social interaction in the western Sanders County communities take place where people meet in the course of their day-to-day activities. In addition to particular workplaces (and, of course, people's homes), these include the stores, post offices, restaurants, and the like in the area. The mix of such public places varies from community to community. For example, in Heron the community center is a major draw for public events and hence, social interaction. In Noxon, the restaurants are a draw for groups of people to socialize. Reportedly,

socializing at the individual restaurants in Noxon tends to vary with the politics of the owners; as is common in other small towns, decisions about patronizing a particular business is not divorced from the knowledge of who the owners are, and trading at a particular location is sometimes viewed as supporting points of view or showing support for individuals. This is not always the case, however. For example, although a number of people interviewed commented on Trout Creek's seeming inability to support a restaurant over time, while at the same time believing that a restaurant would be a desirable asset/positive quality of life benefit for residents. This seeming inconsistency may be simply be related to a too-small year-round customer base of people who value eating out frequently enough to support such a business. At the time of field interviews, Trout Creek did have a restaurant after approximately a year of not having one; thus the restaurant which was reported to have opened and closed a number of times in the past, was again a place for public social interaction. Bars also provide an arena for ongoing social interaction in Noxon and Trout Creek, but these, of course, do not draw equally from all segments of the community on a regular basis.

Community Integration and Social Divisions

As noted in many places in this chapter, there are forces and values that serve to both integrate and divide local communities. Some of these are highlighted in this subsection.

Schools

In many rural communities throughout the West, a school is seen as a cornerstone of a community, and where a school closes, as in the case of Heron, there is considerable importance attached to the event. According to interviews, "there was a school in Heron until six or seven years ago. The school buildings are now a community center. The community lost a 'center point' when it lost the school." In general, this centrality of the school is recognized for all of the communities. One lifetime resident expressed this sentiment as follows:

"Probably the thing that really draws the people together are the schools. And the schools probably are the focal point in each community, you know, for . . . athletics and [other] functions. And then the schools are used as gathering places. The school boards make it open and all of them have an area where they can have dinners and everything and these are - - you know, it's about the only thing available. You don't have too many Masonic lodges and places where there's places for activities."

There are two high schools between the four western Sanders County study communities. These two schools are located in Noxon and Thompson Falls, and in these communities students can attend school in their home town from kindergarten through high school graduation. Heron students attend school in Noxon. In Trout Creek, there is a local school that runs through the eighth grade, and for high school, students go either to Noxon or Thompson Falls. According to residents, Trout Creek students are "pretty evenly split between the two" with a number of factors deciding which school the students will attend. Attendance decisions are not based strictly along geographic lines, with the schools reportedly being quite receptive to the desires of parents. Among other

factors mentioned by residents in the decision making process, one resident noted the following:

"Noxon tends to have the better basketball team, so that draws some kids. Thompson Falls has a football team, and they have some more things, like language programs [that Noxon does not] . . . If a kid gets in trouble in one school, he can go to the other. Some kids [go] back and forth between the schools [if they experience trouble]."

Festivals, Community Events, and the Expression of Community Identity

In Trout Creek, the annual Huckleberry Festival held in August is central community event and a source of considerable civic pride. As noted on a prominent sign on Highway 200, Trout Creek has been officially proclaimed the "Huckleberry Capital of Montana." The three day festival includes a fire department pancake breakfast each day, a parade, a logger contest, food booths, and a softball tournament that draws competition from as far away as Idaho and Washington. The festival is sponsored by the Trout Creek Community Improvement Association which funds various community projects and "even . . . a small scholarship." According to one committee member, the festival draws approximately equal numbers of residents and individuals from outside the area (both from other parts of Montana and from other states). During the festival, "every motel in the area, every campground, everything is filled." According to one knowledgeable individual, "it has been estimated between 2,000 and 3,000 people hit it in those three days . . . people who only come out of the woods' once in awhile come out for it, that's the big local thing."

In order to generate interest (and commerce) in the winter, in the past few years there has been a "Winterfest" held in Trout Creek. It is on a much smaller scale than the summer Huckleberry Festival. According to one long-time resident, while "it has not been a big success so far," it enjoys support as an activity during a time of the year when not much else in the way of community involvement is taking place. Included in the activities are a snowmobile "poker run" than some hope will help promote the tourism potential of snowmobiling in the area. While the festival is relatively small at present, the Forest Service, among others, does participate and one interviewee noted that "it's getting a little bigger every year." Other activities include the following:

"sculpture contest, tug-of-war, . . . a pie-eating contest, and what not. It's just little silly stuff that lasts a couple days. And [a purpose of the event is to] try to get people to come in from outside the community to leave a few bucks to tide things over [during the slow winter months]."

In the words of one business owner, the Winterfest is more personally enjoyable than the Huckleberry Festival:

"[the Winterfest is] more fun for us, because we don't have to work so hard [as we do for the Huckleberry Festival]. We double our business that weekend, it is almost more than we can stand. But the Winterfest is more like just the community getting together . . . we have a light parade and it's

fun, cause the kids . . . dress in lights, and we shut down traffic and we just all walk down the highway. And then we have like snow sculpturing and snowball throws and pie eating contests and . . . it's just fun stuff, not money making really except the . . . food . . . it's not a big thing, it's just a community thing. It's fun."

In addition to festivals, other community events provide opportunity for expressions of community identity. For example, both Noxon and Heron host parades on the 4th of July holiday. The two parades are timed such that, if so desired, individuals and organizations can participate in both. The Forest Service is one of the participants that takes advantage of this opportunity. Hosted in Trout Creek, "Shakespeare in the Park" is another popular community event.

Sports

As noted earlier, the high school basketball teams in the area are a source of local identity, and games are popular community events which attract interest and fans from nearly all segments of the communities. The place these teams play in the fabric of community life is similar to that seen in other rural communities. During the winter, high school basketball games are the central recurring events that bring the community together. Whereas there are other specific contexts in which wide segments of the community come together, such as annual festivals, parades, and the like, basketball provides a multiple-occasion series of events in which people take pride and display community spirit. In the words of one resident, speaking of important community events, "and then of course the high school boys basketball. Life wouldn't be the same without it, and . . . the season just began so we're all on cloud nine' at the moment."

Community Differences

While being tied in a number of ways to the smaller communities in the area, Thompson Falls is unique among the study communities in several ways. Previously stated was Thompson Fall's position as the county seat and base for several different service and social organizations that draw members from the smaller communities. An additional aspect of Thompson Falls that was noted in interviews is its relative difficulty in staging community events. Thompson Fall's annual Christmas Bazaar, which draws visitors from within as well as outside the county, is an exception. Explaining the noted difference between Thompson Falls and the other study communities, a resident of one of the smaller study communities said:

"Thompson Falls has a terrible time when it comes to community events . . . They can't pull together festivals . . . They struggle and they try. [Commenting on the differences between communities:] Thompson Falls does not have the 'small community pitch-in' [and share-the-work] attitude like the communities here [Trout Creek, Noxon, Heron] . . . They have a commercial district, some industry, but they do not have community events . . . like the smaller communities have."

An additional difference between study communities is that Thompson Falls, perhaps because of its larger size relative to the other study communities, has a number of organizations that draw primarily from the community itself. For example, there is a "little theater group" in Thompson Falls that, according to information from several interviews, is a success and something that people take pride in. This group has apparently drawn on Thompson Falls-based service organizations "to help out with things" in the past, and this type of immediate access to other community groups is characteristic of Thompson Falls, but not the other communities.

6.2 Major Issues and Concerns About the Present and Future

6.2.1 Economic Present and Future

While interview data would indicate that there is interest in non-timber related economic activity in the area, and non-extractive uses of the National Forest, there is still strong sentiment that the long-term economic well-being of the western Sanders County communities will remain dependent upon the timber industry for the foreseeable future. While the service industries are seen as having growth potential, many see its future as limited, both in terms of the number of jobs it could support and the level of income it could provide. The following statement by a long-term resident is representative of this widespread view:

"There's a lot of people -- I wouldn't say a lot of people -- but there's a small group of people who would like to see all logging stopped, like to see the forest left solely for recreational use, for wildlife, visual opportunities. I personally feel that we need that timber economy, and I think that we're just fooling ourselves to think that we can exist on a service economy. I just don't see that happening. I think you can philosophize about the state of the national economy, and I think part of it is the federal government has pumped so much money into the economy through the borrowing that they do to keep it going. I think we need basic industry . . . I think basic industry is still important in this age. I think timber and a lot of the basic industries -- keep renewing the resource continually. I think that there can be a balance reached where we can continue to harvest timber and still preserve the environment. That's what I would like to see the forest plan come up with. I think that there's too much of a push to swing the pendulum way the other way, and then almost eliminate timber harvesting . . . They talk about competing uses, but -- and I think that's all well and good -- but I think they want to put timber way down [at the bottom], and elevate all these others [uses]. In aggregate, [the other uses] would be much greater than timber, and I don't think that's necessarily the way it should be. "

An opposing point of view on the long term value of service sector jobs was offered by another long term resident:

"One of the county commissioners . . . she said that she really didn't like tourism, it just generated minimum wage jobs. Well, I think if you talked to

anybody that operated a business in . . . Sanders County here for the last twenty years, that's what they've been working for, if they've been lucky. Some years . . . we made a dollar an hour [or so when you figured it all out]. But . . . [tourism and other service industries] also bring other people in. They come here [once], and then they come back in the summer with their families and [this generates additional revenue for the area]."

One life-long area resident noted that the changes in the local industrial base have been both related to and simultaneously occurring with population change:

"A lot people living up here . . . they think they're independent, that they have that ability and that opportunity, but they shoot themselves in the foot in many ways in that they drive a lot of industry away. You see less and less [industry] . . . now we're getting in a bunch of environmentalists that are moving up here just simply to live, and most of them have money from other income, and so they kind of come up here and live and do their thing and criticize the Forest Service and everybody else for everything we do . . . the subdivisions, that is the biggest change in everything . . . just the fact [that] there's just more people. I just can't believe the amount of people everyday in this town. And I don't know what they're doing."

As for the role of the Forest Service in stimulating the local economy, some residents see limits on what can be done. The following comment expressed by one resident is consistent with the opinions of a number of people interviewed:

"I'm not sure there's a whole lot they can do. I know the Forest Service has got some programs where they try to stimulate rural economies, but you know, I'd like to see some examples of when it really worked. I'm not sure their are [any]. Around here they've spent money on, doing various things, primarily improving boat launching sites and trying to go at it from the recreation side. To try to make more opportunities for people . . . Well that seemed to be a real obvious way to spend the money, to put it into the boat launching sites. They've done a real good job . . . but whether or not that's actually contributed to the economy, I don't know. You might [attract] people, as they're passing through, to say lets get out in the boat and go out on the reservoir.' But are you willing to spend a bunch of dollars so we can all say boy, that really made a difference.' I don't think it's there. I'm not sure the government has any business trying to meddle with the economy. On the other hand, you know their management of the timber program, that had a direct impact on the economy. That is one way to look at it. I think that's good, but I think on the other hand, I don't think they're able to do an awful lot in a service economy. I just don't think it's going to happen."

6.2.2 Population Changes

There are a number of salient issues in the communities that have to do with the impact of growth. Many of these, including land use issues, are developed elsewhere. The size

and nature of the population change, however, is causing its own concerns. According to one long-time resident, there are some local worries about how people moving in may be changing the cultural context of the area by bringing problems from other areas. However, the relationship between social problems and new people moving in is recognized to not be straightforward -- interviewees did recognize that some negative changes are likely to be associated with larger cultural changes or "the changing times." In the words of one resident:

"I feel that we're getting a little more vandalism. We were just talking about [the fact that] there wasn't a lot of kids moving in, yet I sense that we are seeing some impact in, maybe, youth with some idle time. I don't know how that relates to everything, because like I say, the school populations haven't grown significantly at all. I think that's a concern. I think there's concern about drugs in the high school, and I don't know if that's related to people moving in either."

Other respondents discussed how there is a built-in degree of turnover among new residents based on the economic realities of the area. One lifetime resident stated:

"Well, a lot of them are never going to make it here, and the novelty of owning a piece of Montana' is going to wear off -- plus the fact that [the prices of] things are astronomical. You pay \$40,000 or \$50,000 for 20 acres and then you put in your well -- that's another \$15-16,000. And then your septic tank, and you build your house . . . I think a lot of them . . . thought they were going to get in maybe for a \$100,000 or \$150,000, [but] it's going to be a lot more than they ever anticipated. A lot of them [will be] winter kill,' you know, they really never had a tough winter for several years, and they come up here and it's really kind of pleasant and they enjoy skiing and snowmobiling, and then a lot of them will go south for the winter. We've had this happen before, maybe not to this extent. But, you know, we're getting more and more people [and that] puts the demand on all property, especially in an area where it's very desirable. And this is a desirable valley to live in."

Another long-time resident noted other subtle (and not-so-subtle) changes that have occurred as a result of the population of the area increasing:

"It's been a drain on resources, for one thing, like the volunteer fire department . . . I mean, they are protecting so many more people than they ever had to before. And, you know, we used to be able to go out on the lake and not even see anybody, and now you have to wait to dock your boat. And . . . the little jet skis just drive you crazy. And . . . your fishing spots . . . [have people there]. And so, I don't know, as a business person you would probably look at it in a positive way, but as someone who lives here [and is a business person], it's not all positive . . ."

One local business person noted that although the influx of population could change the area for the worse, the local reaction to the influx would make a considerable difference to the outcome of the process:

"[In] this part of Montana I think probably the greatest problem we got is what's coming, and that's people. And it's like the snow melting in spring. It's going to come down that creek. Now you can try to build a dam and stop it, or you can put a waterwheel in it and see how you can [use it] . . . [if you] build a dam, [it] is probably going to get washed out, [but if] you put the waterwheel in there . . . you're going to get some [return]."

6.2.3 Infrastructure Concerns

As noted in several other places, there is considerable local concern over water and waste issues. These have been the focus of some local activism, with people taking stands on what they perceive as quality of life issues. For example, one resident explained:

". . . we formed an alliance with the tenants right here in two drainages that we live in. We've watched this growth take place and Sanders County never really enforced any rules or regulations on septic tanks or wells, or, you know, regulations and rules that really the state of Montana has adopted, but they haven't enforced. And now I think the people who live here and who have lived here really appreciate what they have . . . they're getting together and they're going to see that some of the rules and regulations are enforced, I mean, this is a community that does not like rules and regulations. But it, you know, to preserve our water quality and our quality of life . . . those of us who still live here are the ones that are going to have to enforce it, because our commissioners, a lot of them are new, the haven't spent a whole lot of time here and they come in and they are politically active, and so they get involved in come of our politics and really, like I said, the very thing that attracts and draws them to this area . . . they tend to destroy or want to change. But . . . it's very difficult to organize anything in this community."

Roads are another area of concern regarding infrastructure, particularly issues involving the equity of resource distribution. Some residents voice the opinion that the area bears a larger share of the impacts of some activities and shares a lesser portion of the benefits:

"[W]hat's really strange about here in Montana is the fact that very little of the money ever stays . . . I mean, this timber that we see growing here and everything, sure we use a little of it, [but that is] a very small part of it, and [of] the wealth and everything that comes from it, we see very little of it here . . . we can't even hardly get the damn county [to come] through [with] the funds that we get from this impact . . . the Forest Service receipts -- we can't even get them to keep our roads improved or even in good condition. The money comes off the Forest, it goes in county

treasury, and those of us that have to live out here [don't see it] . . . if you looked at all the timber that's been harvested in this county, I think, more comes out of this drainage than any other place, and we got one of the worst damn roads in the county. It's some problems [like this] we try to get people to understand, and I don't know, within the law, if the can ever control it -- I know the Forest Service . . . they give the county commissioners a check, but then it's spent all over the county, it really isn't spent where the impact [is felt] . . . I told . . . our ranger down here, this year I'm going to get a record of all the receipts of the timber that's come out of here this year and find out actually how much money has been harvested in this drainage and by God, we're going to hold them to keep up the roads and everything in here, because that was the intent of the law. Spend the money where the impact is."

6.2.4 Environmental Quality

Local concern over environmental quality is by no means limited to Forest Service-managed lands. While population density of this area is relatively low when looked at in terms of the total county land mass, the population that is present is constrained to a degree in its distribution by the lack of availability of private land in the area. This, along with a lack of environmental quality regulations, has lead to localized environmental quality problems.

As an environmental issue, water quality has become a concern especially with continued private development within particular drainages. There is, however, no County entity such as a planning and zoning board that could address these issues, nor is there desire to create such a body sufficient to overcome other reasons for opposing its creation (including a general dislike for governmental regulation). In at least one case, the concern over declining water quality in the face of continued development has lead to the coalescence of a group, the Beaver Creek Alliance, for the purpose of addressing this issue. This group also provides a forum for the discussing other subdivision and development issues in the area.

6.2.5 Perspectives about the Changing Nature of Community

Timber

Despite significant changes in recent years, timber is still seen as the backbone of the local economy. The words of one particularly knowledgeable local resident express this well:

"I think that the timber industry, and related occupations, related industry, has got to be the biggest element of the economy. By far. Then I think you could group a large part of the economy as service related -- the stores, the motels, things like that. I don't believe there's any other manufacturing [except for a] . . . a small manufacturing plant up Prospect Creek called [company name]. They produce antimony oxide, which is a catalyst and a chemical used in various other manufacturing processes. But you know, we're sitting in this valley, within 30 miles of three major lumber mills and another smaller one. [There are] only a few large logging firms left, but there's a lot of individuals -- one and two man firms, three and four man firms --

that make a living in the area, either skidding, timber falling, hauling, things like that. I think by far, logging and milling are [still] the biggest element of the economy."

The timber industry has been affected by the high number of people moving into the area for a variety of reasons. For example, one long-time resident offered the opinion that the land sales that have accompanied this movement have had an impact on the local timber industry:

"I actually think [elements of the local timber industry are] growing a little bit. But more so because we had a lot of people moving in, and they bought land that has timber on it, so they are converting that timber asset to cash. Obviously the level of National Forest timber sales has declined greatly, but . . . if you look at the stockpiles in the mills themselves, there's a lot of timber there."

The changing nature of Forest Service timber sales has changed the nature of the community as seen from the perspective of small logging operations. In the words of one resident:

"[T]hey have a responsibility, because of [the local predominance of Forest Service] land, to local communities [to] make smaller sales. You see, when I first came here they did have lots of independent little loggers, and in the last twenty years I've seen it [dwindle] and the little guy . . . either . . . went to work for the bigger survivors [or] didn't work at all . . . then it seemed like [there were only] big, big sales [that go to outside bidders] . . . I've gone done there and [said] 'hey, make smaller sales. Put some local people to work.' If they're working, they're not on welfare, they're not having problems in their home with their families because they are not working and stuff like that . . . So I've been saying, 'Hey your scale is not in keeping with the economy of the community' . . . They are supposed to take into account the economics of the community."

Interview data also suggests that the nature of the mills in the area is changing, in terms of employment and products. According to one interviewee:

"The employment [in the timber industry] is probably declining somewhat because you're modernizing. You take the [named] mill . . . he's just completing a major modification . . . It's going to cut his number of employees down. He's going to be more efficient and be able to produce more products from more varied materials. The biggest employer which is the [named] mill, just right outside of [Thompson Falls], they're just completing a major remodeling . . ."

A number of people pointed out, however, that timber as an industry is changing and declining in the area.

"Well, traditionally there has been a heavy emphasis on wood products and harvesting. And that's changing here as it is everywhere as the

industry has changed and the number of employees per unit harvested and processed has gone down. Our economy is really . . . in transition . . . like a lot of them are, to more of a service economy. We have a lot of retirees, we have a lot of people moving in here who in some fashion have a check coming in, sort of independent of our local economy . . . the percentage of timber jobs has really gone down and that I think the community is changing as a result of that."

One common view expressed during interviews was that, although the role of timber in the overall economy was declining, timber-related employment is at present fairly steady locally, though at levels much reduced from earlier times. An example of this viewpoint follows:

"Oh, I think it's definitely changing. Economically, the area to me seems to be moderately stable, but [is] not always [centered] on the same thing . . . timber production has somewhat dropped, although locally on this district, I don't know if you could say it has dropped a whole lot [very recently] and then with the Forest Service production of timber might have dropped on the Kootenai. You know there is a lot of private logging around there, that has made up for that [drop of Forest Service production] I think you could say. So the timber industry probably is fairly steady right here locally, I think at the moment."

Environmental

During interviews, there were opinions expressed regarding the regional distribution of viewpoints on the environmental issues involved in Forest Service management. In the words of one long-time resident of Thompson Falls:

"I think there you get different opinions from different people. Probably the biggest environmentalists are on the west end [of Sanders County]. I think they're real critical of the Forest Service. Around here [the Thompson Falls area], where people have more jobs and more work, they're not as concerned, so I think they're more accepting of the management the Forest Service provides. I'd say in general the majority of the people think they do a good job, [or] an adequate job at least."

There is some perspective by residents that local environmental groups have been successful in pursuing their agenda precisely because of their activism. For example:

"I think in every community, and in fact, in every society, there's the real vocal groups . . . The timber industry has never been one to really stand up for what they want. They've just been the ones that went to work and went home at night. They didn't attend a lot of public meetings, they didn't stand up and say, "well we think you ought to . . . " On the other hand, when the environmental movement got going, environmental groups . . . were the ones that would stand up and they would go to every meeting, and they would protest everything. They would write letters, they would talk to people. I think that they have gotten more their way than the timber

industry has gotten theirs. [Management] was weighted in favor of the timber industry to start with [but things have changed]. I guess they [the timber industry] didn't know things would go against them this much.

On the other hand, many people felt that the differences seen between environmentally-oriented groups and other organizations were a lot less contentious locally than in other areas. According to one individual:

"There are some unifying elements here, there really are. And I think . . . the churches are a big thing. There's a Huckleberry Festival here that is unifying. I think . . . Libby, for example, to me is a community that is really polarized and there is a lot of sort of antagonism -- the pro-timber and the pro-conservation is a sort of us or them' kind of a thing, and [features] name calling. And so that's really never been an issue here, at all. I've been pretty active in the conservation movement on and off and you know never had a hassle at all, I've always felt . . . liked and respected by everybody. And I think that's true all the way around. So, I think our community has really, even though there is differences, there's sort of a sense of shared purpose here."

One distinction made by some local residents is between the terms "environmentalist" and "conservationist." The latter term is preferred by a number of people who wish to stress that while they may have viewpoints that are not as in favor of some types of extractive development, at least at the levels of some other interests, they do not wish to be tarred with the "preservationist" brush that is sometimes associated with environmentalism.

Business

As noted earlier, there is strong local opinion that the primary local economy remains strongly dependent upon the timber industry. Other types of businesses in the area are noted elsewhere, with, by far, the greatest concentration of local businesses being found in Thompson Falls. In looking at the changes in local businesses as a result of the recent population increases, those interviewed tended to downplay their impacts in terms of bringing businesses to the area. In the words of one long-time resident:

"Although I think they [the new residents], for the most part, have mobility, so they can travel to Missoula, or Spokane, or Sandpoint when they need specialty items. They have an impact though on [local] grocery shopping, hardware stores, maybe some gift shops, gas stations, things like that. Not a big impact on the economy, but they're bringing dollars in, and the dollars are circulating."

Taxes are also often noted as a local issue, both for businesses and private individuals. According to one resident:

"[T]axes are always high on the list of topics. That is probably true nationwide, I suppose in any community you go in. Around here it is more on a county level than a national level . . . this is probably where the seed of

conflict within the county comes from . . . politically . . . their own court house and their own commissioners and things there. So that is always a central topic -- the commissioners and property taxes and . . . everything that revolves around county politics. Stemming from that probably are school issues: the way our schools are run and you know just that whole ball of wax there, drugs in school and . . . teacher conflicts and administration . . . all that kind of stuff."

"Old-timers" and "Newcomers"

The influx of population is an important local issue for a number of people interviewed. Many of those interviewed had, at some point in their lives, moved to the area, and they recognize the dilemma of at once not wanting the nature of the place they moved to changed, while they themselves are part of the change process. In the words of one resident,

"I think one other [big issue] is this influx of population. You get both sides of that though, because some people would like to shut the door after they come in, but they also don't want [restrictions, they in effect say] "Don't tell me what to do." One the one hand, they might support restrictions on zoning type things, but [only] as long as they don't apply to them."

One person noted that published population figures are consistent with the notion that the local population is growing quickly:

"In fact, [in the local paper there was] story this week that Sanders County, they had released a population estimate for 1994, and we grew 12.3 percent, or 1,064 people since 1990. That was the sixth highest rate of growth in the state. That's all got to be attributed to people that have discovered the area, bought property, and moved in, because the populations of the schools don't seem to change much."

Several people interviewed made note of differences in orientation between people who arrived in the area a generation or so ago, versus more recent arrivals. One individual noted:

"You know, that original group of people that are homestead orientated, you grew gardens, you made meat. Fishing . . . and hunting . . . was all based on subsistence. The use of the forest wood was based on subsistence. Use of minerals was based on subsistence. Now we find that profile changing with people stopping here because it was the most beautiful place they saw."

One long time resident noted that there have been times of similar growth in the past. He stated:

"[W]e are not bumping elbows with people constantly, but it's becoming noticeable . . . It seems like it goes through cycles. Every seven years there is a rush of Californians and out-of-area people. More than half the

people here were not born here. I'm an import. I wasn't born here. My wife . . . was born and raised here. And there is a big difference in the local born-and-raised-here attitudes [compared] to the new people coming in. The new people are a little bit more flexible. The older ones that were born and raised here are much more set in their ways and they have seen . . . more changes over a period of time, which they resent in a lot of situations. Because they can't go ride up the road . . . with a truck anymore . . . That creates resentment towards the Forest Service, for one, because they gated the road, and the other is all these assholes that are moving in here and they've got no business being here' as far as they are concerned. So the pressure is increasing, because we are getting more and more people in here. But this area has a way of weeding [the new arrivals] out. More than half of them that come here cannot survive financially and they leave. The ones that move here and are retired and have an income they are not hurting things too much. It's Ma and Pa,' they'll take a little hike up to a lake, or something like that, and catch a few fish, and you don't see them too much. It's the younger ones who think they are going to move in here and live off the land' and be happy ever after' . . . That's where you get into your problems, because they end up, in a lot of cases, losing everything they came with and leaving here broke with real bad attitudes. But, it's a way of life here. It's how it is."

One resident of Heron described a distinction between very long-term residents and others in the community:

"[T]here's almost two components of the community . . . there's a large number of people here who born and raised here, or have lived here for a very, very long time. A large number of them. And they are very closely knit. And then [there are] the people who have come into the community who, some of them have really participated in activities, and others who've kind of stayed off to themselves."

One relatively-recent arrival described the process locating to the area and the role the National Forest played in that consideration:

"We had looked all throughout the western United States, really all the United States, and we decided on either Colorado, Montana or northern Idaho. And we liked the fact that the Heron area is surrounded by National Forest everywhere. [Another draw was the proximity of] the Wilderness area, which we really liked, because we use that quite a bit, because we don't have to run across motorcycles and other people that much. [Another factor was the low percentage] of private land . . . the rest is all either National Forest, or BLM or something, so that you know that road [construction] factors . . . or housing [or other development is] not going to be that tremendous."

In addition to general trends of individuals moving into the area, there have also been influxes of whole groups into the communities. When asked about whether this has changed the nature of the communities, one person responded:

"You know it has. And the people . . . sometimes I really wonder, because [of] what migrations are kind of all about. I think I came here 22 years ago and it was when the people were coming, you know, it was the 'back to the land' movement, call them old hippies. And now, the new people are, it's almost like a different [set of] refugees. We've got a lot of new churches and . . . whole organized groups moving in. Heron is a particular area for that kind of [thing] -- you know, whole groups of people moved in from Florida related to a church. There's another church over here that nobody really knows what denomination they are yet. We've got quite an influx . . ."

One relatively distinct segment of the incoming population, at least as characterized during the interviews, is retirees. In the words of one resident, "retirees have discovered the area." The migration of retirees was commonly noted in the interviews, but resulted in the expression of few concerns. According to one resident, "they build nice homes . . . they are not very involved in the community." The potential political clout of retirees, and the possibility that this clout may be exercised in a manner contrary to other groups of residents, such as on school bond issues, has not yet become a local issue (although one long-time resident did mention the "anti-tax" orientation of some new residents as the reason behind the failure of the levy that in turn resulted in the closing of the Heron school). The economic impact of retirees, according to multiple interviews, is felt in various ways. While it was acknowledged that "they bring money into the area," (or as one resident put it, "they draw their paycheck at their mailbox") there were also opinions expressed that "they require services" beyond what has typically been provided in the past. "Bringing money into the area" is often viewed as a double-edged sword from the local perspective in that it is, in general, good for the economy, but this movement has been a part of the context that has resulted in higher real estate prices and other problems associated with increased development. Of course, higher real estate prices are also viewed with some ambivalence. On the one hand, land owners who wish to sell are in a position to derive considerable income from such sales. On the other hand, for those who do not wish to sell, increased prices mean increased assessed value, which means increased taxes. As noted elsewhere, this is perceived to be a significant problem locally, and one that has contributed to secondary changes in the local economy, including the subdivision of local farms, etc.

As for measures of "new" money being brought into the area, one interviewee noted information from the local bank in Thompson Falls that appeared in the local paper:

"The bank statement shows that the bank is growing real rapidly. That's a result of the people bringing their savings and their checking accounts with them [when they move to this area]. They have social security and retirement income that goes into that bank, which causes their -- I think they call it their 'footing' -- to go up all the time. There's like \$43 million this

month. I bet you six years ago it was down in the 20's. So . . . they've got a lot of growth."

This same individual stated, however, that in terms of the money being brought to the area, "overall, I don't see it as real impact." Instead, he noted, as did many other individuals, that there was more concern over growth issues per se:

"There's more talk about land use issues. Right now we don't have a planning board. We don't have planning in any of the cities or the county, so that discussion is constantly surfacing: [people are asking] "Do we need that kind of thing." I think the majority of the people would favor planning, but I'm not personally convinced they know what they're talking about. From the standpoint that . . . they think that if they have planning they can tell their neighbor what he can and can't do . . . [then they are mistaken, because] that's not true. They need enact some kind of land use controls to do that, and I don't think that would ever pass."

One obvious segment of the economy that is experiencing an impact from the influx of new residents to the area is the construction industry. According to one resident, "the home construction people are tied up for . . . years with contracts right now, building homes [for retirees]." Another person added:

The construction trade has just been incredible around here . . . Ten years ago there were a couple of contractors that stayed busy year round, and the other ones were very seasonal. I would imagine that there are at least six contractors now that stay busy year round. They might have a little slump in the winter months, but certainly not much.

6.3 Public Assessment of The KNF and Its Natural Resources

As developed throughout this section, there are a variety of worldviews regarding appropriate forest management strategies, and these, in turn, influence public assessments of the Kootenai National Forest and its resources. For some local residents, the National Forest is akin to a farm to be planted and harvested on a regular basis. For others, "preservation" is a more desired goal. A third element locally is the "conservationist" viewpoint that espouses continued use extractive use of the Forest with an emphasis on sustainability and maintenance of environmental quality, particularly water quality.

6.3.1 Sentiments About the Natural Resources of the Kootenai National Forest

Sentiments about the Kootenai National Forest's natural resources are based on their appearance, intrinsic value, importance as a wildlife habitat and other factors. These types of sentiments are briefly discussed in this section.

Appearance

The perception of the natural surroundings are noted throughout discussions with residents to be a centerpiece of the quality of life in the area, thus the appearance of the

Kootenai National Forest is something of concern to local residents. In part, the appearance issue ties in with worldviews regarding the forest as a farm or a preserve. In the words of one long-time resident:

"Well, think a minute -- it's just like any other crop. There's nothing that looks more devastated if you go back across South Dakota, [or] Iowa, in the fall of the year, and see [a] farm field after it's been picked . . . [but the] snows . . . cover it up, and [in] spring they go up and plant it, and it's grain again. Here, you don't do that. It's a several year process. When it starts . . . [it] looks terrible . . . When you point out to [people who make negative comments on appearance], 'hey, that surrounding timber was all flat on the ground in 1910,' [they say] 'oh, well uh, uh, gee, it comes back that quick' -- yeah. But they've had this drummed into them that any harvest is bad, how it's just terrible to look at. I'm not going to argue with them, it's not pretty. But it's -- you look at a clear cut, you go out . . . three years later, they're planting trees, they're planting young growth, you walk into some of the stuff that they're calling 'old growth' and all just standing there waiting to die, there's nothing coming under it, there's nothing . . . for wildlife, most of it, there is no forage . . . The [old] clearcuts are where the berries are, where the new grass is, the young growth. And basically your biggest uncomplimentary remarks are made by people . . . [who] don't know what the hell they're looking at.

There are, however, a variety of views regarding the appropriateness of the managing the Forest for appearance values. This complex topic is developed in several different areas in this discussion about public sentiments about the Forest.

Valued Places and Their Meanings

When asked about particular valued places, most local respondents were reluctant to single out specific areas, preferring to attribute value to larger areas. A number of interviewees, however, mentioned the Ross Creek Cedars area as a place of particular value and high local use:

"For example, the Ross Creek Cedars area, which is a special management area of some kind, you know they paved the parking lot and they put up a wonderful interpretive series there."

A number of other valued places were mentioned, including a number of the high lakes. Some mention was made about the possibility of losing specific valued places (as opposed to quality of life in the general area or aspects of it) to resource development, but this was not frequently noted. One of the valued places that could become a source of conflict over development was summed up as follows:

"Up in Rock Creek there is a place called Rock Creek Meadows and it is just a stunning, stunning place. Huge meandering creek makes a meadow that's several hundred acres, five, six hundred acres, and big jagged peaks all around . . . sort of got a real high country' feel . . . it's about three miles from the road, and it's good fishing, and it's also right near where this [proposed] mine is going to happen. And that's a real conflict there."

Wildlife

Wildlife is highly valued by local residents, for a variety of reasons, including viewing, hunting, and simply being integral part of "the outdoors" that local residents feel is an

essential component to the quality of life in the area. This is not to say that there are not local divisions of opinion on the management of particular wildlife species.

At times, wildlife issues involve competing local use values. As developed elsewhere, there is a debate that revolves around restricting alternate uses of some lands in favor of predator species management, particularly the grizzly bear. Other times, interview data would indicate that predator transplants are simply incompatible with any other human use of the area. As an example, commenting on a grizzly bear transplant, one resident stated that:

"one of [the transplanted bears] moved over into Rock Creek, [and it] turned up dead here a couple years ago. I have no idea what killed it or neither does the Forest Service. But, my feeling is, somebody got rid of it. Plain and simple fact it was [in] a kid's recreation area. It was [an area that has] pretty good fishing, it was a short hike. And, a lot of time you'd see 10, 12, 14 year-old kids in there, in that same area camping over night. My personal feeling is, some parent was worried about that and probably got rid of it."

Other individuals offered the opinion that public interest in the issue died down when the bears were actually transplanted, as opposed to the period when the move was being discussed. According to one resident:

"I think, when the first grizzly bear recovery plan came out and there was a plan to transport bears into the Cabinet here, there was sort of a real negative knee jerk reaction. Again a lot of it was based on misinformation. And I think a lot of loggers had some legitimate concerns . . . boy, their contracts, if you read their contracts, it says if any bear is ever seen anywhere this contract is null and void, and you're out of there basically. But, I don't hear it [any more] as a big negative issue . . . now [that they] transplanted a few bears. The community has really . . . [responded] in a positive way. You know the bears have been named and people usually know where they are. And people identify where this bear now, sort of a . . . positive identification with the bears. Where before it was sort of like a abstract issue. All of a sudden it's how are they doing up there?' Where are they asleep now?' And I think that's been really positive and that's been a noted change in my experience."

There were also opinions expressed that attitudes toward predators result, at least in part, from different generations living in the area having different experiences with them over time. In the words of one resident:

"The transplanting of the grizzlies was a very, very -- it is still a very hot issue. [A friend of ours] apparently had some extremely bad experiences when they first settled in the valley. They live up in Heron. And as far as she is concerned the only good grizzly is a dead grizzly' . . . you hear a lot of that from your old homesteaders, more than you do from your younger [residents], and I think that it is because they probably dealt with them in a whole different [situation]. I mean, most of us haven't had to deal with grizzlies if you will. Black bears get into our garbage, and stuff like that . . . but there was never any danger involved in them."

In addition to wildlife, a number of other natural resources of the Kootenai National Forest are commonly valued and used by local residents. These are presented in individual discussions below about natural resources.

"It's Important That it is There"

In the words of one respondent, the National Forest is the local "piggy bank" on which the local communities rely. Other individuals spoke of how the forest fit with the local identity. The words of one man exemplifies this perception of connection between resident and the Forest:

"Oh it [the Kootenai National Forest] means a tremendous amount, there is no question there. I think, in some ways, that it is a safety valve for people. You know it's a place to go and to be. And I think a high number of people use the forest, you know for picking berries and hiking and for a place to go, and I think I'd say it's extremely important to people. And it's also sort of a, it's kind of a self image . . . that we live out here in the woods and we can take care of ourselves and we have a lot of wildlife around . . . I think a lot of [people's] prime identity in being part of the forest here."

6.3.2 Our National Forest: Public Assessment of the Idea of a "National Forest"

The balance between recognizing the "special relationship" of communities immediately adjacent to the Forest, versus managing the Forest for what is locally perceived to be an abstract national good, is a central issue in local views of forest management practices. This is a theme that runs throughout this general discussion of local communities. One individual noted the precedent for recognizing the particular relationship between adjacent communities and Forest resources:

"We feel that the receipts from this land, for instance timber sales, 25 percent of the receipts from these timber sales going for the roads and the schools in the counties from which they originate, that this is . . . a long standing acknowledgment that these forests from which these resources come, are located in a particular state, in a particular county, and that the receipts are rightly to be distributed -- the receipts and the benefits of these forest lands -- to the local communities and states from which they originated. If you forget that, or if you push that aside out of your consideration in making management plans and decisions, then you are going against an already established tradition which acknowledges the right of local state and forest-area counties to use the proceeds from these resources . . . [the issue is] the use of resources locally, versus having them tied up with some grandiose national reason being given for tying up and or wasting these resources."

This inherent tension between management for local and non-local use is often pervasive in those areas where there are conflicts over resources within the Forest, and particularly in the area of management planning. It is commonly held that there is a good deal of local cooperation on issues when compared with other areas of the Kootenai and beyond. In the words of one long term resident:

I think . . . that there's a lot more local cooperation or acknowledgment of the other fella's right to live, and make a living than there is, perhaps, when you jump from the local scene to the national scene. You get a

Congresswoman from the state of New York or Pennsylvania writing a letter which puts an abrupt halt to a timber sale on an area that she's never seen, under the direction of an agency whose head she can't even name. This sort of a thing is where I see great disagreement and disgruntlement among the total length and width of the country . . . Just speaking for the locals -- because if we don't speak who will -- we feel, somehow, a closer and a more vested interest in this land which is local to us. We don't really appreciate off-hand statements like 'well, it's federal land, everybody has a vote,' you know, [and] 'everybody has a vote in the use of this land.'"

6.3.3 Types of Uses

Commercial Harvesting and Extraction; Other Commercial Uses

Various uses of the Kootenai National Forest contribute to the economy and lifestyle in western Sanders County communities. Timber and mining are obvious commercial uses of the forest land, but residents use the Kootenai National Forest in many other commercial ways. Timber and mining are considered separately in this chapter; and other commercial uses are reviewed in this section.

Huckleberries

Huckleberries are harvested commercially in the western Sanders County portion of the Kootenai National Forest. According to interview data, current problems exist which would indicate a need to change management approaches to berry picking. One interviewee noted, however, that there are a few spots that are starting to "get hit hard" by commercial picking, and he further noted that there could be some conflict between berry resource utilization and proposed future use:

"Down here it [commercial picking] hits particularly [hard in the] . . . the Rock Creek area. I think a concern you will see coming along is that mine, [if] the proposed mine goes into effect, you know their plant is [going to be] right in the middle of the road into that [Forest] access, from two sides of the mountain their plants is going to cut off a whole area of access up to one of the prime picking areas."

While few people expressed the opinion that there were areas of overuse by berry pickers, some offered that the techniques employed by commercial pickers were not particularly good for the resource, that in their haste more damage was done to the plants that would otherwise be necessary to simply pick the berries. When asked specifically about whether there were local areas of the Forest that are showing signs of pressure from concentrated use, one resident replied:

"Yeah, a lot of your Huckleberry areas. Unfortunately you've got your [people] that go in there and just really destroy -- your commercial picker. [The Forest Service has] talked about actually starting to limit some of those areas, of not letting people up in. And you know, I think it would be very sad for your home canners not to be able to go up and pick berries,

because it is as much a part a life here as the pine trees growing. But, some of those areas are really being destroyed . . . those areas are getting an awful lot of traffic, cars, vehicle traffic . . . [such as] White Pine Creek Road. Those would be the ones that I personally know about, and I am sure there is more. You see an awful lot . . . of vehicles just don't go very slow up some of those -- those roads aren't made for highway driving and there are people who are very disrespectful of that . . . [you see plants that are] just yanked out . . . they just rip out the plants and everything. And that effects both the animals, the bear population because that is one of their biggest foods, one of there, and I would say the areas where the berries are the heaviest are taking the [brunt of it]. I didn't know until . . . a man that took me out to teach me about Huckleberries and . . . I'd ask him about some of the little colored flags, because I thought they were put there by the Forest Service, and what he told me was that . . . scouters or whatever go in ahead of time for the commercial pickers and mark where they see them going green . . . then the pickers know where to go in . . . So, you know, and it has become ugly in some areas now, I mean people threaten [each other] with guns and everything else, and that's scary when you start getting that element of greed in there . . . it is effecting the terrain and the animals."

Another interviewee also noted disputes between commercial pickers in the Forest, and added the challenges this brings to the Forest Service. In his words:

"Then [between some of] the commercial people there have been some altercations that ended up physical and [in] gun play. And what will be interesting to see is now the Forest Service is supposed to come down and [start] charging the commercial pickers . . . [for a] permit. It will be interesting to see that."

According to interview data, although Huckleberries are characterized as "big business" by some, even the largest operations do not provide exclusive income for their owners. Further, these operations require outside markets, which has ramifications for their marketing and expenses. Some individuals who are involved in commercial berry picking have questioned the recently implemented permit system, based on the fact that given the small scale of most local "commercial" operations, the distinction between commercial and "home use" is not all that clear when it comes time to enforce the permitting.

Other Plant Materials/Botanicals

One type of resource use that has seen recent development is that of "botanicals." There is one operation that is acknowledged as a leader in the local field, and an involved individual related the following description of the business:

"I started that out in 91 . . . I was a processor for yew bark . . . [from] which they get [a substance for treating] cancer . . . [for three years we] marketed everything we did to subcontractor to Bristol Meyers. . . . [but then they synthesized it]. We [then] got into different

products, for instance, this year we were selling tractor trailer loads of pine cones, red fir cones. We bought and sold over 8,000 pounds of Huckleberries. I did a small . . . program [with plant material] used as medicinal tea in cancer clinics outside of the country. And what we'll be doing this winter is researching and developing markets for mushrooms, other medicinals that we have in this area . . . Medicinals is what we are keying in on now, because we get a better return . . . and there is an enormous opportunity here for that. I've been educating myself as to what we have here. Researching the markets, researching and getting set up for processing of products and then present[ing] them to the retail market . . . It's intriguing, it's something new . . . it's fun . . . and it's something that never has been done in Northwestern Montana. It's on a very small scale . . . but [it is] not unorganized effort, [we're] coordinating with the Forest Service on harvest techniques and procedures . . . and they're learning too . . . I let them know what's happening, and we go out in the field and I show them . . . what we're doing . . . to the plant, and show them how we process the stuff . . . It's not a new industry by any means . . . [but in the developed markets] they are beginning to exhaust their resources on certain items. So, they're reaching out and pulling products out of Montana . . . We're in the process now of learning what is going to be a sustainable harvest . . . we are identifying [our harvest areas], marking them on maps, coordinating with the Forest Service so we can go back . . . and start to figure out . . . what kind of effects we are having on the resource. The last thing that we would ever want to do is wipe something out, because we cut our own throats that way . . . So, at this point it is relatively an untouched resource here, and we are taking it very slow as we go."

Mushrooms, whose use on other parts of the Kootenai is discussed in the Lincoln County chapter (chapter 5), are reportedly of little use consequence in Sanders County.

Outfitting/Guiding

Outfitting is frequently mentioned as one of the primary commercial uses of the Kootenai National Forest in the western Sanders County area. In addition, outfitter/guide training and outdoor education has recently expanded in the area and is now a reportedly successful local business unto itself. Outfitters' perceptions of the fit between their needs and existing, locally-applied Forest Service management policies vary widely. One outfitter who was displeased with Forest Service current management policies commented on the apparent local bias toward timber-oriented management, and the difference between logging and guiding in a long-term economic outlook.

"[The Forest Service,] they're so far out of tune with . . . recreational needs. The recreational needs of this land are going to be great. I could take a canyon, let's say like this out here . . . anybody could go in and make a million dollars worth of timber out of there in a sale and clearcut it and road it, [and] change the profile of it completely. And do that in a year, and it will take 150 years for that to correct itself. An outfitter can go in there and probably take a quarter million [dollars] of it out a year for the next 150 years to recreation. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out . . . what was the wisest use of that land. But . . . [the] Forest Service has . . . not adhered to their sustained use . . . policy. The multiple use policy is not a multiple use policy."

The nature of guiding, at least according to some operators, would appear to be

changing. According to one knowledgeable individual outside of the guiding industry itself, it could be that the client base is changing, but it would seem that the guides are serving an older population than in the past, and as a result the clients now prefer an easier type of hunt. An interview with one guide suggested that the guides who work the area are themselves getting older and tend toward less arduous hunts, which dovetails with the observation of how the needs of the client base has changed -- people have less time and energy for their hunts than in the past, so they are less likely to be interested in difficult hunts. Yet another guide attributed changes in guided hunting over the years to a noticeable deterioration in client's hunting skills as a result of these individuals spending so little time in the field during the course of their daily lives. He said:

"The cliental has changed dramatically over the last ten years. This is tough country to hunt. Very few of them want to work that hard for their game. Your average client now-a-days . . . he wants to fly in someplace, spend about three to six days, kill what he went for, and get the hell out of there as fast as he can . . . most of them are not willing to put forth the effort to work that hard for it. And the skills of the hunters are diminishing from year to year, dramatically. And the reason for this is because the people now-a-days that can afford to do those type of trips, they're not out in the woods hunting enough to keep their shooting skills and . . . [other] skills up to par. They are behind a desk running a business all the time. At the last minute they throw their gear together, they jump on a plane, and they run out here. It's our job to make up for their shortcomings, which is increasingly becoming more and more difficult because . . . the best guide in the world . . . can only do so much, we're not going to shoot the game for them. You can get them in there and you can get them the shots, the rest of it is up to them. That is where we run into problems . . . But society is changing, there aren't that many tough old mountain men left in the United States. What you deal with is business people that in their own world . . . they're probably . . . ruthless at times, and can make all kinds of head shots' . . . in their [own] situations. But they are out of their element here. And they still want to come, they want to do it and they're willing to pay us to take them out. But, it is making guiding . . . more difficult all the time."

Outfitters do, at times, form a relatively cohesive group that exerts some influence in the area. According to one knowledgeable individual, guides do "coalesce for specific issues . . . otherwise they do not work [well] together." Outfitters can and sometimes do bring additional clout to bear on specific issues through the state outfitters and guides association.

One issue mentioned a number of times by outfitters was the perception that they represent on the local level the interests of non-local Forest users. Because the outfitters are in contact with a non-local client base, they are often involved with articulating what they believe to be the interests of these non-local users. Several mentioned that they felt that non-local users had less of a voice in management

decisions than they should otherwise have, given the disproportional amount of money they had to spend to access the national resource in comparison to local users. This, in a sense, is a "flip side" to the argument that local users should receive extra consideration in the allocative process based on needs derived from proximity.

Some outfitters noted changes, independent of Forest Service actions, that were occurring and reportedly making it progressively more difficult for the guiding/outfitter industry. For example, one outfitter explained:

"we have too many outfitters in the state competing for a limited number of [state] licenses. The outfitters go out, they promote the state of Montana at their own time and expense, and then a lot of our licenses are on a computerized drawing now. So even if you go out and market and sell the hunt, that doesn't mean that that guy is going to get a license and you're going to be able to do the hunt . . . in the last two years, some [outfitters] have been devastated by their clients not getting the licenses. And . . . there is a heck of a lot of overhead in it if you're running it right. And through the 80s I would run 60 to 80 hunters a year. And I made a living off of it and you know kept a roof over our heads and all that. But, it progressively got tougher and tougher to show a profit . . . [now] I try to do a very high quality service to a limited number of individuals . . . The hunting competition is increasing too, and it's not so much from nonresidents, it's from residents. We've got more and more people moving into the state, living here, and every year there is a noticeable increase in the amount of resident pressure here. The nonresidents are limited, and will always be, due to licensing number limitations. But, the situation has developed and we're getting more pressure and . . . the outfitting here has never been too much of a problem as far as competition amongst ourselves. Some animals like mountain lion is pretty competitive hunting, but the rest of it -- there is enough hunting to where everybody can do their thing."

A management issue discussed in interviews was effort limitation. A common perception was that Forest Service implementation of policies to limit effort was late in coming. In the words of one long-time outfitter:

"There have been times where I have felt that the Forest Service has made some really lousy decisions regarding outfitting policies here. But, in the long run things have worked out relatively well. The only thing I could say about the Forest Service was they never stopped the growth here when they should of. There is a policy now on the Kootenai Forest that there will be no new outfitter permits issued. If an outfitter wants to get in here now he has to buy out an existing situation. The Forest Service never made that move until all us outfitters got together and went to them and formally put it in writing, you've got to cap outfitters,' quick. And they said oh, why didn't you tell us this before?' [our response was, Well, you fools you're the ones running the show, you can see what's happening, you

bitch about it all the time, what do you want?' [and their response was] Well, we need a letter from you.' Well, we got a little educated in the process of that, so now when we see things coming . . . we'll put it in writing, get together as a group."

It is important to note that, by no means, is there consensus on all issues between outfitters. In the words of one veteran outfitter:

"On certain issues, you can get all the outfitters pretty much together, and everybody have the same consensus on an idea . . . and in times like that we ban together to politically cover our own ass. When everybody has an interest in it, it is very easy to do something like that. If the Forest Service throws a piece of meat out there and says, OK we've got this one thing here,' then it's like a damn pack of starving coyotes, and everybody is in there fighting and cutting each other's throat and trying to get at whatever is available. But, overall, all-in-all with what I know about problems that they've had on other National Forests in Montana, we haven't had it that bad. It's been pretty well steered and relatively the right direction I think."

Several outfitters interviewed spoke to the service-day effort cap wherein local outfitters have some operational flexibility for year-to-year fluctuations in business. The system varies from district to district, with the district ranger having a good deal of latitude in his or her decision making process. According to one outfitter, this arrangement can work well or poorly, depending on the personalities involved:

"[In one named district the] ranger is a pretty level headed fellow and . . . he's been there a long time, he knows the outfitters, he's familiar with license set up and situation. And if a guy needs to go over, you can go in and sit down and talk . . . and usually get something worked out. It all depends on who you're dealing with at the district level. You go [to another named] district and you get an entirely different story. Mainly because of the resource manager in charge of managing outfitters. You get into personalities then. And that's the only thing that I can say has been a problem with outfitter-Forest Service relationships over the years is [if] you get a guy in there . . . in charge of administering the outfitters and if he doesn't like outfitters, then you start having problems. Because you just get no answer every time you need to do something. They have it written in their policy that they are under no obligation to make any decisions for economic benefits to the outfitter. And they take advantage of that sometimes. They have a misconception too about outfitting. A lot of them think all we do is run around and hunt and have a good time and make a lot of money. That's not the case. Most outfitting businesses here, if they are showing any profit at all from year to year, they are doing pretty doggone good. The best that I was ever able to do was . . . 3 to 5 percent, if I was able to do that. So, it's marginally economic to even make it in the business . . . it's a difficult business to show a profit in. You handle a lot of cash, but you don't get to keep very much of it."

One long time outfitter reported that the Forest Service is encouraging "non-consumptive" outfitting, which has the advantage of possibly curtailing some conflict between outfitters and some other local users:

"The Forest Service is encouraging the outfitters very much to go to non-consumptive use, which is non-hunting and non-fishing. This is just taking people out for . . . hikes, trail rides, butterfly catching excursions, they term it as interpretive trips'. You can take a group of people . . . up on the mountain and watch the sheep all day and explain to that group what they are seeing . . . And the Forest Service seems to be pushing the outfitters in the direction of non-consumptive use a lot more [for] a couple reasons: it diversifies the outfitting businesses, it begins to wean them off of the hunting and the fishing which is competing for a resource; and, also . . . you're not going to have a bunch of people getting kicked at you for going up there and catching butterflies as you will if you are out there dumping their' elk meat. The residents look at it as their' meat . . . that's were the big clash comes with the outfitting industry and the locals."

This outfitter noted that this type of conflict is not only present locally, it is a statewide problem. In his words:

"[I]f there was a vote tomorrow. . . by the Montana residents, [outfitters] wouldn't be [left in the state by] the next day. There is no doubt in my mind about that. As a group we are extremely unpopular at the legislature. The Sportsman's Group, they don't like us. The only people that like us are the people that we employ and the people that we spend money with. The majority of the voting public in Montana works Monday thru Friday, nine to five, and they hunt on weekends. They get up to a trailhead, and here sits an outfitter. [In their eyes] they get no economic benefit from us whatsoever. We are nothing more than competition for the resource. The money that we bring into the state . . . circulates several times before it leaves . . . but the average Montanan [thinks they] get no benefit out of it, except that those nonresidents are funding more than 75 percent of that fish and game budget every year. But, they don't care, they would be willing to foot more of the bill, I think, to get rid of some of the nonresidents, because hunting is a very egotistical thing and it is highly competitive. When somebody goes out and they want to get their meat, or they want to get their head, or whatever they're after, they do not want to compete with a professional. Because most of them are not equipped to compete with professionals. We have the horses, we have the know-how, we're in the woods constantly, and we are hard to compete with. From their point of view, you can see where they are coming from."

While less emphasis is placed on fishing-related guiding than on hunting-related guiding, some guided fishing does take place. Additionally, fishing outside of the guiding context does bring income into the area, through its draw as an activity for anglers from

outside of the immediate area. Occasionally, fishing tournaments bring money into the community. One resident provided the following example:

"In fact, last year there was a whole bunch of us in the county that worked and got [the] Bass Western Regional Tournament [to be held here]. That's [a tournament where fishermen from] the ten western states fished on this reservoir right here to see who goes back east to fish in the nationals. That put approximately -- what did they say, I've the figure someplace . . . about \$122,000 into the community in ten days. [But] that's only a once-every-ten-year situation.

Other Uses

One relatively recent local use of the National Forest is for "alternate education" institutions. One local resident described this type of use as follows:

"There is an interesting economic phenomenon that is going on. [There are] a lot of group homes, there's five or six, that enroll adolescents [who] are struggling and typically coming from elsewhere -- urban areas. And they might have anywhere from three to 20 kids and the programs are quite costly per person. And . . . the focus is sort of on getting the kids back on track. The Forest is very important to these programs in varying degrees. Some of them are very much wilderness expedition oriented, and others are less so. But, I think the fact that we are in the wild country is important to all these places. And there was, years ago, there was a school here which I worked for a time . . . that had like 40 kids out of basically this population and the school folded, but lots of the staff sort of got this idea to do this thing. And I don't know the numbers, although I've seen some numbers and I think there is quite a few jobs and quite a lot of money involved in this. Typical cost are in the range of \$3-4,000 a month per student . And it is sort of a great industry, really when you think about it, everything is an upside."

Non-Commercial and Recreational Uses

In addition to commercial uses of the Kootenai National Forest and its resources, there are a wide variety of non-commercial and recreational forest uses by local community residents. These are summarized in this section.

Family Use

Much of the non-harvesting and extraction uses of the Kootenai National Forest adjacent to the communities of Heron, Noxon, and Trout Creek by local residents could be classified as "family events" according to interview data. Such things as viewing, hiking, picnics, camping, and related activities are said to be common. In the words of one resident:

"we do a lot of family things on weekends, and the woods and the streams provide just a constant source of recreation in various ways . . . and there isn't anything else to do. You live in [this] community if you enjoy the outdoors, because there really isn't anything else to do. People rent a lot of videos and we have a couple movie theaters [in the area], but as far as any entertainment there's no shopping malls and places where people just hang out . . ."

Of course, family use also involves some harvesting activities. In addition to hunting and fishing, and gathering firewood and berries, a popular annual family related activity in the National Forest is getting Christmas trees.

Viewing

A number of area residents mentioned taking drives and just looking at the National Forest as a major local use. There is some opinion that viewing opportunities have declined over the years through management policies. In the words of one respondent:

"Several years ago I know that the Lolo Forest did studies on what was the biggest use of the Forest [and the results are equally applicable to the local use of the Kootenai]. The biggest use was sight seeing. People would drive out on forest roads and just drive around. Take a Sunday drive, that kind of thing. That was the biggest use of the forest. I think that's probably still the case [but] it's not as great as it used to be. I grew up here, and then I moved back in 1983. Even then there was more roads open, we could go a lot more places. Gradually more and more roads have gotten closed for various reasons: environmental reasons, wildlife reasons. There's fewer roads to have to maintain. I don't have a real problem with that, but there's not as many opportunities now for Sunday drives as there were, say, ten years ago."

Camping

Camping is one of the more popular recreational use activities in the Sanders County portion of the Kootenai National Forest, according to staff. One program in particular that has gained in popularity in the recent past is public rental of the three fire lookout towers on the district (Gem, Sex, and Squaw peaks) as camping facilities. No longer in service for their original use, these towers are now "booked solid" by persons wishing to stay in them, whereas only a few years ago there was reportedly a lot of open time available. Reportedly, camping opportunities in the National Forest compare favorably with those offered by the National Park Service areas in the greater region, in terms of solitude and different and unusual opportunities, such as the lookout towers. The Park Service reportedly tends to be seen as more impersonal in their service as well, with reservations often required a year in advance, and overcrowded conditions found upon arrival.

Hiking and Skiing

Hiking is a major activity of local residents, and it is a part of "just being out in the woods," which is cited as a primary attraction of the region to both long term residents and new arrivals.

"[T]here's quite a bit of hiking and backpacking . . . You come up on any day of the week, or any time of the year, and with weather permitting, the woods are full of people. I think that that's one thing that draws them to the area.

One resident summed up his viewpoint on local hiking and skiing use:

"And a lot of people hike, they do a lot of day hiking and a lot of camping, backpacking type of things. That is my favorite activity in the summer is to hike up some of these high mountain lakes and go fishing . . . And then, of course, you have your users who like to cross country ski during the winter months and snow shoeing and that sort of thing which is a smaller contention, but nonetheless, there is, probably around here there is a rather large number of cross country skiers."

In conjunction with hiking, a number of people mentioned different aspects of hunting and fishing.

Horseback Riding

Horseback riding is a popular activity in the area, both on National Forest lands and on the adjacent lands. Riding is seen from different perspectives by residents of different portions of the community. On the one hand, it is seen as a very low impact type of use, offering a number of advantages to access. In the words of one interviewee:

"I was talking to somebody and they were saying, 'Oh, yeah, you know, one of the best ways to get around here is on horse, at least in the low lands because there's a lot of private property. People don't mind so much if you ask permission to travel across their land if you're riding a horse or something like that, you know, [rather] than a guy just walking across their place."

On the other hand, there has been some concern expressed about the impact of having too many horses in particular areas of the National Forest. These concerns, judging by interview data, were not widespread, but the issue was raised as a potential management concern.

Subsistence

In addition to hunting and fishing for food, there are other resources from the National Forest that are used locally in a subsistence type of manner. Chief among these are berries and firewood. Consideration of these uses in this orientation is included in the individual resource discussions.

Hunting and Fishing

As noted elsewhere, hunting and fishing have an important place in the local "outdoor orientation." Access to such opportunities is frequently cited as one of the primary benefits to living in the area. In the words of one long-time resident:

"Everybody shoots a deer. You know white tail deer are like rabbits around here and lots of people go elk hunting . . . [too] Sort of a totally different approach, you know a deer is, well, it's handy you shoot one . . . [but] elk hunting, you sort of have to gear up . . ."

Reportedly, hunting of other species is much less common with local residents. According to one interviewee, when asked about hunts for additional species:

"Well, [there are] mule deer and . . . there is a fall-spring bear hunt, which I think is probably mostly [pursued by people from] out-of-state, that is certainly my sense. And also there is cats and stuff, but there is not a lot of local interest in that."

In addition, as developed earlier in this chapter, most of the fishing in the area takes place on local reservoirs, outside of the National Forest. There is, however, some fishing in the Forest lakes.

Firewood

Firewood cutting and collecting is a major activity on the Forest for local residents. Along with berry picking and hunting, local residents characterize gathering firewood from the Forest as the most common local non-commercial extractive resource uses.

It is also the source of a some discontent by local residents, and availability of firewood is a major concern with Forest Service management. As mentioned elsewhere, local firewood policy, particularly as it relates to slash management practices, is a source of some ill-will locally.

"They had a job up here [at a particular place] this year and last year, [and] they left enough small stuff up there [that could have been used for] fence posts or firewood, [with] easy access, and they burn it. To me that's totally ridiculous. They're just leaving too much out there. There's people that can use that kind of stuff. Especially in this area. There's a lot of people still heating with wood. I'm one of them. I don't do it by choice, [and] that's gonna change as soon as I can get a hold of a stove. But, there's a lot of people that their only source of heat is wood. And then with this \$10 fire permit, wood permit, which is the way they've administered it. I can see charging for a firewood permit, I don't have any problem with that. It's the amount and the way they do it . . . if you go and buy a firewood permit, fine. You buy a firewood permit. Then you go get what you want to get, and pay for whatever you got. When they say \$5 for ten cords, which is not a bad price, really, but why not say 'okay \$5 for your permit, \$1 a cord,' or what have you, for the administrative work and let them go after it. Whatever is easiest for them. If they go get it out of slash piles, or where they're logging, all they're doing is cleaning up the area a hell of a lot better. Putting the wood to a use. They're helping out the logger and themselves, for whatever reason they do it.

One resident also noted that the issue of road closures are pertinent to firewood use. This resident explained:

"And a lot of people still get their wood when they can, it's getting harder and harder though . . . The roads are blocked off. You can't get up there. And [the sources of firewood are] getting further and further from the road, and if you can't get them from the road, you can't take equipment up there to get them. In fact, a lot of people I know have had to go to different sources of heat . . . Yeah, it's bad . . . There is a lot of people mad about it . . . because there is dead and dying [trees] up there, and they can't get them

because the roads are blocked off. And especially after this summer . . . I mean it's just timber for fires up there. It's just waiting for lightning strikes or something. But nobody can get them."

Snowmobiling

There is at least one group in the area that is comprised of snowmobile enthusiasts, but it would appear that it is not as common an activity as in other parts of the Forest. One individual knowledgeable with the recreational cycle of the local area noted that "snowmobiling is not that big an activity . . . It is too wet and there is too little snow around here" to make snowmobiling as popular in the western Sanders County area as it is in other areas of the Kootenai National Forest with better snow conditions.

Other Non-Commercial Uses

Another type of non-commercial use that was mentioned in interviews might be termed "recreational prospecting." What follows is a typical statement regarding this activity:

"We have people that pan gold, that work some of these claims around here. I don't think they ever get much gold, but it's the recreation, the fun of doing it."

There is also interest in studying the various plant species in the Forest. In the words of one interested person:

"I am a member of [a local group] the Native Plant Society. We call it botanizing.' I love to go out and identify wildflowers . . . [and do some] wildlife viewing . . . if you believe some of the research that I've read about, the number of days spent [on] non-extractive, non-impactive types of enjoyment far out-number . . . other uses of the forest."

There is also a local historical society that has taken an interest in the historical resources offered by the Kootenai. This group was involved with the renovation of a historic ranger station on the district. According to interview data, this group has been more active in the past than it is at present.

6.4 Sentiments About the Forest Service

6.4.1 Role of the USFS: Local, Regional, and National

The role of the Forest Service in balancing local, regional, and national interests and needs is the at the crux of local concerns with forest management planning, as developed throughout this chapter. One component of this is a common local sentiment that the Forest Service "acts like they own" the Kootenai National Forest in terms of a perceived lack of responsiveness to local desires. However, another component is that many local residents are often quick to recognize the difficult position the Forest Service is in. Internal to the management of the Kootenai National Forest itself, there is some sentiment that the Sanders County portion of the Forest receives less attention than is warranted, and that Lincoln County receives more, based on the proximity of the Lincoln

County portion of the Kootenai to larger population centers and a larger local Forest Service presence.

6.4.2 The "Old" and "New" Forest Service

One of the issues that is discussed in the community with respect to the Forest Service is the perceived differences between the "Old" and "New" Forest Service. In this dichotomy, the "Old" Forest Service is characterized as being staffed by individuals who were primarily field personnel rather than administrators, individuals who spent time in the woods and interacted with local loggers and residents instead of in offices interacting with other agency personnel. The "New" Forest Service is characterized as overly bureaucratic, not responsive to local needs, staffed by professional specialists who have little long-term commitment to the areas where they serve at any one time, and are career-oriented where individual assignments are considered "ticket punching" to allow the individual to rotate to other locations and higher positions on a career track. One long time resident summed up this perception:

"Most of the people in there are career oriented, and the only real goal that they have in that career is their retirement. Most of them leave the area when they retire. They'll go someplace else. It's like the old Forest Service people usually were born in the area and retired in the same area they worked in. It's not the case for these people. This is just a duty station. And they move them rather rapidly, we are having a change in [personnel] at alarming rates. And usually all sorts of philosophies. And it changes so rapidly you can't establish a working relationship."

In considering the changes in the relationship between the Forest Service and the community, one lifetime community resident stated:

"Well, I don't know quite how to put it, but . . . I think a lot [about] kind of the end of . . . what I call the old time' Forest Service. You know people [would] see a truck load of mules go by, they really kind of, they kind of fit in with just a different era. I would probably have to say that there [was] a little more respect . . . [for the Forest Service] back in the 50s, and it seemed like people were a little more friendly. Even the early 60s. It seems like that's kind of went down. It seems like the type of work has changed. There is more [Forest Service] office work now and less people out in the field. You know, [it used to be] where people seen a lot of people that seemed like [them]. And, of course, moving the station out of Noxon kind of was always a hard lump . . . for the people in town here, because there weren't any public meetings or anything. It just up and consolidated. I know there was a lot of hard feelings about that. There probably still is . . . community loses something it never gets it back."

The issue of rotating staff as a "New" Forest Service issue was evident in a number of interviews with long-time residents. As expressed in a number of ways, the central idea behind this issue is that there is something inherently problematic with a short-term employee "telling" a long-time resident (particularly one whose family may have lived in

the area for a number of generations) how best to manage local resources for their benefit. These staff people are seen as coming and going, and leaving the consequences of their inexperience and potentially individually biased decision making process behind. The other side of the coin, of course, is that Forest Service staff members seldom, if ever, make independent or unilateral management decisions. Administration, senior staff, and/or others are usually consulted.

Paradoxically, the Forest Service remains one of the most decentralized of Federal institutions, but the consolidation of administrative units and offices (requiring some local closures and movement) has fostered the perception of increasing inability to deal with local needs. Further, longevity in a senior position does not equate to local residents thinking that needs of the community are always foremost in manager's minds. On the one hand, short-term "ticket punchers" are viewed as not sufficiently in touch with local conditions to make informed decisions as to what is right for local needs, but there would seem to be less question of bias toward particular individuals or groups of individuals within any one user group. On the other hand, when an individual has been in a position for a long period of time, there would appear to be, based on interview data, more question as to whether or not that individual has formed biases for or against particular individuals or groups of individuals within user groups. Such biases could be based on friendship or other established associations. The issue of bias, of course, is not entirely resolvable. Given that there will be more demand on resources than can be met under existing management parameters, there will always be those who when denied a particular resource use will interpret that denial as personally directed. Both local Forest Service staff and many interviewees are cognizant of the difficulties involving in maintaining continuity of management by leaving senior individuals in place and maintaining a public perception of unbiased decision making. One component of this public perception problem may be a lack of public understanding of the limits of flexibility in management decisions that even senior members of the locally assigned administration must work within.

Concern is also expressed about increasing consolidation and centralization of larger administrative units within the Forest Service. At the time of interview data collection, there was a considerable amount of discussion of the possible move of regional offices from Montana to Denver. Although few individuals offered opinions on exactly what these changes would cause to on-the-ground aspects of local Forest Service operations, they felt that it would have some consequences for the provision of local services and presaged difficulties in getting the Forest Service to understand local issues and needs. In the words of one resident:

"There has been a lot of reaction to that . . . [people are having an] excuse me, how is anyone from Denver going to help us here' type of thing reaction. But, again, I think that that is the more initial shock of on the news, what you are hearing on the news, more than any facts that anyone knows yet."

Concern was also expressed over the potential for the further loss of Forest Service jobs from the area as a result of the move.

Most interview data indicate that residents recognize the complexity involved in trying to manage resources to suit the needs of different local and non-local constituencies. This, of course, is not unique to the Forest Service; as with resource management issues in other small communities, there is to a degree an inherent tension and a need for a balance to be struck between those perceived as "locals" and "outsiders" managing resources. It is understood that for a person to climb through the ranks of the Forest Service and obtain an upper management position requires a willingness to relocate to other areas, effectively limiting direct management by lifetime residents. Further, most recognize the institutional mandate is to manage the resources for the national good, not the local good. While continuity of upper management is appreciated, the other side of the coin is represented by the opinions of those who feel that when a manager stays in one place for an extended period of time they will develop stronger ties to some groups and individuals than others.

6.4.3 Trust in the Agency

While there was not unanimity on the issue, judging by interview data there is a clear sense that the Forest Service has a significant problem with trust in the local communities. Of course, the Forest Service has many strong supporters as well. However, the issue of trust would appear to be one that has an impact on the way local residents deal with the agency. In the words of one individual, trust is something that increases and decreases over time -- most of the time things seem on an even keel:

"But then there are other times, and you hear little bits and pieces of things that go on internally, where it absolutely becomes obvious that you were lied to about some sort of thing. You know, it is no great catastrophic lie, I guess, but just in conversation with folks who work down there, outside the office and in the bar and whatever, and you hear about this, that or the other meeting, or things that have been said, or memos passed around, or whatever. And it makes you stop and think, well, we've talked about this' or we've dealt on that' and they just simply didn't tell the truth, or they certainly didn't tell the whole story to you. And why the Forest Service should have things to hide, or secrets . . . to keep amongst themselves until some grand time when they reveal the final product, or whatever, is absurd. So . . . personally I go up and down a lot because . . . [of not just specific] project matters . . . but personal encounters as well. [discusses incident of friendship with Forest Service staff member cooling as a result of becoming active in a conservation group] So, that is just an example of an instance that has a negative impact to how you deal with them from a personal perspective. . . . I guess what I am pointing out is [that] there is a personal aspect to how we communicate with these people that can either impede or enhance the communication. And then there is the professional aspect of trying to communicate with them where you disagree from a conservation philosophy with what they're doing that can impede or enhance communication. And so I guess what it boils down to is, I still don't trust them I think there are some people at this district that are sincere and genuine and trying to do a good job. And I think there

is people who aren't . . . And so it is an unfortunate thing, but I still don't believe that they are trying to do the best for the land. I think . . . there are other goals or objectives in mind, which are largely political. Probably entirely political. And because of that I still don't trust them."

When asked if local residents trust the Forest Service, one individual responded with a comment that drew a distinction between the local level agency staff and those outside of the immediate area:

"Not entirely, no, I don't . . . I [was involved with] an appeal of [a previous] Forest Plan . . . the Cabinet Resource Group and the Montana Wilderness Society appealed the Forest Plan. And I'd been hearing from conservationists for years about how the Forest Service lied to them here and screwed them there. And I really never had any patience with that. Why would an agency do that, I mean who are these guys? They have nothing to gain from lying to people. I thought it was a misunderstanding and probably the conservationists contributed to it. And anyway, the short version is, we [who were appealing] made an agreement with [a person in a decision-making position with the agency outside of the district] about a settlement that was drafted on their computer [but then this position turned over] and the new guy basically strung us along for years . . . Now my experience at the ranger station has always been real positive. The people are very focused . . . [and have a lot of] integrity, and if they say something's that way, that's the way it's going to be. But I did have a terrible experience with [the person in the office outside the district]."

Others attribute distrust in the agency to the impossible situation local resource managers are in when it comes to the ability to please everyone all the time:

"There is not a lot of trust there. And there are several different reasons for that . . . [including the fact that] at least at one time or another, because of some decision or another, they have stepped on somebody's toes, which is unavoidable in [the] management situation that they're in. And once they step on somebody's toes, [that person will] get a sour taste about it, and then they form opinion, and then a lot of them, from that point on, it stays that way, forever. People don't . . . understand all the stuff that those guys go through sometimes . . . the decision processes that they have to go through to formulate policies and that type of thing. The public is pretty uneducated, I think, on that point. I've been involved in a lot of that things with them and you ask them, can we do this?' Well, they get out a book and they have to start reading all these . . . guidelines and everything. And I get to see from time-to-time the behind-the-scene things with them, which the public doesn't get to see that much. So, the public is not that well educated as to what they have to go through to get things done. And as a result people get their toes stepped on sometimes, [and] they don't understand why a decision was made one way or another. And the Forest Service doesn't so much have time to stop and explain it to

everybody. They have . . . have things they have to do, too. And in the process a lot of people get run over and . . . once you get treated bad, you never stop talking about it. You can get treated good one time and yeah, they're a great guy,' but once they step on your toes bad one time, then that just continues on and on. In an area like this people talk, word gets around, and especially in the winter time conversation is one of the biggest forms of entertainment that there is. A good way to get a . . . conversation going and spend the whole evening [is start] bitching about the Forest Service. How they do this, and how they do that, and on and on and on, and it is a favorite subject . . . well, they gated this road and they gated that road' and I couldn't get my firewood' and etc. And they get a little bit of a raw deal sometimes. Sometimes they deserve it, but not all the time."

Perhaps the extreme example of distrust of the Forest Service is seen in the case of the Militia of Montana and similar groups. According to the Militia, a number of actions of the Forest Service are directed toward removing resources from access to local people, at its most benign, to preparing to engage in armed conflict with local residents, at its most malevolent. An example of the latter interpretation is found by examining a widely-distributed photocopy of a purported 1993 Forest Service purchase order for thousands of rounds of ammunition. One standard of distrust this group applies is whether or not officials have been locally elected or appointed. For example, the county sheriff is an elected office, and this individual is accorded a measure of respect; federal law enforcement officers in particular, and federal agencies in general, are distrusted because they are not chosen by, nor are they responsible to, local people. In one locally-circulated story, a person in a leadership position in one of these types of groups was going to be arrested; because a sheriff personally made the arrest it went without incident, but there apparently was violence planned if a officer from another agency were to have attempted the arrest. In general, there is a significant amount of distrust in governmental institutions in the area, and groups like the Militia of Montana may represent an extreme on a continuum in this regard. Few local residents, however, would apparently see themselves on a continuum with these groups. A few residents negatively characterized the pervasiveness and the power of Forest Service enforcement efforts as "the green mafia," but this was not a widely expressed viewpoint. Some members of the public also ventured the opinion that it was not wise to speak negatively of the Forest Service because of the power they have over the local economy and individual local enterprises that rely on National Forest resources, but, again, this was not a widely expressed opinion.

According to interviews, it is the case that people come to western Sanders County to escape from rules, regulations, bureaucracy, and other types of "government interference" in their daily lives (and to escape to a valued landscape). On a number of issues, local residents find themselves betwixt and between these notions; an example of this is the marked concern over growth in the area that is degrading the quality of some localized areas (such as water quality in particular drainages), but a concomitant unwillingness to create a governmental bureaucracy, such as a county planning and zoning board, that could address the problem. To date, the dislike of regulatory bodies

has outweighed local concerns over problems these bodies may be able to resolve, hence development that is locally perceived as adverse continues unchecked.

6.4.4 Changing Forest Service Management Direction

Changing Forest Service management direction is viewed in different ways by different user groups. From the perspective of logging interests, it would appear that the Forest Service is moving away from their timber orientation. From the perspective of a number of other local residents, it would appear that the Forest Service is moving away from their traditional "multiple use" concept toward more specialized uses in particular areas, such as wilderness and habitat set asides. An interagency concern mentioned in interviews was the relationship of the Forest Service to the Fish and Wildlife Service with regard to threatened and endangered species management. A number of interviewees discussed the Grizzly bear issue and how it was impacting the Forest Service. According to locally held views, the Fish and Wildlife Service was responsible for the bear transplant program only until that time that the bears were actually placed on land for which the Forest Service had management responsibility. Once the Forest Service was given that responsibility, management of those lands had to be predicated upon the health and welfare of the reintroduced species, rather than toward the Forest Service's tradition management policies of "multiple use" and managing for the "greatest good for the greatest number in the long run." There is a considerable body of local opinion that managing toward "single use" as management for reintroduced endangered species is a step in the wrong direction, and directly counter to the needs and desires of adjacent communities. In the words of one resident (an ex-Forest Service employee):

"I grew up and spent years in the forest in times gone by when the slogan, you might say the watch word . . . was 'multiple-use.' The greatest good for the greatest number in the long run. This was a creed that we used to, in the Forest Service, uphold proudly. We felt that it was a pretty good description of what we were trying to do. Now, we see a fragmenting. We see signs 'you're in grizzly country', going up all over the Forest. Far be it from us to contest Mr. Grizzly Bear his right to use that part of the ecosystem. But we deeply contest the folks who take it upon themselves to be the shepards to these grizzly bears; either the native grizzly bears or the introduced grizzly bears that they choose to drop off periodically here, and then use this endangered species introduction as a reason to lock up large portions of the district. This is a very disquieting approach. Whether we're talking about grizzly bears, or whether we're talking about introduction of wolves, which is a current topic in the state and in the adjacent states here. Folks who live here that I talked to -- native people, people who value the land and the wildlife -- they don't fear the grizzly bear, and they don't fear the wolf. What they fear is the folks behind the grizzly bear and the wolf and their zealous pursuit of single use management on a large piece of real estate that these critters are to roam on, to the exclusion of things like human beings and folks who depend on these areas for a livelihood. We really object to this sort of thing -- taking big parts of our District, or our Forest, and roping it off for . . . be it grizzly bear, or be it wolves or be it any other single use. We don't feel that

humans should run roughshod over this area to the exclusion of these species. We value them. But it [should] work both ways, and we don't see it working both ways. This concerns us."

Another issue raised in local interviews regarding management direction is how the decline of local timber sales on Forest Service lands has, in turn, put additional pressure on private timber lands. With virtually no small local sales recently, there has been pressure to increase logging on the limited amount of private land in the area. In the words of one resident, this issue is reaching a critical point:

"I have been seeing the private land around here . . . being hammered since they have cut back on the National Forest logging. I mean it is being hammered. I've talked with some of the loggers, last year we had a little meeting with a lot of the small ones, [to] talk about it and they were saying, 'hey another year, at the most, and the private supply will be exhausted. . . .'"

It is also recognized locally that there are competing groups that demand quite different things from the Forest Service. To some, this has led to a perceived withdrawal of the Forest Service from the community. In the words of one resident:

"The Forest Service, as far as I am concerned, are down there in their little compound and they are off in their little world . . . sure they mix [with the rest of the community], but there is almost a distinct little culture there. It's almost like some of them feel like they are under siege . . . and this comes from . . . environmentalists want something, the loggers want something, the outfitters want something, maybe it is real, I can see why they would feel that way."

There were often opinions expressed that the Forest Service is being tugged in a number of different directions, such that there is no clear solution to problems. Some individuals even ventured that the Forest Service, in a way, seems to promote conflicts between users by some directed programs. One person summed up this viewpoint in the following manner:

"There are times when you think that they're pulling for one side, and, of course, I'm sure the other side thinks they're pulling for that side, you know what I am saying? . . . For the purpose of maintaining conflict, for whatever purpose that would serve. But that's a perception, I guess. I see the Forest Service, the goal of the Forest Service in my mind should be the protection of our natural resources through preservation, through wise and careful development. And those two things just about sum it up. I don't think it is the Forest Services position to provide jobs for locals communities. Jobs are an outgrowth of some of the things they do and should be, but I don't think that should be a purpose, a stated purpose . . . I think their purpose, their reason for being . . . should solely revolve around the good of our natural resources and what they as an agency can

do to enhance those resources . . . And then whatever programs and projects evolve from that purpose, and whatever comes from that like jobs, or wilderness designation, or increased [or] improved wildlife habitat, or whatever, [those] are just outgrowths of that central thing."

Similarly, another individual offered the following opinion:

"Naturally, the Forest Service is always, seems to be, in the middle. At least that is how they like to construe themselves perhaps is always in the middle of the two sides. The wise use set, I guess you could say, and then the conservationists are often called the preservationists. I don't know if, sometimes it almost feels like the Forest Service likes to promote, in subtle ways, two sides, rather than trying to draw opposing sides into a middle of the road type of thing. Although I'm sure, I know that their stated purpose is to try and draw people together for a common good."

6.4.5 The Forest Service as a Participant in the Community

In the Heron-Noxon-Trout Creek area, the Forest Service is commonly seen as an active participant in local communities. There is, however, a distinction drawn between individual and institutional participation in community life, and a further distinction between these types of involvement and the responsiveness of the Forest Service to a range of community needs by way of flexibility in, or local tailoring of, management practices. According to one respondent,

"Individuals are [a part of the community but] the agency is not at all, and never has been. I think there is a strong undercurrent of sorts, of a sort of resentment that there is this big bureaucracy that . . . sort of goes its own way and doesn't participate and doesn't really listen and so on. And it's hard to deal with; there is a ton of paperwork and so forth."

While commonly expressed, this above-stated view was by no means universally held. As for Forest Service participation in the community on an individual basis, local Forest Service employees are active in a variety of community service institutions, such as volunteer fire departments, as well as other community based organizations. Such community participation is reportedly actively encouraged by senior staff in order to keep in touch with community organizations and issues. Forest Service employees also tend to be active in local sports activities, with one example cited by staff being a local rod and gun club whose membership is now approximately two-thirds comprised of Forest Service personnel. There are some social contexts that Forest Service personnel reportedly steer away from, such as the local taverns. In the words of one resident:

"You don't really see a lot of Forest Service [people] come through the bar, guy stopping in for a drink, or what have you . . . The sentiment being as it is about the Forest Service, and the forest management plans that they have . . . they're not really what you'd call compatible in a bar situation, so I think the Forest Service more or less just avoids that kind of a situation. Which, I can't say as I blame them. You know, you go in to

have a beer, and you got ten guys jumping your ass about something you have no control over, you tend to avoid that kind of a situation."

As an institution, the Forest Service works with a number of different organizations and institutions, cooperating with over 40 organizations according to a recent count by local staff. The Forest Service also participates in a variety of local community events, such as Independence Day parades in Heron and Noxon and Winterfest in Trout Creek, and they set up displays at other events, such as the annual Huckleberry Festival in Trout Creek. The Kootenai National Forest has also been represented for the past four years by the Forest Service at the Sanders County Fair, although they did not participate in this event previously due to the fact that the fair was held in a community on the Lolo National Forest. The fair was a county-wide event, but the administrative structure of the Forest Service would appear to not coincide with the geography of its user groups. Local Forest Service staff rated the recent participation in the county fair a success for outreach, with an estimated contact of three thousand persons over a period of four days.

6.5 USFS Management of The Kootenai

6.5.1 Debate About The Existing LRMP

One issue discussed locally about the existing LRMP is the problem of forest inventory. In the words of one resident:

"[T]here is a serious concern that the forest might of miscounted the trees when they did their inventory . . . the issue is called the Phantom Forest Issue. And when they did the first forest plan they, of course, had to calculate the . . . timber, and they messed up. And they got, the number they got, was way too big. So I think there is a concern that we are counting too much too fast."

Some of the local interview data regarding existing forest management planning concerned calculation of timber sale amounts, and questions were raised as to how this would feed into the revised Forest Management Plan. For example:

"[A]ctually, what might of be sort of germane here, is that at some point the Forest Service is going to have to recalculate the . . . sale quantity. Well, generally, and certainly in Region One and I think nationally, the first round of forest plans all had ASQs that nobody could meet, they were totally unrealistic and that was true here. And industry was mad because they thought they were being promised this amount of wood and conservationists were upset because we thought, you know, where in the heck is all this wood going to come from? And the Forest Service . . . sort of, turned their back on the issue, I think, and said well ASQ is not even a goal or a target, it is an upper limit and it doesn't mean anything anyway, it just means that we can't go past that' and they sort of tried to tell people that it doesn't have a meaning, but people always focus on it. And I think

to me the 64 dollar question' on this forest plan revision, [actually] there's two, one is how are they going to come up with a new number for ASQ and what's that going to be like? And are they going to shoot for a realistic number? I would hope that would do that . . . The second big question is about plan management and are there acres that are now on the timber base that will come out or visa versa . . . So I would say those are the two big issues there and I think a lot of people would be interested in those two questions."

Another individual brought up the issue of water quality as it appeared in the Forest Plan. In this case the individual was incredulous that degraded water quality was a "planned" outcome of forest management:

"Several years ago, when the Kootenai Forest Plan first came out, they out-and-out stated in the plan, I believe, that there was going to be a decline in the fish because of sediment in the streams due to road building and logging. I mean . . . that was the plan."

Another planning issue that was referred to during discussions with residents involved the Forest Service making decisions or considering actions that were viewed by some as "extreme."

This can raise local ire, as is expressed in the following quotation:

"An . . . example was at one time they were going to close down access to some of the lakes in the Cabinets, to discourage people from going there. They had a resource problem, because some of the slobbs would go in and leave trash around. It was creating problems so . . . their plan was . . . to poison the lakes. The reason people would go there would be to fish. Well, they came up with this brilliant idea, if we kill all the fish, they won't go there anymore.' . . . You know that didn't go over well at all. And they didn't end up doing it. They ended up trying to make some extreme decisions . . . to solve a problem that they don't want to deal with . . . You know when we pack into an area, and there is a bunch of trash . . . we'll bring the stuff out. A lot of people won't do that . . . you get one group going behind a bad group . . . and they're expecting to get to this beautiful place, and [instead] there's beer cans all over the place. And they're extremely unhappy . . . they don't know who left the mess usually, they're going to go blame the Forest Service . . . why aren't you keeping this place clean and keeping those jerks out of there?' So the Forest Service gets the heat for it."

6.5.2 Public Issues and Concerns

Non-local Interests and the Appeals Process

A number of residents mentioned the role of non-local interests in the appeals process, which has a direct impact on local interests. In general, local interests, even local "environmental" interests,

are viewed as being supportive of at least a minimal level of logging in the National Forest. In the words of one long time resident:

"[I]t's only the environmentalists, the people that really don't represent the natives and the people that live here, that come in here and shut down all these timber sales and everything. I mean, it's just a matter of philosophy, political, or whatever ideology that shuts down the timber sales. It isn't the locals that do it. I think everybody around here believes they want everything in moderation. They don't want a big harvest, they want sustainable yield, and sustainable harvest . . . the environmentalists have really created some problems that I don't think are necessary in that we have a renewable resource here, and the timber that's harvested from these forests that we all own provides a lot of people with the opportunity to own a home. And if you want to talk about a subsidy, I think one of the greatest subsidies that we have is the timber and the lumber off of these National Forests that provides young people, and everybody, an opportunity to own their own home, and the fact that [in] 50 or 60 years will regenerate . . . it isn't like it's gone and you'll never have it again. I just can't see where the critics come on all this -- obviously . . . it's more the ideology than the practical part of it and you have activists, and people with causes, and I find you're never going to pacify those people."

Clearcuts and Selective Cuts

Based on responses to local interviews, it is apparent that few, if any, individuals would prefer logging by clearcut. Areas which have been clearcut are characterized as ugly in a region that is renowned for its beauty. Clearcutting practices today are less common than they were in the past. According to Forest Service staff, "approximately 80 percent of the logging here [in the immediate Heron-Noxon-Trout Creek area] is skyline or helo-logging now." One issue that arises occasionally is who is to "blame" for past clearcutting. There are a number of groups and individuals who assign blame to loggers for such practices, but during interviews, loggers, in turn, related that clearcut practices were dictated by Forest Service policies. According to one individual:

"I worked with and talked with a lot of loggers and at least as far as clearcuts [go], I mean you will get this from some of the most diehard ones, . . . they don't like doing them . . . [but] when somebody tells you, 'hey you want the trees, [this is] how you got to do it' [then you do it] . . . I can't beef about that, because I have made clearcuts myself. You want to eat, this is what you have got to do. I don't like them."

Clearcuts are also an issue for those interested in tourism in the area. According to an interview with one individual in a tourism-related business, the checkerboard appearance of some areas of the National Forest is visible from the road, and "tourists don't like squares." In a more general sense, concerns about clearcutting are involved with the broad issue of desired appearance of the forest.

In addition to the negative aesthetics of clearcuts, a number of other interviewees mentioned aspects of clearcutting that they considered wasteful. Further, one person made a point of how clearcut practices, even if they are considered not generally negative, are not managed in such a way that the small operations common to the area can take advantage of the opportunities clearcutting could represent:

"Clearcuts ain't all bad. They're not. But, there's a lot of waste that goes on in them, because of the smaller stuff they don't bring out. You know, I can understand that it's not economical for the large guy . . . the guy that's got this big job, he's got a million, two, three million board feet to get out of there of the marketable timber that goes to the big mills. But, that also leaves the smaller stuff there that the little guy can use. That he can go in there and get it to the road, somehow or another. Maybe hire a truck, or go after it himself. So, I think, that stuff should be put to use. It's like [in the case of a particular sale area where], they built roads in there that are excellent roads. You can drive a car into them. This one man I know, what he typically uses is a three-quarter ton pickup, a winch, and a trailer. And he could get all the wood he needed [to keep his small operation going] up there just with what he uses."

Other residents expressed concerns about the impact of clearcut practices on water sheds, both in terms of water quality and erosion. One rancher spoke at some length to the erosion issue in particular:

"Well, I've lived here, I guess, 35 years and I have some views about clear-cutting. I can see the efficiency and -- but it's really created a lot of problems on the watershed for us down here, especially with the streams . . . in the spring . . . traditionally we get a lot of snow, and you know, we'd have five or six weeks of high water and a gradual run-off. Now, boy . . . because of the lack trees and everything, the snow comes off much faster and the streams fill up, and we've had a lot more erosion, and I've had to riprap on this creek and everything. It's really created some problems. The two drainages that we live in . . . [have seen] some big clear-cuts . . . I've complained about this -- what's ironic is . . . one agency within USDA . . . they create all these problems and then we have another agency that comes back and wants us to riprap it. You know, sometimes I wish they'd get together. I can appreciate [the problems, because] we've done logging on our place, and I know . . . it's more efficient to just go in and cut every stitch. It is. You aren't working around trees, you aren't destroying a lot of trees. But the time it takes for the new growth to start in, I mean, you're talking about 30 years . . . but it's just the practice. It may benefit some people, but [to] other people it's not that beneficial. As far as [clearcuts] being an eyesore, [the] aesthetic value, that doesn't bother me, I can realize that in 30 or 40 years . . . it heals. But during those interim periods, for those of us that live on these streams and everything why, it creates some problems, and -- God, I tell you, a shovelful of dirt in this valley is worth 10 bucks around here, I mean, it's just, there are astronomical prices . . . and so . . . we work our butt off to keep from losing any bank, I mean, we lose part of our horse pasture, 10 feet, you know, because [of] I think, clear-cutting . . . I think the clearcutting has really been a bad deal as far as the watershed."

Other residents specifically expressed the perceived lack of need for clearcuts. For example:

"I know for a fact that they don't have to make [clearcuts] because we have done some real nice selective cuts that you can see from Highway 200 looking up Johnson Creek there. And except for its distinct skid lines or the high line, the rest of it is not unpleasant."

Firewood

Firewood can, and at times has, become an emotionally charged issue locally. It also ties in with a body of local opinion regarding the "wastefulness" of particularly Forest Service management practices. For example, a frequently heard complaint about the way local logging was managed had to do with slash policy. When slash is left to decompose or is burned, while simultaneously local firewood needs are apparently not met (or at least not conveniently met), has created hard feelings. In the words of one interviewee:

"[W]e were up . . . across the road from here and you would see nice big piles of slash . . . that was from a logging operation last year. And they were all piled to burn . . . [you look at that and say] 'Hey, there's enough wood there to supply the community center' . . . coming from an environmental standpoint, I think we [locals] should be able to go in and utilize some of the resources of the forest, especially the wood ones, I don't think we are going to get away from it. I do think that better utilization is the key because I know there is, both on private [land] and on the National Forest . . . I've seen piles of burnt wood as big as this house. You know there really wasn't a need for that."

Similarly, another resident offered this opinion:

"[T]he other complaint I have is, I moved up here from [another part of the Pacific Northwest]. Down there, the logger, if he had slash piles out there, he'd put an ad in the paper that he had slash piles for firewood. Within a week or two he wouldn't hardly have enough to get a good weenie roast going. Around here, they'll arrest you for getting firewood out of a slash pile."

Critics also contend that slash could be stacked and placed closer to roads, facilitating additional uses. Part of the criticism of slash policy may simply be a lack of understanding of the goals of current practices, according to local Forest Service staff. One staff member offered the opinion that, "if you can take the time to explain it [nutrient loading, etc.], people understand."

Responsiveness to Local Small-Scale Timber Related Economic Needs

A primary concern expressed by local loggers is that local sales would appear to be more oriented toward larger operations, which effectively means operations outside of those communities immediately adjacent to the Forest. In the words of one interviewee, "it's always the big boys that buy the timber."

This issue is rendered all the more complex by the bidding practices of the larger timber operations. This reportedly includes aggressively bidding on all sales in particular areas, including small sales that would otherwise not be considered worthwhile on their own, in

order to "protect their turf." There are also local residents who hold the opinion that a number of the small sales that have been held in the past that were directed toward small-scale operations were actually bought by individuals or small operations that were "fronting" for larger interests. The extent to which these opinions reflect actual situations is not clear; what is clear is that attempting to address the particular needs of local small-scale operations is not a straightforward task or set of tasks.

Another difficulty in terms of the local perspective on sales is the seeming inability of the Forest Service take into account local small-scale desires while working on larger sales, even when in the opinion of local residents the larger sales end up "wasting" what would otherwise be used. In the words of one interviewee:

"Case in point, last year I needed house logs and there was this area where the Forest Service was doing a salvage sale. Yet, right in the salvage area I found about 60 white pines, beautiful house logs. To the Forest Service they had absolutely no value, but then when I came around asked for them, they accrued a value. Then they said, 'Oh, well, we're tied up, we've got these regulations. We can't let you in there while this other active sale is going on.'"

In another example provided during another interview, one resident stated:

"There is a spot . . . that they cut two years ago, and I was up there this fall. If I could have done anything about it, somebody would have lost jobs over that, because they left trees laying there . . . there's a guy over here, there's two or three of these little mills here, one-man mills. They don't hire anybody, but they custom cut. They left enough lumber up there to keep him going for probably the next five years. He could have paid for salvage or whatever it is on there, to get it out himself, to keep him busy for a long time."

One common theme among small loggers in the area, as well as a number of residents in the area who are not involved with logging, is that the Forest Service has become too bureaucratic to respond to local needs. It is recognized that this is a complex issue, and that there are a variety of pressures that have been brought to bear on the Forest Service that have resulted in this state of affairs. Still, it is difficult for people to accept what they perceive as the loss of readily available natural resources from the local economy simply as a result of bureaucratic inertia. In the words of one long time resident,

"for instance, a friend of mine tried to deal with the district on getting some dead and dying white pine . . . a small patch and, from what he told me, the [Forest Service] response was we don't have the time or the manpower to put up a timber sale for . . . a small area salvage like that, so we can't help you.' So the backlash to that is, if the logger was to go up there then and say, well, I can't stand to see it go to waste if they're perfect house logs' . . . If he was to of gone up there -- and I don't know if he did or not -- and started sawing down these trees to utilize them and he

had been caught by the Forest Service -- he would have been arrested and fined for stealing government property. Yet the [Forest Service] was content to say, no, you can't because we can't,' so therefore they're going to die and then rot and fall over. And I'd never believe that a dead tree goes to waste' . . . it goes back into the earth . . . however, from the standpoint of utilizing readily accessible material for something like house logs, to me the [Forest Service] has just as much stolen from the people as much as if that logger was to go up there and take that material anyway, because it was right there and ready to go. And we have so much of that type of thing, that type of opportunity that exists here, with salvaging dead white pine . . . root rot is a big thing around here. You can drive up any Forest road, I mean any Forest road on this district and see miles and miles of dead, at least patches of dead and dying trees from root disease, especially Douglas fir. And there is no salvage program to speak of here. And the so called green slip' days are gone because the Forest Service has [gotten] mired in this bureaucratic process of, oh, we've got to analyze and we've got to mark and layout and devise sales' and this sort of thing. And I think part of that is a backlash to the conservationist effort in the past of making sure they did everything . . . according to the law, and so that resulted in more and more paperwork and analyzing and that sort of thing. I think conservationists are a lot responsible for that. So it's a backlash. It's an unfortunate, unexpected result perhaps that now has us in a position where a small logger can't go up and say well, here's an area of wood that's ready to go, next year it will be too late'. And they can't take it because the Forest Service doesn't have the time and the manpower to do a study on what impacts that would have. And I fully agree with the timber industry . . . [it's] a sad state of affairs that we can't salvage material that is readily accessible in a timely fashion. So I think the government is robbing the people in a much more serious way than [were] a logger to go up and take that . . ."

The lack of "green slip" sales is a particular issue of local concern, and although interview data would indicate that people mostly understand why the program no longer exists, they do not view its absence positively. Forest Service staff indicated that green slips sales are no longer held locally due to a regulatory environment that invites legal challenge to such sales -- they are inherently counter to the typical "put it out to bid" process that puts all resource uses, both local and distant, on theoretically even ground. On the other hand, sales large enough to support the bureaucratic infrastructure of the Forest Service are probably beyond the economic reach of small local operations while such sales are reasonably accessible to large outside bidders. It is a Catch-22' situation that is the cause for considerable local discontent. One resident summed up the negative aspects of this perception as follows:

"We have a government agency here that's like a, and you can quote me on this, it's like an 800 pound canary, it can't sing, it can't fly and all it can do is sit and scream for birdseed. It's bound itself up with rules and regulations. It's totally ineffectual."

There are, however, those who represent businesses that depend on outside people accessing the Forest who feel that local needs have too much influence on policy. The following statement is an example of this perspective:

"[The] Forest Service here, 90 percent of . . . what they do is still in tune with the local people. You can have ten people write them on an issue locally and you can have 400 out of the area write them about the use of the National Forest land, and they will move with the ten locals. They're still very local, although they manage the national treasure, they're still very sensitive to what the people here want. [They are] probably going to be challenged on that someday."

Forest Health and Fire Management

Fire management, particularly during the difficult 1994 fire season, was not the contentious issue in western Sanders county communities that it was elsewhere on the Kootenai. This is not to say that there was not some local criticism of fire policies and practices. Proximity to a fire appears to affect one's perspective about fire as an abstract management tool. The following comment by a resident is helpful in examining perspectives about fire management:

"Probably the biggest controversy I've heard is [whether] to burn or not to burn. That has to be one of the biggest . . . do we let a fire burn or do we [not] . . . that comes back down to [wanting to say] excuse me - I live here in the middle of it' to a degree . . . that's not a comfortable thought for most people I don't think, that they are just letting a fire burn. And even though they point to things like Yellowstone, and that [say] this is good' for this reason or [that]."

The great majority of interviews indicated support for Forest Service fire management efforts during the 1994 season and belief that Forest Service personnel did an outstanding job. However, the general fire policy of the Forest Service is not well received by at least some of the local population. Part of this, no doubt, is due to changes in this policy over the years, and the role that logging plays in the local way of life. Past policy dictated an aggressive effort to extinguish most fires; current policy dictates that some fires that would have been aggressively fought in the past are now allowed to burn. To some, the newer policy is wasteful of harvestable resources that would otherwise benefit the local economy. A limited number of other interviewees were concerned over the amount of resources spent on fire response while seemingly letting fires burn unchecked. This perception, in part, may be due to the fact that most of the large fires were somewhat distant from the immediate area. Another resident offered nothing but praise for the local efforts:

"Oh, I think everybody was very pleased. See, we hadn't had a year like this since oh, I guess, it's been about 10 years. They've become so much more sophisticated and there's so much more equipment available . . . boy, this summer [1994] was a bitch. Those clouds were just full of energy. We'd see them come through here at night and the next morning

we'd have 10 or 14 fires within 10 miles of here. When the lightning starts - - and I tell you, the Forest Service is on them right now. I've got a stand of timber up [planted in the] '70s and Jesus, now I can't get my arms around it, and the fire is [within] a half mile. I'm thinking, God if this gets into our timber it isn't like 320 acres of National Forest, it's on private land and one individual, that would be just a tragedy to lose that timber, plus all the income. But they handled that. All this money I've been paying for fire prevention for years [was worth it]. No one could complain. This whole county was on fire for about three months. We had big fires every place you went. Nothing got out of control. No one likes to see this timber burn around here. People love this country, and they love the forest and everything, and they just -- it just breaks your heart to see a fire wipe out all the timber because they're so useless . . . when Yellowstone burned down there and they let that burn I'll tell you they were ready to hang a few people down there . . . People get pretty possessive about the land. They don't like to see it abused or destroyed."

One controversy with the local 1994 fire effort was that at least a few individuals believed that the single local fire that was allowed to burn was permitted to because it suited particular local Forest Service management desires that could not be accomplished otherwise. This opinion speaks to the issue of local level trust in the agency as much as it does to fire policy, per se. In this situation, local managers would appear to be in a no-win situation. The area that burned was not slated for logging. One set of opinions would say that the only reason the area was allowed to burn was so that it could be logged. Another set of opinions would say that now that it is burned, it should be logged, otherwise it is doubly wasteful of resources. Local staff are, of course, cognizant of these issues and are aware that allowing logging after letting fires burn in areas that were not otherwise to be logged "sends the wrong message."

Another issue of some contention was the amount of money that was spent fighting fires:

"So the Forest Service seems to be recognizing that wild fire plays a role and needs to be utilized or allowed or however. And a year like this year, which I guess was an exceptional year especially on the Kootenai, there is no telling how many countless millions of dollars and man hours were spent going into areas, fighting fires that pose no immediate threat to private property. And I just shook my head thinking, here they are telling us on the one hand that they recognize fire is important and we need to allow its place in the ecosystem and on the other hand, I would like to be able to figure out someday if at all possible, they'll tell you so many millions of [board feet] of timber being lost to root rot. Because they haven't allowed fire to play its natural role. So then we are losing all these millions . . . and millions of dollars to a disease that fire could control or contain. But then they, on top of that, go and spend millions of dollars to fight the fire that could help clean up that problem . . . and then add up all the efforts they spend in fighting fire and balance that with what would be

the situation if you just allowed the fire to do its thing. Because they will also tell you, oh we lost so many millions of dollars worth of timber in this fire.' And it just seems to be a vicious cycle that is costing American taxpayers just incredible dollars, if you want to reduce it down to a dollar thing. And the Forest Service hasn't convinced me that they're convinced that fire is a needful thing in the ecosystem. A good for instance, is the fire . . . [this year] when we had some lightening strikes and way up on top of the mountain. And granted . . . if allowed to burn maybe it could of cut down the hill and have effected private property. But here they were with helicopters and people hiking five miles into these little spot fires and they were just in, most of them, were in sparse timber and meadows and that sort or thing. There is no telling what it cost to battle those blazes way at the top of the mountain . . . The fire that they did allow to burn . . . and it burned way down close to the highway at a couple of points . . . and then you look at the money they spent for as little as they actually did do on that fire and then you turn around and look at the bill for fighting that fire, it makes you go, what is this?' So their . . . fire fighting agency or group or whatever, department, within the Forest Service is like a little agency in and of itself inside of an agency and it has a life of its own, and they thrive on creating panic by telling people your homes are going to burn' and wildlife is going to burn,' we are losing all this valuable timber,' and so forth. And so they tap in just a bottomless barrel of money to fight these fires and I think it's just a sad state of affairs. I think Forest Service fire policy and fire fighting, their whole fire fighting structure needs to be really, really worked over and looked at closely by independent analyst or whatever . . . the Forest Service . . . either they still don't believe what they are trying to preach, or they haven't preached well enough what they think they believe . . . that fire is good in a controlled fashion. You know obviously there has to be some fire fighting that is a given. But they're out of control. A year like this was an extreme year and so it makes it . . . more of an issue with people . . . because it was such a highly visible topic."

Appearance

As noted elsewhere, particularly under the discussions of clearcuts, the appearance of the National Forest is important to local residents for a variety of reasons. However, there is a degree of skepticism among local residents as to the utility of managing the Forest for visual impacts. In the words of one resident:

"[F]rankly, I'll tell you my take on the whole visual impacts thing' that the Forest Service has been pushing so hard is that's really their trip. I've never heard anybody outside the Forest Service show as much interest as they do in that. And I think conservationists are kind of skeptical of it because it seems like the beauty strip' thing. Where in the back country, where nobody is, or if the slope is facing where nobody ever sees, then [the Forest Service feels] it is fine to go in and hack it up, but [they think that] if we keep the part that people look at pretty, then they'll let us do what we want to do. So I think there is a little suspicion . . . [and] resentment on the part of the conservation community on that. But, it's not a big issue, it's, again

if there is an issue, there is some drainages around here that were just hammered in the time when they were doing the 500 acre clearcuts and they still look like hell. A lot of them have not come back to anything but brush and you'll here loggers complain about that and how bad they are and why did they do that."

Roads, Gates, and Access

According to data from numerous interviews, road closures on the Kootenai National Forest in the western Sanders County area are not the contentious issue they are elsewhere. This is not to say that there is not a significant amount of local opinion that runs counter to closure policy in general. When asked the reason for the general lack of strong opposition to closures found elsewhere, one local senior Forest Service employee noted that most of the closures in the immediate area "happened in the early '80s" and that while there was considerable opposition at that time, road closures have faded as an issue, because there have been few recently. With the exception of a road in the Bull River area, Forest Service staff reports that there haven't recently been permanent closures of roads "with a history of use." Recent road closures in the Beaver Creek drainage in conjunction with timber sale schedules (estimated to be approximately 250 miles of road) did not apparently meet with widespread opposition.

Road closures in the area are rotated to provide access for various uses, and the portion of the Kootenai immediately adjacent to the Heron-Noxon-Trout Creek area is, according to Forest Service staff, "relatively unroaded" compared to some other areas of the Forest, due to at least two factors: the approximate 80 percent burn-off in the 1910 fire and the local drop-off of the timber sales program in recent years. There are individuals in the area who do object to the rotating closures, and the reasons cited for opposition include a desire to maintain access to the public National Forest for older residents and those who are less physically able than others. There are those who also contend that the rotating closures have closed off access to favored spots at very inconvenient times, such as during berry picking and hunting seasons.

One long term resident argued that there should be more local consultation on specific road closures, rather than a heavy reliance on formulas for road density over given areas:

"[I]n terms of these locked roads and locked access, I would like to go road by road with you on areas that are closed up, [and] discuss . . . the reason that they're closed, and then discuss alternative ways of achieving that objective without closing those roads. If we're talking grizzly bear habitat, if we're talking elk summer range, or elk winter range, if we're talking any number of the reasons that roads and areas are closed off to the tax-paying public, I would like to have an opportunity to consider and implement other ways of managing these multiple resources up there . . . when they close off [the] road system, and they don't use them, the brush grows up in them. Just speaking for just the roadside timber along these areas, it dies or some of it dies, and is wasted. The Forest Service don't seem to have man power to put up many little timber sales the way they did in years gone by. The reason given 'efficiencies' and "we don't have

the money and the man power to do it." With the roads locked up, and this stuff going on unseen and unchecked, I'm talking about white pine and Douglas fir trees. Some of those white pine trees, you know three feet in diameter. Some of those trees at present day value being worth a thousand dollars a tree. I'm talking about those trees dying, and just laying there bleaching in the sun. When somebody could be making a nice livelihood getting these out. We're talking 500,000 acres, and I don't feel that the Forest Service in the lack of multiple use that I consider being implemented today, I don't think they're keeping a very close watch on those big valuable trees, dying out there in the forest. Roads are only one method of accessing, but they're a darn good method of getting out there and being able to see what's going on there. If you close them, if you let the alder brush grow up in them, you've foregone that opportunity. Of course the opportunity for any other resource uses: the firewood, the berries, the entertainment value. We're talking about putting wheel chair ramps at every gosh darn public building, and making requirements on these un-funded mandates they talk about for lots of private buildings. For getting people access. . . . Elderly folks have come and talked to us just wistfully within the last year about remembering going up . . . to St. Paul Peak, picking berries and fishing and that. What a wonderful experience it was to do that, but it ain't no more. This is been repeated place after place after place on the district. Not only could those folks enjoy that land, but folks could harvest some small timber sales . . . you don't have to make a gigantic timber sale every time a tree dies, or every time you want to have a timber sale. It doesn't have to be a 10 million foot sale. If the roads were open and accessible to folks going out there, and six trees are dying on the mountainside -- be they white pine, be they Doug fir, or be they another species -- hey, who's going to be interested in that? You might be surprised who's interested in that. But if the roads are locked, and nobody is there to harvest them . . . they'll die and rot."

Others expressed support and understanding for closures, and attributed existing opposition to a resistance in understanding and adaptation. For example:

"A lot of people couldn't understand why these gates were locked off . . . these were locals . . . [they felt] the road is there why can't we use it, why can't we hunt it?' You know, they don't stop to realize that somebody's there, they got roads up a couple hundred yards apart . . . going up and down that mountain. You know, if you had people driving on those roads, number one you would definitely [spook] the game during hunting season. And they just can't understand that. You know, why they can't go behind the gate. I can see it. The roads were put in there for one thing and that was to bring out logs from the sale basically, that was the only reason that road was put in there. If it hadn't been for the logs, for the . . . timber sale, then that road would have never been established. And just because it is there doesn't mean everybody has a right to use it. Of course, [when] some of the locals look at it, it's theirs, they can use it. We've always been

able to' . . . Maybe they weren't officially using it, but they were using them."

A related access issue that is discussed locally is trail maintenance. In the words of one interviewee:

"This is a real sore point with the Forest Service with me -- they have a budget every year for trail clearing and it's very seldom used for that. There are trails . . . that were built back in the '20s and '30s that haven't been maintained since then. And this particular Forest here, they send crews out to do a little bit once in awhile, but not a lot -- they mostly depend on the outfitters to clear their trails for them. And they are very select trails because this is the areas where the outfitters do a lot of their hunting But I'd like to see more of the trails utilized around here, opened up for the people to use for walking [and] horseback [riding]. In fact, the whole trail system is set up to where you could take up -- say up to Rock Creek drainage and come out in Libby or Bull River someplace, Thompson Falls, or Idaho, what have you . . . Last summer . . . [we were] going up to the trails on the Idaho side, [and the trails on the Sanders County side] were dangerous in some spots, full of brush and whatnot. Then we hit the Idaho trails, Christ, they're well maintained, large trails, [with] easy access."

One individual offered the opinion that future management should be directed toward keeping some areas roadless:

"I think we should stay out of the roadless areas. I think that the roadless areas are a tremendously valuable resource to many people in many ways and the policy of subsidizing road construction to me is a complete squander of our resources. And I think a lot of conservationists feel that way."

Conflicts Among Users

In general, interview data provide little evidence of "anti-logging" sentiment in the area. However, a substantial number of residents feel that a local economy predicated on logging as a mainstay cannot be sustained in the long term with the current regulatory and management constraints on timber sales. As noted elsewhere, there is strong sentiment against particular logging practices, such as clearcuts, but this apparently has not been generalized into to a dislike of logging activities such as selective cuts, except for those areas that are seen as particularly sensitive locales.

While there is some remaining discomfort between local logging and local conservation interests, according to interview data these groups get along more easily than in the past. According to one person who has been both an active logger and involved with local conservation interests:

"There is a definite undertone . . . I don't know if conflict is the word . . . between conservationists and timber people. And I think . . . ten years ago

. . . that [it] was, in this area, much more notable than it is now. I think there was a lot of misunderstanding . . . early on, and there was a lot of [talk] that the conservationists wanted to take everybody's job away and so on [which wasn't the case]."

One individual remarked on tensions between loggers and outfitters, but this was not a theme commonly expressed in interviews:

"[T]he outfitters get mad at the loggers. The locals get mad at the outfitters because they take these out-of-state people up to their hunting [areas] and they get the animals and the locals don't. I think probably that would be [the only conflicts], the hunters don't get mad at the loggers. I know some people say logging is hard on the hunting, but it's really not. The animals hang around when there is logging because they eat the moss and stuff."

It was noted by an outfitter that anti-outfitter sentiment was often similar to anti-logger sentiment in the way that Forest Service management policies may feed the problem:

"[Y]ou'll find a lot of anti-outfitters sentiment within the community with a lot of their woes are brought on by the outfitters [themselves] but [on the other hand], an outfitter is like a logger, he doesn't get to cut the tree he wants to cut, he doesn't get to cut it where he wants to cut it . . . he has the Forest Service people [to answer to] . . . On the Kootenai here, they require us to use the same turf and . . . this is probably the major cause of social problems . . ."

One individual noted some tension between hikers and horsemen which has resulted in changing management strategies for some parts of the Forest:

"For instance, Saint Paul, right up Bull River . . . I remember when we used to ride horses into Saint Paul. It's a nice little lake with real good grass all around it, and I could ride up there and spend the weekend and turn my horses loose, and they could graze around there and it was never any problem. In the last ten years, there has been more and more people hiking up there. Well, what brought the whole damn thing to a head about eight years ago . . . [one hiking group was up at the] lake. [At the same time] here comes this crew on horseback. [There was] horse shit all around the lake after this . . . and, to a horseman, that's no big deal, but to this hiking group it was . . . Well, they went down to the Forest Service and they just bitched and moaned . . . until the Forest Service . . . closed that trail down to horse use and it's a hiking only trail now. Okay, well, there is plenty other lakes around . . . let them have that one. Well, it didn't end there . . . they went back to the ASO's office and they wanted no horse use in the Cabinets whatsoever. I mean the whole damn wilderness area. They wanted it all for them. They didn't want to share it you know. So that created a conflict between the Horseman's Association and [an] environmental group. And both groups had the same interest -- they just

wanted to go up to the lakes and have a good time. They just had a real difference in opinion on how they got there, and what was acceptable to them once they got there. So you get different opinions on what this piece of heaven is supposed to look like when you get there . . . They're starting to set aside lakes -- hiking only . . . But I don't think it's fair for them to come back and want it all. You've got to share, you've got to give and take a little bit you know for this to work . . . And this is only going to increase you know as years go by because the population is not going down any . . .

"

As noted in other sections, there have been conflicts between outfitters. There are also tensions reported between local and non-local hunters, particularly as a result of a perceived collision between the needs of subsistence hunting in a tight economy versus sport or trophy hunting as pursued by outsiders using 'local' resources.

Grizzly Bears, Predators, and other Wildlife

A number of residents expressed opinions that the wildlife in the area is at least as healthy as ever, and any perceived problems were more the result of increased human demands rather than biological constraints on the resources. One resident's comment was reflective of this sentiment:

"Well, they got the bull trout, they're telling us that they're looking at. I don't know. They say you could, before they built the dams in this river, you could walk across the Clark Fork on the backs of fish. Well, I'd have to see that to believe it. There's a lot of issues about the fish and now they're talking about possibly having to take some dams out downstream . . . change our whole way of life and everything, because of an endangered species . . . I don't know what the trade-off is but . . . we got so many damn more fish around than we used to [as well as other game] . . . [and people keep pushing it, for example] you read the mission statement of the elk foundation -- it's not for the preservation of the mighty elk, it's to have more elk to hunt. They want more habitats for hunters and this and that. They get all these little old ladies to contribute 25 bucks to the elk foundation and she just thinks that we ought to preserve the elk and that isn't what they're doing. And we've got so damn many more [now], you ought to come up here during hunting season, we've still got a bunch of elk in our yard out here, everyday I'd get up at daybreak to manage these hunters and God, they just think it's wonderful, you know. We've just got more hunters, we've got more fishermen and you know, that's the problem more than anything else. And then they all want a place to hunt and fish and as far as they're concerned somebody has to provide this opportunity for them. And they themselves, they're the problem."

Grizzly bears, as a local issue, would appear to be much less salient locally than in other areas of the Kootenai. According to a senior Forest Service staff member, "Grizzlies used to be a flash point here" but it is no longer a prominent issue. Two grizzlies were reported to have been shot locally in the past ten years. Of the four recent transplants from British Columbia, two were known to be dead, and the fate of the other

two was unknown at the time of the interviews. Although grizzlies seldom come up spontaneously as an issue, when asked about them local residents often have strong feelings. At one extreme, a type of feeling that was expressed a number of times was that the "proper management" of grizzly bears consisted of "The Three S's: Shoot, Shovel, and Shut Up." According to one of the individuals who expressed this viewpoint, there were understandable reasons why the bears were no longer found in this area, and that attempts to import such predators back into the area were ill-advised, at best. Reasons provided included an explanation that conditions had changed with extensive human habitation in the area, and these changes will cause inevitable conflicts between bears and humans. In addition, the notion that bears would appear to receive preferential treatment for use of National Forest resources does not sit well with some residents.

Others question the wisdom of introducing grizzlies into an area that may be too small to support them, which will inevitably lead to conflicts with nearby human inhabitants. For example:

"[the] Cabinets [is] an hour-glass shaped wilderness area. Two miles across the narrowest part, and they say, well, the grizzlies, their range is 50 miles, so if they're going east and west, they're in and out of that wilderness area half of their life. And for anytime they get on private land or run around the valleys or something, why, you got problems. And simply to say, "No. You aren't going to log this, you aren't going to do this, you aren't going to do that, because it's going to be grizzly habitat," well, it creates real social problems, because people don't like that. You've got to run your cattle operation, I mean, we've got people west of us or east of us . . . where they've had to shoot grizzlies and you know, \$10,000 fine and they're in court for a year, and all they're doing is protecting their property, but they've told us now this bear is more treasured than your property and human life and that's just the sacrifice you're going to have to make. Well, the public is not, and knowing the people around here, they're just simply not going to accept it. And they're never going to get one of these programs off and running unless you have the public . . . accept it, they aren't simply going to be cooperative . . . They think it's going to be so damn simple, we're just going to set aside this. It doesn't work. I'd shoot one if he came down here. We've got wolves all around us here too. I'm just not that broad-minded, I guess. The grizzly is a very fascinating animal . . . I think it's great, but a grizzly and human beings are not compatible . . . we have [other bears around, and they are not problem but a] Grizzly is completely different, I mean, grizzly's got an ornery disposition and he's just looking for trouble all the time. And then for . . . the Feds to tell me, well, it's just too bad that you live in an impact area, and I say, "Hey, old buddy. I was there before you decided on this program, so don't tell me that I've got to change the whole ranch operations to get along with this damn bear." "Well, you're going to have to." And I said, "No. I'm not." We've never come to that, but it's ridiculous. To me, if they want to see grizzlies, they can go to Alaska. It's a tough deal, and the Forest Service is

in there because they get it from both sides because the grizzlies don't belong to them, they are being introduced as part of another agency. But as soon as they are transplanted and they start growing there, then they become the Forest Service's problem . . . the public [here] never will accept the grizzly, they'll never accept the wolves. They talk about these wolves, and hell, you may find some problem wolves, but they won't be around very long. People won't tolerate it. That era is gone. We don't need a wolf. We still have some great places in Glacier and Yellowstone Park where the grizzly shouldn't be allowed to live. For man to select these areas and say simply well, that's habitat and that's where he's going to live . . . it's a tough deal."

According to one local individual who is involved with a number of different uses of Forest resources, grizzly bears are misplaced targets for people's disagreement with Forest management policy. In his words:

"[The Forest Service] are required by law to take care of that bear [through habitat management], but they use that bear as an excuse when it is convenient for them . . . See the miners, all through the 80s they ran helicopters all over the Cabinet wilderness . . . did any damn thing they wanted to, just about. And the bear got bumped into areas that I wanted to go in and hunt and spend the night, and they wouldn't let me because of the bear. They didn't finish [the explanation by] saying because the miners bumped the bear, the bear bumps you.' That's the reality of the situation. But, there is only so much habitat left here that . . . the biologists are dumping bears in here every year, because that's job security for them . . . While the Forest Service is stuck with taking care of the bears' home. They have to have so many bear management units in there. And, in reality . . . if they just leave that alone, and it's the right type of habitat, those bears are going to live there and stay there. They can't force them to stay there, it's not the grizzly bear's nature. But, they're stuck with taking care of the [habitat] . . . So, when a big money operation comes in, like mining, you know, megabucks, [and] money runs politics, they're going to get what they want, so the bear gets bumped. And it starts the chain reaction right down the line. Recreation is at the bottom of it. So if they have to -- and I've seen them do this -- the miners would go in and they would have [a] drilling operation going, and it could be in a grizzly [area] and [the Forest Service would] say, alright, the bears are going to go over [t]here, cause the miners are here now.' Well, nobody tells the bears that, but they're supposed to know somehow. And when the bear moves over here, then we don't want you guys over here.' So we just get bumped around. And that has created a lot of hard feeling . . . The road closure policy -- the Forest Service tells the public that it's because of the bear. Well, it's got a lot of the locals hating the bears. And if they can, they kill them -- and they do -- and they cover them up because . . . it's an enemy to them . . . They're not able to go into the country and do what they wanted to do, and the Forest Service uses the bear as their scapegoat.

Instead of being up front, they can't tell them the situation. Everybody knows it, but nobody is saying it . . . So the bear ends up being the bad guy. Poor damn bear, it's not their fault, they're just trying to find some place to live. So that creates problems."

The potential for the introduction of wolves into the area causes similar concerns to be expressed. As noted earlier, management of National Forest areas primarily as endangered species habitat, particularly in the case of species introduced from outside of the area, runs directly counter to a commonly-held local ethos of multiple use as the appropriate strategy for managing local resources. Introducing predators and then "locking up" areas of the Forest for their benefit, while at the same time not holding timber sales that are perceived as essential for the health of the local economy is seen as "preferring animals over people." With wolves in particular, a number of people reported seeing wolves in the area, but were not willing to report them for fear of accelerating the process of limiting or closing resource access on account of the endangered species. Similar to the case of grizzly bears, some individuals held the extreme view that other persons would eliminate the wolves from the area so that they did not become an intolerable problem.

Endangered species management, in general, is not as contentious in western Sanders County as it has been in other areas of the Pacific Northwest. Local residents are well aware of the problem, however, and the potential threats to local livelihood that can accompany related management issues. In the words of one resident:

"I guess the biggest thing that I don't understand on the ecosystem . . . I just don't, is . . . when its one little bird. Maybe I don't take that serious enough, extinction of something, versus it shuts down everything because there is a fish that may not be anyplace else. I am not sure I understand the importance of that. The evolution continues from the time God created us, I mean, evolution just means things change and grow. And I am not sure that I understand how a certain bird or a fish can stop a whole job or community, maybe I don't understand the importance of science, I mean, we don't have dinosaurs anymore. And we have certainly survived that. So I guess maybe, that is the only management that I perhaps don't understand the importance of this one bird or this one fish over the existence of people and survival . . . Maybe it isn't that kind of a decision that has to be made. I don't carry it that far, I love animals. But I don't . . . think a whole community should have to fold up their tents and leave because some fish aren't going to swim in that stream anymore."

Environmental Quality

Environmental quality, particularly concern over water quality, is a theme that has run throughout this characterization of Sanders County issues. There are a number of local interests that focus a good deal of effort on water quality issues, including the Cabinet Resource Group and those involved with the adopt-a-stream program. Another group that has been active on environmental quality issues is the Clark Fork Coalition. This

group focusses its efforts on river issues, and has been particularly active with their concerns of the impacts of mining on water quality.

In general, water quality was the primary issue within the more general topic of environmental quality expressed locally. One resident expressed a commonly held viewpoint on the water quality risks of development within some drainages:

"I'm not one against growth and I believe that a person ought to be able to do with his own land whatever he wants to do, as long as it doesn't infringe upon the rights of others. Those of us living downstream from some of the subdivisions [wonder] what's going to happen with our water quality, why, that's a very frightening thing, and it's something we're simply not going to compromise. We're not going to take the chances that it may work or it may not work, because if we ever get the aquifer and this land polluted around here, there's no going back. Unless you just simply dig it up and bring in new soil. A lot of people can't understand it. They just can't understand why we get up in arms. Well, I have seen some beautiful valleys in Montana like this, where you can't drink the water, and you know, they've polluted the aquifer and a quality of life . . . I'll never see where they will ever get back and they're spending millions of dollars on . . . site clean-ups."

Specifically, there is marked concern over the potential of mining in the National Forest to degrade water quality. However, this does not appear to be a concern that draws as much activity in western Sanders County as it does in other areas because, perhaps, as one long-term resident explained, "mining was never really that strong in this area, not as much as over in Idaho, or farther east in Montana . . . [although] I'm sure there used to be some silver mines around." In fact, there have been a number of small mines in the area, and one active antimony operation has in the recent past been involved in processing rather than mining. Whether or not future mining is economically viable in the area will depend on a number of circumstances which include overseas conditions (economies, demand, etc.) and existing environmental quality constraints.

One area water quality program that has been actively participated in is the "adopt-a-stream" program. As explained by a person active in it:

"It's basically recruiting volunteers to adopt a stream and do some homework and some water quality testing on a systematic basis . . . to get some baseline data and sort of keep an eye on it. It's really primarily educational, it's not so much an issue of . . . finding polluters and taking them to court. It's really a way to get people involved and get their feet wet . . ."

Wilderness

Part of the Cabinet Mountains Wilderness is within the Sanders County portion of the Kootenai National Forest. Local concerns expressed over the wilderness area issue are often a distillation of a number of other issues. Creation and maintenance of a

wilderness area for some parts of the Forest achieves some of the goals of those who would view the Forest as a type of preserve. For those who subscribe to the philosophy that the National Forest primarily represents a set of renewable resources that are set aside for periodic harvest and other multiple uses, the creation of wilderness areas often seems to represent "what is wrong" with Forest Service management of the public resources. To those who hold this view, the National Forest is not a National Park, and thus should not be treated as such. The commercial use of its resources are the key to the local economy, and to larger economies beyond.

Another issue that is increasing pressure on the wilderness area is increased use. As increasing numbers of visitors from outside the area, primarily from Idaho and Washington according to Forest Service staff, are drawn to the wilderness, there are more reports of trash, noise, and other human-caused problems.

Historic preservation for posterity is also an aspect of wilderness issues. For example, a perspective sometime expressed about the wilderness and "old growth" trees is that preservation of these areas is akin to historic preservation -- there may be a benefit to knowing the past, but the past should not be allowed to dominate the present. In other words, "wilderness" and "old growth" are a part of the past that does not reflect the reality of contemporary use needs. This perspective is put forth in the words of one individual as follows:

"I think we ought to manage our resources. I'm really not an advocate of setting aside any land. I look at our own ranch here, and you do away with some of the things you've done in the past ... I can see where people want to preserve the past, and give their children the opportunity to see some of the past, but I think that they can better manage [things] ... [you can] bring your children up and if they've never seen old growth timber, why, they're just going to have to look at that stump and take somebody's word that at one time there was a big tree there. If they live long enough, they're going to see other big trees, because they do grow. Trying to preserve this simply so that we have this old growth stand of timber here so everybody can go look at it, you know, it creates a lot of problems. It's a fire hazard, and if we can take some of that timber before it dies on the stump and make some use of it, I'm all for that. I don't think we ought to waste any of our natural resources ... simply for the preservation and aesthetic value of it because, given time, those forests will grow again. Young people that grow up with the trees, they can have the same experience ... And there's just some things that pass. You go from one age to another ... I just think it's terrible to let mother nature do her own thing ... I think that man can manage it much better for the benefit of all of us."

6.5.3 Agency Communication with Community Publics

Perceived Needs and Problems

Western Sanders County presents some challenges for local communication. An example of this is the availability of television reception in the area. In the Heron-Noxon-

Trout Creek area, the only television reception available is from the west. In the words of one interviewee, "you know all the news from Spokane, but you can't find out what is happening in Montana." This has implications for timely dissemination of information about political issues and political campaigns and the like, and also for resource management issues, because the issues seen on TV are not always local issues.

Interview data would suggest that Forest Service local community outreach programs are well received, particularly when they are held at locations separate from Forest Service facilities. For example, individuals cited the success of meetings held in the White Pine Grange hall and the Heron community center as examples of this type of approach. While these locations may not be any closer for a number of the attendees, it would appear that use of this type of meeting place shows a greater effort and concern for local interests than holding meetings on Forest Service "home turf."

According to one person interviewed from the local media, the local Forest Service entities have been successful in establishing relationships to disseminate information to the public.

"The Cabinet [District] is wonderful. . . . They're just real easy to deal with . . . When something is going on, they're usually the ones that call and initiate some discussion. You know, they want to get things in the paper. They've been good about supporting youth activities. It's been a well run organization. It's something that people can be proud of in the Federal government. I don't know as much about the Kootenai as a Forest per se. We'd have to go by the Cabinet. I think the Cabinet is just really a well managed organization."

One long term resident offered the suggestion that the key to acceptance of local management policies is continuing outreach to the communities:

"you know, if you speak to a logger, they're [the Forest Service] not putting out enough sales. If you speak to an environmentalist, they're tearing up the country. You know, I feel personally, that they are doing a good job . . . [I have seen overuse happen elsewhere, and] when they have to take unpopular stands about some of this stuff, for instance, the roads, I think you hear negatives [from] people who don't understand. Perhaps the biggest value is education or publicity . . . I think if they aren't secretive, if people can understand the issues, they're more likely to accept them. You know, that would be my [suggestion], I would say educate, educate, educate, and, of course, there is still going to be that element that doesn't want to hear it if it doesn't meet what they want to hear. But I think a lot of times that negativism is just ignorance of the issues."

Local media, such the Sanders County Ledger, does devote coverage to Forest Service management issues as shown by the fact that the paper was commonly cited by individuals during interviews as a source of information about Forest Service plans and

actions. The River Journal, a local newspaper begun in late 1993, whose primary coverage area includes the study communities of Trout Creek, Noxon, and Heron, is also available as a source of Forest Service-related information.

The Implications of Community for the Public Involvement Process

According to interview information, Forest Service educational presentations in the area are well received and well attended by the local public. Two examples were commonly cited during the interviews: presentations on the 1910 Fire and the Glacial Lake Missoula flooding. It was commonly stated that this sort of interaction helped with the public communication process. One individual stated that the Forest Service could benefit from being more proactive in these types of events:

"out at the Heron Community Center, one of the first . . . public meeting[s] we did there was on the Fire of 1910 . . . and it was Forest Service people who largely did the presentation. But the meeting was developed, the idea was conceived, and pulled together by non-Forest Service people. But the Forest Service were the people with all the information, so they were the ones who did the presentations. You know . . . that's good. They do get involved in that way, when they are asked to . . . take part in a public meeting, or make a presentation to some group or another. I think they need a lot more public interaction.

A number of individuals interviewed were of the opinion that public comments often had little to do with management direction of the National Forest and expressed frustration at this aspect of the public involvement process. The words of one individual sum up this perception:

"If I had to generalize, I would say that the new Forest Service spends a lot more energy, and I don't want to say listening here, accepting comments. But I think that there is sort of a widespread perception that they take all the comments and they do what they want to do anyway. I temper that by saying the Forest Service has hired a ton of biologists in the past five or ten years, and I think that is having an impact on the agency. But I think public comment, my experience is that it is not important to the decision making process, generally."

A number of individuals noted the tendency of local publics not to get involved until late in the planning process, even when there was ample notice and opportunity for them to do so earlier. Few people offered solutions. One person's perspective on the process fairly represented multiple comments along these lines:

"Well, I think that's a real hard one because . . . the standard for given Forest Service actions [is that] they have a scoping meeting, and they put out information and they have press releases, and they get very limited input in many cases, then they're ready to do the thing and people start saying what's going on here, you know, how come you never asked us?' And I don't know the solution to that. I think the Forest Service has done a good job of trying to involve people up front, but I don't think they get, how

can I say this, it's hard to get much involvement until something is about to happen. That's the reality, I think everybody has experienced that. The only suggestion I might have there is that when private industry wants to know what people think, they do some marketing studies and then they tailor it around that . . . I think the Forest Service, in a lot of cases, is sort of waiting for people to come to them, and they hear from four extremists here and three kooks there, and they throw all that out and they do what they want to do anyway. Maybe that's not fair, but . . . I think they would be better served by maybe doing some surveys and that kind of thing. For example, interestingly, recently a survey was done asking people state-wide about wilderness issues and it turned out, there is a wilderness proposal . . . considered by many people to be sort of radical because it's protecting a lot of country. And the majority of randomly sampled state-wide people supported that more than any other particular plan. And it's like nobody asked them before. You know all they heard was from the extreme end . . . You know again, my sense as a conservationist is that the majority of local people are real concerned about recreation and wildlife issues and . . . much less commodity oriented than the agency is."

Some individuals interviewed portrayed a frustration with the public involvement process at different points in the administrative process. In the words of one person:

"The biggest thing with the Forest Service is their decision making policies . . . like two weeks ago . . . [they] made a decision to go ahead and do some trail work on a dead end trail. [Essentially, what was said was] 'I have made this decision, now the public comment period starts.' They'll hold a public meeting and say 'well, this is what we're going to do, now it's your turn to tell us what you think about it.' In reality they don't really give a damn what you think about it, this is the way it's going to be anyway. And their side of it is they publish it, for people to public comment beforehand and nobody shows up. One or two people come in every time. And it's a double edged sword, it cuts both ways. But when they do make the decision, and say 'well, now you can comment on it' -- forget it. You're wasting your time and theirs both. The decision's made, nothing's going to change it."

Another person who has been active in the public involvement process in the past offered a different type of approach when asked how to better involve the public:

"Oh, man. I don't really know how to answer that, because you've got so many different groups that have different interests. If I was running it . . . I would get me together a team of my Forest Service people, a representative from each district, and identify the user groups. Go through and identify your user groups first, categorize them. And then get representatives from those groups. You'd have a representative from the Forest Service to respond to that group. You'd have outfitters. You'd have loggers. You'd have miners. You'd have everything. Residents, whatever.

And then get those groups together and tell them what you want to do: OK we're brightening up our new management plan. What are your concerns and what would you like to see?' And then have them write it down a list from each [of the] user groups. And then get reps from all those user groups together at a big table up at the ASO's office and go right down the line. OK, logging, what do you want?' You can't make them all happy, and not everyone is going to get what they want. But, then at that point you . . . hammer out something . . . where everybody could get a little bit of what they wanted. If everybody gets a little bit of what they want, the end result is going to be everybody is not going to go away totally pissed off. You know concessions are going to have to be made. But, I would go through and identify the user groups, what their interests are, what they want, look at what you've got that you could give them, and then start to hammer it out from there."

6.5.4 Ecosystems Management

Many of the local residents interviewed were unfamiliar with the term "ecosystems management." One individual's response was fairly typical:

"I haven't heard it. Other than I've read it someplace in the newspaper or something. I don't honestly know. I've heard it on TV, I'm sure. Someplace along the line, somebody mention[ed] ecosystems management."

Some individuals argued that from an individual user or user group perspective ecosystem management is a difficult concept. For example:

"I don't know if you can ever, if that can work 100 percent or not. Because as long as you've got people . . . I mean if my only concern is using that forest for hunting, I'm going to [have] tunnel vision in there. If I'm a picnicker and a hiker, I'm going to [have] tunnel vision [in that direction]. You know, when you blend all that, I don't know if people are ever going to mentally blend it . . . I don't even know if I could, to be honest with you."

One person offered the opinion that the communities have not had positive experience with different types of management strategies. In particular, when asked about ecosystems management by the Forest Service, he responded:

"I think their credibility is real low here on that issue. They had a program called new perspectives' that they introduced about three years ago and . . . you sort of don't hear the name anymore. And I asked somebody about six months ago, what's new perspectives?' and they said, well we sort of rolled that over into ecosystems management'. There's a real strong perception that . . . the PR guys come up with these new slogans and this new lingo. And that's about as far as it gets. And I think there's a lot of the problems . . . when you ask for some sort of definition of what it means and maybe some new guidelines about how it effects of the activities on the ground -- you get a lot of bureaucratic generality. I guess I'd have to say I think the ecosystems management thing is a difficult concept to

implement and to communicate about, and I'll certainly give them that, and I think they're maybe feeling their way. But I'm real skeptical about what it's produced or what it might produce at this point. And I think they have done a poor job of communicating what it's going to mean on the ground and to the community."

Others alluded to the difficulties inherent in operationalizing such an all-encompassing management approach. One person who was familiar with the term and the concepts was fairly typical in his observations about the issue:

"I don't think they [members of the public] know a whole lot about it yet, other than what they picked up in the paper. It is just another term. And it probably confuses a lot of people because they figure what's been happening already?'. . . is it the same, or is it going to be different?' Really, we have been practicing that [type of management] for, probably, years. It just never had that word attached to it. So I think the terminology is one fallacy . . . I mean, new words come up and people get a little confused on what you're really going to do. [It is difficult to communicate] or try to explain it. Like if I was trying to explain it, I'm not even sure how to explain it."

Other people offered the opinion that ecosystems management represented, from the local perspective, both a lessening of the importance of human factors (particularly the relationship of local populations to the resources) in the planning process and a degree of waste, as seen from the local perspective, that was hard to accept:

"It disturbs us to see this, what we would consider waste. And we've heard stories about Forest Service personnel when confronted with these sorts of situations making remarks like 'well, sure those trees will just stand there and die and fall over, and then rot into the ground, but the bugs need something to eat too.' And we would maintain that this while perhaps this shows a ecological awareness of ecosystems and the total components right down to microscopic organisms, we would kind of maintain that this also shows a kind of callous disregard for waste from the human standpoint. We're a little bit concerned that in this attempt to staff Forests . . . with specialists and to get a handle on these whole ecosystems from the standpoint of every owl and every bug and every mammal on the district, that humans, and specifically that the local native human population, is getting short treatment by this approach. Those of us who live in this area, we too love the wildlife and the wide open spaces that we frequent, or we wouldn't live here. Hey, we don't want to see it ruined or despoiled or depopulated. We also have a real strong feeling for what waste is. And some of the things that are done and prescribed in the name of scientific metaphors or scientific ecosystems, we don't necessarily agree with. If we would agree with them we sure don't at this point understand all that's being done on the ground."

6.5.5 Desired Future Condition of the KNF

Views on Balanced or Multiple Use

There would appear to be more consensus in western Sanders County than elsewhere that the key to local social and economic well being depends upon multiple use of National Forest resources. This theme, exemplified in the following quotation, is noted throughout this section.

"I'd love to say that I'd like to see the timber industry remain really strong, but I think that we have to look out for the [other] uses. But then I don't think that we should just lock it up. It seems like there's a mentality of either they think its going to be all logging, or no logging at all. I think we can reach a balance. I would almost say that I think that some preference has to be given for logging, because it's important to our local economy, and it's also important to the national economy. Somebody out there has got to be producing wealth so that the economy continues to grow. We can't all be selling hamburgers and insurance, I just don't see that working. We can't all be consultants asking questions.

One resident noted that the Forest Service is perceived locally as making significant strides in managing for a variety of uses in addition to timber sales, but that the image of the Service has not changed overnight. Additionally, this person, among others, expressed a hope that the Forest Service not "over-manage" some types of use:

"I think we're still coming out of an era where people thought that [timber management was] all the Forest Service did, and probably at one time 90 percent of it was just manag[ing] timber. I think we're, gradually, we're seeing that they're making real attempts to allow for all the different uses, and they're trying to provide it. I sometimes wonder [however] 'what can you do to promote sight-seeing?' I mean, do you have to have a sight-seeing [Forest Service] employee People know how to get out in their cars, and drive up roads until they can't drive any further. So, some of those uses don't really require a lot of management. Other things, like fish and wildlife habitat, require a little more intensive management: burning, sometimes they'll use clearcuts to provide winter range, things like that. I think they're putting forth an image of showing more concern for all the different multiple uses."

One person summed up a variety of issues on management direction away from a nearly-exclusive focus on timber:

"Generally . . . [the Forest Service] has a tendency to produce commodities and at the expense of other resources. I think, beyond saving the wild country and sort of [a] little lighter management on the timber land, I think the Forest could be considerably more sensitive to the needs of the outfitters and the . . . [other] people who sort of provide some sort of commercial form of recreation . . . I think the Forest Service, in my view, sort of turned a blind eye to the other economic uses of the forest and I

think they could do a better job of accommodating some of those groups."

One individual suggested a focus on managing for more recreational uses, and attempting to spread the impact of recreational uses:

"I think there are two issues. One is a perception that the commodity orientation generally is hard on recreation. And that . . . less road building and the less clear cutting in general would be a good thing. As far as specific issues around managing . . . recreation, I think that . . . generally more energy could go into trail building and developing places that gets heavier use and maybe opening some . . . hiking routes and so on to places that don't get as much use now. And I think again that's something that, probably if they were more tuned into particularly the commercial recreation, they could do more in that area."

Another resident suggested an ecosystems approach that featured non-directed use, with a close watch kept on water quality:

"Well, the term ecological management is being tossed around -- I guess I could toss it in too. To sustain the ecological integrity of the forest. And to see that no one use damages that ecological integrity. To allow the public to make its various uses of the forest . . . not to direct the public how to use the Forest, but to allow the public to make its various uses of the Forest . . . under the constraints of ecological integrity of all aspects of the Forest, and that includes the water, the rivers, the watersheds. And the ecological integrity of the rivers and the streams which is probably the most sensitive factor of the ecological equation."

One individual summed up the multiple use management strategy as attempting to appeal to multiple publics that have desires that conflict to varying degrees, but share preserving the resource base as a common need:

"The loggers are going to want access to timber. The miners are going to want access to the ore. The outfitters are going to want access to recreation opportunities. The locals are going to end up [asking for some of] everything, from . . . their winter meat to . . . be able to get into a closed road to get their firewood out. It's going to have to be very diverse. With the one key thing in mind, protecting the quality of the resource. That's . . . the most valuable thing that we still have here is . . . a pretty quality resource. None of the groups should be able to harm that resource. And by harm I don't mean cutting down a tree in a logging situation. For instance, I mean cutting a road so close to a creek bottom to where that creek is going to fill up with silt and those trout can't get up there . . . things like that. This country will heal itself over a period of time . . . if we all weren't here tomorrow, a hundred years from now you come here and you wouldn't be able to recognize . . . that anything had happened here, maybe . . . And if you're constantly depleting it . . . it never has time to heal itself. So it has to be kept in check somehow. The logging policies now . . .

I think they're on the right track. Going through and just doing real small cuts, they selectively cut it and they leave some of the trees in there so the units can reseed themselves. They do a minimum impact road for access. They don't need these great big wide roads . . . they just need a road good enough to get those trucks in and out of there and, whenever possible, helicopter logging so you don't even have to have the road. That's tough to do though, because it is so expensive, which creates a burden on the loggers. You know they have to remain competitive. So you can't put restrictions on them that is going to price them right out of the situation."

Changes in the Nature of Timber Harvesting and the Timber Industry

One issue that came to the fore in interviews was the nature of the relationship of the timber industry to the Forest Service in terms of "subsidies." Some individuals strongly held the opinion that such subsidies were an overall benefit to the economy by keeping lumber prices down, encouraging building, etc. Others, however, felt that not having the timber industry respond to market conditions was detrimental to the local economies overall. One individual expressed the latter view as follows:

"another topic that comes to mind . . . [is] that the timber sales are basically subsidized. That the logging industry is subsidized. And subsidies for resource extraction is a big issue. That . . . a general taxpayer should be subsidizing one industry, causing that industry to bloat . . . beyond what is ecologically sustainable and then causing a boom and bust cycle. I mean, either the subsidiz[ed] industry is going to run out of its resource that it extracts, or it's going to lose its subsidy and when one of those happens, it is going to bust, and then all of those people are going to be mad at something or somebody rather than encouraging the industry . . . to adjust under healthy pressures of supply and demand. But the subsidies cause it to bloat inside, and creates an economic burden on the whole community, [then] you get the bust syndrome . . . that is a real serious problem as far as management at the national level [for] the Forest Service."

Changes in the Appeals Process

A concern over management expressed locally is the desire to streamline the appeals process so that they could be handled and resolved more expeditiously. In the words of one long-time resident:

"they're putting up a sale out here that's going to put 10 or 15 people to work for the next six months to a year. And it's held up by some . . . [individual] because he can go down and turn in a lawsuit for nothing out of his pocket. And that can hold it up for years."

One long time resident offered the following opinion on how important it is for the local communities to resolve the appeals process, and how the lack of timber harvest on public lands is felt throughout the local environment and economy:

"Well, I think the biggest issues here is just availability of timber and . . . the appeals process. What has happened here over the last few years is that there has been less and less . . . timber available on public lands because of the appeals process and those kinds of things. As a result we have seen a lot of private land timber be sold here, which is detrimental, I

think, to the area and to wildlife habitat and to the environment. [For] a lot of reasons . . . I think that the availability of timber issue is probably the biggest issue here . . . it's been one of the reasons also for land prices to escalate so dramatically . . . people see that they can buy a hundred acres of ground and its got enough timber on it to pay for it, and then have the land left over that they can still divide, and get their money back out . . . it makes me sick personally to go up and down the county and see some of the logging jobs . . . on private land because there has been a lot of . . . [improper] timber management . . . because of the appeals process and because of the controversy of cutting on public land . . . that has forced, I mean the loggers are going to eat and the mills are going to run, and so it's forced private land owners to do the things that are probably not appropriate."

6.6 Special Populations and The KNF

The western area of Sanders County is not considered home to special populations with regard to the management of the Kootenai National Forest. Native American issues, including those applicable to Native Americans living in Sanders County, are developed elsewhere.

6.7 Public Perceptions of Their Role in the LRMP Process

As noted in many places in this chapter, the local publics desire an active role in the LRMP process, including the specific decision making processes to achieve specific management goals. On the one hand, it is recognized that it is often difficult to get people involved early in the planning process. On the other hand, it is also clear that people will get involved if they feel the situation is urgent or important enough. A number of local residents, for example, have been actively involved in the Plan appeals process. Paradoxically, there are a number of residents who believe that public comment, when taken, has little impact on management direction; however, it is public input, through the appeals process, that has resulted in what many feel is a management environment that is less responsive to what are perceived as local needs. These issues are more fully developed in the summary chapter (chapter eight).

7.0 MANAGEMENT CONCERNS OF THE KOOTENAI TRIBE

The Kootenai Tribe is a "special population" for the purposes of this study. "Special population" is a technical term that refers to interest groups or stakeholders who, because of their status or dependence on a resource, may suffer disproportionate consequences if that resource is damaged, destroyed, or used in a way contrary to the interest of the group. The Kootenai Tribe, because of past and present cultural connections to these lands and their use by tribal members, is a special population. Logistical issues limited the number of interviews with members of the Tribe. However, the interview data indicate intense interest in current and future management plans, including ecosystems management. Consequently, we present here a summary of issues from group and individual interviews as one indication of the Kootenai perspective regarding forest management. The information from these interviews suggests multiple and complex relationships of the Kootenai to the KNF; and the discussion presented here should be considered as suggestive of the types of topics that need to be considered with the Tribe as current and future management plans are developed.

As noted in chapter two, the Kootenai Tribe has had a long association with the KNF, using these lands for multiple purposes, including ceremonial, subsistence, residences, and other cultural purposes. Although most Tribal members now live outside of Lincoln County, these lands remain important because of past historical attachments, treaty rights to these lands, and current uses.

Other stakeholder groups have historical connections to the KNF, but none of these groups have the legal basis for their stake in the forest that is indicated by the treaty rights the Kootenai Tribe has to these lands. These treaty rights specify both the historical and legal connections of the Kootenai Tribe to their traditional lands that are within the boundaries of the KNF. These treaty rights are meaningful to modern-day Kootenai because they provide a sense of guaranteed access and, to some degree, protected access to areas that have cultural significance for tribal members.

'We do not need any permits to hunt, to fish, to camp. We can camp almost anywhere and we do not need permits. In the treaty rights it says you can make your shelter where ever for the purpose of hunting and you can hunt and dry your meat right there. Sometimes it becomes an issue, there was someone last summer that tried to use a recreation area and they tried to make them pay and they said, 'I don't have to' and that became an issue, but I don't know where that is at right now.'

Treaty rights are important because they express to tribal members their access to traditional lands for their use. These rights are not ones that tribal members feel are necessarily granted, but rather they are ones that have to be asserted since these rights are not acknowledged by other users of the forest. Further, it is felt that not all government agencies are sufficiently aware of the substance of these treaty rights. This results in the need for the Kootenai to assert these rights on an ongoing basis.

However, unlimited hunting is not a guarantee to individuals since the tribe itself regulates the number of animals that can be taken.

Tribal members use the KNF for hunting, fishing, gathering berries and medicinal plants, camping, swimming and other recreational uses, and ceremonial and religious activities. Some of the ceremonial, religious, and medical plant gathering uses are culturally important and sensitive issues about which individuals feel a very strong sense of privacy. The sensitivity and privacy about these issues cannot be over-emphasized. It results in a certain reluctance to share information about uses that are culturally meaningful. Furthermore, there are activities associated with the use of the forest that are part of traditional ways that are used to instruct children and young adults in the cultural heritage of the Kootenai. Fishing, hunting, camping, and other such activities thus have meaning not only as pastimes, but also as an instruction for children in the Tribe's way of life. These actions become an enactment of the way of life, an aboriginal tie, that expresses the relationship of lands within the KNF to the Kootenai Tribe. For example, this sense of enactment of a way of life is illustrated in the following excerpt from the interview data:

"Telling stories, telling what we know about the areas, these are important things we do. We would hear these stories over and over again, my mom and dad would tell us these stories just when we were picking berries and things like that and it's a lot more than what people think. We aren't just going up for food and animals. It's important to us in other ways. It's part of our past and part of the way of life we want to pass on to our children."

Historical traditions of the Kootenai Tribe exist as a legacy within the boundaries of the KNF in the form of "cultural resources." These cultural resources include sites of past use or habitation by members of the Kootenai Tribe or other aboriginal inhabitants. These cultural resources are a valued part of the tribal past and a modern-day connection to the lands of the KNF. As an embodiment of the past, these valued cultural resources are felt to be an essential part of the tribal heritage that must be protected. Damage to these resources is considered a sacrilege. For example:

'Our people have been here for a long time, this is our place. It is important to us that we pass on to our children the hunting sites and where the old places are. When they (non-tribal members) pick up arrowheads and things they are desecrating our past: a page of our history is torn out.'

The landscape is thus not only one that is made meaningful by present day uses, but also by the physical artifacts that represent the continuity of the Kootenai past with the cultural present. The protection and preservation of these resources is an important issue in the Kootenai's forest management concerns. The tribe expects the Forest Service to implement the legally mandated protection of these resources, especially from commercial collectors as well as from "pot hunters." Enforcement of laws protecting cultural resources is an area where there is room for exchanging concerns and ideas between the Forest Service and the tribe.

The Kootenai also have concerns about overall environmental quality, gated roads, timber harvest practices, and competition with commercial berry and mushroom collectors. Gated roads have restricted access to areas for cultural usage, although there appears to be a workable solution to this problem. Similarly, timber harvesting practices that threaten cultural resources sites, other areas that have cultural meaning, and overall environmental quality are an ongoing concern. The concerns expressed about mining in the following quotation are just as applicable to concerns about the overall environmental quality of the KNF:

'A lot of these firms that are coming in, they are in it for the short term economic benefits, but not the long term. The rest of us are going to be here 20-30 years from now, but they won't be. We are concerned about stream quality and the overall health of the forest. It can be a devastating effect if those are not cared for. You have to look at the long term issues.'

Clearcutting and selective harvesting are viewed in terms of their benefits. Clearcutting results in an increase of habitat for huckleberries, but they are also a "visual scar" and they change the experience of the forest: 'We want to go where it is peaceful, so it is important how it looks. We want it to be peaceful and there not to be a lot of ATV's running around in there.'

Commercial huckleberry and mushroom pickers have also recently become a more prominent concern since resources that are important to the Kootenai for cultural reasons are increasingly difficult to find. The cultural preference for such "traditional foods" cannot be overstated.

'People used to go up there a lot more than they do now because of the competition from the commercial pickers. We pick for our personal use and for those foods are special to us, they are a part of our diets and we crave them. The deer, elk, moose, and the roots, we crave those things, especially the elders. But, it has gotten so hard to get them that now we can only have them on special occasions.'

Plants and roots are also collected, and some are used for medical purposes. However, knowledge of these plants is kept private because of fears that information about them will become public and result in competition for these resources: 'We don't want to tell people about the plants because they will tell someone else. It's like abusing our culture when they misuse the plants that are important to us, so we don't say anything about them.' This feeling of privacy regarding information about plants is an expression of a more generalized concern about divulging information regarding cultural practices or knowledge. The consequences are perceived to be a potential harm to those practices or other detrimental effects on the tribe.

There is also a theme in the interview data about the crowding of the forest and the loss of privacy that Tribal members have previously experienced. Some of this concern about the crowding also has a safety component:

'There are some radical types that roam around the woods with weapons and that scares the hell out of me. These people have no sense of morality and you feel like you have to strap on a gun to feel safe. I think the Forest Service needs to keep track of those types of activities and let us know if we need to be concerned.'

There is also a more generalized feeling of increased use of the forest which is encroaching on the Tribe's use of these lands.

'Where ever you go, where ever you travel there are people there! You want to go there and be private but you can't. There are too many people around. Sometimes we just want to be in a place to be who we are. We don't want to be disturbed.'

These concerns about privacy and the protection of important cultural knowledge and practices represents an important concern of the Kootenai. Embedded in these concerns is a management issue regarding how to work with the tribe about forest management issues while maintaining the privacy they so highly value.

The Kootenai appear to be favorably disposed to ecosystems management, although the specifics of the approach are allocated to evaluation by tribal botanists, biologists and other specialists. Yet, the general concept resonates with existing cultural concepts about the interaction of elements in the natural landscape:

'It like things we already know. You can't forget about the tiniest element in the system. So you have to look at how things interact, but they don't realize how everything and everyone works together. It (ecosystems management) won't happen overnight. They have been destroying for years and they are trying to mend everything with this plan.'

Ecosystems management is perceived as working to the advantage of tribal interests because, as the concept is seen, it takes into consideration the interaction of all elements in the system:

'They just can't look at one plant. That's where it works to our advantage, they just can't do one thing. Ecosystems is a way to look at the whole picture and not just one aspect, so it can't camouflage one thing and that will help us.'

The Kootenai have an ongoing working relationship with the Forest Service which is valued as an important link to assuring that tribal interests are taken into consideration in management decisions. Even though this is a sound and valued working relationship, there are areas of concern to the tribe. These include:

- The political processes of the tribe need to be taken into consideration when tribal responses to management issues are requested.

- The time-frame for responses is sometimes problematic and there needs to be more consideration of the political realities and limited resources of the tribe.
- The Forest Service has "its own lingo" and there is often a process that needs to be gone through in order to discover the meaning of requests for information or formulating responses to management issues.
- Communication and problem solving has improved because of the tribal liaison with the Forest Service, but further progress can be made by extending this position.
- Issues regarding the intellectual and other property rights need further work to ensure that the cultural resources of the tribe are fully protected.
- When issues concerning the tribe are under consideration, the tribe needs to be consulted "at the front end" of the process rather than after decisions are made.

In general, it appears that the Kootenai Tribe and the Forest Service have established a working relationship in which issues can be discussed, and problems can be evaluated from the point of view of each party. This working relationship demonstrates the potential for all stakeholders to have a strong working relationships with the Forest Service.

8.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter summarizes this report's major points that relate to the overall study objectives as described in chapter one. Chapters one, two, three, and four are informational material that can be consulted by those readers interested in the study objectives, socioeconomic context of the Kootenai National Forest, prior studies relevant for this work, and methods and procedures used for this work. Information from the descriptions of Lincoln County (chapter five), Sanders County (chapter six), and the Kootenai Tribe (chapter seven) is integrated into this chapter, and the summary points and conclusions are then discussed in relationship to the major study objectives.

8.1 Summary of Major Findings

This section summarizes the major findings of this study. These are presented as "bullets" or condensed points that are developed in more detail in the body of this report. These findings are collated so that they can then be used in the second part of this chapter to draw conclusions relevant to the study objectives. Readers interested in the details of any given point should consult the relevant sections of chapters five, six, and seven. The information presented in this summary is about community context and the KNF, perceptions of natural resources, perceptions about the Forest Service and forest management, and the Kootenai Tribe perspective about forest management. This summary emphasizes the findings of this study regarding the perceptions of study participants about these issues. For example, a statement such as "clearcuts are a harvesting tool with limited applications" is a perception of study participants. This perception may or may not be consistent with how foresters view clearcuts, but it does represent a finding about the issue as understood by stakeholders interviewed for this study.

8.1.1 Community Context of the Kootenai National Forest

The community context of the Kootenai National Forest describes social and cultural issues that affect the responses of stakeholders to natural resource management issues. Socioeconomic conditions, social relationships and community culture, and stakeholder groups are the categories of issues summarized in this section.

Socioeconomic Conditions

The region as a whole is experiencing economic and population changes that are likely to influence responses to natural resources issues.

- The population of the region shows a modest decline between 1970 and 1990, but updated 1994 population estimates indicate there is currently an increase in population within the region.
- Population composition is changing.

- There is an in-migration of new residents.
 - This coexists with an out-migration of young adult children of long-term residents.
 - Older residents are accounting for an increasingly larger portion of the total population of the region.
 - More recently arrived residents are less involved in extractive industries than earlier arrived' residents.
- The costs of social programs and services have steadily increased.
 - Employment opportunities are declining.
 - There is a decline in the total number of mining jobs.
 - There is an overall decline in timber jobs.
 - There is a decline in the total number of establishments in the timber industry.
 - Despite a downward trend in employment, the total number of housing units has increased, average number of persons per household has decreased, and the average value of real estate has increased.
 - The timber basis of community economies is changing.
 - There is uncertainty about the economic viability of the timber industry.
 - The total value of wood products sold has declined, and the current trend is downward.
 - Agriculture is a small but nonetheless significant portion of the region's economy. The total number of agriculture operations has decreased, but the value of products sold has shown a steady upward trend, with livestock production accounting for a major contribution to this upward trend.
 - Multiple economic activities allow many small scale businesses to exist. Some logging, part-time retail employment, selling huckleberries, and other such activities also characterizes the economics of many families in the region.
 - There is a significant economic dependency of the region on the resources of the Kootenai National Forest.
 - Logging and the production of wood products are a significant economic contribution to the region's economy.

- Full-time Forest Service employment is a significant contribution to the economy. Summer seasonal employment is also a major source of jobs for area residents.
- Hunting (including outfitting and guiding hunts), firewood cutting, and gathering (for example, berries and mushrooms) are economically significant.
- Residents rely on the use of forest resources for a portion of their overall economic survival and viability.
- Economic diversity is a significant goal of the region given the changing nature of the timber industry and the current downward trend of the total value of wood products produced.
 - New uses for wood products are being investigated.
 - Recreation and tourism are hoped for options that will increase economic diversification.
 - Although tourism is frequently mentioned as a potential solution to this type of problem, few of those interviewed felt that the local tourism potential would develop into an industry that would support large numbers of residents at a reasonable income level.

Land Use

- Land use in the region is dominated by the proportion of Forest and other government lands. Federal and state owned lands account for more than 90% of all lands in Lincoln County and a major portion of lands in Sanders County.
- Harvesting and extracting natural resources is a major land use in the region. Timber harvesting is the largest among these, but large scale mining has significantly declined in recent years.
- Recreational and tourism are increasingly important land uses in the region.
- Ranching and agriculture have traditionally been important uses of land. Recently, however, land has been taken out of agricultural use and put into subdivision and housing developments. This trend tends to feed on itself, in that as the demand for land increases, land prices increase, assessed value increases, taxes increase, and agricultural land becomes more expensive to maintain and more tempting to sell for profit.
- With the breakup of farms and ranches, there is a lessening reliance on local resources for local income. Combined with a lack of timber sales on public lands, this has raised concerns about the apparent loosening of ties between

the local economy and locally available resources.

- It is understood that people are moving to this area primarily because of what are variously termed as "way of life," "quality of life," or "lifestyle" issues that are based on the characteristics of the lands in this region.

The Cultural Basis for Community

"Community" is about the sense of belonging among neighbors and the place they live. A major finding of this study is that community integration is more in the ideals and values about place and community than it is in the social processes or patterns of association and group membership. The cultural values and ways of life of these communities invest individuals in their communities and in concerns about natural resource issues.

- Community is based on both attachment to the attributes of local geography and to an idealized rural community.
 - The value of the landscape and its resources is highly important to people and these values constitute a major reason individuals live in Northwest Montana.
 - The idealized rural community provides an integrating perspective about what local communities should be. This idealized community has the following attributes:
 - Individuals can pursue self-reliance and independence.
 - Neighbors support one another in times of need.
 - There is a high degree of personal safety.
 - Fear of crime is minimal.
 - High moral values exist and support an environment that is good for raising children.
 - Government in general and government regulation in particular should be minimized.
- An outdoor lifestyle is a major integrating force because people share sentiments about the value and meaning of outdoor activities for recreation, work, or other purposes.
 - There is a strong recreational basis for the outdoor lifestyle that is expressed in a variety of activities through which individuals interact with the natural resources of the Kootenai National Forest.

- Hunting is of major importance as a recreational activity, a social means to reinforce bonds with others, and an expression of the values of the outdoor lifestyle. Hunting is also an important contributor to the food supply of many residents.
- Working out-of-doors is preferred and constitutes a reason for residing in the region.
- The strong attachment to place, the idealized sentiments about community, and the conduct of an outdoor lifestyle constitutes an important core of values that residents share. These shared values are significant contributors to the integration of communities.

The Social Basis of Community

The characteristics of social groupings and relationships affect the nature of a community and the degree of community integration. The characteristics of social groupings are relevant for this study because they affect the potential for community integration and the degree of homogeneity in response to issues of importance to a community. Similarly, the characteristics of social relationships are important because they influence how people interact as individuals and participate in the issues that are considered important. The findings summarized below address the types of social groupings, their characteristics, and attributes of social relationships in the study area.

- There are multiple types and bases for social groupings.

Territory is an organizing principle of social groupings in the study region. Territory defines where people live and their groups of reference. The territories in northwest Montana also have specific historic, economic, and social differences that contribute to distinct community identities that residents believe need to be respected.

Formal organizations are those such as community booster organizations, fraternal organizations, and groups concerned with business interests and economic development. These types of groups often have a community-wide (or small region) focus and their purpose is usually community service. Such organizations tend to be the arena of activity of those who are involved in community promotion. These groups are also usually a part of the "core" of a community and promote social integration among those who participate. These groups usually involve a limited number of participants when the entire population of a community is considered.

Clubs may also be a "formal" organization in the sense that they have a charter and may have legal status. However, the defining characteristic of clubs is their focus on specific activities or interests of the club members. Rod and Gun Clubs, Backcountry Horsemen, ski clubs, garden clubs, fly fishing clubs, snowmobile clubs, quilting clubs, and other types of recreational and special interest clubs are popular types of social groups. These groups tend to promote social integration among their members, but because of their focused purposes, they may not function as a major force of social integration.

Volunteer Organizations such as the volunteer fire departments and ambulances usually attract the socially active members of a community. These are prestigious organizations that make significant contributions to the quality of life in these communities and they are recognized as prestigious organizations. Because of their small memberships, they are not major forces of integration, but they are important organizations because they represent the ethic of community involvement and volunteer support among neighbors.

Churches are important expressions of participation in religious life in these communities, and membership in a church is socially valued. There is a relatively large number of churches throughout the study region, with a predominance of Protestant denominations. Churches also express the desire for neighbors who share common values and views about morality. Churches tend to be an integrating force for congregation members. However, the variety of denominations may also be a force for social segmentation within these communities.

Newcomers/Oldtimers are noted here as a type of grouping because the interview data suggests that this is an important social distinction within these communities. "Oldtimer" (or any of a number of similar terms) is a distinction usually applied to members of families who have lived in the region for more than one generation. "Newcomers" is a label often applied to those individuals and families who have moved to the region within the last ten years. The newcomer-oldtimer distinction implies that there are at least two different social networks composed of the older residents and the newer residents within this region. The interview data also suggest that there are different arenas for community participation among oldtimers and newcomers; oldtimers act through their connections with one another, and newcomers tend to act through formal organizations or less extensive informal networks.

Parent-based groups are those entities that are organized around the activities of children within these communities. These include school-based activities as well as recreational and athletic based groupings such as little league and soccer. These types of groups tend to integrate individuals from diverse segments of the community and therefore act as a strong force for community integration.

Cliques or sub-groups refers to distinctions made by community members about individuals who are like-minded and tend to associate more with each other than with other community members. These entities span a wide range of organizational types, degrees of formality, focus of interest, and size: teachers, the Forest Service, and the Militia of Montana are examples of entities that are noted as special types of sub-groups within these communities. The focus of these groups on their specific interests results in limited overall integration with other groups.

Special interest groupings are ones formed in response to specific issues such as Citizens Against Gated Roads, The Kootenai Wildlands Alliance, and Communities for a Great Northwest. These types of special interest groups may have a formal legal status

or they may have a more informal structure. These organizations are not necessarily permanent entities, but they represent a process of residents coming together in response to specific issues. These entities may be formed around conflict and therefore function to promote a specific point of view that may not necessarily work as an integrating force within communities.

- The satellite-hub character of social groupings affects community integration.

The integration of the study communities shows a satellite-hub process. This process is about the nature of the relationships among groups and individuals within these communities. "Hub" relationships are those that tie different groups and individuals together, much like the hub that connects spokes in a wagon wheel. Hub relationships tend to be cross-cutting, that is their ties tend to cut across different groups to which they belong. The more interconnections among groups, the more there tends to be a hub relationship. These relationships promote a tightly integrated community. "Satellite" relationships refers to loosely connected associations among individuals and groups. A group exhibiting satellite attributes tends to have a single purpose, and there are few connections with other groups. Individuals belonging to satellite groups tend to participate in a few groups and there are few cross-cutting ties with other individuals and groups. The loose connections among satellite groups results in a less tightly knit community.

There appears to be some historical basis for variation within these communities of the ratio of hub to satellite type relationships among groups. This appears to be an ongoing process in which at times hub relationships predominate, and at other times satellite relationships are more dominant. This process of shifting between hub and satellite relationships appears to characterize these communities. At this point in time there seems to be more satellite than hub relationships resulting in more loosely knit communities.

- Individuals have multiple types of connections to each other that make face-to-face relationships complex.

Individuals in these communities tend to have multiple types of connections with each other. That is, a boss might also be a hunting partner as well as a fellow church congregation member. These multiple types of connections in social relationships tend to make face-to-face relationship more complicated than in those situations where there is only a single interest in the connection between individuals. Such multiplex relationships tend to act as a brake on social conflicts and on participating in situations where social conflicts are possible or likely.

- There is an ethic of conditional participation in community activities and groups.

The data from this study suggest that there is an ethic of conditional participation in community activities. This ethic supports limited participation in community activities among those individuals who do not wish to be involved in group activities or in only a narrow range of activities. Individuals can participate in a narrow range of "satellite"

groups and perceive that they are "involved" in their community; this ethic of conditional participation also means that they do not feel compelled to participate in other community-wide activities. Public involvement programs need to consider this ethic of conditional participation and its relationship to other values and characteristics of groups in these communities.

- Individual action is usually based on the worldviews and values of a local reference group.

Reference groups in these communities tend to be those based on territory and focused mutual interests. This is not to say, for example, that people in Eureka do not know and associate with people in Troy; nevertheless, residents tend to associate based on kinship, neighborhood, church membership, a common work place, or on common activities in which they participate. These reference groups are more often than not the ones that people are concerned about when they evaluate issues of importance to them. Furthermore, because these reference groups are local, those influences that are external to these communities are viewed with some caution, if not concern.

- A sense of community results as much from ongoing face-to-face relationships as it does from participating in groups and other community activities.

Individuals often have numerous brief interactions with a wide range of people. These brief interactions promote a sense of connection among those who are "known" in some way to each other. These seemingly casual interactions result in a perception of social connection, although such connections do not necessarily result in a tightly knit community. Nonetheless, along with a sense of shared values, ongoing face-to-face relationships constitute a major feature of social relationships that result in feelings of community.

The Consequences of the Kootenai Accords Conflict

The Kootenai Accords Conflict has left a legacy that continues to affect public involvement in and responses to natural resource issues. The conflict resulted from efforts to reach agreement among timber, recreational, and environmental interests over a proposal for wilderness in the Kootenai National Forest. The processes of trying to build an "accord" about these issues eventually resulted in social conflicts and eventual defeat of the accords proposition in a public referendum. The consequences of the accords conflicts are as follows:

- Individuals tend to perceive natural resource issues in terms of the polarization that resulted from the accords conflicts; that is, in terms of supporting or opposing resource harvesting. This implies that substantial effort needs to be applied to presenting issues in terms of their own merits so that they will not be reinterpreted in terms of positions taken on past issues.

- A consequence of the social conflict that resulted from the accords is the "burn out" of some leaders who are now reluctant to participate in natural resource issues that have community-wide importance.
- There is some reluctance for individuals to participate in potentially contentious issues about natural resources because of the observed negative effects on individuals involved in the Kootenai Accords.
- Any public issue regarding natural resources will have to contend with the past social conflicts over this wilderness proposal.

Major Concerns

Major concerns of individuals about their community and its environment are as follows:

Employment opportunities are decreasing and there is a perceived need to develop additional jobs within the region.

There is substantial uncertainty about the overall economic future of the region given recent declines in the timber and mining industry.

Overall environmental quality needs to be maintained while promoting the use of natural resources.

An influx of newcomers is driving up real estate prices and has the potential to adversely affect the overall quality of life in the region.

Building and housing costs have increased along with the real estate prices, and this, in combination with the fact that the few employment opportunities available tend to pay low wages, produces trends that are worrisome for a number of residents. A commonly voiced concern is that young people growing up in the communities, some of them members of families that have been in the area for generations, may not be able to afford to stay.

While there are other concerns about the infrastructure and services provided to residents, the economic future and the need to maintain environmental quality overwhelms most other issues of importance to area residents.

Stakeholders

Because of the strong attachment to place and the dominance of the federal land ownership, everyone in the study area can be said to have a strong stake in forest management issues. Nonetheless, specific stakeholder groups exist within these communities. These are not formal groups, but rather groupings of individuals that are connected by the stakes' they hold in the Kootenai National Forest. The following stakeholder groupings were identified as existing in the study region:

- Timber Interests include loggers, truck drivers, mill workers, and timber companies. Their stakes are in using the resources of the Kootenai National Forest for economic purposes and in some instances to pursue a lifestyle based on harvesting timber. These stakeholders are represented by formal organizations within the timber industry, by community-based organizations such as Communities for a Great Northwest, and by individuals throughout the study region. These stakeholders differentiate between "corporate" and other types of timber stakeholders.
- Mining stakeholders are those individuals and corporate interests that are pursuing the extraction of ores and other underground substances that can be removed from the Kootenai National Forest. These stakeholders have been represented by companies such as Asarco, W.R. Grace, and, more recently, Noranda. There are other small scale operations in the region who are also included in this group.
- Ranching and Agriculture stakeholders are vested in the Kootenai National Forest because, among other reasons, they use forest lands for grazing purposes. These stakeholders are represented by larger groups such as the Cattleman's Association, but otherwise they are a loosely associated group within the study region.
- Outfitters and Guides have a direct economic stake in the use of forest resources, especially game and other wildlife. Game habitat, water quality, and overall environmental quality are of concern to these stakeholders. Although there is a formal organization that represents these stakeholders, they tend to act as individuals.
- Forest-Related Business stakeholders are those that use wood products for all or a portion of their income. These include huckleberry and mushroom gatherers as well as those who use botanical materials for commercial purposes. These stakeholders are not represented by an organization.
- Community Business stakeholders are those who derive their income from commercial activity not directly related to the use or sale of forest resources. A portion of their incomes is derived directly from those employed in industries and activities that generate income from use of the National Forest. Business stakeholders are most usually represented by Chambers of Commerce.

- Tourism Hosts are a relatively small group that derives an income from those who visit the Kootenai National Forest for tourism purposes. Lodges, hotels, and, to some extent, restaurants represent these stakeholders. There are some tourism hosts who are promoting non-consumptive uses of forest resources (for example, rafting, horseback riding, and other forest-experience' uses), but these stakeholders perceive they have only a small a voice in management decisions about the forest.
- Community stakeholders are ones whose primary focus is the current and future status of their community and its lifestyles. In general, the concerns of these stakeholders about forest management issues are based on what is best for the overall community. They may support portions of both environmental and timber views about forest management, but the tendency is to view issues in terms of what will most benefit the future of their community. These stakeholders include Economic Development Councils, but a wide range of individuals and groups can be included in this category.
- Government stakeholders are chiefly represented by county, municipal, and state governments. These entities have indirect as well as direct interests in forest management issues. They are represented by the officials of the respective level of government in the region.
- Environmental stakeholders live throughout the region and include long-term residents and more-recent migrants. These stakeholders are concerned about multiple use management and especially about forest management practices that affect the health of the Kootenai National Forest and its flora, fauna, and water resources. A major concern is ensuring there is no further over-harvesting or degradation of environmental quality within the KNF. They tend to favor the existence of more wilderness in contrast to timber, ranching, and most other stakeholders who generally perceive there is "enough" wilderness in the region. Environmental stakeholders are represented by organizations such as the Tobacco Valley Resource Group and the Cabinet Resource Group.
- Recreational stakeholders use the Kootenai National Forest for hunting, fishing, hiking, viewing, skiing, and other types of pastimes. They are represented in groups such as the Rod and Gun Clubs, Backcountry Horsemen, ski clubs, and other outdoor oriented clubs that use National Forest lands. However, many recreationalists are not associated with formal groups. Rather, their stake is in their personal use of these lands to recreate with their friends and family. Their concerns tend to be about access, wilderness, overall environmental quality, water quality, habitat enhancement, protection for wildlife, and management of the forest so that recreation, timber, and mining interests can coexist. Recreationalists are not a single organized group and they therefore have several "voices."
- Subsistence stakeholders are those who use forest resources such as deer, huckleberries, firewood, mushrooms, and other flora and fauna for personal consumption. These stakeholders are not generally represented by an

organization, although local clubs (for example, Rod and Gun, Fly Fishers) may, to some extent, represent their interests.

- The Kootenai Tribe is a stakeholder because of their historical and current uses of Kootenai National Forest lands and resources. The Tribe has treaty rights that guarantee their access to the forest and the use of its resources. The tribe has particular concerns about environmental quality within the forest. There is a Tribal Council as well as a Liaison with the Forest Service that represents these stakeholders.

Timber and environmental stakeholders, in particular, have conflicts in their views, but these vary throughout the region. There is more conflict in the Libby-Troy area and substantially less conflict in western Sanders County and northern Lincoln County. Minor conflicts were noted between loggers and outfitters, horseback riders and hikers, snowmobilers and skiers, and among outfitters themselves. The Kootenai Accords conflict split stakeholders into two major groupings at that time, but this polarization of stakeholders as for or against logging appears to be diminishing.

8.1.2 Perceptions of the Kootenai National Forest, Its Natural Resources and Their Use

There are five major views of the idea of a "National Forest:" (1) it is a local resource for use by the region's residents who have the largest stake in its management and use; (2) it has many natural resources that can and should accommodate multiple use; (3) it is a "woodbasket" that should be used to provide timber for the nation's needs; (4) "it's government ground" expresses the idea that the use of National Forest lands is regulated by the government, often at the expense of community residents; and (5) "it's a war zone" for competing views of how natural resources should be used. These five themes are examined in detail in the body of this report. Perspectives about the Kootenai National Forest's natural resources and uses are briefly summarized here.

Four Perspectives about the Natural Resources of the KNF

Views about natural resources are best thought of as organized by one or more of four perspectives about natural resources and their use. Each of these are summarized below.

- The "bedrock" view of natural resources is widely shared. It emphasizes the inherent value of the natural beauty of the region's flora, fauna, and water resources. These resources motivate individuals to live in the region and they are the basis for an outdoor lifestyle that itself is central to how individuals define their personal identify. The core of the bedrock perspective is the inherent value of these resources. The bedrock perspective is widely shared and often coexists with one of the other views listed below.

- The "use" perspective emphasizes that natural resources should be used for the benefit of humankind. While this view emphasizes resource use, especially for humankind's benefit, it also entails the notion that forest lands, wildlife, and all other resources must be managed and not left to "Mother Nature's whims." Further, the use perspective incorporates the idea that natural resources should not be "wasted." Waste can include not harvesting bug- or fire-damaged timber or management practices that do not allow valuable resources to be used by local residents.
- The "preservation" perspective emphasizes that natural resources need to be conserved and managed with concern for natural processes. This view includes the perspective that natural resources can and should be used. However, there should be a strong emphasis on the conservation of resources and the restoration of damaged resources. This view emphasizes that management practices need to take into consideration the natural biological processes of a forest system.
- The "conservation" perspective promotes various types of uses, but no one use at the expense of another. The conservation perspective emphasizes ideas such as "sustained yield," "multiple use," and overall environmental quality. In this view, natural resources are truly perceived as capable of serving economic, recreational, spiritual, and other needs. These needs can and should be served such that all users of these resources are treated fairly. This perspective, more than any other, stresses the idea of "balance" in the use of resources. It also entails the idea that resources can be conserved as well as used for logging and other economic purposes.

Uses of the Kootenai National Forest

The uses of the natural resources of the Kootenai National Forest result in individuals having economic, spiritual, recreational, and lifestyle stakes in its natural resources. The major types of uses are as follows:

- Subsistence activities include gathering (for example, huckleberries, mushrooms, and firewood), hunting, fishing and other personal/family uses of the natural resources of the KNF. Subsistence uses are economically important and they are also significant because they allow the expression of a lifestyle in which the harvesting of such resources is highly valued.
- Harvesting natural resources for economic purposes is also a significant use of the Kootenai National Forest. Logging and mining are the prototypes of this type of use, but it also includes the commercial harvesting of mushrooms and huckleberries.
- Grazing is an important use to ranchers who graze livestock on National Forest lands. The viability of most medium to larger scale operations depends on access to these lands.

- Recreational uses include viewing, hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, horse back riding, and the full range of recreational activities of residents in northwestern Montana. These types of uses constitute the major reason for many residents to live in this area.
- Spiritual uses are important for members of the Kootenai Tribe as well as for other area residents. The Kootenai Tribe continues to use the KNF as a site for ceremonial activities and other religious purposes. Other residents derive non-material, or spiritual benefits from both "knowing it is there" and from their use of these lands.

8.1.3. Perceptions of the Forest Service and Forest Management

Perceptions about the Forest Service and evaluations of forest management issues are interrelated. Perceptions of the Forest Service and public trust in the agency are a significant factor in how publics evaluate issues in forest management and how these issues are to be addressed.

Perceptions of the Forest Service

- As a government agency, the Forest Service has given only limited trust by the stakeholders in this region.
 - Individuals within the agency who are known to residents or with whom there are ongoing working relationships are trusted, but in general the agency is not.
 - The degree of mistrust appears to be directly related to the distance from the local area: the District is more trusted than the Supervisors's Office which is more trusted than the Regional Office, which is more trusted than Headquarters.
 - Mistrust of the agency appears to be an impediment to engaging the public in natural resource management issues.
 - Others attribute distrust in the agency to the situation wherein local resource managers cannot meet everyone's needs all the time. The observation is that if you are active enough in National Forest use, there are enough competing uses that you will not be satisfied at some point. Negative experiences with the agency appear to be more easily recalled than positive ones.
- The Forest Service is perceived as too rigid in adherence to regulations and as exhibiting a too inflexible bureaucratic style for working with local stakeholders.
- The Forest Service is perceived to favor timber interests at the expense of recreational and other types of uses of the resources of the Kootenai National Forest.

- The Forest Service is perceived to favor large corporate timber operations over smaller scale local operations.
- Contemporary Forest managers are perceived to often have insufficient on-the-ground knowledge to make effective decisions about management issues.
 - "New" forest managers are perceived to rely on "book knowledge" whereas the "older" managers are perceived to have relied on practical experience.
 - The perception exists that managers who are good bureaucrats are advanced into decision making positions at the expense of persons with on-the-ground knowledge.
 - Similarly, the perception exists that the older managers with their store-house of experience are being replaced by managers with insufficient practical knowledge.
- Forest managers are perceived as disregarding or under-using local knowledge and expertise about natural resources and their management.
- Decision making is perceived as too centralized. Stakeholders wish that District Rangers had more power to make decisions that affect their areas of responsibility.
- The Forest Service is perceived to be paralyzed by its concern about taking any action that will be opposed by "pressure groups."
- The interview data indicate that residents recognize the complexity involved in trying to manage resources to suit the needs of different local and non-local constituencies. This, of course, is not unique to the Forest Service; as with resource management issues in other small communities, there is to a degree an inherent tension and a need for a balance to be struck between those perceived as "locals" and "outsiders."
- Despite mistrust and numerous criticism of the agency, stakeholders perceive that the agency is the only hope for managing the Forest for the benefit of all stakeholders.

Perceptions of Forest Management Issues

Regarding forest management, there is a wide range of issues of concern to residents. The areas of concern and the summary of issues are as follows:

Roads

- Road standards are perceived to be too high and need to be rethought for economic reasons.

- While there is some strong feeling against road closures, there is also support for the need for road closures to protect game and game habitat. Among most stakeholders there is criticism of the process of how road closures are decided; and, there is sentiment for more consultation with stakeholders about how to achieve the objectives of road closures.

Timber Harvest Levels

- There are alternative perceptions that (1) too much wood has been cut from the forest, and there needs to be further consideration of sustainable cutting of the timber resources in the forest; and (2) there is timber that can and should be cut in the Kootenai National Forest but it should be accomplished in a sustainable manner.

Clearcuts and Selective Harvests

- Clearcutting is a harvesting tool with limited applications. Selective harvesting results in a sustainable cut and, as "environmentally friendly," is a preferred harvesting method.
- Clearcutting has political liabilities that damage the future of the loggers and other non-corporate stakeholders among timber interests.

Appeals of Timber Sales

- The appeals process is perceived to be working against effective forest management by most stakeholders other than environmentalists.
- A more reasonable appeals process would consider the "weighting" of various stakeholders and especially "local" interests.
- A more reasonable appeals process would insert much needed predictability into the process of timber harvesting and thereby benefit the stakeholders who are economically dependent on it.

Fires and Salvage Logging

- Stakeholders perceive the Forest Service was effective in its response to the 1994 fires. There are some complaints about waste of resources in responding to the fire and the speed of response in some areas, but overall stakeholders have a favorable evaluation of the fire fighting effort.
- More local residents should have been used in fighting the fire.
- Community and timber stakeholders have strong views that fire damaged timber needs to be salvaged or it will be "wasted."

- Environmental stakeholders are concerned that there may be damage to other resources in any harvesting of fire-damaged timber.
- The buildup of bug-damaged timber and other downed timber presents a fire hazard that can threaten communities more than did the fires of 1994.

Wildlife Management

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has too much control over the Forest Service and its management of lands within the Kootenai National Forest.
- Most species of wildlife in the National Forest are valued as an important contribution to the quality of life in the region.
- Game species are highly favored by stakeholders, and predators are generally considered competitors and thus less valued.
- Residents value grizzly bears, but bear management practices that close roads and threaten to reduce the use forest lands exemplify a concern for animals more than humans.
- The potential for the introduction of wolves into the area evokes concerns about Forest Service priorities in forest management. Management of National Forest areas primarily as endangered species habitat, particularly in the case of species introduced from outside of the area, runs directly counter to sentiments about multiple use (as it is traditionally understood and practiced by the Forest Service) as the appropriate strategy for managing local resources. Introducing predators and then "locking up" areas of the forest for their benefit, while at the same time not holding timber sales that are perceived as essential for the health of the local economy, is seen as "preferring animals over people."

Wilderness

- Local concerns expressed over the wilderness area issue are often a distillation of a number of other issues. That is, concerns about wilderness are not always about wilderness, but they reflect past polarizations about the wilderness issue within the area.
- For those who believe that a National Forest is a renewable resource that is set aside for periodic harvest and other multiple uses, the creation of wilderness areas often seems to represent "what is wrong" with Forest Service management. That is, the National Forest is not, and should not be treated as, a National Park. The commercial use of the Kootenai National Forest's resources are the key to the local economy and to larger regional economies.
- Stakeholders support the concept of wilderness, but there is some sentiment that wilderness "locks up" the land and is therefore wasteful. There is also sentiment that

there is enough wilderness land in the Kootenai National Forest and the addition of more is unnecessary.

Appearance and Environmental Quality.

- Two major themes emerge from the interview data about the overall appearance of the Kootenai National Forest. One is that it should have a "park-like" appearance with little or no downed timber. The second view is that the "natural" state of the forest is preferred, even if that includes heavily covered, downed, and bug-killed timber.
- Viewsheds are important and should be considered in forest management decisions, especially those concerned with timber harvesting.
- Clearcuts are generally perceived as ugly and undesirable. If clearcutting must be used, more concern should be given to irregular cuts rather than square "diaper" cuts that emphasize the clearcut landscape.
- Water quality is a major concern of residents in the region. Water quality is perceived to be affected by some timber harvesting methods, roads, and mining.
- Air quality can be adversely affected by controlled burns. Overall air quality is increasingly an important issue in portions of Lincoln County.

Ecosystems Management

This study found that ecosystems management is not well understood by all categories of stakeholders. Environmental and timber stakeholders each perceive the concept may be implemented to favor the interests of the other group. The Kootenai Tribe favors this concept because they perceive it to be consistent with traditional ways of viewing the interconnections and interactions among the flora, fauna, and other resources of the forest. Publics are hungry for information about the concept, but at the same time skeptical that it may be attempting to operationalize a too complex view of the forest. There is also concern that this view does not take into consideration how humans and modern-day surrounding communities fit into the ecosystem of the Kootenai National Forest.

Desired Future Condition

The overriding "desired future condition" of the Kootenai National Forest is one in which there is a return to a "balance" in the use and management of forest resources. The definition of "balance" tends to vary according to stakeholders, thus there are conflicts in what "balance" means. However, the various stakeholders interviewed for this study share the perception that in the future "balance" needs to guide forest management. Several other "desired future conditions" emerge from the data:

- The Forest Service should focus on developing a workable multiple use approach to forest management.
- Sustained yield timber harvesting that is environmentally sensitive needs to be implemented.
- Recreational concerns need a higher priority in forest management.
- The way of life in the region needs to be sustained without over-cutting the forest.
- The appeals process needs to be streamlined to address and resolve an appeal more expeditiously so that some certainty can be reinstated into the harvesting of timber in the region.
- Clearcuts should be minimized and selective harvest practices emphasized.

8.1.4 The Kootenai Tribe

- The lands of northwestern Montana, including the Kootenai National Forest, are part of the traditional homelands of the Kootenai Tribe.
- The Kootenai Tribe has treaty rights which guarantee the use of National Forest lands according to the terms of the treaty.
 - The Tribe's exercise of these treaty rights often needs to be asserted because of a lack of knowledge among some forest managers and other government officials.
- The Kootenai National Forest contains important cultural resources for the Tribe that are part of their history and ongoing traditions.
 - Cultural resources are protected by laws, but they are still illegally taken.
 - The Forest Service does a good job of working with the Tribe on cultural resource issues.
- The Tribe uses the Kootenai National Forest for hunting, fishing, gathering of medicinal plants, recreation, and religious purposes.

- Religious uses of the forest are important but sensitive issues. Tribal customs prevent discussion of religious practices and beliefs.
- The Tribe is concerned about maintaining the overall environmental quality of the Kootenai National Forest. Water quality damage from mining, clearcutting, and road construction is a special concern.
- Selective cutting is preferred over clearcutting as a timber harvesting practice.
- The Tribe is concerned about their privacy while using the forest for cultural and recreational purposes.
- There is some concern about the safety of Tribal members while using the National Forest.
- Competition with commercial mushroom and huckleberry pickers results in diminished harvesting of these resources by Tribal members.
- Ecosystem management is consistent with traditional tribal views of the management of forest resources.
- The Tribal Liaison with the Forest Service has improved the working relationship between the two entities.
- The Tribe's limited resources and internal political processes need to be considered when the Forest Service requests responses from the Tribe about specific issues.

8.2 Conclusions About Particular Study Objectives

In this section, the summary points and conclusions that were presented above are discussed in relationship to the major study objectives. Chapter one of this report describes both "findings" and "implications" type objectives for this study. Findings objectives are about the presentation and analysis of information concerning the socioeconomic context of the Kootenai National Forest and the effects of this context on stakeholder responses to forest management issues. Implications objectives are about the use of study findings to develop and implement forest management plans.

8.2.1 Findings Objectives

Three of the five findings objectives are addressed here. Each of these is restated along with a discussion of how the study results achieve each objective.

Understand what people need, want, expect, and/or desire in regard to natural resources management in general, and to the KNF.

This study achieves this objective by presenting information about the views of natural resources and the management of the Kootenai National Forest. Furthermore, this information is placed within the context of the current socioeconomic conditions and trends within the region that affect the emphasis given to the beliefs presented. The following information is particularly relevant:

- Current socioeconomic trends create a climate of economic uncertainty within the region. This economic uncertainty amplifies concerns about the future of the timber industry.

Among timber stakeholders, this climate creates concern about any natural resource issue that is perceived as affecting the potential for timber production. These stakeholders desire a timber industry that is similar to the past when there was work in the woods or in the mills for themselves and their children. The is also an overriding concern to take measures to establish certainty in the levels of timber harvest so that the timber industry can predict its present and future.

Environmentalists and some other stakeholders perceive a need for a new type of timber industry that emerges in response to current economic conditions. This industry would emphasize small-scale logging operations and the creation of a value-added industry in the region.

- There are four major views of natural resources: "bedrock," "use," "preservation," and "conservation." These four major perspectives organize stakeholder views about natural resources and their management. These views have different valuations about natural resources and different priorities for their use. However, many stakeholders share a view of the importance of natural resources and their

meaning for the quality of life in this region. This "bedrock" view is a basis for future efforts to develop working relationships within the community and among stakeholders who also have different views about how these resources should be used.

- There is a perception among the major stakeholder groups that forest management is "out of balance" and there needs to be a return to "balance." The definitions of "balance" differ according to stakeholders, but the shared view of management as favoring one view over others indicates frustration about the current status of forest management.
- Other specific management issues that appear salient among stakeholders are as follows:

Harvest practices should favor the use of selective cuts over clearcuts.

Wilderness is an asset of the Kootenai National Forest, but how much wilderness needs to exist is perceived differently.

Fire- and bug-damaged timber needs to be harvested and not allowed to "go to waste." Some stakeholders are concerned that such salvage harvesting will be an excuse to harvest additional timber or that the practices used will damage other resources.

The buildup of fuels in the forest, especially dead timber, presents a threat of massive forest fires in the future. The safety implications of this buildup of fuels needs to be considered in managing the forest.

A portion of the significant findings of this study are presented in chapters two through seven of this report. Collectively these findings present a range of material about the social context of the study area and specific views of stakeholders. This information achieves the study objective and provides a basis for further developing public views about forest management.

Determine spatial and temporal trends of social parameters.

Socioeconomic, census, and interview data presented in this report achieve this objective. The socioeconomic and census information presented in chapter two describes population and economic trends in the study area. Similarly, the interview data makes two gross spatial distinctions: Lincoln and Sanders Counties. Other important geographical and temporal differences are described in chapters two, five, and six. In particular, chapter two and the first section of chapter five are relatively rich in spatial and temporal data about the study area. Several highlights are emphasized here, but the earlier chapters of the report should be consulted for more detailed information.

Recent job losses have continued decreasing trends in timber industry and mining industry employment. Efforts are underway for economic diversification throughout the

region with hopes for some increase in economic benefit from tourism and recreation based activities.

- Population has shown a steady increase, although population composition is changing. More new residents are migrating in while the adult children of families living in the region are increasingly moving out of the area to find employment. There is concern among some stakeholders that new residents are changing the nature of their communities; and, there are also different values about the use of natural resources in general and the harvesting of timber in particular.
- Declining employment in resource harvest and extraction is resulting in increased concern about the economic future of communities in the region.
- There is a trend toward increasing heterogeneity of the population. Areas where there is more available land such as in western Sanders County and northern Lincoln County will experience more of the effects of increasing heterogeneity than in other parts of the region. However, the social dynamics of tensions about newcomers will be present throughout the region.
- There is less conflict about natural resources issues in the western portions of Sanders County and the northern portions of Lincoln County.
- Historically, there have been significant conflicts regarding the use of natural resources, throughout the region, but in the more recent past these conflicts have been more severe in the Libby, Troy, and Yaak regions of Lincoln County.
- Community-Forest Service working relationships are better in Sanders County, northern Lincoln County, and with the Kootenai Tribe than they are elsewhere in the study area.

Changing economic trends, the increasing heterogeneity of the population, changing population composition, and geographical differences in attitudes to the Forest Service show spatial and temporal variation. There is less of these types of variation in public understandings about ecosystems management, the shared values about the natural resources of the region, and the types of management issues of concern to stakeholders. However, changing population and economic trends may alter the types of concerns and the nature of public actions about these concerns.

Determine effective methods for public involvement for Forest Plan revision and Forest Plan implementation.

Public involvement is problematic in many civic and government activities throughout the study area. This finding should remind the Forest Service that any problems with existing public involvement may not be attributable to the nature of the program per se, but to how the program is implemented in a social environment in which "conditional participation" in community activities is acceptable. Findings from this study can be applied to improving public involvement, but we emphasize that developing a public

involvement program itself requires a substantial and focused effort. The information presented here can be part of a first step in such an effort. More effective public involvement in the forest planning process can be achieved by the following steps:

- Recognize the implications of this social context and its values about social participation to develop a strategy for public participation in the Kootenai National Forest area.

Public participation has historically be a problem for all types of issues.

There is a value placed on minimal government control.

Conditional participation in social events is a norm.

There is some sentiment that locally-developed solutions are not possible.

There is some feeling that local stakeholders are powerless to provide effective input about natural resource issues.

- Increase efforts to communicate about the activities and purposes of the Forest Service so that stakeholders will know more about the agency and its goals.

Unknowns about the agency's full range of activities results in skepticism about any process to involve the public.

More familiarity with the agency and its missions will likely increase public interest and awareness of what can be accomplished.

More use of newspapers and perhaps newsletters could communicate information about the agency and its missions.

- Address public mistrust of the agency

Promote participation of agency personnel in community activities and events.

Promote the successes of the agency in its management activities.

Promote fair and cordial treatment of stakeholders.

- Develop a strategy for workable public meetings in which stakeholders perceive they can express their concerns without engaging in public conflicts with other stakeholders of agency personnel.

Traditional public involvement methods will draw core community members and some of those with special interests.

Many stakeholders perceive public meetings as ineffective because they result in individuals on opposite sides of issues dominating the meeting and creating conflicts.

Meetings need to be organized to draw key persons into the public involvement process so they can communicate to their social network that meetings can be effective.

Methods for effectively facilitating such meetings need to be known by managers who are involved in the public meeting process.

- Develop an outreach strategy that draws portions of the community that would not otherwise participate in public meetings into the process.

The ethic of conditional participation suggests that many individuals and stakeholder groups will not participate in an ongoing tractional public participation process until that process has proved more effective and safe than in the past.

An outreach strategy targeted to small groups with common interests will likely be most effective for reaching these persons. District staff should be consulted to develop the list of persons and groups to target.

These meetings may be most effective when organized by Districts with the participation of key staff from the management team.

Meetings held at "neutral" locations rather than at Forest Service facilities are perceived by a number of community members as representing an effort on the part of the Forest Service to be responsive to the community (i.e., the Forest Service is "coming to" people rather than requiring people to come to them) and to be less intimidating than those held in Forest Service facilities.

- Address public needs to have a "working/advisory committee" that consults with the Forest Service about management issues.

There may be practical or legal reasons that preclude the formation of such an advisory group, but this study suggests this sentiment should be explored and addressed.

The actual formation of such a group may be socially complex and the process of developing who is to be included has the risk of generating social conflicts that would detract from the goal of such a committee.

- Use the findings of this study to organize a public meeting to discuss study findings, their meanings, and implications for improved public participation in forest management planning.

One of the most useful outcomes of the Kaufmans' study (1946) was a working group that was organized to discuss and review their findings. This working

group was composed of diverse community interests who met regularly to develop the implications of the study findings. This proved to be an important asset in developing public participation in the forest management process. It was also an important step for forest managers to productively use the results of the Kaufmans' research.

These are straightforward suggestions based on the study findings that can be used to develop more effective public involvement as the Forest Plan revision process proceeds. We emphasize the need to develop an overall strategy using the knowledge of agency personnel, the findings from this study, and the knowledge of public opinion leaders within the communities of the study region. Such an effort would seem to have a high probability of developing a fresh approach to public involvement that can work for the communities and the agency as well.

8.2.2 Implications Objectives

Provide the basis for making defensible decisions and to understand the social implications of those decisions.

This study presents information about public perceptions of a wide range of forest management issues. This information exists within a particular historical and social context with trends that affect how stakeholders may emphasize or select some issues as more important than others. This objective is achieved if forest managers extract from this report an awareness of how social factors affect responses to management issues. "Social factors" include elements of the relationships between the Forest Service and stakeholders as well as among various stakeholder groups themselves. Such an awareness should be incorporated into the overall approach of forest management. The completion of this report is the first step in developing and using that awareness, but this report alone is not the sole basis for understanding the social implications of management decisions. The next step is applying these findings so that they are incorporated into an ongoing process of considering social variables as factors in forest management. Such an application of these findings requires a separate piece of work. The foundation for how to accomplish such an application of findings exists in this report, but a further step is needed to actually apply the findings. Given the basis existing in this report, this objective has been achieved.

Identify possible changes to the KNF Land and Resources Management Plan.

The process of revision of the Forest Plan will be a complex process that will need to incorporate the concerns of stakeholders throughout the region. This study has identified a range of issues that may be addressed as this process proceeds. Indeed, this document could function as a basis for discussion of issues of concern with individuals, groups, and communities. However, this report should not be the only source of information about public views of management issues. Nonetheless, this study has achieved this objective by the presentation of information in Chapters 5-7 and its summary in this chapter. Clearly, some of these issues may be outside the process

of revision of the plan, (for example, the appeals process), but this allows the agency to focus on those issues where action can be taken.

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