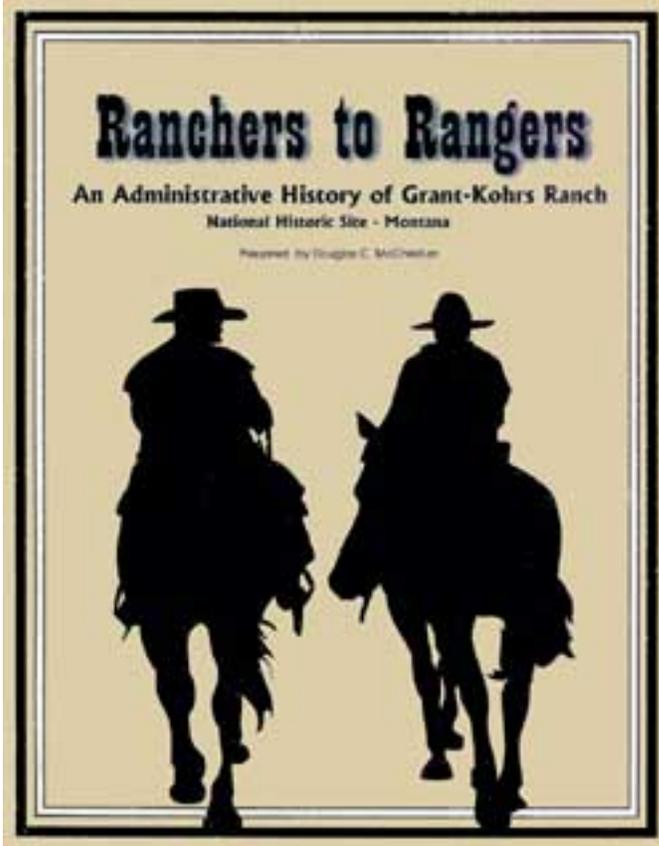


# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History



## **Ranchers to Rangers: An Administrative History of Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site**

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Rocky Mountain Cluster  
National Park Service  
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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### INTRODUCTION

In the decade following World War II an expanding and prospering American public frequented its national parks as never before. It was predicted that visitation to the National Park System would double by 1960. However, by the mid-1950s most park facilities had seen no major improvements since the days of the Civilian Conservation Corps, in the 1930s, when great amounts of money and labor had been infused into the System. In the intervening years, during which the nation's attention had been dominated by World War II and the Korean War, roads, bridges, and utilities systems had deteriorated to an alarming degree. Housing for park employees was often worse, consisting of make-shift and barely habitable cabins. [1]

Alarmed at the impacts of this massive influx of people, National Park Service Director Conrad L. Wirth proposed to Congress a ten-year program aimed at rehabilitating the system. This major overhaul of the national parks, termed the Mission 66 Program, was to be accomplished in conjunction with the 1966 fiftieth anniversary of the National Park Service. Both the Eisenhower administration and Congress endorsed Wirth's ambitious plan.

In addition to the general improvement of facilities and the construction of dozens of new visitor centers, hundreds of employee houses, as well as new roads, trails, and maintenance buildings, Mission 66 also affected a dramatic expansion of the Park System. The Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, administered by the Department of the Interior, was reactivated in 1957 following a hiatus of several years. The program was intended to identify and evaluate nationally significant properties throughout the United States and, with owner consent, designate them as National Historic Landmarks. Ultimately, these were eligible for consideration for inclusion in the System. A similar program was initiated for natural history areas. Even when designated properties lacked the qualities to meet basic criteria to become official units of the System, these inventories nevertheless provided official recognition, and local attention, to thousands of sites that otherwise might have been destroyed inadvertently.

One of the properties singled out during this process was a working cattle ranch owned by Conrad Kohrs Warren at Deer Lodge, Montana. Now known as the Grant

Kohrs Ranch, it was the site of one of the Montana's earliest ranches, which eventually became one of the largest cattle raising operations in the West.

The ranch that would eventually burgeon into a cattle empire had humble, if not unlikely, origins in the commerce of the Oregon Trail. "Captain" Richard Grant, a Canadian of Scottish and French ancestry, was already a twenty-seven year veteran of the Northwest fur trade when the Hudson's Bay Company assigned him to manage its affairs at Fort Hall, in what is now the state of Idaho. The company had purchased this post on the Snake River in 1837 for the purpose of extending its wilderness trading empire, as well as to bar American trade from expanding into the Pacific Northwest. By all accounts Grant was a large man, who was "pleasant for an Englishman," according to one Yankee passerby. [2] Grant assumed his new duties as factor in June, 1842,\* little realizing then that his tenure there would span more than a decade.

Besides continuing a profitable business trading manufactured goods to the Indians in exchange for furs, Grant fell into a lucrative sideline. By the mid-1840s there was a significant number of emigrants passing over the trail to Oregon. Those who made it that far often were burdened with half-starved, footsore cattle and horses. Although the short-horned cattle were frequently of good English-American blood lines, having been selected to start herds in the promised lands of Oregon and California, these animals were all but useless by the time they reached Fort Hall. Grant saw this as an advantageous opportunity to relieve the emigrants of their lame cattle, and at a handsome profit for the company. An emigrant arriving at the post in 1845 observed that,

The garrison was supplied with flour, which had been procured from the settlements in Oregon, and brought here on pack horses. They sold it to the emigrants for twenty dollars per cwt. [100 lbs], taking cattle in exchange; and as many of the emigrants were nearly out of flour, and had a few lame cattle with them, a brisk trade was carried on between them



### Vicinity Map

Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site  
U.S. Dept. of the Interior - National Park Service

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Sept. '83 | RMRO

*(click on map for large image)*

and the inhabitants of the fort. In the exchange of cattle for flour, an allowance was made of from five to twelve dollars per head. They also had horses which they readily exchanged for cattle, or sold for cash... They could not be prevailed upon to receive anything in exchange for their goods or provisions, excepting cattle or money. [3]

Grant pastured the cattle from one season to the next, time enough for them to regain their weight and health. The following year he would offer west-bound emigrants in need of fresh stock one of these rehabilitated animals in exchange for two head of their worn out cattle. [4]

While Grant showed no hesitation in profiting from the Oregon Trail traffic, some passersby were of the opinion that he was "unwilling to have the country settled by the Americans." [5] Unquestionably loyal to the Hudson's Bay Company, Grant may have simply represented his employer's interests by attempting to discourage emigrants from continuing their journey to the Oregon Territory, a region whose ownership still was disputed by both Great Britain and the United States. Grant no doubt appreciated the potential threat that a great influx of American settlers may have posed to British control of the Northwest. According to other accounts, however, Grant simply informed travelers of the rugged conditions to be encountered on that route, often suggesting that they take the alternate, more easily traveled trail branching off to California. To those who insisted upon going to Oregon, Grant sometimes made an exception by offering to take wagons, for which he had little use, in trade for supplies. The truth of the matter probably lies in a combination of influences, wherein interests of both California and the Hudson Bay Company came into play. [6]

By 1851 an aging Richard Grant recognized that the fur trade was all but dead. When declining health posed a hindrance to his transfer to a more northerly post, as ordered by the Hudson's Bay Company, Grant elected to retire and take up the life of a free mountaineer. He afterward established his residence at an abandoned army cantonment near Fort Hall, from which he conducted personal trading operations with both emigrants and Indians. [7]

Grant's younger adult son from his first marriage, John Francis, was already well-established as a mountaineer and trader in his own right, having struck out independently two years earlier. His taking of a Northern Shoshone wife further enhanced his status and business opportunities among some of the native inhabitants. Based at Soda Springs, east of Fort Hall near the fork of the Hudspeth Cutoff, the Grants continued to actively trade replacement cattle to emigrant farmers, as well as to eager California-bound prospectors. They augmented lucrative summers on the trail by wintering in the mountains along the Salmon River where they traded goods with the Indians. [8]

The Grants traditionally drove their cattle north across the Continental Divide to pasture on the lush grass in the Beaverhead country, in present southwestern Montana. There, sheltered and unmolested by Indians, the stock could recuperate and fatten in a relatively mild climate. In summer part of the herds were separated and driven southward to the trail for use as trading stock to the emigrants.

Reacting to rumors of sedition among the Mormons in 1857, the United States Government ordered a

strong military expedition under the command of General Albert Sidney Johnston to Utah to quell the alleged rebellion, if not to subjugate the Mormon population. Latter Day Saints leader Brigham Young immediately ordered his followers to mobilize to resist the threatening invasion. The Mormons quickly took the offensive by sending out armed parties along the trail east of Salt Lake City to destroy potential supply points, including Fort Bridger, and to execute a "scorched earth" policy aimed at denying forage to the advancing federal army.

Meantime, the Grants returned to the Beaverhead region in the fall, happy enough to distance themselves from an impending war. There Richard resided "in a good three room log house" at the mouth of Stinking Water Creek, just north of present-day Dillon, Montana. From this base, Richard Grant and a group of former Hudson's Bay employees continued trading on the emigrant road, as well as with the Indians in the region. [9]

John Grant remained for a time near his father's camp, later moving to the Deer Lodge Valley for the winter of 1857-58. When a government contractor negotiated a deal to purchase two hundred head of cattle from Grant to supply Johnston's column at Fort Bridger, Grant declined to deliver the herd for fear the Saints would retaliate against him. By this time Grant considered himself a permanent resident and businessman in the region and thus had no desire to make enemies of the Mormons, with whom he had to deal, war or not. Salt Lake City was, in fact, his principal point of supply. Despite the loss of this sale, Grant later chanced selling the troops a few dozen horses, which he drove to Fort Bridger the following spring. [10]

The elder Grant, also concerned for the safety of his property, packed his goods and trekked farther north to Hell Gate, in the vicinity of modern-day Missoula, early in 1858. There in the Flathead Indian country of the Bitterroot he continued to raise cattle successfully for another three years, until a particularly hard winter decimated his herd. His roving days came to an end when he journeyed to The Dalles in Oregon to obtain supplies over the winter of 1861-62. On the return trip in the spring, Grant suffered from over-exertion and died before reaching home. [11]

In the summer of 1858 Johnny Grant, as he was universally known, returned to the Bitterroot, where he had left his cattle on shares with John M. Jacobs during his trip to Fort Bridger. He then drove this stock back to Henry's Ford, near Fort Bridger, where he happily discovered that the other traders had disposed of their entire herds to supply the Utah Expedition. As a result, Grant's competitors were left with only the emaciated cattle they had been able to buy from passing emigrants that season. When Johnny arrived with his fresh herd that fall, he immediately began trading his fat steers, at the rate of one head for two. That winter he chanced grazing these cattle in the vicinity, rather than returning to Montana, so that by the next spring he had a sizeable herd to offer the emigrants.

Although Johnny Grant was in an advantageous trading position during the summer of 1859, he perceived that the traffic over the trail was less than it had been previously, a factor that likely prompted him to return to the Deer Lodge Valley that fall. [12] The relatively mild climate, clear mountain streams, and an endless abundance of rich grass made it a near-perfect place for raising cattle. It was a

good place to settle down with his family, which by this time had grown to include three Indian wives and a number of children. His rough-hewn log cabin stood at the mouth of Little Blackfoot Creek, about twelve miles north of the present ranch. [13]

Despite the prosperity he found in the Deer Lodge Valley, Grant discovered that it was a lonely existence for a family accustomed to interacting with people during the Fort Hall days and later with their mountaineer clan on the Beaverhead. A few Indians and even fewer white men occasionally passed through, but none stayed. Bored by the solitude, Johnny decided to journey back to the Oregon-California Trail to see if he could induce some of the west-bound settlers to follow him back to Montana. His glowing descriptions of the country persuaded about a dozen families to redirect their destinies to the Deer Lodge Valley. These few formed the nucleus of a settlement christened, appropriately, "Cottonwood." Later, it would re-named Deer Lodge.

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## Administrative History

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The Grants resided on the Little Blackfoot for about a year after his quest for neighbors. In 1861, still somewhat isolated from the society now offered at Cottonwood, he gave up his first home and moved near the settlement. There, on the east bank of the Deer Lodge (Clark Fork) River, he first built two small adjoining cabins, augmented in the fall of 1862 by a handsome two-story home of hewed logs. Today this substantial house remains as the centerpiece of Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site.

Not long afterwards the other principal character in the Grant-Kohrs saga made his entrance on Montana's territorial scene. In 1862 Danish-born immigrant Conrad Kohrs, drawn by the news of gold strikes in Idaho Territory, traveled through the Deer Lodge Valley. By the time he arrived at Cottonwood, however, he was nearly destitute. Needing a grubstake to start mining, Kohrs was only too happy to accept the offer of employment as a butcher at the boomtown of Bannack. Con, as he was known, had gained some experience in the trade while employed in a family-owned meat packing house in Davenport, Iowa. He little knew then that he would discover his bonanza in beef, not gold, and that it would be the foundation of an empire.

Young Conrad Kohrs quickly mastered the business. The shop owner recognized his abilities and soon entrusted Kohrs with keeping the books for the shop. Hungry miners made for a thriving business and Con discovered that the surest way to make money was by supplying their needs, not working the mines.

After a run-in with Henry Plummer, territorial sheriff and head of a band of road agents, Con's employer hastily cleaned out the cash box and left town. Left with the shop, Kohrs suddenly found himself in the meat business. Before long, he was turning a modest profit, which he began reinvesting in cattle to supply his business. Kohrs soon expanded his interests by opening additional shops in neighboring gold camps. Always prudent in his business affairs, Kohrs relied foremost on his family as a source of partners to operate these shops, convincing his Bielenberg half-brothers Charles and John (twins) and Nick to join him in Montana for that purpose.

Kohrs was a inherently astute business man who soon realized that by raising his own cattle, he could control both ends of the business, thereby cutting costs significantly. His herds grew rapidly as the result of careful breeding, almost boundless grazing opportunities, and purchases of additional livestock. By 1865, he was one of the leading cattlemen in southwestern Montana Territory.

The extensive Kohrs cattle operation demanded a ranch with adequate pasture. In 1864 Con acquired a ranch on Race Track Creek, but by this time he was well-familiar with the Deer Lodge Valley and had undoubtedly noted its attributes for raising and wintering livestock. His business dealings had also brought him into contact with Johnny Grant, whose ranch was ideally situated for Kohrs's needs. Although Grant declined Con's first offer to purchase the ranch in 1865, a desire to move his children to a more hospitable environment prompted Grant to reconsider a year later. [14] Kohrs paid him \$19,200 for the property, including all improvements and about 350 head of cattle then grazing on the place. Soon thereafter Grant departed for Manitoba, thus closing his era of cattle trading that had spanned two decades. Con took up residence at the ranch in September, 1866. From this base of operations, "... in name and fact the 'home ranch,' he would supervise the varied and dynamic Kohrs and Bielenberg cattle operation and mining activities." [15]

Con Kohrs had come a long way since his inauspicious trip through the Deer Lodge Valley just four years earlier. Not only was he a leading meat purveyor in western Montana, but he was now the most prominent cattleman, owning the former Grant ranch, as well as additional land on the west side of the Deer Lodge Valley. The stage was set for a new era in both the life of Con Kohrs and the development of the Montana cattle industry.

Since his arrival in the territory a few years earlier, Con's half-brother John Bielenberg had become a close and trusted associate in the enterprise. These two energetic men made an effective team, each playing to his respective, yet mutually supportive, strengths. While Con ranged far and wide making bold but solid deals in cattle, land, and mining interests, John usually stayed close to the ranch managing the day-to-day operation. It was a comfortable partnership that would thrive for over fifty years, until Con's death in 1920.

Conrad Kohrs, at the age of thirty-two, was by this time firmly rooted in western Montana Territory. Already well-off financially and highly-regarded among his peers, Con lacked only one ingredient in gaining the full measure of respectability -- a wife. When he decided to spend Christmas 1867 with his mother and step-father in Davenport, Con may have sensed that he would return a married man. In a letter, Con's mother had played Cupid by reminding him of a childhood acquaintance, August Kruse, now a beautiful and eligible young woman of nineteen, Con found Augusta at her home in Ohio, courted her for two or three weeks, and returned with her to Iowa, where they were married in February, 1867. After honeymooning until April, when the spring thaw cleared the Missouri for steamboat travel, Con and his bride of six weeks made the long, arduous journey home to the ranch.

If Augusta had any second thoughts about what she had gotten herself into, she did not allow them to discourage her. With a typically German sense of order, she immediately took charge of the two-story house and made her imprint on it, A working cattle outfit it may have been, but the house soon became Augusta's domain, Domesticity had arrived in no uncertain terms at the Kohrs-Bielenberg Ranch, She deftly integrated herself into the society of what was now called Deer Lodge City, easily assuming the role of wife to one of Montana's most successful entrepreneurs.

By 1870 Kohrs and Bielenberg had expanded their cattle operation far beyond the home ranch. With the herds growing rapidly and grass becoming increasingly scarce in the Deer Lodge Valley, the partners looked to the open range northeast beyond the mountains. There in the country south of the Sun River the cattle could fatten on an almost boundless area of free grass, with little tending until the late summer roundup. It was at about this same time that the half-brothers began to explore wider markets for their beef. Always alert to new opportunities, Kohrs began shipping cattle to Chicago via a southerly route down through Idaho and across southern Wyoming Territory to railheads at Cheyenne and North Platte. An alternate trail from the Sun River range led southeastward through the Crow Indian Reservation to link with the Western Trail passing through eastern Wyoming to Cheyenne. In connection with this growth, Kohrs and Bielenberg also placed a large herd on the Snake River and another that was moved variously from western Nebraska, to Wyoming, and even into North Park, Colorado, depending upon where the grass was best. All of this activity marked a major turning point in the business and thus established a pattern that would be followed and further developed in the future.

Ever the wise businessman, Kohrs reasoned that by sharing the investment in herds with other partners he could maximize his capital and, correspondingly, reduce his potential losses. If all went well, he still made money, albeit not as much as he might have by owning the entire herd himself. But, the losses in one herd were usually offset by profits in another deal. Of additional benefit, were the sound relationships he formed with other cattlemen, as well as financiers in Chicago, thus enhancing his reputation and bolstering political connections that would bode well for him in later years.

Even as the cattle operation grew, Con maintained firm control over the other aspects of his meat business. The vertical diversification method he had established early-on continued to be the foundation of his success. Besides selling live cattle to more distant markets, Con continued to supply animals to his butcher shops in a half dozen western Montana mining towns, and to his own new two-story store in the town of Deer Lodge.

The prosperity that Kohrs experienced by the 1870s was reflected in several aspects of his professional and personal life. It allowed him, for instance, to purchase additional lands for the home ranch in partnership with Bielenberg. From time to time, they bought up small ranches neighboring the home ranch, as well as parcels of pasture land, which increased the grazing area for the home herd used to supply the butcher shops. With John handling much of the routine cattle operation, and with other reliable foremen managing affairs on the far-flung ranges, an unquestionably affluent Con Kohrs found more time to engage in activities not directly related to his business. The early years of the decade marked his entry into local politics with his appointment as a territorial prison commissioner. He also took time for an extended vacation to Germany with Augusta and their two daughters, something that would become a tradition every few years thereafter.

Con Kohrs clearly loved making a good deal. One of these occurred in 1883 when Con purchased 12,000 head of cattle and other ranch property for the price of \$400,000.00, marking the largest such transaction in Montana up to that time. Profits aside, it seems unlikely that he was motivated by wealth for wealth's sake. What does become apparent is that he derived great pleasure from wheeling and

dealing on a grand scale, He was the consummate entrepreneur.

In the early 1880s, the Kohrs-Bielenberg partnership thrived beyond all previous measures of success, It was big business. No longer was it an operation that could be managed on a daily basis by its owners. Much of the immediate supervision of the herds, as well as the drives and even some selling, had to be relinquished to trusted foremen, Both Con and half-brother John assumed oversight responsibilities, riding long distances to monitor the various herds.

In the late-1870s Kohrs and Bielenberg grazed stock on various ranges from above the Canadian border to the Crow Indian Reservation in southeastern Montana Territory. When the completion of railroads negated the need to drive cattle along the old southern route, Con began using a trail that struck eastward from the Judith Basin to railheads located first at Miles City, and later Custer Station and Billings. The days of the long drives thus came to an end, Cattle could be shipped directly from the territory to markets as far away as Kansas City and Chicago. After the construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad across the territory in 1883, coupled with the decline of the buffalo that had competed for the available grazing range, livestock operations shifted principally to the Sun River region on the plains east of the Continental Divide.

The Deer Lodge Valley remained nonetheless important for pasturing animals intended for the Kohrs butcher shops. During the late 1870s, the home ranch had assumed an increasing importance as a breeding operation. Kohrs had long recognized the advantages to improving the quality of his cattle. This in mind, he began acquiring blooded Short Horn breeding stock from the Midwest. Most of these animals, the numbers of which multiplied significantly after 1880, were pastured and cared for at the home ranch during the winters, Kohrs and Bielenberg added registered Herefords in 1884.

A massive influx of cattle brought in from other areas by speculators in a booming market, began to compete for the ever-shrinking Montana range lands by the mid-1880s. The enormous herds belonging to Kohrs-Bielenberg and Montana pioneer Granville Stuart, in addition to those of several foreign stock growers, rapidly depleted the grass. The quality of the northern ranges declined so that it became increasingly difficult to support such large numbers of cattle. Seeking additional range lands, Kohrs and Bielenberg leased large acreages from the Canadian government and petitioned to have more land opened for grazing within the Crow Indian Reservation in southeastern Montana Territory. In 1886 the risk of loss was made more acute by dry conditions that failed to replenish the grass. Prairie fires took an additional toll on the ranges. Experienced stock growers recognized the precarious situation posed by the steadily escalating numbers of cattle and the fragility of an overgrazed range, yet they trusted to luck rather than change their methods.

Winter came early in 1886. And, it was uncommonly severe. Blizzards brought temperatures that plummeted to sixty degrees below zero. Even when cattle were able to dig through the crusted snow, there was no forage to be had. The grass was gone and they died by the thousands. When spring finally came, the coulees and stream courses were filled with the stiffened and rotting carcasses of what had once been the great herds. Most of the British cattle investors who had seen what they thought was an

opportunity to make an easy fortune, lost all and disappeared from the range as rapidly as they had come. Many of the large ranchers and most of the small ones, unable to withstand the staggering financial losses, also went bankrupt during the months that followed. Kohrs and Bielenberg, Stuart, and some others of the most wealthy stock growers managed to hang on, despite the loss of half to two-thirds of their stock, mainly because they commanded the financial reserves to absorb such a disaster, Con's strategy of diversifying his interests among cattle, land, and mining stood him in a reasonably stable position during the crisis, though he had to borrow heavily to regain momentum. Particularly fortuitous was the placement of the registered breeding stock at Deer Lodge, where the winter had been comparatively mild. Kohrs and Bielenberg had the genesis of a new herd, but the nature of the cattle industry would remain changed forever.

The days of the open range were numbered, and the stockmen who had survived the catastrophic losses of 1886-87 had to make changes to stay in the business. No more would large ranchers allow their herds to graze at will on vast, unfenced plains. Kohrs and his contemporaries became much more conscious and watchful of range conditions and carrying capacities. Ranchers also became serious students of cattle breeding to improve the quality of their stock, resulting in more weight per head, thus reducing the numbers necessary to generate adequate financial return.

During the 1890s Kohrs altered his approach one other important way. The home ranch previously had been considered as a permanent land base and home to the registered breeding stock. The bulk of the cattle had roamed on the enormous acreages of unclaimed government lands. The ranchers who managed to survive the crushing losses of 1886-87 were compelled to recognize, finally, that stock growing demanded better breeding, consolidation of operations, and wise land management using an increased ratio of acres per head to avoid overgrazing. Gone were the days of free land as homesteaders moved onto the plains. Accordingly, Kohrs and Bielenberg aggressively bought up tens of thousands of acres of land in the Deer Lodge area, whenever they could get it at cheap prices. These acquisitions continued through the decade of the 1890s and well into the early twentieth century. By so doing, they placed their operation on a self-sustaining basis, combining pasture with meadow lands that provided hay for the winters.

Time brought other changes to the ranch. In 1894 Con, then age 59, suffered a serious injury while riding. Both years and the injury limited considerably Con's ability to actively run the ranch. The taciturn John Bielenberg, although eleven years his junior, could hardly manage the still extensive operation by himself. Therefore, a younger and more vigorous manager was found in John Boardman, who had married Con's eldest daughter, Anna, in 1891. Both Con and John placed great faith in Boardman. While Boardman continued to direct the daily ranching activities until his death in 1924, Con developed strategy for the future of the operation. In this, he was unexcelled and had always been the "brains" of the business.

With the ranks of their Deer Lodge friends thinning with the passage of time, and the ranch in good hands, Con and Augusta decided there was little to hold them there. Despite their love for the ranch and the valley that had been their home for more than three decades, they decided to move to Helena on a trial basis in 1899. A few months later, Con purchased the large home they had been renting, after which

they usually made only summer visits to the ranch. [16]

The rapid and irresistible development of the western U. S. after the turn of the century had its effects on the Kohrs-Bielenberg Ranch, By 1914 homesteaders moving into Montana occupied much of what formerly had been open range land used collectively by the cattlemen. With the homesteaders came fences and plows. Recognizing that the old days were gone and sensing that the time was right to begin selling out, Con, Augusta, and John Bielenberg formed the Kohrs-Bielenberg Land and Livestock Company in 1915 to incorporate most of their property holdings. That done, the aging cattle kings began to liquidate their extensive acreages the following year. Sales progressed quickly and in just three years the ranch that had taken most of a lifetime to build, was reduced to mere remnants.

By 1924 Con Kohrs, John Bielenberg, and John Boardman all were dead. That same year witnessed the last of the ranch land sold, with the exception of a reserve of about one thousand acres surrounding the buildings of the home ranch. For the next few years a succession of hired caretakers managed what was left of the ranch, but the old cattle empire, like its founders, had passed into history.

The famed ranch was all but dead when grandson Conrad Warren, son of Katherine Kohrs and Robert O. Y. Warren, began working there in 1926 as a hand on the haying crew during summer recesses from college. Following his attendance at the University of Virginia, Con Warren returned to live and work at the ranch from 1929 to 1932. Whereas the other grandchildren took no interest in ranching, young Con did. As a boy he had shadowed the old ranch men, Grandfather Kohrs and Great-Uncle John Bielenberg. He watched, he worked, and he learned. They in turn favored the boy who displayed an interest in what had been their life and livelihood for so long.

When the ranch caretaker left in the spring of 1932, Con Warren was handed the reins of the operation as its new manager. No longer would the ranch languish as the stagnant business it had become in the hands of non-family employees. Warren realized that the ranch would never again see its former glory, but in order for it to support a family, it had to be revitalized into a paying, beef-producing operation. Through the 1930s and 40s Con stocked the ranch with fine purebred Herefords and registered Belgian horses. Within twenty years, he had attained national recognition as a stockman in his own right. Had Con and Nell Warren's children elected to devote their lives to ranching, the family tradition might have continued, and there would not have been a Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. Con Warren was a proud man, both of his ancestry and of what his grandfather had accomplished during his lifetime. Con thought that was worth preserving, but how?

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



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### Chapter One: GOING INTO THE CATTLE BUSINESS: ACQUISITION

When Conrad Kohrs Warren assumed the management of his grandfather's ranch in 1932, he had no thought that it might one day become a unit of the National Park System. The nation was in the depths of the Great Depression, and Warren's motives hinged on the practical. Although the once-famous ranch declined under the management of salaried caretakers during the previous decade, it nevertheless afforded an opportunity for Con Warren and his new bride, Nell, to make a living. Fresh from studying at the University of Virginia, Warren was no stranger to the ranch, or the ranching business. As a boy he had practically grown up at Deer Lodge, Montana, listening to the stories of the open range days told by Grandfather Kohrs and his partner and half-brother, John Bielenberg. Even as a young man, Con returned from school during the summers to work in the hay meadows of the family ranch that had once served as headquarters for one of the West's great cattle empires. After graduating college, Con took up residency on the ranch, working as a hand until manager Pem McComis retired. Even though the ranch was controlled by the Conrad Kohrs Company, headed by an old friend of the ranchman, Warren's selection as the new manager may have been influenced by family matriarch Augusta Kohrs.

The beginning of the Warren era heralded a rejuvenation of cattle raising on the old Kohrs and Bielenberg home ranch. With acreage now reduced to a small fraction of the former holdings, Con Warren recognized that additional land would have to be purchased if he were to be successful. More pasture was needed to support a much larger herd of cattle than the nearly static numbers that had characterized the operation for many years. The directors of the company agreed to acquire several parcels either contiguous to or near the home ranch for this purpose. Before long, the Kohrs Company owned 6,200 acres of land, of which 500 were devoted to hay meadows to provide winter feed for the stock.

Warren also turned to rebuilding the livestock herds. He had a small number of Herefords left from the former herd, along with a few old draft horses still bearing the Kohrs-Bielenberg brand. Con started by breeding registered Herefords with the two bulls then on the ranch. He also purchased additional heifers and bulls at extremely low depression-era prices and before long had a sizable herd of quality animals. Using his own money, Warren acquired a number of Belgian draft horses for use on the ranch. Rather than buying all of the horses he needed, he began raising his own Belgians, some of which he sold.

Although Con clung to some of the time-proven traditional ranching methods he had learned from his grandfather, he demonstrated a flexibility in adopting progressive techniques, such as insemination of horses and scientifically mixed livestock feeds. By 1940, Warren had a highly successful stock raising operation that was nationally renowned for its registered Hereford cattle and purebred Belgian horses. [1]

Con invested heavily in the facilities at the ranch as well. The latter 1930s marked a period when several new buildings and corrals were constructed, and old ones were rehabilitated. Conservative in managing the ranch, Con always utilized the original ranch structures whenever possible, a factor that would bode well for the future. In 1937 it was reported that the ranch boasted numerous, "freshly-painted barns, new fence posts, and a neat, almost military-like order." [2] Among the recent additions was a new cottage-style house occupied by Con and Nell, a gift to the new bride from "Ohma," as Augusta was affectionately known. [3]

A new decade, however, brought changes to the operation. Whereas the horse business had become a staple of the Warren operation, and one that had helped him financially during downturns in the cattle market, draft horses were quickly becoming a thing of the past. Farmers were turning to mechanization in their operations. Technology and mass-production increasingly brought machines within the financial reach of more farmers, who in turn could work larger acreages more efficiently. When an Iowa horse breeder offered to buy Con's Belgians, he did not hesitate in selling. Although he was emotionally attached to the horses, that part of the business no longer made economic sense. It was well that Con sold the horses when he did, because the World War II years witnessed an even more rapid acceleration of mechanization in American agriculture.



Nell and Con Warren, 1934.  
(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

Within the few years after becoming manager of the ranch, Warren proved himself to be a rather adept manager. Clearly, he had revitalized the old ranch and had made it not only productive, but profitable. It was not making the company rich, by any means, but the modest profits portended better days to come. This in mind, Con offered to buy the home ranch from the Conrad Kohrs Company in 1940. The directors exacted a high price, but Con bought the property nevertheless. It was to be a heavy financial burden for many years to come. [4]

The end of the war saw the ranch solvent, though hardly better off overall than it had been four years earlier. Government price controls on beef during the war had severely limited Warren's profits. Operational costs, too, became almost overwhelming, precluding his ability to pay off the mortgage as quickly as he had anticipated. The modest profits realized went primarily to pay the interest on the contract. However, by selling the so-called "upper ranch" south of Deer Lodge in 1945, Warren was able to relieve himself of much of this burden and at the same time liquidate his assets to improve cash flow. [5] This was offset by a corresponding reduction in acreage, thus limiting the number of cattle he could support.

The Warren Hereford Ranch, as it became known under Con Warren's ownership, continued to produce high-quality purebred cattle. Building upon his already widespread reputation in the business, Con actively sought out new markets for his animals throughout the Pacific Northwest. He not only transported his cattle to various sales where prices would be highest, he promoted auctions at the ranch itself. The frequent visits to the old ranch by prospective buyers prompted Warren to construct new facilities, including corrals and a sale barn, east of the railroad tracks. At once, this relocation improved access and solved the perennial problems with deep mud experienced at the old ranch situated on the lower bench of the flood plain. From that time forward, Con's ranching activities were largely confined to the zone between the tracks and the highway.

Despite his earlier successes, Warren's solvency declined in the post-war era. In the late 1950s he suffered a major blow when it was discovered that the blood line of his registered cattle was plagued with genetic dwarfism. Eventually, weary of the struggle to make ends meet, Con decided to sell the herd in order to raise cash. It was said that he had only \$10,000.00 after settling his debts. [6] He then resorted to raising common feeder cattle. Warren maintained a herd of about 350 animals for several years, until he again transformed his operations to raising and selling yearlings. In the late 1960s, Con limited his activities to feeding and marketing cows and calves. With the operation declining, the day was not far off when Con would have to consider the future of the ranch.

The effort to authorize Grant-Kohrs Ranch as a national historic site was rooted in the Mission 66 program, a ten-year renaissance designed to rehabilitate a flagging National Park System. Not unlike Con Warren's Hereford ranch, the National Parks languished in a financial vacuum during World War II. Visitation as well as Congressional support dropped sharply while national attention focused on the war effort. Much of what had been accomplished by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the way of roads, bridges, and buildings had seriously eroded during and after the war years when all aspects of park development, maintenance, and protection suffered from inadequate funding. Compounding this

situation was a prosperous American public that thirsted to travel by automobile in the 1950s. It was estimated that one of every three persons in the United States would visit a national park in 1955. Faced with public use that had tripled since 1940, the National Park Service appropriation was actually less than it had been on the eve of the war. The Park System simply could not survive if something were not done, and quickly. [7]

Director Conrad L. Wirth devised a strategy for garnering a large special appropriation by proposing a bold program to rehabilitate the System. According to his plan, and a massive infusion of money, the national parks would be brought up to a satisfactory condition through an intensive ten year effort. Wirth's logic and persuasive powers convinced both the Eisenhower Administration and Congress to approve the program, labeled Mission 66, in 1956. [8]

Mission 66 created benefits beyond those aimed at rejuvenating the parks themselves. The Historic Sites Act of 1935 had provided for the National Survey of Historic Sites, a program involving the identification and evaluation of properties potentially having national significance. Those determined to have exceptional qualities might be considered for inclusion in the National Park System. The program brought together professionals from the fields of history, architecture, and archeology working in concert with state and local officials, as well as private owners. However, the shift in funding priorities during World War II caused the suspension of what had been a valuable tool in the process of preserving key sites representing the nation's heritage. The critical condition of the Park System in the post-war era would not permit the resumption of this inventory until Mission 66 was launched. The resurrected program was titled the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings. [9]

In order that all important aspects of U. S. history and prehistory would be represented, Service professionals developed an outline of primary and sub-themes. Teams of appropriate personnel then prepared thematic studies to define the historical significance of these themes in the tapestry of the American experience. These teams subsequently identified properties nationwide that served to illustrate each theme. One such group, composed of historians Robert M. Utley, William C. Everhart, and Ray H. Mattison, was assigned the task of studying the role of the cattle industry within the larger context of westward expansion. Their 1959 report identified twenty-seven sites associated with the range cattle days, of which they recommended only six as having exceptional significance based on the established criteria for the survey. Among these was Grant-Kohrs Ranch, noted not only for the integrity of its structures, but because Conrad Kohrs was, "perhaps the greatest single figure in the cattle industry of Montana. [10]

Upon submission of the team report, those sites potentially eligible were presented to the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments. This board, composed of recognized authorities in several related fields of knowledge, had been established under the authority of the 1935 Historic Sites Act to consult with the Secretary of the Interior on such matters. After a lengthy deliberation, the committee recommended that the Grant-Kohrs Ranch, along with the JA Ranch (Texas), the town of Lincoln, New Mexico, and the Tom Sun Ranch (Wyoming), met the criteria for designation as National Historic Landmarks.

At the time, the act of announcing a property as a National Historic Landmark did not necessarily mean that it would be officially registered as one. The final designation for eligible properties was conferred when the property owner signed an agreement to maintain the historical character of the site, and consented to permit periodic inspections conducted by the National Park Service. Provided he chose this course, the owner would be presented with a certificate of recognition and a bronze plaque that could be publicly displayed at the site. [11] More than merely recognizing the national significance of such sites, however, the National Historic Landmark program provided for gratuitous technical assistance by Park Service preservation specialists. This element was basic to the concept of government assistance with preserving worthy sites, without actually acquiring them. Public access to the sites remained the province of the land owners.

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter One: GOING INTO THE CATTLE BUSINESS: ACQUISITION (continued)

Typical of his agrarian counterparts throughout the western United States, Con Warren was reluctant to invite what he may have perceived as needless government involvement, if not intervention, in his ranching business. In the rural West, even a strong appreciation for family heritage and regional history often do not equate with public use of one's property. It is not surprising, then, that none of the ranch owners named in the National Survey report elected to permit visitor access to their sites, although three of them, the J. A. Ranch, Grant-Kohrs Ranch, and the Tom Sun Ranch, did agree to the other provisions. [12] Thus, the cattle industry theme continued to be publicly interpreted by only two areas already in the Park System, North Dakota's Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park and the all-encompassing Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis. Neither of these, in fact, had as its primary focus the cattle industry. Nor, in fact, was there enthusiastic support within NPS for acquiring additional areas to represent that theme. According to one Service historian, "Traditionally, the National Park Service has had a negative attitude toward the cattle industry theme . . . grazing has been looked upon as an adverse use in most . . . parks." [13]

By the mid-1960s, Con Warren was in his middle years by this time and had accepted the fact that neither of his children would pick up the reins of running the ranch. Yet, Con possessed a strong sense of pride in his pioneer heritage and the contribution of his forebears to Montana's cattle industry. Without anyone in the family willing to carry on the tradition by working the ranch, there was little point in maintaining the business. Con began to think in terms of somehow preserving the place beyond his lifetime, perhaps as a museum for Deer Lodge. He and his wife discussed the possibilities from time to time, but were unable to arrive at a solid solution until 1966, when Nell suggested approaching the National Park Service. The ranch, after all, had been officially inspected and recognized for its significance. "We wrangled about it for thirty days before I finally sat down and did it," Con remembered in a later interview. "So, if it hadn't been for her, we wouldn't be standing here right now." [14]

Warren's subsequent communication with the Montana congressional delegation prompted Chester C. Brown, chief of planning in the Washington office, to request assistance from nearby Yellowstone National Park. Accordingly, Superintendent John S. McLaughlin assigned historian Aubrey C. Haines to

make an on-site investigation of the area with a view to its potential for becoming a unit of the System. Haines at that time was serving a stint as acting ranger-in-charge at Big Hole Battlefield. Traveling to the ranch on July 28, 1966, he met with the Warrens and made a cursory inventory and evaluation of the structures. It became apparent to Haines during their conversations that despite Con's expression of lofty motives for parting with the ranch, he was willing, even anxious, to sell. Haines recommended to McLaughlin that, "further study of the area" was warranted because of the "good condition of the premises, their obvious integrity . . . and the possibilities for a meaningful presentation to the public." [15] However, Haines would confide years later that the place impressed him, "as a kind of run down, remnant of a ranch" that was going to require a lot of money to develop. [16]

Communication now established with the Service, Warren wrote directly to the Washington Office during the following January to bolster his case for bringing the ranch under the protective umbrella of the National Park Service. Con wanted to know if the ". . . Department would be interested in developing a museum or recreational area at this Historic Site," at the same time offering his complete assistance. [17] Assistant Director Theodor R. Swem responded in a supportive tone, asking if Warren had given any thought to, "what measures might be helpful in assuring preservation of the ranch buildings and collections." Swem also queried Warren as to whether he had in mind a time schedule for selling the property, even though his letter had not indicated any particular urgency. The Washington official concluded on a note of caution that all of the usual factors of suitability and feasibility would need to be investigated, "before we can take a position in regard to the ranch's potential as an addition to the National Park System." [18]

In his missive of a few weeks later, Con reiterated the obvious need to set aside the 1862 Grant-Kohrs house. Beyond that, however, he was uncertain just what the NPS might consider as historically significant for inclusion in a national historic site and suggested that it might be appropriate for professionals to "clarify the boundaries of the Kohrs-Grant ranch." Con candidly admitted that he did not have the financial resources to preserve the ranch, moreover he wished to retire in the not-too-distant future. With those considerations in mind, he was willing to negotiate the sale of the ranch at any time. [19] Russell E. Dickenson, chief of new area studies and master planning (and future NPS director), subsequently advised Warren that his office was already encumbered with a heavy workload, therefore it would be impossible to undertake a study at Grant-Kohrs for some time. He did offer the promise that his staff would conduct the project as soon as possible. [20]

Good to his word, Dickenson saw to it that historian Merrill J. Mattes and architect John Calef, both from the San Francisco Planning and Service Center, paid a visit to the site in September 1967a. [21] Mattes's report favored NPS acquisition, though he outlined several conditions that would have to be weighed very carefully. There was no question in his mind that the ranch was a historically important site; that already had been confirmed by its National Historic Landmark designation. While Mattes was a seasoned academic historian, he recognized the potential impacts of a new form of interpretation termed historical animation, or "living history," as it became known in the NPS, that was catching fire throughout the nation [22] By the late 1960s, there were many "living farm" demonstrations active in the throughout the United States. Mattes challenged the Service to consider whether or not it wanted "to

embark on an expanded program of living demonstration areas, including a western ranch holding" and, if so, to make a determination whether the Grant-Kohrs Ranch was "the most feasible candidate for such representation in the National Park System." Of a more practical nature were the questions of whether Warren would sell at a reasonable price, making a donation of the historical objects and records, and whether Congress could be convinced to pay the high price commanded by prime agricultural lands. Mattes estimated that the total cost for acquisition and development would exceed one million dollars. [23]

The wheels of bureaucracy turned slowly and it was not until early in 1969 that Swem notified Warren that while the Service had not lost interest in the ranch, it would be some time before a master plan could be prepared. Swem explained that this planning exercise was basic to the preparation of a specific proposal for consideration by the Secretary of the Interior and the Advisory Board. Funding, he pointed out, simply was not available to accomplish this. He added that an even greater hurdle in the process would be the act of Congress necessary to authorize the area, along with a funding appropriation. [24]

This was a grim forecast that might have dashed any hopes Warren had for the quick sale of his property, were it not for Swem's suggestion that he consider an arrangement with the National Park Foundation. It was for just such circumstances that this organization had been chartered by Congress. The officially-sanctioned partner of the National Park Service relied solely on private donations to acquire options on identified critical lands, and to hold them in trust until congressional funding was forthcoming. Thus, tracts of land vital to Park Service interests, that might otherwise be lost to prior sale or degraded by adverse impacts, could be protected in the interim.

This was clearly not the answer Con wanted to hear. He initially ignored Swem's suggestion, choosing instead to turn up the heat under the Park Service. Writing to Swem in July 1969, the businessman in Warren came to the fore. His frustration with what he perceived as a needlessly slow process surfaced as he pointed out to Swem that very little had been accomplished in the two and one-half years of discussions. In a "fish, or cut bait" ultimatum, Warren told Swem that he had received a very attractive offer to sell the whole ranch to another party and that he was running out of time to respond. "If by [September 1, 1969] the Park Service has not made a move to acquire . . . the Historic Site," Warren wrote, "I would have only one alternative and that would be to dispose of the antiques and artifacts and sell the whole property as a ranch." [25]

Whether or not Con was bluffing may never be known, but one thing is certain -- this no-nonsense rancher knew how to get the attention of the National Park Service. The very next month Ralph Lewis, chief of the Branch of Museum Operations, found himself in Deer Lodge, Montana. There he spent a full day with Con surveying the contents of the 1862 ranch house and several of the outbuildings. That Lewis was mightily impressed is evident in his report. He noted, once again, that the entire site possessed a high degree of integrity in its magnificent collection of site-specific artifacts, its original structures, and in its landscape. Here at an old-time working ranch, he noted, "The cowboy and other usually over-romanticized elements of the wild West fall into proper perspective and seem to gain impact in the process." [26] This visit seems to have either appeased Con for the moment, or belied his

threat. Whichever it was, the ranch remained unsold.

In following months, the National Park Foundation opened communication with Warren, but the road was a rocky one initially. Warren hosted Robert R. Garvey, assistant secretary for the National Park Foundation and executive secretary for the Advisory Council, at the ranch late in 1969. At that time the two reached agreement on major points. Garvey also initiated an appraisal of the ranch lands. [27] Yet, upon his return to Washington, Garvey was stunned to learn that Warren had declared the negotiations to be at an end. Once again, insufficient basic data and the absence of a defined concept plan deprived the players of a foundation for the frank discussions that Con Warren expected. Neither party understood just which tracts of land were considered significant for inclusion in the proposed historic site. Further, the Warrens rejected the idea of being granted a life estate on their home and the parcel of land encompassing the modern ranch operation east of the railroad tracks. Garvey attempted to rescue the relationship as best he could, blaming the breakdown on "a lack of information regarding requirements, both ours and yours." [28] He encouraged Con to reconsider his stance, assuring him that the Foundation had not changed its mind about the significance of the ranch.

Con's favorable response to Garvey's entreaty may well have been in deference to an ailing wife's desire to see the ranch preserved as a public historic site. If he was still considering a sale to anyone other than the government, Warren made no further mention of it. He quickly submitted to the Foundation and the NPS a revised proposal containing several alternatives for protecting the historic ranch, as well as preserving a viable portion of the Warren Hereford operation. [29]

After teetering on the brink of collapse for months, the negotiations suddenly made a turn-around, due in no small part to Bob Garvey's diplomacy. He and Con seem to have established a mutually respectful working relationship during Garvey's visit to the ranch. By the first of April 1970 Warren had firmed up his earlier proposals for dividing the property to accommodate both park and ranch needs. The essence of this plan was to sell thirty-five acres containing the historic home ranch buildings, plus an additional ten acres east of the tracks, south of Con's house, for visitor parking and access. Additionally, Warren would grant easements on adjacent lands, the whole priced at \$311,000.00. A separate contract would be negotiated for the antique furnishings and ranch equipment based on appraised value. Warren's attorney in Helena, Peter Meloy, prepared the formal offers and forwarded them to Garvey, suggesting at the same time that Garvey should plan to meet with him and the Warrens as soon as possible to work out the details. [30]

After this meeting took place, late in June of 1970, Garvey returned to his Washington office where he conferred with John D. McDermott, his assistant secretary on the Advisory Council. Garvey was faced with the critical decision of having proposals for two eligible sites, Carousel Park in Maryland and Grant-Kohrs Ranch, but money enough to acquire only one. When asked for his recommendation, McDermott immediately suggested the ranch. He reasoned that the Park System had no area devoted exclusively to representing the cattlemen's empire, a sub-theme in the recently adopted National Park Service Plan. The concept for such a plan had originated in 1964 with Interior Secretary Stewart Udall, who had advanced the idea that the Park System should be expanded. His successor, Walter J. Hickel,

likewise became convinced that there were "serious gaps and inadequacies which must be remedied while opportunities still exist if the System is to fulfill the people's need to see and understand their heritage . . . ." [31] NPS Director George Hartzog and his staff capitalized on this opportunity by designing the plan around a thematic framework for expanding the System's cultural parks through careful evaluation of appropriate sites and buildings. Accordingly, the plan encouraged controlled expansion of the System by outlining historical themes that ought to be represented by sites meeting specific criteria of significance and integrity. These served as an objective method for screening out unwanted or marginally-significant parks, so often imposed upon the NPS by delegates eager to promote local economies, and garner support for the next election. At the same time, the process exposed a wide range of deficiencies in themes that were either under-represented, or not represented at all. [32] Hartzog had guidelines in place, coincidentally, by the spring 1970. Considering the Department's emphasis on fleshing out the System, Garvey the politician saw a serendipitous advantage in promoting an under-represented type. [33]

Garvey immediately initiated procedures for finalizing the deal to acquire Grant-Kohrs Ranch. Following a legal review of the provisions contained in the sale offer, the Foundation's attorneys deliberated with Meloy until a tentative agreement was reached in August. The decision turned on a key factor -- the Warrens' decision to donate, rather than sell, the artifact collection. These favorable developments influenced the Advisory Board at its October 1970 annual meeting to "emphatically recommend that the National Park Service negotiate immediately" with Warren to acquire the ranch. [34] In the deal that was struck, the Warrens relinquished 130 acres in fee, plus 1180 acres of easement, for a single payment of \$250,000.00. Although a meeting to finalize the deal had been scheduled early in September, the closing was delayed until November 13, 1970. [35] With that, the papers were signed and the legendary ranch passed out of family hands for the first time in 104 years. No doubt Con Warren had some feelings of regret when the time actually came to sign away the place, but he would later admit that, "really, that's kind of what saved my bacon is when I made that sale . . . otherwise, I think I'd be flat broke now, maybe worse than flat." [36] Con's decision was probably the best compromise he could have negotiated; the ranch was preserved, he retained his home and business, and there was cash to pay his debts.

Separate from the land sale was an agreement executed the same day between the Warrens and the National Park Foundation (NPF). The document was intended to guide the use of the area by both parties during the interim period. A provision of this accord called for an inventory of the historical objects on the site, which were to be donated to the NPF rather than purchased. Another was significant for authorizing National Park Service personnel, acting on behalf of the Foundation, to assume responsibility over the area. [37]

One of the members of that first reconnaissance party was Park Ranger John R. Douglass, then serving as the West District naturalist in Yellowstone National Park. Douglass conducted an informal inspection of the site and, as a result, developed some recommendations for the immediate future of the ranch. Besides the need for researching the buildings, he saw an urgent need to establish an official presence at the site. He observed that Con Warren had "shown remarkable patience in dealing with the multitude of

Park Service personnel," but Douglass felt it was time to designate one individual as coordinator for the area. Too, he recommended that a caretaker be assigned to live on-site for protection and to carry out minor maintenance work. [38]



Vernon E. Hennesay (front row, right) with group, Yellowstone National Park.  
(Courtesy Yellowstone NP)

The staff at Yellowstone National Park moved quickly to act on the caretaker issue. Early in December, arrangements were completed to move a mobile home from Yellowstone to the ranch. Tom Pettet, a Butte, Montana native and member of the Mammoth District maintenance crew, was detailed for the assignment. Since Pettet shared quarters at the park with his mother, both were relocated to Grant-Kohrs. By mid month, Acting Midwest Regional Director Robert L. Giles, headquartered in Omaha, was able to report to Director Hartzog that the site was occupied and that utilities connections had been made with the city of Deer Lodge. [39]

For a few weeks following the purchase, Douglass continued in his liaison role, making community contacts in Deer Lodge and laying the groundwork for housing Pettet at the ranch. Vernon E. Hennesay, the assistant superintendent for special services at Yellowstone National Park, also had become involved

by virtue of his catch-all staff position. It became increasingly apparent that a single key person should be designated to coordinate communications both within the NPS and with outside organizations. Issues such as utilities connections, fire protection agreements, and basic maintenance priorities were already arising that required the attention of an employee vested with authority to act on them. Furthermore, Pettet's placement at the ranch raised questions about supervisory responsibility. Douglass complained that, "The man does not know what he is supposed to do. Who is to tell him?" Acting on Douglass's suggestion, Yellowstone Superintendent Jack K. Anderson named Hennesay to head the effort. [40]

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter One: GOING INTO THE CATTLE BUSINESS: ACQUISITION (continued)

The dawn of the new year found the ranch entering a new phase in its transformation from cattle operation to historic site. During Con Warren's protracted negotiations with the NPS and the Park Foundation, some area residents had scoffed at the notion of his selling the ranch to the U. S. Government. Many in the community perceived the deal as nothing more than a financial scheme for Con's benefit. This was probably a reflection of the Warrens' unpopularity with some people stemming from the couple's private nature, seasoned with an element of envy. While there can be little doubt that Warren saw in the sale an opportunity to secure his future, he also was genuinely interested in establishing a permanent legacy devoted to the days of the open range, as illustrated through his ancestors. [41]

Once the ranch was purchased by the Foundation, however, the voices of the nay sayers were suddenly replaced by community leaders lauding the noble effort. This shift in attitude was evident when two officers of the Deer Lodge Chamber of Commerce solicited U. S. Senator Mike Mansfield for his support of proposed legislation to officially authorize the site. "We feel that such an area is desperately needed to alleviate the pressure on the two National Parks in the State and would be a substantial aid to the economy . . .," they wrote. [42] Mansfield's counterpart, Senator Lee Metcalf, joined him in querying Director Hartzog for a report on the status of NPS plans for the ranch. The Service could respond only that planning would have to be revised with a view to the property that was actually purchased, as opposed to the initial concept of acquiring a tiny holding of only 45 acres. However, the Service could take no particular action until a master plan was completed. [43]

The purchase of the Warren Ranch by the National Park Foundation gave renewed impetus to formal planning for the area. Just before Christmas 1970, Robert L. Giles, acting Midwest Regional Director of the National Park Service, notified Hartzog that it was urgent that NPS move forward on this project. He left unsaid what Hartzog already knew; the politically powerful Mansfield was not to be denied, Giles declared that since funding for new area studies was critically short, the region would defer two other projects in favor of Grant-Kohrs Ranch. Assistant Director Joe Holt thereupon suggested that the process might be further expedited by a request for money from the director's reserve, but that proved unnecessary when the Western Service Center found massive funding to underwrite several studies,

including one for the ranch. By March, 1971 both the funding and a planning directive had been approved. A team was slated to meet in Deer Lodge on May 3 to begin work on the all-important plan. Significantly, the Park Service officially settled upon "Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site" as the formal name for the proposed area. [44]

With a growing public constituency now behind the creation of a national historic site, the Montana delegation initiated a request for the NPS to draft the enabling legislation for a House of Representatives committee hearing scheduled for late in April, 1971. [45] This was timely, in view of Director Hartzog's aggressive acquisition program to flesh out the historical wing of the System, according to the comprehensive National Park System Plan.

Grant-Kohrs Ranch was suddenly thrust in the fast lane of the legislative process. There was not time, of course, to complete a master plan within the deadline imposed by Congress. Legislative counsel for the Department of the Interior, Frank Bracken, forwarded the draft authorization bill to Mansfield's office on May 24. Although this draft called for a limitation of 2,000 acres of land to be acquired for the site, that amount was later reduced to a maximum of 1,500 acres. The Midwest Regional Office also supplied the senator with estimates for personnel and support costs for a five year period. [46] Following closely on the submission of these estimates, the Park Service sent copies of a hurriedly prepared preliminary master plan to the Washington Office in preparation for a site visit by the House Subcommittee on Interior and Insular Affairs in mid-August. The committee wanted to "get a better view and a better understanding of what the area is," according to site coordinator Vern Hennesay, [47]

Regardless of the House committee's timetable, Mansfield and Metcalf formalized and introduced their bill (S .2166) on the Senate floor on June 28, 1971. In his speech, Mansfield appealed his colleagues that, "Opportunities of this kind are very rare and I hope that the Congress will be able to expedite considerations of this legislation so that the National Park Service might proceed with the development of this site." Even though the Interior Department had not yet been asked for its opinion on the legislation, Deputy Director Tom Flynn prepared a draft favoring the bill, knowing the Senate committee would request it on short notice. [48]

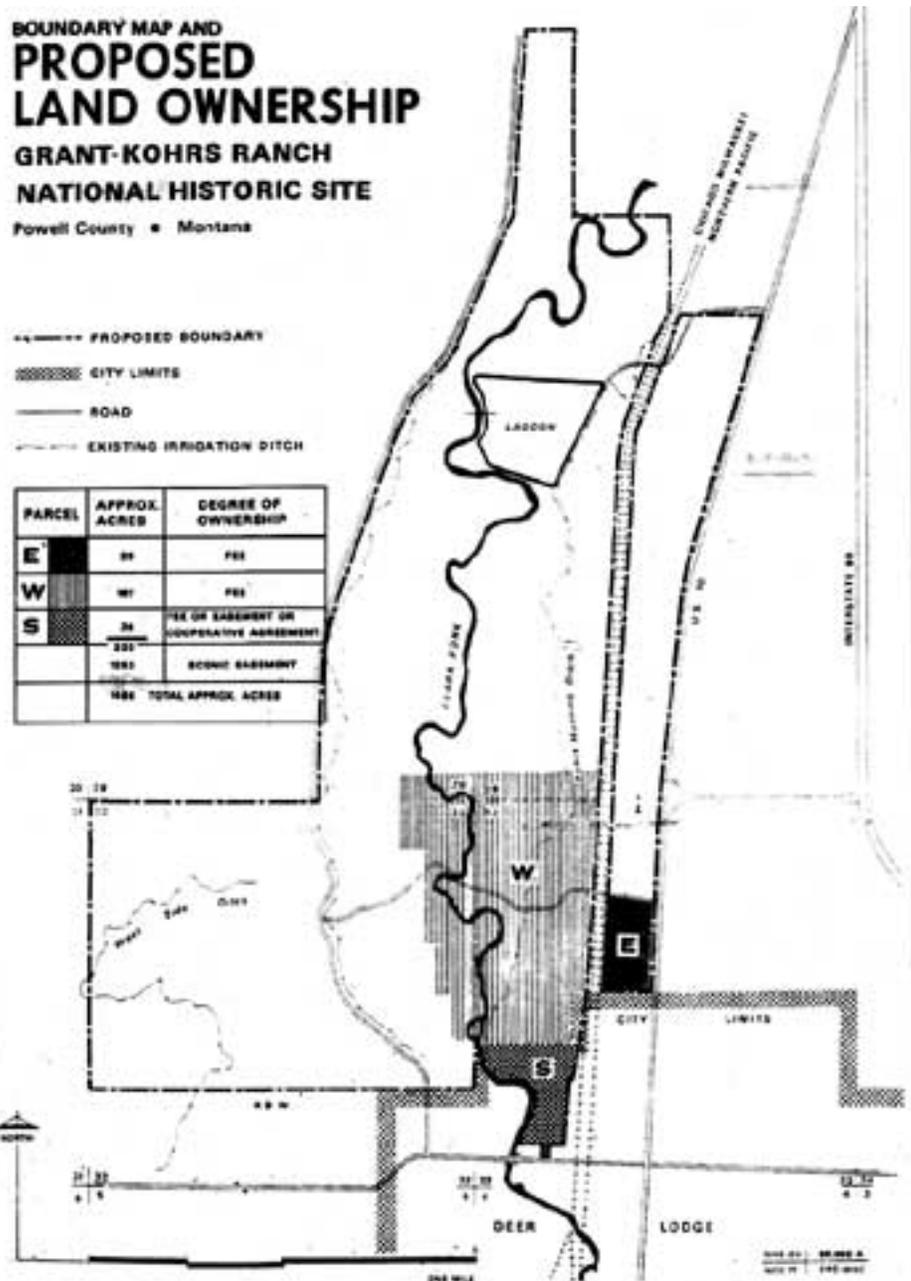
The congressional committee's visit was a serendipitous opportunity for the NPS and the Deer Lodge community to advance their case for authorizing the site. The congressional inspection of Grant-Kohrs Ranch was one stop on an itinerary that included visits to two other proposed parks, Golden Gate recreation area in California and a recreation area on Snake River in Idaho. Preparations for the event moved into high gear to ensure that the Washington visitors were favorably impressed. Vein Hennesay coordinated plans with the Deer Lodge Chamber to host a luncheon for the delegates and approximately 100 community leaders and residents on the old Kohrs ranch house lawn. The committee, including Representatives Roy Taylor, Joe Skubitz, Don Clausen, Jim McClure, and John Melcher, arrived by chartered airplane on August 11. The Park Service was amply represented by Deputy Director Tom Flynn from the Washington Office, Regional Director Len Voltz, and Yellowstone Superintendent Anderson. Hennesay and Douglass led an orientation tour of the site, highlighted by a walk through the ranch house, for the congressional party and NPS central office staff. The affair had the desired effect. In

addressing the group, Montana Congressman Melcher pledged his full support to "prompt legislative action" on the ranch. Hennesay later gauged the committee's reaction as a positive one, noting that, "We are sure there is no doubt in their minds . . . of the value in having the Grant-Kohrs Ranch established as an historical site . . ." [49]

In the months following the committee's visit, the staffs at the Washington Office, the Midwest Regional Office in Omaha, and the newly-organized Service Center in Denver devoted full attention to preparing legislative support data for the ranch. [50] By the end of October 1971, all of the figures for land acquisition, easements, and development, in addition to projected personnel costs, had gone forward for congressional consideration. The Service finally proposed purchasing 208 acres in fee, and negotiating easements on an additional 1,280 acres to protect the integrity of the site. The total cost estimate for the first year of operation was \$350,000.00 [51]

Deeply-rooted Kohrs family ties with Montana politics promoted strong bipartisan support for setting aside the ranch as an historic site. In July 1971, Congressman Dick Shoup weighed in with his own version of a House bill bolstering the Senate legislation framed by Mansfield and Metcalf a month earlier. [52] There was little surprise when the draft cleared the already thoroughly-battered Interior and Insular Affairs Committee on February 10, 1972. "All of the hard work we have gone to get the Grant-Kohrs Ranch designated . . . is now paying off," Shoup proclaimed to the press. Hearings on the bill were slated to be held near the end of April. [53] Once past the hurdle of the congressional committee, albeit a low hurdle in this instance, the house bill was in the home stretch for consideration by Congress.

During the interim there was little that could be done by either the Park Service or the Deer Lodge community beyond continuing to beat the drum of support. Townsfolk now enthusiastically embraced



(click on map for larger size)

the idea, even those who had previously suggested that Con Warren might be showing signs of senility in thinking the ranch had any significance. [54] The Chamber of Commerce, slow to back Warren initially, eagerly began calculating the financial benefits to be reaped from a major tourist attraction. At Chamber meetings and in coffee shops, area residents discussed how park visitors would need expanded lodging and restaurant facilities once the site was in operation. The forecast of an economic boom was no doubt fueled by the wildly speculative predictions that some 220,000 to 240,000 tourists would visit the ranch each year. [55] A national historic site on the edge of town, it was predicted, would be the salvation of Deer Lodge. "They were all going to get rich off of it," one former park employee recalled. "They thought it was going to be another Yellowstone." [56]

While the politicians competed for the laurels to be reaped by sponsoring the enabling legislation, the strategy of having separate bills before the two bodies of Congress had its advantages. Senator Metcalf served in a key position as a member of Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. His influence was vital to winning committee approval of the Mansfield-Metcalf Bill, S. 2166. Approval of the parallel proposals by both House and Senate committees practically guaranteed final passage with few alterations. In August the two pieces of legislation were considered and voted on by the respective houses, the Senate version passing easily on August 10, with Shoup's to follow a few days later. The latter was delayed when it was discovered that the number of acres for acquisition was not specified in the document. Consequently, the House bill had to be laid before the Senate for resolution. The Senate voted to adopt the less specific wording in the House version, which established a land ceiling of 2,000 acres, without limiting the fee acquisition to 208 acres. Once that was done, the amended and approved Senate bill was sent to the White House. The legislation eventually caught up with President Richard M. Nixon at his home at San Clemente, California, where he signed Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site into law on August 25, 1972. His signature officially put the Park Service in the cattle business. [57]

Before year's end the National Park Foundation conveyed its interests in the ranch to the NPS. In turn, the Service reimbursed the Foundation \$257,544.00, the full amount of its investment, plus interest and administrative costs. That was the final action necessary to place Grant-Kohrs Ranch firmly and forever in the hands of its new stewards. [58]

The momentous events in San Clemente and Washington had little immediate effect on activities at the ranch. The site would remain closed to the public for the next two or three years, a disappointing revelation to the Deer Lodge community. "We want to discourage visitors now as we are not ready for them," Vern Hennesay told listeners at a Chamber luncheon within a month after the signing. "So please don't give it too much publicity." [59] While his comments may have dampened community enthusiasm, Hennesay was only being realistic. There was still no funding approved for the new park. The buildings were in no condition to be accessed safely, and the lack of visitor facilities and staff made it impossible to accommodate the public.

In the two years since National Park Service personnel had first occupied the site, only the most basic of maintenance activities had been carried out. "One man can only accomplish so much," Hennesay lamented in December 1972, adding that he would have to "continue operating on a very slim budget of

whatever we can 'bootleg' from Yellowstone until after June 30." [60] Tom Pettet and his successor, Edward Griggs, were therefore limited to organizing and storing the many years of accumulated ranch material, as well as disposing of refuse scattered about the property. They mitigated the danger of fire somewhat by keeping the grass and weeds mowed around the grounds. Crude, stop gap means were employed in propping up sagging roofs and keeping the weather out of the decaying buildings by fixing doors and replacing broken window panes. Under Hennesay's direction, the caretakers attempted to provide the wagons and other ranch equipment with the best storage possible within the existing primitive conditions. It would remain for NPS professionals, and a large influx of money, to put the ranch back on the road to recovery.

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**CHAPTER TWO >>>**

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Two: WORKING RANCH AND WORKING PARK: PLANNING

When the National Park Service acquired Grant-Kohrs Ranch it faced several problems that were unprecedented in its experience. Even though Lyndon B. Johnson Ranch (LBJ) in Texas and Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota each had an element of the cattle industry in its respective story, neither had been set aside principally for that purpose. Rather, the two parks memorialized the individuals reflected in their respective titles. Cattle raising at LBJ, for instance, was an incidental aspect of President Johnson's heritage, while Roosevelt's Elk Horn Ranch, which remained undeveloped by the Park Service, exemplified his dedication to conservation, as well as encompassing outstanding examples of Northern Plains Badlands geology. Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, on the other hand, was identified specifically for its direct relationship with the range cattle industry, as personified in two of the West's great cattle barons, and for the opportunity it afforded to graphically represent that sub-theme within the larger context of westward expansion.

The agency possessed a wealth of experience in planning many types of parks, but re-configuring a working ranch into a public historic site posed new challenges. Some of these had been foreseen when Historian Aubrey C. Haines had prepared a brief feasibility report in 1966. Haines, on the staff at Yellowstone National Park, was sent to Deer Lodge to examine the ranch and to offer his opinions as to whether it retained enough integrity to be further considered for inclusion in the Park System. Following on Haines's positive recommendation, two professionals, Merrill J. Mattes and John Calef, from the San Francisco Planning and Service Center inspected the ranch the next year. Mattes, a distinguished historian in his own right, saw potential for the ranch in relation to the burgeoning "living history" movement then sweeping the nation. "If we are indeed going to 'go into the cattle business,'" Mattes wrote, "we should do so with imagination, and on a scale that will make federal participation significant far beyond the preservation of objects and buildings." Mattes thus defined the long-term management direction for Grant-Kohrs Ranch.

However, the acquisition of too little property might constrain the presentation to hardly more than a historic house museum. Mattes predicted that this would present "the awkward problem of just how to segregate the historic features from the working ranch," meaning Con Warren's Hereford operation just across the railroad from the original headquarters ranch. Mattes argued that if the proposed park

boundaries were expanded to include the core of the active ranch as well, it would provide greater latitude, but at the same time it would be incumbent on the Park Service to perpetuate that operation. He admitted that, "the operation of a live hay and cattle ranch would pose problems," yet he did not consider them to be insurmountable. Mattes cautioned that the Service should only enter into such an obligation with a complete understanding and acceptance of the premise that the ranching operation would continue. [1]

That Mattes's remarks were heeded was reflected in the agreement signed between Con Warren and the National Park Foundation upon its purchase of the historic ranch in 1970. This Historic Use Agreement specified that the site was, "to be managed as a living ranch . . . for the inspiration and benefit of the American people." [2] Warren initially wanted to sell only two small parcels of land, one of about 35 acres upon which were the Grant-Kohrs Ranch buildings, and another of about ten acres bordering the north side of the Deer Lodge city limit, west of Highway 10. At that time, he and his wife Nell were opposed to selling a larger area and accepting a life estate for themselves on the Warren Ranch proper. During negotiations during the spring and summer of 1970 Park Service and Foundation staff convinced the Warrens of the necessity for acquiring a larger holding for historic site purposes. In the end, the Warrens agreed to the life estate provision on five acres surrounding their home. [3]



Warren Ranch House, c. 1945.

*(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

Once the Foundation had acquired Grant-Kohrs Ranch, Acting Regional Director Robert L. Giles informed Director Hartzog that ". . . we must move forward on the master plan." for the ranch. [4] Master plans, more recently termed general management plans, served as a basic planning framework for all national park units and were an essential step in the process of initially authorizing parks. Such documents varied somewhat from park to park, according to circumstances, and they could be updated periodically to address current needs and issues. Nevertheless, the first plan for any park was particularly important for outlining the basic resources, as well as management objectives. Most plans for small historic sites addressed concepts for preservation, visitor use, and land acquisition. These equated to estimated costs for lands, development, staffing, and operation.

A serious effort to prepare a master plan for the ranch had been launched early in 1971, prior to the acquisition of the site. Although Montana Senator Lee Metcalf had been eager to introduce legislation to authorize the site as a unit of the System, the a bill could not be drafted until NPS was able to articulate in more detail its plans and needs for the area. Writing to Metcalf in January, NPS Assistant Director for Legislation Joe Holt informed the senator that some of the concepts for the area had changed with the acquisition of more lands than originally anticipated. The uses and benefits of the additional acreage would have to be evaluated with regard to the overall development concept for the site. [5]

A planning directive was prepared and approved by mid-March. The team, led by Landscape Architect John B. Sage from the Denver Service Center (DSC), included Yellowstone Park Superintendent Jack Anderson, Historian Edwin C. Bearss, and John Douglass, by then the assistant chief interpreter at Rocky Mountain National Park. The members rendezvoused at Deer Lodge early in May 1971. [6] The pressure was on to develop a master plan as quickly as possible to be ready for the Congressional hearings.

To no one's surprise, the team focused most of its attention on the proposed boundary for the site, addressing in particular a means of convenient public access. Deliberations began with the team's acceptance of the premise that the ranch house (HS-1) would be used as the primary visitor contact station. The most direct entrance to the Grant-Kohrs house led past Con Warren's residence, but in accordance with Con's request, this was designated as a service road only for park staff. He did, however, offer to donate an easement north of his house, passing in front of the big red barn, on which the Service could and later did construct an alternate access road. [7] The railroad, however, was opposed to a public crossing through their right-of-way at that point because of safety considerations. Therefore, an alternative entrance had to be found.

The area acquired by the Park Foundation included a small parcel of land, approximately 10 acres (designated as Tract E), lying between the Highway 10 and the railroad tracks, south of the Warren residence. Preliminary discussions between the NPS and Warren envisioned visitor parking and other facilities being located on this tract, but it, too, involved getting the public safely over the railroad tracks. [8]

The team, however, largely ignored this suggestion, preferring instead to bring visitors into the site from the south, through a small adjoining city park. This would be "a transitional zone where the existing diverse scenes can blend." Driving through the park along a tree-lined approach lane, the visitor would make a transition from the modern world to the days of the Kohrs and Bielenberg Ranch. A compelling consideration for the team's recommendation of this site as the park entrance stemmed from the inherent safety hazards associated with moving visitors across two sets of railroad tracks within the site. This location would route visitors from U. S. 10 (Main Street) west on Milwaukee Avenue and across the tracks outside the park boundary. The visitor entrance to Grant-Kohrs NHS, accordingly, would be via Park Street, which could be extended north from Milwaukee through the city park. Starting at the park boundary, a meandering low-key road would traverse the Stuart Meadow. A parking lot for 75 cars would be established on high ground, west of the tracks, a few hundred yards south of the historic buildings. The proposal also would "consolidate the relationship between city interests and historic ranch interests." Since the main park entrance would lie immediately west of downtown Deer Lodge, the potential benefit to the town "would be mutually beneficial." [9]

The planners considered a vehicular right-of-way to be the minimal NPS interest in the city park, labeled Parcel "S" on their map. "However," the team reported, "the potential to develop and protect this key area . . . is too important an issue to resolve without a cooperative approach to the question." City planners were interested in constructing a picnic area on joint-use acreage, though the team's comment suggests that the Park Service perceived a larger threat of commercial development at the front door of the historic site. [10]



*Aerial view of Grant-Kohrs Ranch, with Warren Ranch in middle ground.  
(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

An initial draft of the master plan called for the visitor and support facilities to be on the west side of the still actively-used railroad tracks, so that staff would be readily available in the event of an emergency. Trains sometimes paused in this area for periods of up to half an hour. After reviewing the plan, however, Vein Hennesay wrote a note to Superintendent Anderson objecting to this element because, "without support facilities on the east side of the tracks, that small track [sic] of land is useless to us." [11] Subsequent versions of the plan placed park administrative buildings on Tract E, adjacent to Highway 10.

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Two: WORKING RANCH AND WORKING PARK: PLANNING (continued)

The master plan addressed several other important land considerations. Among these were the Deer Lodge sewerage lagoon north of the ranch, the two railroad rights-of way running through the property from north to south, bisecting the property; and three irrigation ditches. There were also utilities corridors across the lands. Although the Park Service expressed no intention of altering the use of these improvements, the team determined that action would be necessary to clarify and resolve the varied legal aspects relating to the interests. [12]

Beyond the land issues, this early plan outlined the initial management objectives that would serve as priorities for guiding the activities of interim and permanent staff over the next several years. It is worth noting that Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS was intended initially to be a satellite area administered under Yellowstone National Park, and supervised on-site by a management assistant. [13] That the five-member team included Superintendent Anderson may have influenced this recommendation. However, until a congressional appropriation for the area was forthcoming, Assistant Superintendent Hennesay would continue to be key man for the new site.

Facilities at the site would be minimal and designed to be compatible with the historic setting of the ranch. The team proposed that park housing be constructed for some, but not all, of the staff for the sake of night-time security. Of course, public rest rooms and improved utilities connected with the City of Deer Lodge would have to be installed before the area could be opened to visitors.

The planners concluded by making general recommendations for additional studies, principally a historic structures report and an interpretive prospectus. Both would generate basic data essential to informed management of the resources, particularly the buildings in the defined historic zone encompassing the "old" ranch west of the railroads. Even though it might have been appropriate to include a historic resource study at the same time, the need for such a report was not identified until later. The team did, however, include the suggestion that living history be considered as an appropriate means of interpretation for the site. [14] The final master plan was issued early in 1973.

Key man Vein Hennesay met with regional office staff in Omaha on January 30, 1973 to discuss plans

and short-term operations for the ranch. A crucial need was that of conducting a professional assessment of the structures so that a preservation plan could be developed. It was decided that a historical architect should be sent to the area as soon as possible to begin this process. Likewise, a staff curator should visit the ranch to inspect the collections with a view to improving environmental conditions and to train the resident seasonal ranger in cataloging techniques. [15] The condition of the Grant Kohrs house (HS-1), especially the roof, was a major concern on both counts.

The citizens of Deer Lodge, like most residents near newly-designated parks, found it difficult to understand the delays in bringing a unit to an operational level. The greatest impediment was, of course, the lack of funding. Until the beginning of fiscal year 1973, Yellowstone National Park had been bearing most of the costs for Grant-Kohrs. The NPS predicted that Congress would appropriate an operating program of \$103,000.00, but the actual amount came to only \$88,000. Still, it was a beginning. This modest budget at least would cover basic staffing and office equipment costs, along with the development of an alternative road by which Con Warren could access his ranch lands without going through the historic zone. [16]

The most sensitive planning issue at this early stage continued to be public access to the area. Hennesay and the others attending the January 1973 meeting agreed that it was not yet feasible to allow the public onto the ranch grounds, and that formal establishment should be delayed for an indefinite time. The question of where to put the park entrance "is the major thing holding us up," Hennesay later told the Silver State Post. "Once we get that decided we can proceed with other developments." [17] He predicted, prophetically as it turned out, that even though the staff was discouraging visitation, it would only be a matter of time until interested groups would pressure the NPS to open the ranch. Hennesay was able to evade the issue at the local level until September, when Chamber of Commerce Secretary Ted J. Mannix attempted to force a definitive answer by planning a celebration in conjunction with a grand opening. Hennesay was candid in admitting that the Service "was not in a position . . . to even guess when we might be able to have a dedication . . . ." [18]

Months passed, but Park Service officials could claim virtually no meaningful progress at the site. The temper of the local community, already on a short fuse, began to sizzle anew when it discovered that the NPS had not requested development funds for that year. The Service understood that planning had to precede any work on the ground, but it seems that no one had clarified this in the minds of Deer Lodge residents. On March 15, 1974 the local newspaper unleashed a front-page diatribe accusing the NPS of masking the facts "in bureaucratic confusion" resulting in the "unjustified and unnatural death" of Grant-Kohrs Ranch. [19] At a meeting the very next week, Chamber of Commerce members opened fire on Hennesay with a barrage of questions about the lack of activity, pointing especially to NPS failure to appoint a local manager who could devote full-attention to the site. One person in the audience offered the opinion that this was a principal reason things were in such disarray. The beleaguered key man agreed, but could only respond that his request had been "waiting in the personnel office in Washington since November." Hennesay unintentionally fueled the smoldering mood of the audience by predicting that no major allocation of money would be scheduled for the ranch until 1979. "This is a real sad thing," one audience member lamented, "We feel we have been shuffled aside and we won't be around

long enough to see the project." At that point, Congressman Dick Shoup's representative, also present, waded into the fray declaring that, "We will bring pressures to bring this into fruition earlier." [20]

The Chamber and the Silver State Post were not the only ones concerned about the apparent lack of development at the historic site. Con Warren stirred his own political waves with the Montana delegation to find out what, if anything, the NPS was doing toward opening the ranch to the public. Responding to Warren's inquiry, Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior Douglas P. Wheeler expressed his regret that of the seventeen projects requested for Grant-Kohrs in fiscal year 1974 (beginning July 1, 1973), none had been funded. Included among these were the construction of an entrance road, water and sewer systems, restoration, and other facilities. The ranch, he confessed, had been upstaged by "commitments to Bicentennial projects" in celebration of the nation's 200th anniversary upcoming in 1976. [21] Warren probably found little comfort in Wheeler's comment informing him that the process of Service-wide priorities required two or three years to integrate new area projects into the funding program. [22]

Con remained unconvinced. Moreover, he was fuming over the NPS announcement of its preference for yet another proposed park entrance. According to this plan, Rainbow Avenue, running west from Main to a dead-end at the railroads, would be extended via an underpass beneath the tracks to connect with the park boundary. [23] Actually, this proposal had been a topic of discussion between NPS officials and the Deer Lodge City Council during the previous year. Vern Hennesay had expressed his view to the regional director that the Milwaukee entrance would route visitors "through one of the more undesirable parts of the city: namely the city utility yard." (This lay immediately north of the city park) Of even greater concern was the high potential for traffic to be blocked and backed-up for lengthy periods by train switching and refueling operations.

He pointed out that the railroad crossing on Milwaukee was the only route available to Deer Lodge's west side residents, thus the already high volume of traffic on this street. The Rainbow alternative would be somewhat shorter and would access the park directly on the east side, circumventing the Milwaukee Avenue problems, as well as the city park. [24]

The revised concepts of developing an approach road outside the park boundary rankled Con Warren. In recent years, Con had become somewhat distanced from the Deer Lodge community, probably as a result of his wife's chronic illness and his own change of lifestyle. [25] He resented the fact that the townspeople had not supported his six-year struggle to attract the government's attention to the historic ranch. These new plans, if adopted, would necessitate constructing a costly underpass, either on Rainbow Avenue or farther downtown on west-bound Milwaukee Avenue, to avoid traffic delays at the railroads. Warren saw this as being unnecessarily complicated with regard to opening the park. Venting his exasperation in a letter to Regional Director Lynn Thompson, heading the new Denver-based Rocky Mountain Region, Warren exclaimed, "The Powell County [Deer Lodge] Chamber of Commerce, the City Council, and the people of west Deer Lodge have long wanted an overpass of the railroads . . . They are using the Historic Site an excuse to get this overpass at the expense of the National Park Service." Firm in his denouncement, Con declared, "I do not intend to stand by and see these people use the Site

for their own gain." [26]

Warren reminded NPS officials that their original understanding had been to install an access directly from Highway 10. Visitor facilities would be located east of the Burlington Northern tracks on Tract E, the parcel of land south of his house, ostensibly acquired by the Park Service for that purpose. Early concepts, in fact, envisioned a pedestrian underpass on a foot trail leading from a parking lot to the ranch proper. The Rainbow Avenue approach, he maintained, would permit unrestricted public access directly to the historic site and would infringe on his easement over the Stuart Meadow, west of the railroad. He particularly resented Congressman Shoup's demand that the Park Service "get this thing going, even if we can't go inside the building . . . [visitors can] peer in the windows . . . ." Warren demonstrated a keen grasp of park priorities by rejecting this as "ridiculous" because "it would only open the door for vandalism and pilferage, something we have been able to avoid so far." [27] He wanted the historic site developed, to be sure, but in an orderly, well-thought-out sequence. Warren, like most rural westerners, was accustomed to doing business on his word. If the NPS was not going to abide by its commitments to restore and preserve the ranch buildings first, and instead launch "into an ambitious and vastly expensive project such as the Rainbow Street overpass . . . [he] would not be interested in any further contributions...." [28] Con had drawn the line. It was high noon at the ranch.

He was not facing down the Park Service and Shoup alone, however. He had enlisted his friends, Montana Senators Mansfield and Metcalf, to back him up. Against these odds, Shoup quickly blinked, saying that he did "not mean for them to do a hurried job on the Ranch," only that the NPS should "start work on their planning and development phase ." [29] Predictably, the confrontation sparked a gust of letters throughout the halls of the Park Service, all of which were crafted to reassure Warren that preserving the integrity of the ranch was paramount. As further assurance to the ranch's benefactor, Rocky Mountain Regional Director Thompson arranged to come to the ranch to discuss the issues personally. [30]

Congressman Shoup used his influence to lever the chair of the House Appropriations Committee for Interior to advance the funding schedule for Grant-Kohrs Ranch. He announced in mid-July 1974 that the funding had been jumped up in priorities by one full year, at the same time criticizing the NPS for previously requesting planning money in the same year with development funds. Shoup secured promises of \$30,000.00 for planning, plus an additional \$100,000.00 for construction of the entrance road, parking lot, and a picnic area to be included in the 1974-75 appropriation. "I have been assured by the Park Service," said Shoup, "that they have no objection to this request and that if such moneys [sic] are appropriated in fiscal year 75 budget, this site would be available for public use in the summer of 1975." [31] At last, everyone seemed to be satisfied that the new park was on-track.

The serenity did not last long. But, it also became someone else's problem. Vern Hennesay, who had served as the coordinator for Grant-Kohrs for four and one-half years, was probably somewhat relieved to announce in July 1974 that a permanent manager had been selected for the site. During his seven years with NPS, Richard R. Peterson had followed a career path in administration from Rocky Mountain National Park, to Redwoods, to doing a stint as an urban trainee in Washington, D. C. He was serving as

administrative officer for Mather Training Center at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia when he was tapped for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch job. His previous experience would serve him well in bringing to the site a sense of order and a thorough understanding of the NPS fiscal system. [32]



Superintendent Richard R. Peterson speaking at park dedication, July 16, 1977.

*(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

Peterson was faced with myriad details in getting the fledgling park operation on a solid footing, challenge enough in itself, but the most pressing matter was the access issue. The community "was very anxious for something to happen," he would later recall in a 1996 interview. [33] This question had to be resolved, and with both public relations and those with Con Warren at stake, it had to be done diplomatically. Soon after his arrival, Peterson met with regional office staff in Denver, after which he had the unenviable duty of informing the press that, "the \$130,000.00 did not include money for planing the access road," and "you can't build a road without planning." He added that the master plan would be re-done, with all of the proposed alternatives back on the table. Like his predecessor, Peterson still had no way of knowing when the park might open. Just what happened to the planning money Shoup had promised is uncertain, but it may have fallen victim to a mix-up in labeling during the appropriations process, and once branded, could not be reversed. Peterson assured everyone, however, that he and regional officials were working together to find the necessary funds. [34]

This news prompted a fresh campaign of letters to the Montana delegation, to which NPS Director Ronald H. Walker replied that the 1975 fiscal year Interior appropriation did in fact include \$135,000.00

for Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS. Part of this, he said, was earmarked for planning the entrance, while the lion's share would go to constructing the access and parking. He attempted to appease the citizens by expressing his confidence that the park still could be open to the public by summer 1975. [35] While Walker's announcement played well in the press, it is doubtful that his prediction was taken very seriously by anyone in the Denver Service Center.

In his first Superintendent's Report, Peterson acknowledged that much of his time during those first few months had been devoted to trying to "improve local relationships and work out ways to open the site." [36] He also was granted greater authority and latitude in leading the park effort when the area was declared an independent park, thus severing it from oversight by Yellowstone, effective December 8, 1974.3 [37]

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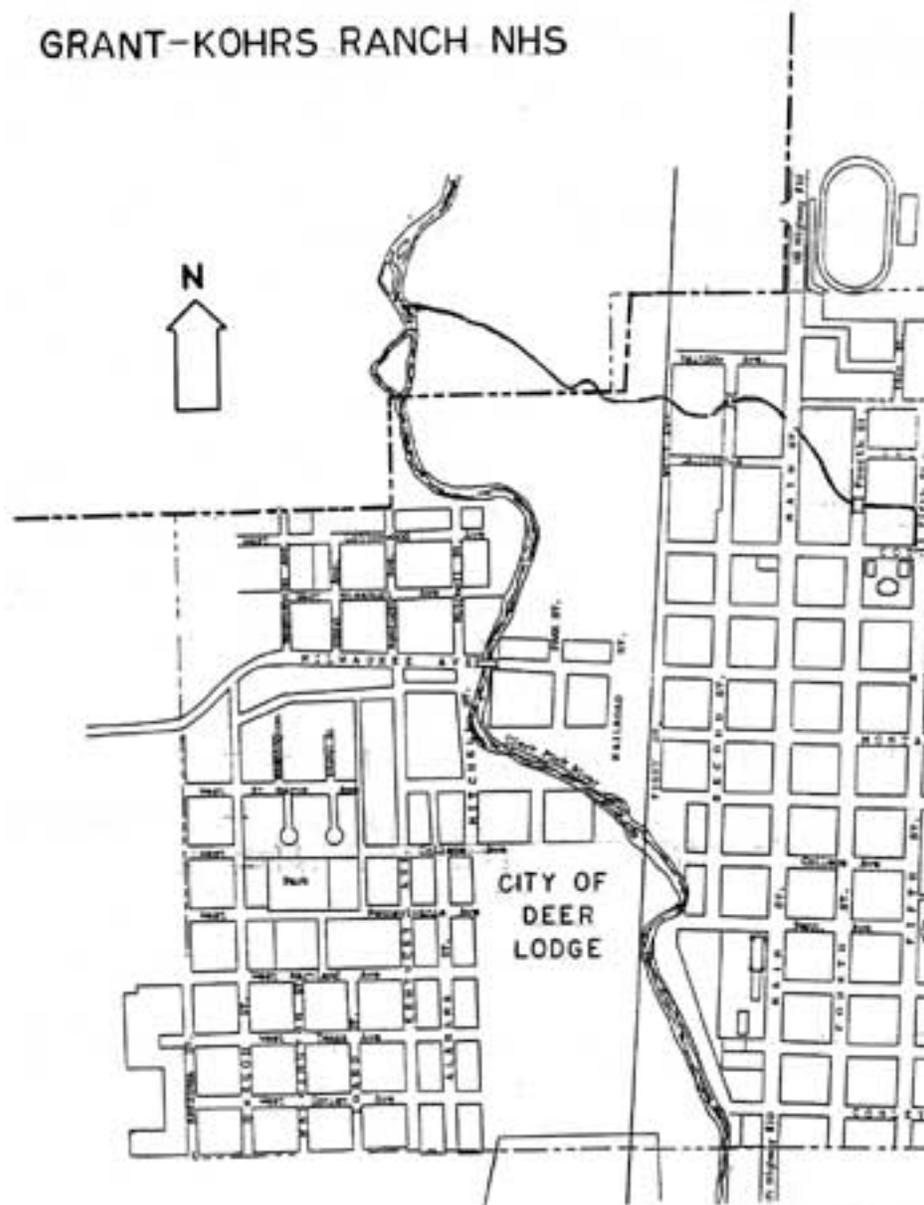


## Administrative History

### Chapter Two: WORKING RANCH AND WORKING PARK: PLANNING (continued)

Superintendent Peterson got things moving by working with regional and service center staff to prepare an environmental assessment to evaluate the various proposals and their potential impacts on resources. Included was a presentation of the three alternatives for developing the public entrance to the site. Peterson scheduled a public meeting at the court house in Deer Lodge for March 26, 1975, to afford local residents an opportunity to express their views. When it came time to discuss the now touchy issue of where to construct the park entrance, members of the Deer Lodge Chamber of Commerce quickly proved the truth of Con Warren's suspicions. Spokesman Ben Bailey readily concurred that the plan "providing for a walkway underpass at the railroad tracks is the most economical and much the fastest to accomplish." But, he went on to explain the town's need for the vehicular underpass preferably on Milwaukee Avenue, or farther north on Rainbow Avenue, largely ignoring the real issue at hand -- the park's requirements.

Revealing the true motive, Bailey concluded by offering the opinion "that the Rainbow underpass is the most practical," adding that it was the Chamber's intention "to make every effort to bring this about to



the benefit of all in our community." A second Chamber member echoed this opinion, saying that, "The overpass at the Milwaukee is the one we'd all like to have. [38]

Two other individuals then spoke up, revealing that the Chamber did not necessarily speak for the entire community. One person representing the Friends of the Earth, an environmental group, offered the candid opinion that the town's need for such an overpass had existed long before the arrival of the National Park Service and that the agency should not be in the business of building roads for municipalities. "I personally don't think the Park Service should have to pay for the road," echoed another westside resident. "... the town has had a need for the access for a long time and if the town hasn't come up with it yet it is not the Park Service's fault." [39]

Peterson proceeded to make a determination shortly thereafter. On April 28 he notified Regional Director Lynn Thompson that despite the urgings of the Chamber of Commerce, "We must select alternative D.3" [the Highway 10 access]. He based his decision on several practical reasons. First among these was the exceedingly remote chance that the Service could obtain, much less justify, the estimated \$2 million for the town underpass. Additionally, the highway entrance would be easier for visitors to find, and it would have the least impact on both the ranch and its ecological integrity. As Peterson put it, this was "the only feasible route if we are to have any chance of opening this season." [40]

On May 15, 1975 the Park Service announced its choice to the public, softening the town's disappointment with the assurance that every effort would be made to open the ranch by late in the summer. The new entrance would include a visitor contact station and a parking lot east of the tracks, and a quarter-mile pathway to the ranch complex, via a pedestrian underpass. [41] Much remained to be done, though. Further planning and design, archeological assessments, and other park development needs to provide for public visitation, would in fact delay the opening of the site for two more years. (Those aspects are addressed in later chapters.)

Superintendent Peterson appreciated the delicate position the Service was in and knew that visible progress had to be demonstrated at the park. The community was restless and growing ever more pessimistic over the seemingly endless delays with getting the park on an operational footing. Nevertheless, Peterson used the media and local club meetings to skillfully articulate the Service's dual mandate for "making areas available to the public for its use and at the same time preserving the sites for the future." [42] In the weeks following the public meeting, he demonstrated good faith by following through on commitments to coordinate with the Denver Service Center (DSC) to prepare plans and specifications for a parking lot. Working along parallel lines, the Rocky Mountain Regional Office backed him with procurement support in letting a contract for the construction of the entrance. [43]

Back at Deer Lodge, Peterson and DSC Historical Architect Peter Snell located and purchased two old ranch buildings that would have to suffice for a visitor contact station and rest room facility until permanent buildings could be funded. All of these facilities, in fact, were considered to be temporary, since further planning would be necessary to determine long-term staffing and visitor needs for the park.

[44]



Visitor contact station (left) and restrooms (right) during construction.  
(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

Temporary or not, it was progress. Peterson's common sense strategy of relating well with the community and doing his best with what little he had effectively stifled the public criticism of the Service. Through his efforts, the townspeople came to better appreciate the enormous challenges the park faced and became much more understanding of the NPS position. "It's been a typical year in the life of a new and growing Park Service area," Peterson reported at the end of 1975. "We have been short of everything and at times things looked impossible . . . We will get into operation soon and will start to reap some of the rewards of Park Service work to accompany the sweat and frustrations [of] getting there." [45]

With the selection of an entrance site on Tract E, opposite the Powell County Fair Grounds, Superintendent Peterson faced an urgent need to re-evaluate the initial development concepts for the ranch. An access on the southern boundary of the site between the railroad and Clark Fork, as originally envisioned, called for visitor parking on the west side of the railroad right-of-way. Now, placing the main gate on the east side of the park demanded a means of getting visitors safely across two parallel sets of railroad tracks. A pedestrian underpass already seemed a foregone conclusion, yet this was contingent upon permission being granted by both the Milwaukee and Burlington Northern railroads. Peterson's skills as a negotiator would be put to the test in surmounting this hurdle, one that would

further postpone public visitation to the site.

A second planning team assembled at Deer Lodge in May, 1976. Team leader Jim Massey, on the DSC staff, wanted to meet at the site to allow close concert with the park staff, which by this time Peterson had succeeded in expanding to include interpretation, maintenance, and administration components. This new planning effort would be founded on more realistic conditions now that the park was actually gearing up.

Likewise, the new General Management Plan (GMP) format adopted by the NPS took a comprehensive approach intended to "provide the . . . very best management action document which will serve the short and long range needs of the park, while guiding preservation and use." [46] To do this, Massey put together an interdisciplinary group including the park staff, as well as DSC Research Historian John Albright, and Nan Rickey, a DSC specialist in historic furnishings and curatorial management.

This new team re-shaped the interpretive premise upon which planning would rest. Whereas the first master plan had defined the objective in terms of recreating "the historic mood and way of life . . . of this early cattle ranch," and gave only a nod to the story of the cattle industry, the 1976 team placed great emphasis on providing the visitor with "an understanding of the evolution of American cattle ranching, from open range to early farm-ranch cattle raising . . ." This change in direction undoubtedly stemmed from the team's composition, a group heavily weighted with trained historians. The new plan also would be based on a decision not to restore the site to historic times, because the era of active operations extended from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. It was thought that the various types of buildings and architectural styles would benefit the interpretation of evolving cattle operations. The team did, however, recognize that the open range era could not be adequately addressed at the site because the home ranch was only the headquarters of an operation that extended over a vast area of Montana and Idaho. Therefore, that part of the story would be dealt with through audio visual presentations and exhibits. [47]

Although the first master plan had generally outlined classifications for land use within the boundaries of the site, the GMP team subdivided the area into "management zones" dedicated to specified uses. This was intended "to guide future management, use, and development of the park's lands and resources" to avoid conflicts and degradation of the inherent nature of the area. The core zone, of course, was the area immediately surrounding the historic home ranch buildings west of the railroads. A sizable buffer around this encompassed the hay meadows to the north and west. The all-important visitor use sub-zone was delineated in the southeast corner of the property. Significantly, the city park parcel that had so influenced the access issue, was deemed to be of no further use to the park and it was recommended that this 26-acre parcel be excluded by a boundary adjustment. [48]

The plan recognized the temporary nature of the existing contact station moved in by the park staff. It was recommended that these old buildings be replaced as soon as possible by a modest-sized new structure designed for the purpose that would be compatible with the historic ranch buildings. The permanent facility was to be located "near the site of the present temporary facility and parking

area." [49] To reduce the visual impacts by development near the park entrance, the team recommended that consideration be given to adaptively restoring the "red barn" still in use by Con Warren. If and when his holdings could be acquired, the barn would provide ample space for the park administrative headquarters and maintenance operations. [50]

The plan also emphasized the continued use of the historic structures. Wherever possible those uses should reflect "the buildings' last useful function" in the ranching operation. This would in turn dictate the period to which individual buildings were to be restored or preserved "in a working condition." The team identified bunkhouse row (HS 2), the thoroughbred barn (HS-15), and the ice house (HS-5) as the major structures to be restored to their 1930s appearances, while the ranch house itself (HS-1) would reflect the zenith of its architectural development and importance as the ranch headquarters during the 1900 - 1920s period. It was also stressed that the grounds around the buildings in the historic zone should not be kept too clean, and therefore out of character with a working ranch. [51]

The need for a suitable curatorial facility where objects could be treated and, if necessary, stored in environmentally stable conditions was an early consideration advanced in this GMP. There was no preferred location expressed in the plan, though it was implied that it would lie within the park boundary. The team was wise enough to recommend that the issue be addressed by professionals in the museum field. [52]

The team concluded its work by recommending that several studies be undertaken to generate basic data useful in guiding future management of Grant-Kohrs. Perhaps the highest priority was for a compilation of historical research data, which resulted in a comprehensive historic resource study authored by John Albright. By the time the study was completed, it had been expanded to include the Kohrs-Bielenberg biographical information and the architectural data research identified by the planning team. Also suggested were a study to evaluate the historic landscape and a ranching operations plan.

As it happened, "Pete" Peterson did not remain at Grant-Kohrs Ranch long enough to see the completion of the plan he had initiated. His steady-hand at the helm of the ranch during trying times had been noticed at higher levels in the NPS. A proven administrator, Peterson was selected for the Departmental Manager Trainee Program and three years, almost to the day, after his arrival Peterson left for a new assignment in Washington, D. C. He did, however, have the pleasure of hosting the official opening of Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site just prior to his departure.

Despite the compressed schedule outlined for developing the GMP, team leader Massey also left his position, accepting a transfer to another agency shortly after the site visit. A draft was completed in December 1976, but afterwards the plan languished for lack of attention. It was some time before Massey's successor, Benjamin Brandt, took up the reins of the project and became familiar enough with the details to lead the effort to completion. [53] Meantime, a change in superintendents at the park probably contributed to the loss of momentum as well. Consequently, the final GMP was not approved until February 1980.

Thomas G. Vaughan followed Peterson into the superintendency at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, arriving in the latter part of October 1977. Vaughan came from a more traditional ranger background than had his predecessor. A graduate student in anthropology, he had served as a seasonal archeologist-interpreter at Mesa Verde National Park in 1966. He subsequently worked for a private museum in Hawaii before eventually returning for another stint at Mesa Verde. After almost giving up on the possibility of a permanent NPS career, Vaughan was eventually selected as a ranger intake and, after attending basic training, was assigned to City of Refuge National Historical Park, back in Hawaii. He later moved to Haleakala as a district ranger and later still to Point Reyes as assistant chief naturalist. His introduction to park management came with a hitch as superintendent at Hubbell Trading Post NHS on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona. After spending three enjoyable years there, Vaughan applied for the superintendency at Grant-Kohrs and was selected to fill the job. [54]

One of his first challenges was to pick up the reins of the planning effort. Although the approved version of the plan differed little from the draft, it nevertheless reflected Vaughan's varied background, especially with agricultural landscape concerns not unlike those he had encountered at Hubbell. An important aspect common to both was the recommendation that additional lands within the designated boundary be acquired in fee ownership by the NPS. There were two reasons for this. One of the mandates for the area was that it be operated as a working ranch. It became all too apparent that the acreage (216.79) owned by the Service simply was too small for any sort of meaningful stock raising program for public education. In addition, many undesirable uses of the easement lands still held by Warren could not be adequately controlled, despite the covenants provided in the agreements. These were strong motivations for management to work toward purchasing the additional acreage. [55]

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**CHAPTER THREE >>>**

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Three: THE SIZE OF THE SPREAD: LANDS

When Conrad Warren opened negotiations to convey a portion of the historic ranch to the National Park Foundation in the late 1960s, he considered several alternatives. Two of those would have involved the sale of all existing ranch buildings, while another proposed relinquishing only a modest acreage encompassing the old home ranch. At that time Warren was thinking primarily in terms of a museum, little comprehending the broader needs posed by the creation of a national historic site. Because he was still actively ranching, Warren initially defined about 45 acres, including 35 on which the home ranch was situated, plus about 10 acres south of his residence for use in developing a parking lot and some sort of visitor reception facility. "We would not be interested," Warren wrote, "in breaking the ranch up in such a way that the balanced [livestock-producing] unit would be destroyed and the value of such a unit lost." [1]

When Historian Merrill Mattes had visited Grant-Kohrs Ranch a few years earlier, he acknowledged Warren's vision of creating a historic house museum with limited acreage surrounding the buildings of the old ranch headquarters. However, he offered the opinion that "a park of such limited character is more ideally suited to status as a state park." In his opinion, places having national significance should transcend the mere preservation of objects and buildings. He advanced the concept of a larger site embracing a portion of the bottom land along the Clark Fork to provide visitors with a sense of the cattle country. Mattes, in particular, recognized that the story of Grant-Kohrs Ranch involved considerably more than simply a Victorian house in the hinterland of Montana. The house was merely the result of successful livestock raising on a grand scale in the West. Acquiring additional acreage and all of the buildings, of course, would one day obligate the National Park Service to assume full responsibility for the ranch and its operation. But, Mattes was convinced that the integrity of the place justified such an approach because "one looks in vain for anything resembling a ranch in the Western United States that is in public ownership as a park open to visitors . . . ." In the Grant Kohrs Ranch was the opportunity to exhibit a working ranch and to "tell a story of the evolution of ranching operations." In his view, the National Park Service afforded the best avenue for preserving and interpreting this aspect of the nation's heritage. [2]

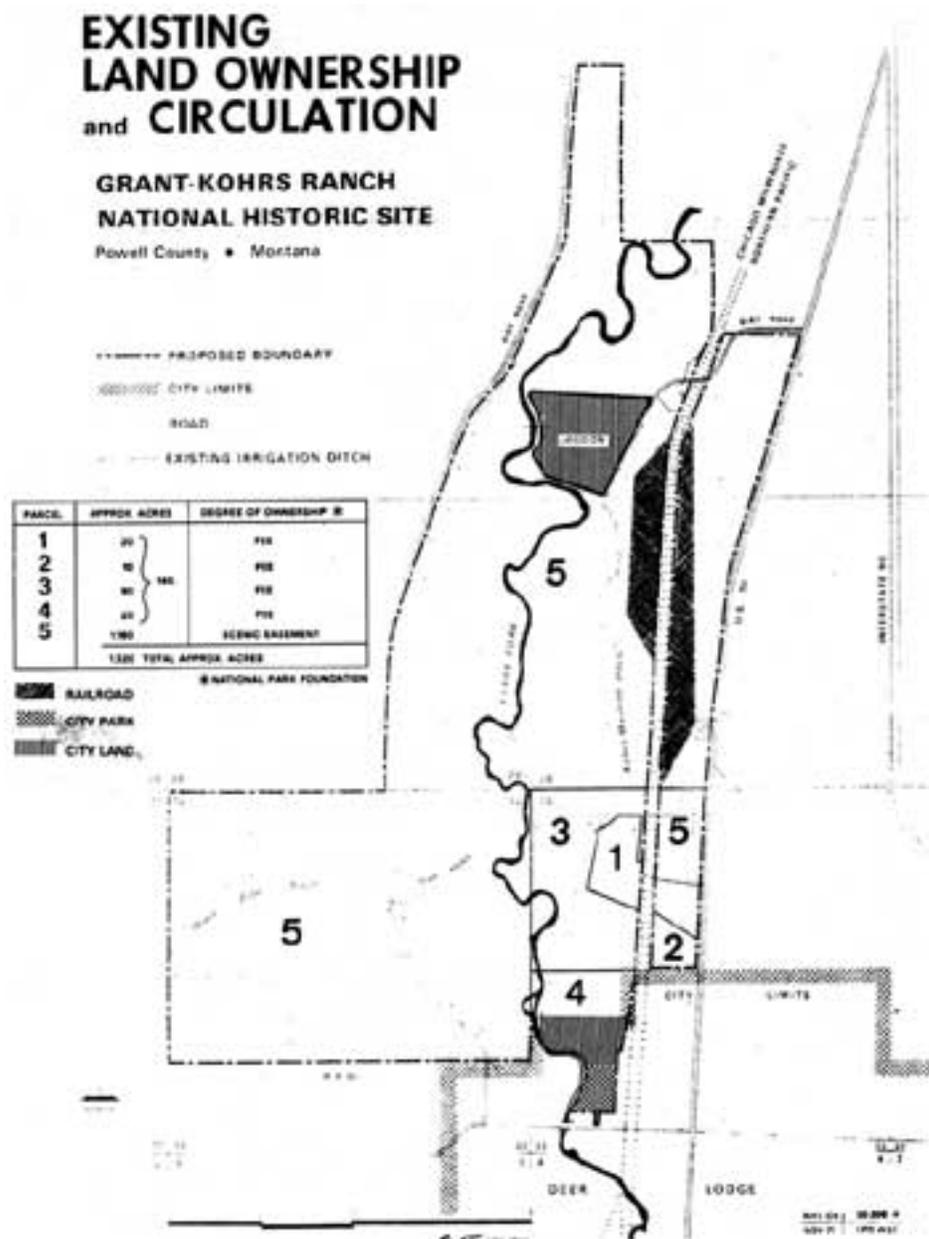
Mattes's concept of a larger holding was

reflected in the land map included with his 1968 report. The boundary he suggested at that time corresponded closely with the perimeter later defined and agreed upon by Warren and the National Park Foundation in 1970. In his formal offer, Warren identified 1,523.19 acres lying mainly between Highway 10 and the river. The price arrived at by the two parties was \$250,000.00, plus survey and recording fees, and a share of the taxes. The Foundation thus purchased 130 acres in fee simple title and scenic easements on an additional 1,030 acres. [3]

As the effort to prepare authorizing legislation gained momentum, the Midwest Regional Office emphasized the need for more refined data upon which to make the proposal to Congress. In the spring of 1971, a planning team assembled at Grant-Kohrs Ranch for this purpose. Although it would be several months before a master plan could be finalized, the team rushed through a preliminary summary proposing that NPS acquire 205 acres in fee title and approximately 1,220 acres in easements. [4]

The master plan team further recommended re-defining the park boundary to include additional lands west of Clark Fork, to protect a natural viewshed from the ranch as well as secure the river environment. Accordingly, a decision was made to include a large portion of Section 32 in the figures forwarded to the Washington Office as part of the legislative support package. But, Acting Regional Director Phillip R. Iversen suggested that the Warrens not be apprised of these intentions until the master plan could be completed. Then, he thought, Warren "would be in a better position to understand the rationale of the additional taking." [5]

During the legislative process the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs reported that the historic site would be limited to no more than 2,000 acres, most of which would continue to be used for agricultural purposes. Based on the NPS request, the committee advised the House of Representatives that about 208 acres would be needed in fee, along with 1,280 acres under easements. [6] The fee acreage was determined by adding the 77 (approx.) acres occupied by the Warrens to the 130 acres



*(click on map for larger image)*

already owned by the Foundation. Subtracting a like amount from the Foundation's easements, the committee arrived at a figure of 953 acres of scenic lands, to which 261.43 acres were proposed to be added by the legislation. The House recommended that \$350,000.00 be approved for land acquisition, of which \$257,544.00 was designated as reimbursement to the Foundation for its investment and attendant administrative costs. The Senate voted to adopt these provisions in its final version of S. 2166. The approved legislation containing this ceiling for land acquisition was signed into law on August 25, 1972 and in November, the Service purchased the land from the National Park Foundation. [7]

In the months following the authorization of the area, the Service established a presence at the Site by placing a caretaker on-site and began pursuing a land acquisition program. The agency's traditional desire to reduce its inholdings was based on a long-held tenant that had originated with the founders of the NPS. For decades the Service's informal policy was to own as much of the land inside park boundaries as possible to promote the most effective protection and management of the resources. By the 1970s, though, the NPS had come to realize that it simply could not own everything and that a combination of less-than-fee strategies could be a more cost-effective means of achieving agency goals. [8]



**Branding demonstration, 1982.**  
*(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Three: THE SIZE OF THE SPREAD: LANDS (continued)

The master plan, released early in 1973, clarified the lands issues. In the case of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, the less-than-fee strategy was manifested in the Service's objective of purchasing only about 200 acres and securing easements on more than 1200 acres. The problem of visitor access, addressed in the previous chapter, initially involved the potential donation of 26 acres of Deer Lodge city-owned land at the southeast corner of the boundary. The city, while willing to promote the park by such a donation, stipulated that the parcel be developed as a picnic area and that the Park Service's extension of Rainbow Street be made available as an emergency route to the west part of the town. [9]

The Park Service approached the Warrens early on with an offer to purchase the small parcel of land containing their residence and a bit of pasture. Despite the guarantee of a life tenure, Con and Nell rejected the idea. Mrs. Warren, particularly, was opposed to this arrangement because she felt that she might be uprooted from her home if it were conveyed to the government. Unfounded as her fears may have been, she nevertheless was unwilling to take that risk. To avoid upsetting the Warrens over this matter, Vernon Hennesay, liaison for the ranch during that time, advised the Midwest Regional Office that Con should "not be approached until it is entirely appropriate." [10] By April 1973 however, Con confided to Hennesay that he favored NPS acquisition of his remaining property, but in deference to his wife's health he was not prepared to enter into any formal negotiations at that time. [11]

Con was concerned about the possible loss of the land on the west side of the river. While he understood the reasons behind Park Service's desire to assume a degree of control over that part of the ranch, he was reluctant to sell the parcel. He hoped that an easement might suffice. This was, after all, some of his best hay meadow. Hennesay attempted to clarify the Service's concerns by explaining that someone leasing those lands in the future might not have the same degree of sensitivity for the values of the Site that Con had. Another person, Hennesay reasoned, could "come in and clear off the woods on the bottom land and turn it into a haying field, which would completely change the complex of the river bottom." [12] Warren agreed to think it over. He later worked out an arrangement to sell enough of this tract to provide a corridor to protect the river bottom from the park's southern boundary northward to a point 330 feet inside Sections 28 and 29. The odd division resulted from Warren's north corral straddling the section line at that point. The east-west line of this property extended to the railroad right-of-way. The sale was

concluded in February 1973. [13]

Hennesay also feared that undesirable development might occur on Tract 01-102, which had no restrictive covenant. This long, narrow parcel, containing about 37 acres, lay north of Warren's residence and was bordered on the east by the highway and on the west by the midline of Section 28. When Hennesay broached the idea to him, Warren did not understand just why development there might adversely affect the park, when, in his mind, it was the old ranch headquarters that was important. Apparently, he had not yet recognized that his modern operation would one day become an integral part of the park's interpretive story. He nevertheless agreed to sell an easement to the NPS in December 1973. [14]

The only other land transaction to occur over the next couple of years was when Con sold a tiny tract, No. 112, along the eastern border of the Site near his home in July 1975. [15] These acquisitions increased the total fee holdings in the park to 216.79 acres.

By that time, Mrs. Warren's health was deteriorating and Con's debts were mounting. "It was terrible," he recalled, "it just soaked up a herd of cattle and a couple of years of operating expenses and everything ...." [16] The proposition of selling additional portions of his ranch land to the Park Service became more appealing. Con decided to relinquish major segments of the easement lands. Despite the small purchase earlier that same year, however, the NPS was forced to decline the offer because the congressionally-imposed ceiling would not allow the purchase of the additional lands proffered. And, the addition of these 829.94 acres would be a costly proposition for the Service. Superintendent Richard Peterson set the wheels in motion for acquiring this land by preparing a legislative support package to increase the monetary ceiling for lands acquisition. But, he warned Con that it would be 1977, at the earliest, before any action could be taken. [17] It would indeed prove to be a long road.

Meantime, the Park Service continued to negotiate the land deal with Warren, a mistake that would prove costly to the heretofore cordial relationship enjoyed between the rancher and his new government neighbors. With Nell Warren confined to a rest home in Great Falls, Con and Park Service officials continued their periodic discussions relative to Tracts 115 and 117. Progress was slow, however. Valuing the house at \$65,000.00 and the land at \$400,000.00, Warren reminded the NPS that they were "cutting the heart out of the ranch" and leaving him with scraps of land that would be of little use to a livestock operation. [18] By the end of 1977, Con revised his offer to include only Tract 115, north of his house along the east side of the railroad, and Tract 117, the large meadow extending west of the river and all the way north to the city sewage lagoon. These he offered to sell for the same amount he had proposed earlier. The residence, apparently, was no longer under consideration. [19]

The following year NPS officials thought they had discovered a means by which the restrictions of the enabling legislation might be circumvented. A congressional action passed in June 1977 amended the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 to permit federal agencies to exceed their monetary ceilings for land acquisition by ten percent, or \$1,000,000.00, whichever was greater. This windfall would have been more than enough to cover the \$402,000.00 needed to purchase Warren's two tracts

and, better still, the money was available to be reprogrammed from Canaveral National Seashore. All of the necessary pieces had fallen into place, or so it appeared. [20]

Just when it seemed that success was imminent, the Interior Budget Office reviewed the proposal. While they admitted that P. L. 95-42 would legally permit the ceiling to be raised, the Washington staff perceived conflicts with both the intent of the law and the park's enabling legislation. The modification of the Land and Water Conservation Act, in their opinion, was a response to escalating land values lying within national park boundaries. [21] They argued that the purpose of the law was to enable the Service to purchase such lands immediately at current prices. Had that been the only consideration, Grant-Kohrs Ranch probably would have qualified. But, the Department cautioned, the reports of the 1972 congressional hearings revealed "that they expected the Site to be made up of 208 acres acquired in fee and approximately 1,200 acres on which scenic easements would be obtained." Accordingly, Congress based the land acquisition monetary ceiling of \$350,000.00 on this estimate. Had the legislators envisioned a larger taking in fee title, reasoned the Budget Office, they would have approved a larger initial appropriation for that purpose.

Since the park already owned 216 acres in fee and had easements on 1,105 acres, the pattern of ownership was almost exactly that contemplated when the legislation was passed. In disapproving the request, Interior Budget Officer Frank Wilson concluded his remarks by pointing out that, "Clearly this reprogramming proposal is not a result of rising prices, but rather a desire on the part of the Park Service to substantially change the land ownership at the Site. We believe that amendatory legislation . . . should be submitted to the Congress on this matter." [22] Interior thus "slammed down the window of opportunity," as former superintendent Vaughan related in a 1996 interview. [23]

In hindsight, it would appear that the NPS might have been too conservative in its original land estimates, probably to appease Con Warren and perhaps to avoid giving Congress the impression that the government was out to unnecessarily annex productive private lands. That short-sighted strategy may have been sound enough at the time the NPS was negotiating for the ranch, but the modest figures submitted to Congress proved to be a detriment over the long term. Despite the final legislative language limiting the Site to 2,000 acres, which the Service considered to be for the purpose of providing it some latitude in land matters, Washington Office legal analysts conceded that buying Con's 829 acres would "tip the ratio of fee to interest lands as to exceed any program anticipated by the Congress." [24]

The Department further argued that the Service had previously outlined the lands it needed to protect this historic scene, and that goal had already been accomplished. Now, it appeared that the additional purchase was "engendered more from the standpoint of the owner's willingness to sell the property than from actual park requirements." [25] That was true, at least in part. The Service was responding to Warren's offers, which stemmed from his personal financial difficulties, but at the same time NPS staff were of the opinion that if Warren sold his easement interests elsewhere, "we could have problems administering the area in the future." [26] The NPS clearly did not set out to acquire fee title to the additional lands, but when Warren's situation forced him to consider selling, the Service feared that upholding the loosely-worded easement with another owner might prove difficult, and legally expensive.

This, in fact, was the principal objection most field-level managers had to less-than-fee arrangements. While the original owner usually understood and abided by the covenants on the land, subsequent owners were often not fully informed about the restrictions until it was too late. They often felt cheated by both the seller and the Park Service. So, taking advantage of an option to purchase the Warren lands inside the boundary seemed like a prudent and legal move to everyone involved. [27]



Rancher Pete Cartwright mowing with horses, 1978.  
(*Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS*)

Although the Department had torpedoed the quick-fix plan for acquiring the Warren lands, all was not lost. Art Eck, the legislative affairs officer in the Washington Office, subsequently advised Regional Director Lynn Thompson to restructure and bolster the justification to support a change in the authorizing legislation. Eck expressed his cautious optimism that an "omnibus bill" then pending in the House of Representatives just might be a vehicle by which such an amendment could be accomplished. However, he echoed the Department's concern that two principal questions would have to be answered in the new justification: 1) how would the historic scene be better protected by fee acquisition, than by easements; and 2) what was the justification for a historic livestock operation at the Site?

The NPS-Warren relationship suffered the greatest damage as the result of the bureaucratic haggling. "Mr. Warren . . . has become much less cooperative with the National Park Service," Acting Regional Director Kenneth Ashley noted. He may not have realized then just how serious the damage was.

Superintendent Tom Vaughan, who had arrived at the Site in October 1977, just in time to inherit the land issue, recorded in his 1978 annual report that Con's "reaction to our inability to complete the contemplated deal inhibited communications on historic research, the National Register nomination, and other items of mutual concern." [28] This turn of events created a chasm between the Service and Warren that would not be easily overcome. Con obviously felt that he had been betrayed by the NPS, and unfortunately Vaughan happened to be the most accessible representative of the agency.

These differences were fueled even higher in the year to come. On November 10, 1978, the president signed into law the National Parks and Recreation Act, which gave new promise to the Grant-Kohrs proposal. This act provided authority for the Service to acquire in fee title lands over which it had existing easements or other less-than-fee interests at the ranch by increasing the ceiling to \$752,000.00. [29] Following Warren's offer to sell on a 90-day option, effective December 15, the Rocky Mountain Regional Office immediately forwarded a request to the Washington Office to make the purchase. They were assured that the funds would be available through reprogramming on or about June 1, 1979. Based on this new information, Regional Director Glen Bean notified Con Warren that a member of the regional lands office would be contacting him in the near future to re-open negotiations. [30] In all fairness to Warren, Bean might have cautioned the rancher that "authority" for funding did not necessarily mean that a congressional appropriation would be forthcoming right away. Nevertheless, with his hope renewed, Con proceeded to sell half of his cow herd and all of his yearlings and bulls in anticipation of the land sale. It was to prove a costly mistake to both the rancher and the NPS.

The meetings with Warren late that winter resulted in a line item request to Congress for \$500,000.00 to complete the land acquisition in Fiscal Year 1981. To everyone's surprise, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) scuttled this move until the NPS "made a thorough evaluation of alternatives to fee acquisition." With congressional hearings on land acquisition coming up that fall, Acting Director Daniel J. Tobin, Jr. advised the regional director to develop "a more comprehensive and restrictive scenic easement to achieve the protection you desire." [31] The region assured Superintendent Vaughan, in any event, that they would continue to support his land acquisition efforts in every way possible.

In January 1980, Tobin resurrected the idea of using P. L. 95-42, the amended Land and Water Conservation Act, as authority to exceed the land acquisition ceiling, at the same time suggesting that the regional office prepare revised cost estimates. One of the most valuable results of this was the preparation of a formal land acquisition plan for the park. This re-examination of the park's requirements produced several recommendations. One of these called for the removal of Tract 109, the 25.66 acres of city park lands, from the southeast corner of the boundary, since this parcel was determined to have no integrity and no potential for administrative uses. Although the land around the city sewage lagoon fell into the same category, the facility could not be easily relocated. The planners felt that there was no danger of development or other undesirable use of the property on three sides of the lagoon, but that fee interest should be purchased in Tract 117 extending south from the lagoon, because the vague language of the current easement, "for livestock ranching purposes . . . could lead to very different interpretations and to litigation . . ." [32] The plan also recommended the acquisition of Tract 115, including the modern ranch buildings, which could be used for administrative purposes, thus allowing the park to

consolidate its operations. While the purchase of the Warren residence for future staff housing also was proposed, Con was assured of having lifetime use of the premises.

At the same time the Park Service was working on its plan, Con Warren took matters into his own hands by attempting to force a political solution to the problem. Congressman Stewart McKinney, acting on a request for specifics from Con's brother, Robert O. Y. Warren, wrote to the Secretary of the Interior inquiring why no action had been taken to implement the acquisition authorized by the 1978 bill. Robert Herbst, assistant secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, responded that regardless of the authority to increase the land acquisition ceiling, it had come too late in the budget cycle to include funds in fiscal year 1980. Moreover, the emphasis in the 1981 budget was on preventing threats to high priority lands. This effort, he explained, had already been crippled by a two-third's reduction in appropriated funds for this purpose. [33] The effort stalled once again.

Con Warren's frustrations with the Park Service and the agonizingly slow bureaucratic machinery reached the boiling point in June 1980. (There can be little doubt that the loss of his wife the previous November also influenced his mood.) He claimed that he had already lost \$80,000 - \$120,000.00, the result of selling off his cattle prematurely the year before. Once again, the process seemed to be going nowhere, and Warren thought that the recently completed land acquisition plan hinted that his property could be taken by condemnation. The situation exploded from an unexpected catalyst, and the shock was felt all the way to the nation's capitol.

Con's German Shepherd, like most ranch dogs, was protective of her territory, even when people she considered to be trespassers wore Park Service uniforms. She often confronted and sometimes nipped at staff members, who parked their vehicles alongside the lane south of the red barn. Vaughan had spoken previously with Warren about the dog, "Dru," and asked that she be confined. After yet another incident in which a ranger was attacked one evening, Vaughan decided to make a written complaint to document the situation. It so happened that this was contained in the same letter by which he provided Con a copy of the land acquisition plan. It was, at best, bad timing. [34]

In an unprecedented letter campaign, Con "wrote everybody but the president," Vaughan remembered years later. In a smoking diatribe to a shocked superintendent, Warren ordered park personnel to stay off his land, announcing that all negotiations for land were ended forthwith. Nor, would he be any further assistance to the park in any form. He had faced down the government before and, he announced, "if the Park Service resorts to condemnation proceedings with which you threaten me in your letter they will meet with the utmost resistance." "If I had known how this would end," he concluded, "I never would have started it and you and everyone connected with it would not have a job in the Deer Lodge Valley." [35]

Of course, Vaughan had not threatened Con with condemnation. The fact that this contingency was referenced in the acquisition plan was standard policy extending from the federal government's right of eminent domain. In the case of Grant-Kohrs, the Park Service reserved the right to condemn "should incompatible uses develop or be proposed . . ." on the easement lands. Warren had reviewed the drafts of

the general management plan and was well aware of NPS management concerns and directions for the future. [36]

The incident relating to the dog was merely symptomatic of Warren's discontent over myriad irritations, not the least of which was his own botched cattle deal. Vaughan explained to the Rocky Mountain regional director that Warren had sold his stock on speculation, not on signed documents. He added that some incidents with "Dru" in fact had occurred west of the tracks, inside park fee lands, as well as in the access lane. There was no question as to whether or not the park staff had a legitimate right to use the lane. This was granted by the original agreement with the National Park Foundation, but it was a moot point. [37] What did matter was that Warren had taken the NPS at its word and, as one staff member put it, Con Warren was "a rancher in the grand manner; a man's word is as good as a written contract." [38]

Superintendent Vaughan had already accepted a transfer to Harpers Ferry Center in West Virginia at the time the break with Warren occurred. It was not a happy note on which to end his tenure at Grant-Kohrs Ranch, yet Vaughan was able to find satisfaction in his accomplishments toward restoring the historic buildings and improving the care of the museum collections. He later reflected that "it was time for a new set of ideas and outlooks to come in. Maybe somebody else could go in other directions that would be more productive." Upon his departure, he left a gracious letter to Con with the hope that things would improve. [39]

Con's tiff with the Park Service served a useful purpose nonetheless. Perhaps it had been designed that way. High-level attention again focused on the little historic site in Montana. Senators John Melcher and Max Baucus rallied to Warren's aid by writing to Interior Secretary Cecil D. Andrus urging him to take action in the matter. Noting that the NPS had already responded to Warren, Andrus reiterated that even though the Park and Recreation Act of 1978 had increased the monetary ceiling for land acquisition at Grant Kohrs Ranch, a legal review of the proposal had led the Department to request that the Service seek new legislation to override the original intent of Congress. Also at issue was the lack of funding, which the NPS thought would be a simple matter of reprogramming, until OMB derailed the proposal. [40] In his letter to Con Warren, Melcher placed the blame squarely on the Park Service. "There's no question they bungled this whole affair," he told Con. "They didn't have either the purchase authority or the money when they talked to you in 1978 . . . they really did fail to keep a commitment, but more through ineptness than willfulness." (The senator either was not aware of, or chose to ignore, P. L. 95-625, which unquestionably authorized the appropriation of funds for fee acquisition of lands at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.) He minimized the effort it would take to get an increased monetary ceiling, something he would heartily support incidentally, provided there was still a chance Warren would sell to the Park Service. [41]

In the end, legislation passed deleting the old figure for land purchases and substituting a new amount of \$1,100,000.00 based on increased real estate values. Public Law 96-607 likewise raised the development ceiling from \$2,075,000.00 to \$7,818,000.00, in addition to authorizing the boundary change recommended in the General Management Plan. The new boundary excluded the 25.66-acre parcel of city land at the southeast corner of the Site, where the park entrance from Milwaukee Avenue had been

proposed. The bill became law on December 28, 1980. [42]

It would be several more years before the Service could obtain clear title to a small parcel of city-owned land lying inside the park boundary, south of Cottonwood Creek, where it had been proposed in 1973 to construct an access off Rainbow Street. The City of Deer Lodge contested the NPS claim to this 6.074-acre tract, but it was eventually settled in the government's favor in 1987. [43]

There was, however, an inherent disadvantage connected with P. L. 96-207. This law established the boundary as depicted on a specific NPS map, No. 451-80-013. The defined perimeter actually encompassed somewhat less land than the 2,000 acres originally authorized in the 1972 legislation. No one realized that until it was too late. The 1980 law, then, effectively nullified the previous ceiling by fixing the maximum allowable acreage to 1,498.38 acres, the area included within the revised park boundary. [44]

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Three: THE SIZE OF THE SPREAD: LANDS (continued)

That same day, coincidentally, a new superintendent was assigned to the area. Jimmy D. Taylor was a seasoned NPS veteran who had served as superintendent at Fort Larned National Historic Site for the previous five years. Since joining the Park Service in 1963 as a seasonal ranger, the Cheyenne, Wyoming native had been a ranger at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, Capulin Mountain (now Volcano) in New Mexico, Colorado's Mesa Verde, and Capitol Reef in Utah. Taylor proved to be particularly well suited for the job that lay ahead. [45]

Taylor and Warren got along well from the outset. Certainly, the new superintendent's western origins and his experiences at numerous southwestern parks were assets at Grant-Kohrs Ranch. The new park manager recognized that Con had bruised feelings resulting from his perceived bad treatment by the Park Service. That in mind, Taylor made a concerted effort to communicate and cooperate closely with Warren, paying particular attention to listening to his concerns about the ranch and its development by the Service. It is a tribute to Superintendent Taylor's diplomatic skill that the relationship could be turned around at all. In 1996 Taylor would reflect on his effort to establish rapport and mutual respect as one of the main ingredients to the successful resolution of the lands issue. Even though Taylor admitted that Con did not always understand what the Park Service was doing, or necessarily agree with its actions, communications remained open and generally cordial. [46]

Despite the dawn of a new era of cooperation, Taylor soon had the unpleasant duty to inform Warren of yet another pitfall in the process of acquiring his lands. Since the passage of the legislation to increase the ceilings, Congress had imposed a freeze on new land acquisitions. This reversal apparently created no adverse reaction from Con, who by this time had become numb to the ways of bureaucracy. [47] The proposal to purchase the remaining Warren lands would languish for several more years.

Other land issues also arose during the 1980s. When Taylor learned that the Milwaukee Railroad was declaring bankruptcy in 1982, he contacted the company to see if an arrangement might be made whereby the NPS could purchase the 100-foot-wide right-of-way through the park lands. The railroad corridor had been a fixture in the historic scene at the ranch since the mid-1880s, when the Utah and Northern Railroad had initially purchased a right-of-way from Conrad Kohrs. Thus, the land protection

plan recognized a need to preserve that element of the historic scene. [48] That same year the sent out a track crew to salvage rails, ties, and other property, beginning at the south boundary of the ranch site and proceeding through Deer Lodge. Successful negotiations, aided enormously by the revised legislative authority, resulted in the park's acquisition of the additional 27.67 acres, with rails intact, for \$40,973.00. [49]

Taylor's superintendency was characterized by his initiatives to bring a better sense of order to the entire operation, including the plans for land resources. Like his predecessors, he continued to beat the drum of warning that the easements on Con Warren's land were just as loose as they had always been and that if Warren decided to sell to someone else, the NPS could find itself in a difficult situation. Taylor maintained that "it is absolutely essential that the scenic easement land west and north of the ranch remain as they presently are, open and basically undeveloped." [50] He was persistent in recommending the acquisition of the inholdings, both for that reason and so that the historic ranching operations could be expanded. Warren himself was less active in the ranching business, primarily because he had sold his herd. Subsequently, he began leasing some of the easement lands to other local ranchers. Although Con seemed disinterested in negotiating more restrictive language for the easement agreement, the new tenants began proposing non-traditional uses of this land, including the installation of irrigation systems and plowing the meadows to plant potatoes. The Park Service's worst fears were being realized. [51]

Superintendent Taylor worked with the staff at the Rocky Mountain Regional Office to prepare a revised Land Protection Plan, which was finalized on May 21, 1985. The new title, replacing "land acquisition plan," was a reflection of provisions mandated by the Land and Water Conservation Fund requiring land management agencies to prepare comprehensive documents outlining their strategies and needs for protecting lands. This forced park management to define "management purposes and public objectives" both within and outside of park boundaries. As to Con Warren's 840-acre scenic easement, Taylor reasserted that "the easement issue remains one of, if not the most critical, issues facing the park." Taylor's challenge was to "convince those setting NPS priorities that it is important." [52]

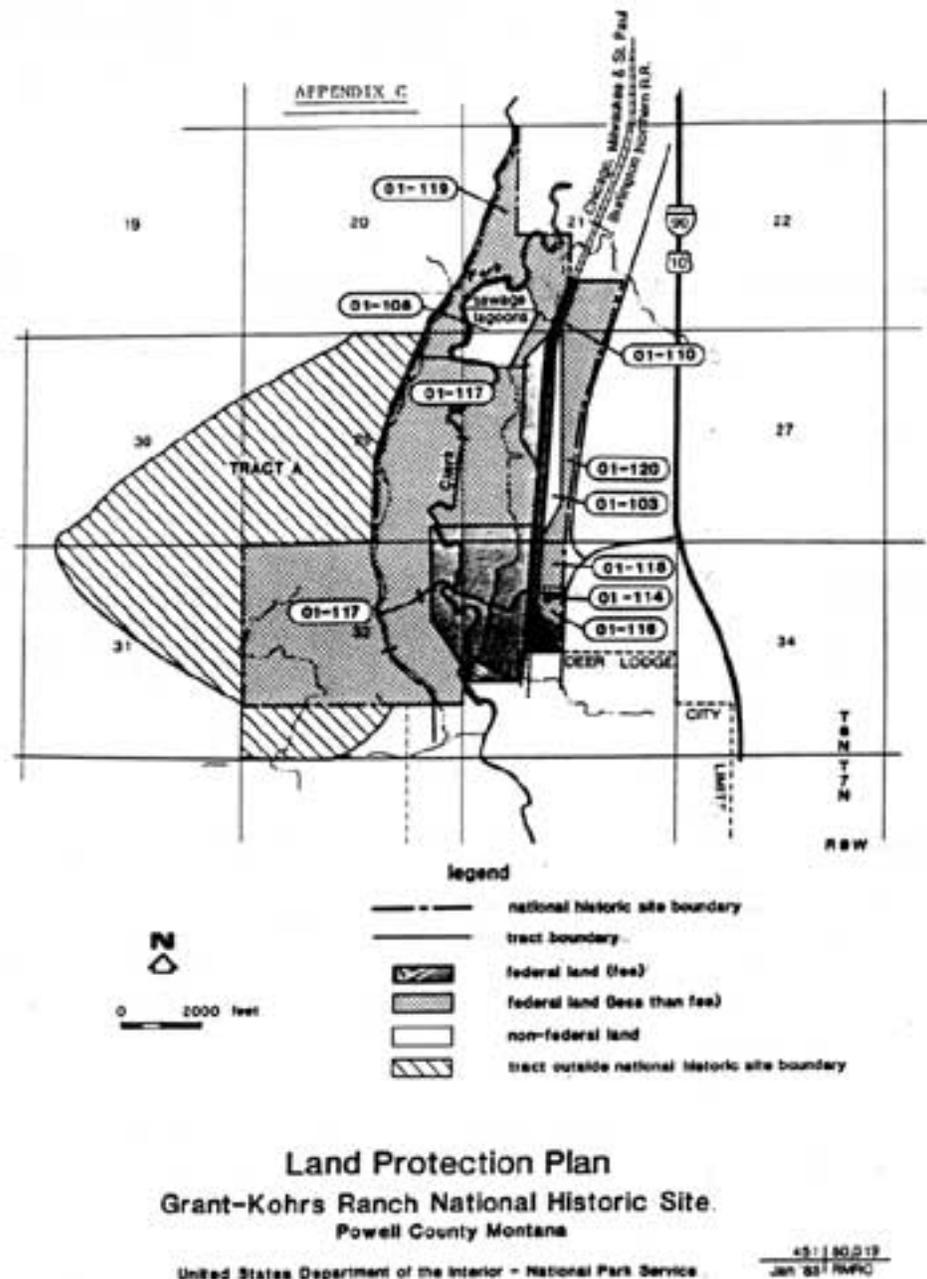
At the end of 1986 the superintendent emphasized that Warren was in his

upper 70s and in poor health. "The situation can only become more complicated and almost certainly more expensive if the NPS does not make this purchase in the very near future," Taylor reported. [53] However, when he approached Warren about authorizing an appraisal, the latter declined, probably because local land values had depreciated in recent years. Now it was Con who was playing hard to get.

Nevertheless, the Park Service persisted in its campaign to obtain the necessary funding that would permit the making of a firm offer. Warren must have sensed the time was finally right by consenting to the appraisal in 1987. The sum of \$600,000.00 was therefore included in the NPS appropriation for fiscal year 1988 and in May of that year the regional lands chief, Dick Young, was able to offer a total of \$485,250.00 for Tracts 115, 117, 120, and 121. This included a life estate on Con's house and associated buildings on a single acre.

[54] Con, a cowboy to the end, expressed concern for the welfare of his last remaining horse, "Whiskey." One acre would not allow any pasture for the horse, so Con requested the inclusion of a life estate for the animal as well. And, to make sure, he wanted it in writing. Taylor granted the request on June 15, 1988, and the day following Con turned over the deed to the property. The NPS gained a total acreage of 1059.85, including the large Tract 117 which was vital to interpreting the open range viewshed toward the mountains. [55]

One anomaly occurred in the final purchase. The Warren property designated as Tract 117 actually extended southward beyond the park boundary to the country road and Hillcrest Cemetery. This left a small 120-acre parcel outside the Site that, if developed, would impose an adverse impact on the viewshed southwest of the ranch. The size of this tract, known as the Apple Tree Pasture, was useless to Warren for ranching purposes. Regional Lands Chief Dick Young found a solution in the Uniform Relocation Act (P. L. 91-646) by employing a provision that would authorize the NPS to purchase this land as an "uneconomic remnant." The inclusion of this parcel demands that the boundary be re-



(click on map for larger image)

legislated. [56]

The acquisition of the Warren parcels not only achieved the long-time NPS goal of gaining full control over the ranching leases, it also granted to the government water rights associated with the lands. The West Side Ditch Company, descended from the West Deer Lodge Ditch Company formed in 1889, was an irrigation cooperative incorporated in 1917 to supply water for agricultural, domestic, and mining purposes to seven shareholders. The canal itself, carrying water northward from Clark Fork (formerly the Deer Lodge River) and Modesty Creek, closely traced the 4,600-foot contour line in Section 32. In a separate instrument, Conrad Warren sold to the National Park Service the one hundred shares of company stock he had owned for many years. [57]

Also conveyed with the remaining Warren lands were the rights to 125 miners inches of water from the Kohrs-Manning Ditch, added to the 6 miner's inches that had come with the original 130-acre historic site. [58] The irrigation system had been constructed as a joint venture by Conrad Kohrs and a Judge Manning of Deer Lodge in about 1870, as an improvement on an existing hand-dug ditch dating to 1860. This rather short canal tapped Clark Fork near the southern boundary of the Site, and extended through the park crossing Sections 33 and 28. Final water rights for the property averaged 30 gallons per day per animal unit based on reasonable carrying capacity and historic use. This additional water came from streams, primarily Peterson and Reece Anderson Creeks, in addition to springs and wells. [59]

With almost perfect timing, Jim Taylor accepted a transfer to Colorado National Monument effective July 30, 1988. He could take great pride in having resolved the major inholding issues and obtaining the water rights to the properties. The high note marking his departure was made all the sweeter by his success in rebuilding Con Warren's confidence in the National Park Service. [60]

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Three: THE SIZE OF THE SPREAD: LANDS (continued)

Superintendent Eddie Lopez, who came to the ranch about a month after Taylor's departure, brought still other diverse perspectives to the issues facing management. Having been in the maintenance field, both as a workman and as a manager, Lopez was drawn to the facilities deficiencies at the site. The recent acquisition of the remaining Warren lands within the boundary afforded a fortuitous opportunity to re-examine the park's alternatives for housing visitor, administrative, maintenance, and curatorial functions. The need for permanent facilities plagued the park since its establishment. For nearly two decades, Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS had limped along with only temporary, stop-gap solutions. Administrative offices had been located in a leased storefront in downtown Deer Lodge since 1974. A "temporary" visitor contact station and rest rooms remained in an old granary and log cabin, respectively, near the parking lot at the ranch.

By 1991, most of the park plans were either inadequate or obsolete, and Lopez won support from the Rocky Mountain Regional Office to combine several of these into a single comprehensive document. This effort, headed by Michael D. Snyder, associate regional director for planning and professional services in the Denver office, recognized the lack of such basic data as a resource management plan and an approved interpretive prospectus. And, it pointed up the critical requirement for providing long-term direction to the site's facilities development.

The revised plan, released two years later, reflected the essence of the

preferred development scheme presented in a 1980 GMP, in addition to the standard "no action" alternative found in all such documents. However, a variation of the 1980 plan suggested that the U. S. Forest Service share both the costs and the occupancy of a 12,000-square-foot administrative building to be located in the southeastern corner of the site, near the studs-out granary. One floor of the proposed building would lie below-grade to reduce the visual impact. Even though the construction of a new visitor center/headquarters on that tract was a viable solution to the problem, the purchase of the Warren home property opened still other possibilities. The NPS had long desired to have a public entrance near the heart of the ranch, but it was impossible so long as Con Warren continued his cattle operation. An improved entrance road past the red barn was designated for staff only, in accordance with the original 1970 use agreement between Warren and the National Park Foundation, to which the NPS also was bound. As it was, visitors commonly drove Through and out of the existing parking lot at the main entrance in the belief that they had experienced "the ranch," when in actuality they had seen only the two structures moved to the site in 1975. Indeed, the railroad grade running through the site nearly masked the historic ranch.



**Superintendent Eddie L. Lopez and Con Warren, 1989.**

*(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

During 1992 a multi-disciplinary team, composed of no less than seventeen contributors from the park and regional office, resurrected the "if and when" concept of adaptively modifying Warren's 1950s red barn. This enormous structure stood a couple of hundred yards north of his residence and east of the railroads, yet within the designated administrative development zone. The plan proposed that the barn's ground floor be refurbished to house a visitor center and the second floor adaptively modified to serve as administrative offices for the park. A fifty-car parking lot would be nearby on land formerly occupied by corrals. Concurrently, a new 10,000-square-foot building is to be constructed especially to house the park's curatorial operation. This building will be sited on Tract E, in the southeast corner of the park, and

is scheduled for construction in 1999. At the time of this writing, however, funding for "a modern visitor center is presently not foreseen." [61]

The ranch witnessed the end of private operations, other than those allowed by permit, when Con Warren died in March 1993. With him passed the Kohrs family legacy of cattle raising in the Deer Lodge Valley. According to Eddie Lopez, Con seemed resigned to his passing during most of his last year. "He was just very happy though that the Park Service was here," Lopez remembered in 1996. Despite his past battles with the NPS, Con obviously took satisfaction in knowing that he had placed the ranch in the stewardship of the Service for all time. The park staff displayed their respect for the old rancher by arranging to carry his coffin to the city cemetery aboard one of the ranch wagons drawn by a team of horses. A saddled horse, with boots reversed in the stirrups, followed behind. Included among the pall bearers were Superintendent Lopez and Park Ranger Lyndel Meikle, a long-time friend who had been particularly close to Con. [62]

According to the provisions of the life estate on the Warren residence, the NPS took possession of the house and other buildings on June 30, 1993. Lopez advised the executor of the estate that all personal property would have to be removed on or before that date. Fortunately, the park curatorial staff was allowed to photographically document the interior of the home with the furnishings in situ. Later that year, much of the contents were publicly auctioned, a topic detailed in another chapter. [63]

Aware that Con Warren probably did not have long to live, Lopez had initiated the preparation of a new combination general management and development concept plan. This is something the Site had needed for a long time, especially considering the changes in land status, that had not been envisioned in the 1980 plan. With the acquisition of the rest of the Warren lands, as well as numerous buildings, the park had to be prepared to assume ownership and have plans established for the use and operation of these major acquisitions.

Only a few small remnants of land remained to be dealt with inside the park boundary. Tract 103, for instance, included a right-of-way for the Western Montana Railroad consisting of 57.45 acres, with a borrow pit along the east side near the highway. Conrad Kohrs originally sold this land to the Union Pacific Railroad, which later leased it to the Burlington-Northern. In 1986 the Burlington sub-leased to the Western Montana company. The GMP recognized the historical importance of maintaining the railroad, or at least the grade and tracks, through the site. At the same time, the borrow pit, which was fenced for many decades, represented a unique sample of ungrazed Montana prairie. The acquisition and preservation of this parcel remains a management objective. [64]

Also addressed was the viewshed along the hills west of the ranch. This vast expanse has been owned by the Rock Creek Ranch for some time. Since they, too, must maintain a productive cattle operation, the owners of the Rock Creek property have shown no interest in dealing with the government, though it may be possible someday to negotiate a scenic easement with them to ensure that traditional uses of the land continue. A large white letter "P" on the far hillside continues to be a distraction for visitors. The viewshed issue was addressed in the park's 1987 Cultural Landscape Analysis and is, as yet, unresolved.

Land and water have always been a significant factor in the history of Grant-Kohrs Ranch. Grass and adequate water were essential ingredients to growing beef cattle. Just as Kohrs and Bielenberg relied on the land to support their enormous cattle empire, so did Con Warren need a smaller land base to successfully operate a modern livestock raising business. National Park Service requirements are similar, though on a much smaller scale since the ranch now exists for purposes of public education, rather than a family's livelihood. But, this has brought with it new considerations for preserving the historic scene and protecting the viewsheds across park boundaries. Future managers must continue to be mindful of the special qualities of the ranch, maintaining a careful vigilance in their stewardship of this unique place.

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**CHAPTER FOUR >>>**

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Four: A HOME ON THE RANGE: FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

By 1970, acquiring the ranch from Conrad Warren had been a long and tedious process during which no one had given much thought to just how the NPS would manage the area once the deed was transferred. Suddenly, the signing of the use agreement between Warren and the National Park Foundation placed full responsibility for the historic ranch zone squarely on the shoulders of the National Park Service.

As noted earlier, Yellowstone Park Ranger John Douglass, who had been the liaison for the ranch, identified an immediate need for a caretaker at the ranch. There was simply no other way to provide basic protection to the buildings, much less the thousands of historical objects on the property. He noted that a couple of mercury vapor lights were already extant on the grounds and there were lockable gates at the front entrance to the property. Douglass suggested that an employee "could live in a trailer below the old house where the ranch help had lived in a trailer in the past." And, more than just being there, the caretaker could perform minor maintenance and rehabilitation work on the structures. [1]

Douglass's recommendations late in 1970 led to the designation of Assistant Superintendent Vernon E. Hennesay as the key man for Grant-Kohrs Ranch until permanent staff could be hired. Hennesay inspected the site shortly after the Foundation purchase was concluded. He agreed with Douglass that a resident caretaker was required, but the conditions he found were worse than he had anticipated. A rock-lined spring approximately eight feet deep provided the only source of water, though Con Warren assured him it was potable. In the 1930s Warren had remodeled a few rooms on the second floor of the rear wing of the ranch house. These were used for several years by his ranch hands. However, Hennesay found the apartment in a sorely neglected condition and, worse yet, he discovered that the sewage was piped directly into Johnson Creek, only a short distance from the house. The electrical wiring in the ranch house appeared to be potentially dangerous and there were no storm windows covering the leaky original sash. The building, Con thought, still could be heated by the original coal furnace in the basement, but the cost would be exorbitant, to say nothing of the fire danger posed by the old furnace.

All things considered, Hennesay and Douglass concluded that placing a mobile home on the ranch was a more desirable and economical alternative. [2] Water could be piped from the ranch house and a sewer connection could be made with the city line running near the house from the treatment lagoon about a

mile north. Leasing a trailer, however, turned out to be more difficult than anticipated. When Hennesay learned that the nearest source would be Salt Lake City, Utah, he managed to procure a spare trailer house from the inventory at Yellowstone and arranged to have it installed during the first week in December 1970. He also negotiated with the City of Deer Lodge for garbage collection, fire protection, and the sewer connection. [3]

Later in December, a maintenance worker from Yellowstone Park, Tom Pettet, was transferred to Grant-Kohrs Ranch. The forty-foot house trailer that had been provided for him was sited between the garage (HS-3) and the garden at the southwest corner of the yard. During a subsequent visit to help Pettet become established, Douglass noted the need for a telephone to be connected to the trailer because, in the event of an emergency, Pettet would have to go some distance to make a call. Too, if the caretaker was expected to do any maintenance work, he would need an assortment of tools because "all he has now is a ball peen hammer." [4]

Hennesay saw to it that the caretaker received a small cache of hand tools, brooms, and brushes. Pettet occupied his time by rehabilitating the shutters on the ranch house, making regular inspections of the property, cleaning the house periodically, and making his presence known in the community. Hennesay remarked that Tom, a Butte native, "seems to be fitting very well into the community and seems to get along well with Mr. Warren and his hired man." Although Pettet was anxious to do as much as he could, Hennesay reminded him that his primary function was to "keep an eye on the place." [5]

Pettet remained on-site until September 1971 when he was replaced by Ed Griggs and his wife, Jean, also employees of Yellowstone National Park. [6] This couple, occupying the same trailer recently vacated by Pettet, continued to fill the roles of maintenance staff, security force, researchers, and public relations team. The fact that there were two persons at the ranch was an inherent advantage.

The west portion of the basement of the ranch house (HS-1) was used as a primitive shop and office for the caretaker. Later in that year, probably in the fall, Hennesay brought a second smaller trailer from Yellowstone for use as an office. Although the residence trailer had a telephone, the office initially had none. Thus Griggs had to walk from the office to his quarters in order to use the telephone. This inconvenience was later corrected by the installation of an extension to the office trailer. [7]



Mobile home, used as employee housing, situated alongside the thoroughbred barn.  
(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

The first planning directive prepared for the area assumed that the park headquarters and perhaps even the maintenance operation would be in the ranch house. Just how those activities were to be accommodated in that building can only be speculated. Another objective was to establish limited employee housing on-site, with the remainder of the staff to reside in Deer Lodge. [8]

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Four: A HOME ON THE RANGE: FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Vern Hennesay proceeded to identify no less than seventeen projects at the ranch that needed immediate funding. These priorities were submitted as high park priorities, but the 1976 National Bicentennial celebration, for which the NPS was the designated lead agency, took precedence throughout the System. Beyond having enough money to construct an access road to the meadows for Con Warren, thereby circumventing traffic around the historic zone, none of the projects were approved. "We all deeply regret that development of the area has not progressed more rapidly," a Department of Interior official wrote to Warren. "However, sufficient funds are not available to accomplish all the development projects within units of the National Park System." He went on to say that the community could expect a delay of two to three years before the Grant-Kohrs projects could be integrated into the system. [9]

Things at the ranch remained little changed until the park's first on-site manager, Richard R. Peterson, and Historian Paul Gordon arrived within a day of each other early in August 1974. They faced great challenges in a park that needed almost everything. Besides establishing a rapport with the community and giving momentum to the planning effort, a more practical need was to find a larger office space than that provided by the old trailer. The basement of the ranch house offered the only area large enough. The two decided to fire up the old coal furnace and to partition off a portion near the door with plastic sheeting, with the hope of surviving their first winter in Montana. They also acquired two desks and other basic equipment from the parent park. "We had a cold winter there," Peterson remembered. "The cold would come right up through your legs." If that were not enough, the basement lacked a ceiling and dust persisted in seeping through the floor above, covering everything in the makeshift office. Everything had to be covered with plastic sheeting when the office was not occupied. "It was pretty grim," recalled Gordon. [10]

Prior to their arrival, Hennesay had brought yet a third mobile home to the ranch, this one intended as additional employee housing. Peterson had been fortunate enough to locate a house in town for his family, but the Gordons moved into the trailer. It was situated immediately in front of the buggy shed (HS-17). He resided there until the spring 1976 when he too moved into Deer Lodge. The "New Moon" trailer Gordon vacated was then relocated alongside the thoroughbred barn (HS-15) where it remained. [11]

Prior to the arrival of the permanent staff, Hennesay had proposed that office space for park headquarters be leased in the city of Deer Lodge. The final decision was left to the new manager. Soon after Peterson arrived, it became obvious to him that the community was bent on getting the park open to the public, and money flowing into local commerce. He quickly became embroiled in the already heated issue of where to locate the park entrance, examined in a previous chapter. Faced with mounting public pressure to construct railroad crossings either on Milwaukee or Rainbow Avenues, Peterson championed an access directly from Highway 10, just outside the city limit. It was a more logical and much more economical entrance to construct than either of the other two alternatives. Besides, a picnic area desired by some citizens could still be developed on a parcel of land, known as Tract E, in the southeast corner of the site. "I see no advantage to be gained by locating our administrative offices in Deer Lodge proper," Peterson wrote. It was his opinion that if the access and attendant visitor facilities were developed on the 11-acre parcel south of the Warren residence, there would be no need to move into town. [12] Following public meetings on the environmental assessment in April 1975, the question was settled. Visitors would enter the park from the highway.



First park headquarters at 314 Main Street, Deer Lodge.  
(Photo by D. McChristian)

Before the area could host the public, however, Peterson saw an urgent need to install basic utilities systems. The agreement with the city to provide fire suppression services was fine as far as it went but Peterson recognized that a fire in a wooden historic structure would cause extensive damage, if not total destruction, in a matter of a few crucial minutes. The new park needed its own city water lines to supply

both domestic needs and a network of fire hydrants in the historic zone. Electricity, too, was needed, along with public rest rooms. Additionally, there was the need to replace the old coal-fired furnace in the main house with a modern gas unit that would be both safer and cleaner to operate. The superintendent also wanted to see the intrusive trailers removed from the park. In order to do this, the old upstairs apartment in the ranch house had to be thoroughly rehabilitated for use as temporary employee quarters. Peterson also considered adaptively restoring one of the other buildings to house a permanent employee. [13]

Faced with the prospect of spending another winter in his dungeon-like basement office, Peterson conceded that moving the park headquarters to town would have some advantages after all. The probability of having a new visitor center with administrative space constructed anytime soon was extremely remote. Moreover, having an office right in the community could benefit the park's relationship with the townspeople. By August 1975 he and Gordon, augmented by a secretary and two maintenance personnel, were ensconced in offices at 314 Main. A maintenance shop was set up in the dairy barn (HS 9) at the ranch. [14]

Much of Peterson's attention was focused on the principal goal of gearing up for the public. Everyone wanted that -- the town of Deer Lodge, the Montana delegation, and the Park Service. The NPS had maintained custody over the property for more than four years, yet had very little to show for it. The agency was under pressure to demonstrate progress in a way that was evident to the public. As the result of continued political interest in the ranch, especially by local Congressman Dick Shoup, the planning schedule was advanced and the fiscal year 1975 budget was amended to include significant amounts for Grant-Kohrs Ranch development. In December 1974 NPS Director Ronald H. Walker informed the Montana senators that several line item requests of the park had been approved, including \$105,000.00 for road planning and construction, plus additional amounts to install water and fire protection systems. [15]

With money available to construct a parking lot and trails, Peterson lost no time in pursuing these plans, following the spring 1975 announcement of the selected alternative. At issue was the development of a safe, efficient way for visitors to cross the two sets of railroad tracks dissecting the Site from north to south. These formed a major obstacle lying between the proposed parking lot and the historic ranch. Indeed, Peterson discussed design needs and cost estimates with both the Burlington Northern and the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroads since shortly after his arrival. But, until the access location had been finally determined, these talks were only conceptual in nature. Once the decision was made, however, the NPS immediately requested the railroads to prepare detailed proposals and cost estimates for constructing the pedestrian underpasses. No one envisioned any particular problems with accomplishing this goal, apparently failing to consider that three bureaucracies were involved. In May 1975 "Pete" Peterson warned, prophetically as it turned out, that "bureaucracies move slowly." [16]



Nearly-completed parking lot, with visitor contact station and restrooms.  
(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

While negotiations continued with the railroads, work on the visitor facilities at the historic site shifted into high gear. The Denver Service Center, augmented by an engineer from Yellowstone National Park, coordinated with the fledgling Site to complete plans for the parking area, trails, and utilities. Unfortunately, the appropriation did not include funds for the design and construction of a visitor center, although some basic facilities were of necessity once the area was open for public use. Undaunted, Peterson and Peter Snell, a DSC architect, found two aging structures on the Cliff Benson Ranch (formerly the Kohrs-Bielenberg "Upper Ranch") that were architecturally compatible with the buildings at the Site. One, a "studs-out" granary typical of the Northwest region, embraced about 350 square feet. The other was a small unfloored log homestead cabin that Benson had used as a pig shelter. Thus, these buildings not only appeared much like those at the home ranch, they were associated with Kohrs. [17]

Peterson purchased these buildings and, using a flatbed trailer, had them moved intact to Grant-Kohrs where they were adaptively restored by maintenance workers Mike McWright and Arnold Larson, based on Snell's plans. The granary, which retained a floor because it had been used recently for storing grain, was converted into a visitor contact station; the log cabin was converted into the public rest rooms. They were positioned adjacent to each other on a knoll near the northwest end of the proposed parking lot.

At the end of July, Peterson proudly announced that the buildings were in place and a "jack-leg" pole

fence had. been erected along the north boundary of the parking area. Even more encouraging, the NPS had just awarded a package contract for installing the paved 28-car parking lot, trails, utilities, and paved walkways. Work started on the comprehensive project on August 11, 1975 and was finished by the end of October. The asphalt-paved trail leading from the parking lot to the ranch was built in two segments ending on each side of the railroad rights-of-way, since negotiations for the underpasses were still pending. [18] That fall also saw both the studs-out granary and the log cabin re roofed and wired for electricity. [19] Superintendent Peterson and his staff could be justifiably proud of their accomplishments that year. Grant-Kohrs Ranch NPS was finally beginning to take shape.

Nevertheless, the summer of 1975 had come and gone, and the ranch still was not open. It certainly was not due to any lack of enthusiasm or energy among the park staff They had done much within the short time they had been there.

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch

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## Administrative History

### Chapter Four: A HOME ON THE RANGE: FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT (continued)

The missing key to unlocking the ranch to public access was the pedestrian underpasses beneath the two railroads. But, the railroad companies seemed to be in no hurry. "The public expects us to open this summer . . . We have been talking about it for years and everyone is becoming a little impatient," Peterson wrote to a Burlington official. [20] The two companies had insisted that the design and construction of the facility would be done by their own engineers in order to meet critical railroad standards. There was also the question of the railroads granting rights-of-way to the NPS for the trail crossing. These approvals took more time than the Park Service anticipated, consequently the documents were not drafted until the spring of 1976. [21] However, the revised grading requirements stipulated by the NPS further slowed the process.



Construction of Milwaukee Railroad underpass, 1976.  
(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

An impatient Peterson was presented with a serendipitous opportunity to employ some political pressure when the Secretary's Advisory Board scheduled a visit to the Site in June. Accompanying the group was William J. Briggie, the NPS deputy director from Washington. During the few hours that the Board members were on-site, Peterson found the opportunity to brief Briggie on the seemingly endless postponements imposed by the railroads, particularly the Burlington Northern. With nearly everything else in place for public access to the park, it was frustrating and embarrassing for the staff to be unable to explain the delay. After Briggie returned to Washington, he laid the groundwork with Senator Lee Metcalf's office to prepare an inquiry, ostensibly initiated by the senator, into the failure of the NPS to open Grant-Kohrs Ranch. This gave the NPS an opportunity to respond with a formal explanation of the problem, which served as a catalyst for Metcalf to tweak the Burlington Northern. [22]

Although the agreement with the Milwaukee Railroad was signed in July, the Burlington Northern dragged its corporate feet for more than a month. Milwaukee officials informed the Park Service that they would begin construction in September 1976. The Burlington Northern once again cited lengthy delays. It would take months to obtain materials, they said, and that would carry them into winter. By that time, the ground would be frozen so that pilings could not be set. It would be April 1977, at the earliest, before they could complete their underpass. Still, the optimistic park staff held out hope that both underpasses might be completed earlier. [23]

It was not. True to form, the Burlington Northern put off starting work until near the end of March 1977, well after the Milwaukee Railroad had completed its share of the project. [24] The end in sight, at last, a weary Superintendent Peterson issued bid invitations to complete the trail work and informed the Deer Lodge community that he was still hoping for a June 1 opening. This would be followed by a dedication ceremony in July. Even though the Burlington Northern completed its underpass in May, it still was too late for the park to open in June. The trail across the railroad corridor was yet to be finished, along with water and sewer line connections across the same easement. Once those connections were made, the park maintenance staff had only to put last minute touches on the contact station and rest rooms. Con Warren even provided a wooden flag staff which was positioned near the contact station. In the interest of public relations, the park staff extended a special invitation to the Deer Lodge business community to participate in a special "sneak-peek" tour of the ranch during the first week in June. [25]



Access trail beneath railroad underpass.  
(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

The long-awaited formal establishment and opening of the area was slated for July 16, 1977. It was to be a grand affair attended by a plethora of politicians, NPS officials, Kohrs and Bielenberg family descendants, and Montana citizenry. Pete Peterson and his staff worked up to the final moments to ensure the success of the event. So close in fact was the completion of the contract work that, on the eve of the dedication, Peterson himself took rake in hand to help groom the newly laid gravel along the trail. [26]

Shortly after the dedication that he had worked so hard to bring to fruition, Peterson accepted a transfer to Washington, D. C., as a trainee in the Departmental Manager Program. This career-enhancing opportunity is offered to a limited number of employees with demonstrated potential for higher-level responsibilities. His three years at Grant-Kohrs had been a challenging, if not an often frustrating, time. But, he eventually reaped those "rewards of Park Service work." He and his staff had taken a park unit in its formative stage and through dedication, creativity, and hard work had brought it up to a basic level of operation. It would be up to his successors to consolidate and refine those gains.

With its foundation firmly established, the Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site was opened at last. Still, it had many critical needs when Superintendent Tom Vaughan arrived. in October 1977. Among those facilities-related matters yet to be overcome was that of providing an adequate water supply for both domestic use and for fire protection. The latter was vital, since the only water source available on the ranch was the spring-fed well, boosted by a 300 gallon-per-minute pump. At maximum pumping capacity, the well could supply water for only five minutes. The relatively small reservoir tank that had been acquired with the ranch had been sufficient for family needs, but was woefully inadequate for park requirements. Considering the high fire danger posed by nearly three dozen frame buildings, an appeal was made to program \$209,000.00 in fiscal year 1978 to correct this situation. [27]

The funding did not materialize that quickly, but the project did. receive priority consideration late in 1979 when the old water source was condemned. [28] As a consideration for reducing resource impacts, it was decided to place all of the utilities, water, electric, and telephone, in a single trench. There was also a question that has plagued many historic sites: how best "to turn ugly old non-historic fire hydrants and hose housing into less intrusive features in the historic complex." Vaughan and others pondered this for some time. At last, the superintendent concluded that, "Anything we can think of to hide the fixtures is inevitably bulkier and more conspicuous than the objects to be hidden." Therefore, they would be left as they were. He did acknowledge that the hose house for the lower yard would have to be specially-designed by the park staff. [29]

The park would be supplied with water via a 10-inch line connecting with the city system a few hundred feet west of the railroads on Milwaukee Avenue. From there it would be buried in a trench along Park Street to a point where it would cross the boundary into park land. The line would traverse one of Con Warren's leased hayfields to a point south of the stallion barn (HS-14). The contract was let to Early Times Construction Company. [30]

This project, like many seemingly clear-cut park projects, quickly degenerated into a nightmare. Despite NPS warnings to the contractor prior to the bidding process, Early Times chose to ignore the high ground water conditions prevalent in the valley. As predicted, the trenching operation encountered water just 400 feet north of Milwaukee Avenue. Conditions intensified all the way to the ranch. The contractor's crew had to employ pumps for the entire time to reduce the water coming into the trench. To make matters worse, the contractor failed to use any sort of shoring in an already-too-narrow trench. The results were predictable. The crew fought flooding and collapsing trench walls nearly the entire 4,000-foot distance to the ranch. The project was still unfinished when Tom Vaughan departed for a new job at

Harpers Ferry Center, late in July 1980. [\[31\]](#)

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Four: A HOME ON THE RANGE: FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT (continued)

His replacement, Jim Taylor, arrived just after Christmas 1980, just in time to witness the testing of the new water main. The line leaked in several places where it had been pulled apart during construction, but those breaks were located and repaired rather easily. However, a particularly stubborn leak occurred somewhere between the stream crossing and the ranch house (HS-1). NPS staff advised the contractor to isolate portions of the line until the leak could be found, but he chose not to, unless a costly change-order were approved. That was declined, of course, because it was the contractor's responsibility to complete the line in a fully functional condition. This prompted the contractor to walk off the job, whereupon his lawyers took up the matter with NPS regional contracting officials. They made it clear that the contractor could either fix the line, or NPS would do so at his expense. The Early Times Company conceded defeat and a crew from Yellowstone Park was called in to assist Grant-Kohrs personnel in finding a solution to the problem. The leak was eventually attributed to a mechanical connection, in which the



Early Times workers had used incorrect bolts, near the ranch house. [32]

Superintendent Jimmy D. Taylor speaking at Last Spike Centennial program, August 28, 1983.

*(Courtesy Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

If that were not enough, Superintendent Taylor cited Early Times for failing to back-fill some of the excavated areas, failing to grade up around the hydrants, and failing to construct five hose boxes. Additionally, he discovered that fences had not been repaired and a final surprise disclosed that the line did not tie in to the plumbing at the ranch house. Early Times was not released until February 1981, yet two years later rocks were discovered in hydrant valves that had failed to function properly. [33]

In 1982 the entire National Park System benefited from a windfall in the form of the Park Restoration and Improvement Program (PRIP). Not for many years, since Mission 66 in fact, had the Park Service been blessed with so much funding to rehabilitate deteriorating park facilities, as well as to build new ones. Grant-Kohrs Ranch garnered money for two important projects: replacing the old coal furnace in the ranch house and installing a fire detection and intrusion alarm system. Also approved was a request for replacing the temporary electrical system that had been installed by the NPS years earlier. [34]

The first General Management Plan (GMP), which Tom Vaughan successfully shepherded to completion in 1980, envisioned the day when the Warren structures might be available for park use, though it left detailed planning to the future. Four years later, with the acquisition of the Warren property seemingly no closer than before, Superintendent Taylor submitted a revised request for a large, multi-purpose headquarters building containing visitor center, theater, administrative offices, museum laboratory, cooperating association, and public rest rooms -- virtually all of the park functions, except for maintenance. However, the regional office took a dim view of this grandiose proposal, advising Taylor that the central staff felt it was important to have agreement between the General Management Plan and the proposed facilities. "Your proposal goes beyond what could be conceived as a normal request in meeting your most urgent needs," wrote Associate Regional Director Richard Strait. He suggested that Taylor revise his request with minimum space requirements and, at the same time, pursue the purchase of the Warren buildings in the hope that a revised GMP would not be necessary. [35]

The eventual acquisition of the remainder of the Warren property, along with many additional buildings, in 1988 created new alternatives for the park. In the early 1990s, Superintendent Eddie Lopez recognized that the time was right to revisit those plans. His efforts resulted in a new, comprehensive document that envisioned the adaptive use of the Warren buildings. The main proposals of this still-current plan called for extensive modifications of the large red barn (HS-64) to house a spacious visitor center on the ground floor and park administrative offices on the second. Visitor parking was planned in a lot to be constructed nearby. The plan recommended that the "temporary" visitor contact station and rest rooms, still in use after more than two decades, be removed. A 12,000-square-foot curatorial facility is scheduled for construction on the same parcel. The main entrance to park would be moved farther north along the highway to the access road leading past the red barn, thus recreating an historic approach to the ranch house (HS-1). At the time of this writing, funding for the curatorial facility has been approved, but it remains to be seen whether the conversion of the barn will come to fruition.

Meantime, the Site has continued to cope with its principal operations widely scattered among several interim locations. The maintenance shop, for example, was moved from its first location in the dairy barn (HS-9) to the all-metal Warren sale barn (HS-65) in 1991. Administrative offices were moved in December 1991 from 314 Main Street in Deer Lodge to another and larger leased storefront at 210 Missouri Avenue, where they remain today. [36] And, the curatorial office, first located in the second floor apartment in the ranch house (HS-1), has resided in the Warren house (HS-58) since the winter of 1994-95, along with archival storage and the maintenance chiefs office. [37] Visitor reception, of course, is still conducted in the 1975 contact station, although the rest rooms in the adjacent log cabin were supplemented by the installation of another set installed in the 1930s blacksmith shop/garage (HS-3). This same structure has become the scene of multiple activities, including an audio-visual orientation program and blacksmithing demonstrations. [38] The continued dispersal of staff and functions, in the words of Jim Taylor, "continues to be a serious problem and a source of frustration for the staff." [39]



Park headquarters at 210 Missouri Street, Deer Lodge.

*(Photo by D. McChristian)*

Neither has the issue of housing employees on-site been resolved. In 1975 the park maintenance staff rehabilitated the apartment in the ranch house (HS-1) so that it could be occupied by Park Technicians Ed and Jean Griggs during the following year. The mobile home they had been residing in was returned to Yellowstone Park in 1976. The one occupied initially by Historian Paul Gordon, and for many year since then by Park Ranger Lyndel Meikle, remains alongside the thoroughbred barn (HS-15). The ranch-house apartment was used as quarters for seasonal protection rangers into the early 1980s, when it was adapted for a time as curatorial offices, but it has not served in that capacity for many years. [40]

While the roads and utilities development at Grant-Kohrs Ranch have proceeded at what might be termed a normal pace, the visitor and staff facilities have not. This is not uncommon in historic areas where major line-item funding often lags far behind the opening of the park. The ranch in some ways has become a victim of its own enthusiasm through a quirk frequently witnessed in smaller park areas, especially those lacking a champion in Congress. Temporary facilities installed in the zeal to get a park moving all too frequently become long-term fixtures. Illogically, these minimal facilities tend to dilute the urgency of a site's need, thereby counteracting justifications for permanent replacements. Despite the best efforts of virtually every area manager at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, the funding has not been made available to provide permanent visitor facilities. Consequently, the ranch has yet to experience its day in the sun whereby it will realize its full operational potential.

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Five

## PRESERVING THE HOME PLACE: CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

One official who had inspected Grant-Kohrs Ranch in 1966 described it then as "a rundown remnant of a ranch," predicting that it would take a lot of money to restore the dozens of buildings. The buildings in the old ranch area west of the railroads had been allowed to deteriorate to a deplorable condition. Conrad Warren, although well-aware of how badly the structures had fared, had little choice but to watch them crumble. The cost of preserving them was far beyond his means, nor did he need the buildings for his relatively small-scale ranching activities. Genuinely concerned that a piece of genuine western Americana would be lost forever, Warren feared that if nothing were done, there would soon be nothing left to save. [1] By the time the National Park Foundation acquired the property in trust near the end of 1970, the condition of the buildings was declining rapidly for lack of any maintenance during the past several decades.

The structural preservation challenges facing the National Park Service at Grant-Kohrs Ranch were enormous. Since historic preservation professionals had been notably absent from among the personnel who had inspected the ranch early-on, it was not too surprising that attention focused initially on the trove of objects that filled the ranch house and outbuildings. That so much of the material associated with the Kohrs and Bielenberg operations, along with a smattering of items attributed to John Grant, remained on the very ranch where they were used was truly unique. Vaunted by NPS officials as an impressive "time capsule of the Western frontier", this description hardly did justice to the diverse collection of horse equipment, machinery, vehicles, furnishings, and historical records that had survived largely intact. Con and Nell Warren's willingness to donate these items to the National Park Service had been a key factor in the negotiations for the purchase of the ranch.

The first task was to develop a general inventory of the collections then housed in the various buildings on the site. On hand at the time the National Park Foundation purchased the core historic zone were Historian Edwin C. Bearss and Jim Dougherty from the Washington Office along with Warren J. Petty, museum curator at Fort Laramie National Historic Site. A few days preceding the sale, this team joined John R. Douglass, the park ranger from Yellowstone who had been the interim coordinator for the ranch. Historian Bearss was especially impressed with the wealth of ranch records he found tracing many

decades of Kohrs and Bielenberg's business activities. [2]

Virtually overnight the agency found itself responsible for protecting and preserving this priceless collection of objects, many of them already in need of professional care. But, because the site was not yet officially authorized as a unit of the National Park System, there was no full-time staff, nor was there funding to support any kind of conservation program. The only protection afforded the collections were the structures in which they resided, and most of the buildings had critical deficiencies. The most that could be done was to install a caretaker, whose rudimentary duties included basic custodial work and the waging of a hopeless battle against the elements by taping broken window panes, nailing down loose boards, and temporarily covering empty window openings with plastic sheeting. [3]

Vernon E. Hennesay, assistant superintendent at Yellowstone and official liaison for the ranch after the acquisition, appreciated the conditions at the ranch, though there was little he could do to correct them. The very limited money that was available to him had to be skimmed from the Yellowstone budget. After paying the caretaker's salary, there was barely enough left over to cover the utilities bills and to make small purchases for basic supplies. This program of stop-gap maintenance prevailed for over two years after legislation was passed authorizing the Site.

Early in 1973 Hennesay met with Midwest Regional Office officials to discuss the status of the struggling new site. All agreed that preservation and rehabilitation of the major ranch structures should be the first priority. Not only were the structures an integral and most visible part of the historic resource, they were the only protection for the museum collection. However, the regional office could offer little more than encouragement, advising Hennesay to prepare a number of project requests that would address the most critical needs for the area. These included an updated master plan, now that NPS ideas for the area had begun to gel. Basic historical research also was desperately needed to assist management in defining the context and significance of the resources. Only then could informed decisions be made and priorities established to address preservation issues. At the same time, Midwest Region applied to the Washington Office for assistance in setting up a historic preservation program to stabilize the buildings, and to define temporary measures for maintaining them until major funding could be obtained. Vance L. Kaminski, the Regional Historical Architect, was given this assignment, while Chief Historical Architect Hank Judd, from the Washington office, volunteered to assist. [4]

The park had so many deficiencies that it was difficult to know where to begin. The architects probably were aghast when they saw all of the structures in need of major repairs. The Grant-Kohrs ranch house (HS-1), the visual centerpiece of the ranch and the building containing the most environmentally sensitive artifacts, needed a new roof -- and right away. Both the original shingle roof over the log portion of the house and the standing seam metal roof on the 1890 wing had numerous leaks that caused ceiling plaster to fall at an alarming rate. Walls, still retaining their original papers and paint, were becoming water-stained. Worse yet, the leaks threatened the collections within. There was no place to move them, and even if there had been, specialists had not yet had the opportunity to study the furnishings in situ, which was essential to the future restoration and interpretation of the house.

It was a problem that simply could not wait for the appropriations process to grind out special funding. Hennesay and Superintendent Jack K. Anderson took the initiative to set aside enough excess year-end money from the Yellowstone National Park budget to cover the materials so that a contract could be let to Arnold E. Larson, a local builder, to perform the work. (Larson would later become the first maintenance worker at the Site.)

This emergency project was carried out late in the summer 1973. In the interest of time, the lack of research, and limited funds, the entire roof was wood shingled, including the rear wing. Con Warren noted this in a letter he wrote to the regional director several months later. Objecting to the removal of the original metal roof, Warren blasted the Park Service for slip-shod work, exclaiming that, "Anyone who knows anything about roofing knows that shingles are not successful of a roof of less than 1/3 pitch. I was under the impression that authentic restoration was to duplicate the original as closely as possible." [5] Authentic or not, the roof was there to stay, at least for awhile. Little did anyone realize then that it would arise later as a major issue.

The local community was clamoring to see definite signs of progress at the new historic site. What they wanted most was to see it open to the public, but that was still premature. In fact, it would take longer than anyone in or out of the Park Service anticipated. Nevertheless, the NPS felt pressured "to do something concrete to demonstrate our interest and concern," Rocky Mountain Regional Curator Ed Jahns observed after a visit to the ranch in August 1974. Jahns, shocked by the general conditions he found at the ranch, recommended that several of the buildings should be braced up "or they will fall with the first heavy snow." [6]

Grant-Kohrs Ranch had a growing number of persons within the NPS who were devoted to its cause, not the least of whom were its first superintendent, Richard Peterson, and park historian Paul Gordon. But, while the park staff fought the daily battles of trying to get the park up and running, they were helpless to do anything about the more complex issues of historic preservation. The ranch needed a champion who could do something about these problems, and needed one badly. Fate provided one in Rodd L. Wheaton, who was hired in May 1974 as the new regional historical architect for the Rocky Mountain Region. This was an extremely fortunate choice for Grant-Kohrs Ranch because Wheaton was not only well-qualified to guide the preservation work at the Site, he had an intense personal interest in Victorian antiquities. He had been in the Denver office only a short time when the ranch caught his attention. When another staff member, who had recently visited the ranch, referred to it as "no better than a Victorian bordello," Wheaton was prompted to make a personal reconnaissance. [7]

During his orientation to the ranch early in October, 1974, Wheaton was truly astounded at what he discovered. Here was a Victorian home, essentially sealed for a quarter century, with major portions of its original furnishings intact. Although he found the interior of the house dark, with everything shrouded "like King Tut's tomb," he soon realized that he was looking at one of the finest collections of decorative arts he had ever seen. Transcending the value of the objects themselves was the fact that the furnishings represented one woman's taste, a woman who had possessed the means to create a haven apart from her rough-hewn frontier surroundings. [8]

Wheaton inspected the buildings with a preservationist's eye to structural detail and fabric. The existing conditions were appalling. He would later recall being "horrified at what Ed Griggs had been doing" to the buildings. Though well-meaning, the early caretakers had in some instances done more harm than good. Working with Superintendent Peterson, Wheaton listed several recommended actions, the first of which was photographically and architecturally document the buildings in accordance with the standards for the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), something that had not yet been done. This was an extremely important step in the process in the event that a building were damaged or destroyed accidentally. It also recorded the conditions of the structures prior to any major restoration work. He arranged to have Jack Boucher, a HABS photographer, perform the work that very month.

Following a cursory examination of the ranch structures, Wheaton inventoried the obvious problems with the primary buildings, using a criterion of "what's falling down the most" to rough out the priorities. The ranch house, bunk house, and log barn complex were among those having the most urgent needs for stabilization. [9] At this point, determining the causes of deterioration and devising effective strategies for mitigating those conditions was paramount.

Peterson and Wheaton made an effective team. Things began to happen. By January 1975 Wheaton's proposed projects had been subjected to the requisite review and cleared by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Montana State Historic Preservation Office. By early that spring contracts totaling \$65,000.00 were awarded to correct some of the most serious deficiencies. These included repainting the exterior of the ranch house (HS-1), replacing the gutters and downspouts, and reconditioning the sash throughout all of the historic buildings. The ceilings in several rooms in the ranch house (HS-1) were restored to prevent any further deterioration. Three buildings, the ice house (HS-4), cow shed (HS-23), wooden granary (HS-26), and the east stallion barn (HS-38) received new roofs, while masonry repairs were executed on the foundations of ten buildings. The ranch was on the road to recovery at last. [10]



Restoration of Stallion Barn underway.  
*(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Five

## PRESERVING THE HOME PLACE: CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued)

With stabilization work underway on the historic buildings, Superintendent Peterson and his staff coordinated the construction of the new parking lot in the southeast corner of the Site, on Tract E. This called for an archeological investigation of that area, since it was already known that a historic habitation [the Stuart cabin] site lay in the vicinity of the proposed visitor facilities. A preliminary survey had been conducted in 1973 as part of a statewide inventory conducted by the University of Montana. This cursory walk-over had detected four prehistoric sites within the park boundaries, only one of which lay on the NPS fee land.

Of greater concern was the "Tom Stuart cabin site," alleged to be the location of a small ranch occupied by the younger brother of Montana's eminent pioneer, Granville Stuart. Little was known about the site, except that Stuart resided there sometime prior to 1883 and sold the place to Con Kohrs the following year. Park Historian Paul Gordon thought that the site might offer an opportunity for park interpreters to contrast ranchers "not as rich and fortunate as Kohrs [11]

A DSC archeologist, Winifred Brown, traveled to Deer Lodge in the spring of 1975 to conduct a reconnaissance of the area to be impacted by the installation of the visitor parking lot and contact station. It was her opinion that the lot, as designed, would indeed intrude on the Stuart site and that the construction zone should be archeologically tested prior to any grading. Wilfred D. Logan, Brown's supervisor in the Denver Service Center, concurred with her recommendations and urged management to allow Brown to further investigate the area before the July 1 start-up of construction. Brown's initial observations influenced an alteration in the parking lot design to skew it somewhat so as to avoid the Stuart site, as well as provide a protective buffer for the resource. Archeologist Brown arranged a site visit virtually on the eve of construction to further test the area. She discovered what appeared to have been a barn location near the house site, but fortunately neither feature would be disturbed by the construction work. [12] This accomplished, installation of the visitor facilities proceeded on schedule, although no one could have foreseen that other factors would delay opening the park for another two years.

One of these was the persistent problem of high ground water on the flood plain below the ranch house. Actually, the choice of location had been a poor one for construction purposes. That slope was a natural aquifer, evidenced by several nearby springs, and Johnson Creek flowed just beyond the corrals. The accumulation of water in the "lower yard" had plagued Kohrs and Bielenberg, too, during their tenure at the ranch. Regardless of their efforts over the years to construct wooden French drains and rock-lined sumps, dozens of them in fact, nature continued to defeat the ranch men. By the time the National Park Service first arrived on the scene, the area was underwater most of the time. "That whole lower yard was a swimming hole," Historian Gordon recalled in a 1996 interview. Both he and Wheaton remembered seeing ducks paddling through the corrals. A new system of drain tiles was installed during 1975-76 to alleviate this inundation. Gordon commented that the area eventually was "high and dry" by the time he left the park early in 1977. [13]

Rodd Wheaton's enthusiasm for the ranch and his strategic position in the Rocky Mountain Regional Office continued to benefit the Site in subsequent years. As a key player in establishing historic preservation priorities for the Rocky Mountain Region, he was successful in funding project work at Grant-Kohrs several years running. This, he later revealed, was sometimes to the detriment of other parks having similar, but less critical, needs. [14] All of this ongoing work required the presence of a professional to supervise the work. Architect Peter Snell from the Denver Service Center initially was charged with preparing a Historic Structures Report to accompany Albright's Historic Resource Study. Since Snell was already spending so much time at the ranch, was assigned to the project full-time to conduct fabric and construction research, as well as on-site guidance.

If the Deer Lodge community wanted to see action at the Site, they certainly had no grounds for complaint now. Fiscal year 1976 saw more money flow into the rehabilitation of various buildings. The amount was not great when weighed against the job at hand, only about \$40,000.00 annually, but it seemed like a fortune to a park that had nothing. Besides the reglazing work that continued on the hundreds of windows, new jack-leg fences went up to replace those fallen down years before. Wheaton also identified eight more buildings that would have their exteriors repainted, including bunk house row (HS-2), the icehouse (HS-5), old granary (HS-18), and the Bielenberg barn (HS-19). The stallion (HS-14), thoroughbred (HS-15), and Leeds-Lyon barns, along with the buggy shed (HS-17), were to be whitewashed. [15]



(left to right) Dave Butler, Bill Lingenfelter, Arnold Larson (hidden), and Rodd Wheaton with new park entrance sign.  
(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

Having park personnel living on-site was a measure of night-time protection, but was limited by their actual presence and vigilance. It was unreasonable, if not unrealistic, to expect employees to remain on-site twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. There would be those occasions, too, when no one would be there. With a new roof on the main house and work underway to restore the ceilings in several of the rooms, the next logical step was to provide electronic security systems to help safeguard the valuable contents. In October 1975, an electrical engineer specializing in such systems was sent to the park to design both fire detection and intrusion alarm systems employing a telephone dialer to alert designated officials in the event of emergency. These systems, were installed in the ranch house (HS-1) about four months later. [16]

Good times had come to Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. These were the years of plenty as the ranch found advocates both in the political arena and within the Park Service. There was action on all fronts as Superintendent Peterson dedicated himself to pushing the all-important pedestrian underpass to completion, while Gordon supervised the research, design, and installation of the exhibits at the new contact station. The architects and contractors, along with the park maintenance staff, combined forces to save the many ranch buildings and return them to a semblance of their former conditions during the ranch's prosperous times. Momentum increased as Wheaton and Snell pursued a strategy of placing the greatest importance on replacing roofs and foundations, with exterior painting to preserve siding as the

next order of importance. Several projects were packaged in a \$50,000.00 request in 1976 to replace the roofs on a number of buildings. Only the thoroughbred barn (HS-15) was actually completed that year, but temporary roofing was placed on both the 1935 granary (HS-6) and the chicken house (HS-22). This work was deferred because several of the 1930s structures required special hexagonal composition shingles that proved difficult to locate on the modern market. These had to be special-ordered to replace the roofs on the blacksmith shop/garage (HS-3), granary (HS-6), dairy barn (HS-9), brooding house (HS-21), and the chicken house (HS-22). However, the singles were procured in time for time work to resume in the spring, 1977 and by the end of the season all five structures had been re-roofed and galvanized iron sheeting was laid on the roof of the buggy shed (HS-17). That same year the ice house and two feed storage houses were repainted. [17]

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Five

## PRESERVING THE HOME PLACE: CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued)

While all of this was happening, the Regional Curator Ed Jahns initiated a meeting at the ranch in February 1977 to begin the development of an interim furnishings plan for the ranch house (HS-1). Since Superintendent Peterson anticipated opening the park to the public by the summer, thought had to be given as to how the Grant-Kohrs house was to be arranged and interpreted. There was not enough time to prepare a formal plan, so Jahns, Wheaton, and Snell spent several bone-chilling days in the main house and the bunk house trying to determine how the rooms should be furnished until more thorough research could be accomplished. The only data available to them at the time were a four historic photographs and some interviews with Warren family members. Con Warren himself spent some time with the team to share his recollections, though they were from a period considerably later than that which was being portrayed. Nevertheless, the team and park employees working together eventually put things in order well enough that the public could be allowed inside. As a final step, Jahns photographed each room and admonished the staff not to move anything without confirmation in the historic record. [18]

The interim plan was the first stage of a continuing process to refine the furnishings exhibits. In the process of locating and inviting family members to the formal dedication, slated for July 1977, the staff encountered Kohrs relatives who had spent varying amounts of time at the house when Conrad and Augusta Kohrs were still living. Two of the most influential were Florence Hershey, a granddaughter by virtue of her marriage to Robert O. Y. Warren (Con Warren's brother), and Mrs. E. W. Bache, a lineal granddaughter. [19] Following the dedication ceremony, both of these women responded enthusiastically to NPS requests to interview them for their recollections about how the house, particularly, was furnished. Rodd Wheaton was able to establish close rapport with both Mrs. Hershey and Mrs. Bache, traveling to their homes at various times to talk with them. These visits produced not only research data on the furnishings, but perhaps even more valuable were their insights to the entire Kohrs family. While there can be no doubt that Con Warren was a wealth of information, the perspectives offered by these other family members were indispensable in providing a balance regarding personalities and family relationships. The two women also recalled details about the routine management of the household, something to which Con paid little attention as a boy. The special and

lifelong relationship that Wheaton formed with Mrs. Hershey also bore fruit in the form of loans, and eventually gifts, of old photographs taken at the ranch and donations of additional family heirlooms. [20]

Following a tremendously successful grand opening of the park, "Pete" Peterson departed with near-perfect timing. It took the requisite few months to select a new manager, but when Thomas G. Vaughan reported for duty as superintendent in October 1977 he was cognizant that he had arrived at a significant turning point in the park's development. Whereas the site had been closed to the public since its acquisition by the National Park Foundation in 1970, it was now welcoming visitors. In his first annual report, Vaughan observed that, "Grant-Kohrs Ranch faces a new set of problems and a new role in the community." [21] Management emphasis was shifting from basic facilities to the more subtle issues of historic preservation. Not only did collections beg for more professional care, but the time was fast approaching when the NPS would have to step back and re-evaluate the premises on which it had based its restoration program.

Vaughan was in many ways uniquely qualified to face these challenges. A contemplative individual, the new superintendent had done graduate work in the field of anthropology and had worked in both the museum and interpretive fields. Prior to his arrival at the ranch, he served a stint as superintendent at Hubbell Trading Post NHS. The trading post, including a fully furnished historic residence, shared much in common with Grant-Kohrs Ranch resources. These similarities provided Vaughan with a firm foundation of experience to deal with the issues soon to face him at Grant-Kohrs. [22]

The first of these would greet him practically on the doorstep. Although Peterson and his staff had attempted to bring some sense of order to the museum collection of approximately 10,000 objects, the job seemed insurmountable. He and Gordon ensured that Jean Griggs, employed only part-time, attended basic curatorial training at Harpers Ferry Center. Still, the task of organizing and cataloging the collection was far beyond one person's capabilities. Pete Peterson accurately characterized the curatorial job as "a bottomless pit into which to pour money -- but worthwhile!" [23] The park staff gained little ground in cataloging the mass of Kohrs and Warren family material, despite valiant efforts.

Back in March 1977 the regional office had perceived that the park's curatorial program was floundering and needed help right away. Regional Curator Jahns returned to the ranch with a team from the museum services branch at Harpers Ferry to spend several days on-site to evaluate the situation and began drafting a collections management plan to bring some professional guidance to the program. [24] As a result, a museum technician, Randi S. Bry, joined the staff later that year to replace Jean Griggs, who had transferred to the park maintenance division in June. [25]

As a supplement to park staff, two supposedly qualified individuals were contracted to catalog major portions of the enormous backlog. These were important steps, but by the time Tom Vaughan arrived the project had grounded on rocky shoals. "The fact that there are problems in the cataloging project here is no news," Vaughan informed the chief of museum services. "I think it is time to address them specifically." He forwarded samples of the contractors' work, lamenting that, "I would like to have included some acceptable products but I couldn't find any, and I searched!" He went on to cite numerous

deficiencies in the quality of the work, concluding that, "If we are to judge from this sample... Grant-Kohrs has an utterly worthless collection which cannot be located on site, which cannot be linked reliably to accession data, and which is often poorly described." He summarily refused to authorize any further payment on the contract until after meeting scheduled early in January to review the terms and the quality of the product. This meeting revealed that the desired product had not been clearly articulated, nor had either party comprehended just how much time and money should have been programmed for the job. Vaughan agreed to extend the contract time for the work to be completed, which it was, but admitted that valuable lessons had been learned all around. [26]

Vaughan's interest in the curatorial aspect of the park and his commitment to improve it was evident in his November 1977 comments relating to a recently drafted long-term management plan for Grant-Kohrs Ranch. It was "mind-boggling," he wrote, that, "Not one word is expressed in the whole thing about collections, artifacts, or curatorial services." Vaughan stressed that the NPS should have an organizational structure better adapted to addressing curatorial issues. "The lack of a potent chief curator position and the separation of curatorial activities in the field from other cultural resource preservation activities is one reason our collections are in such bad shape." [27] At that time, the NPS had no chief curator at the Washington level to serve as spokesman and policy maker for the discipline Servicewide. Vaughan may not have been able to influence the agency hierarchy, but he could and did take action to realign his own staff as a means of underscoring his conviction that parks "must clearly commit resources to the care of the collections." To that end, in 1979 Vaughan made good on a decision to segregate the curatorial function as an independent division under the superintendent. [28]

As the preservation and stabilization work on the ranch buildings continued, evaluations of the stallion barns (HS-14 and 19) revealed serious deterioration caused by moisture percolation. Both of these were located on the low ground behind the ranch house and neither had foundations. They were virtually "slipping into the swamps," as Rodd Wheaton put it. Constructing foundations beneath these barns was slow, laborious work. One barn (HS-14), in fact, had to be moved elsewhere until the stonework could be rebuilt. [29]

Peter Snell, who had returned to his Denver office a year earlier, inspected the work underway during March, 1978. He expressed his satisfaction with the way the park maintenance staff was caring for the structures, but he was not pleased with "the very inconsistent workmanship of small contract jobs which have been done in the last year . . . a great deal of masonry work has been done in freezing weather." It was his opinion that the contractor had taken advantage of a lapse in oversight during the interim period between the Pete Peterson's departure and Tom Vaughan's arrival. This pointed up what Vaughan viewed as an inherent conflict in the division of responsibilities between the regional office, the service center, and the park. At some time prior to his arrival, an agreement had been made that the regional office would have primary responsibility over some buildings, while others would fall under the purview of the Denver Service Center. But, he later related, "I spent the first 18 months there reminding them that they were park buildings," and it would be the park staff that would have to live with the results of their decisions. [30]

Within a month, Rodd Wheaton traveled to the Site to further discuss the issues that Superintendent Vaughan had raised. Key among these was how the Section 106 compliance, required by the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act, was being handled with so many projects underway concurrently. Up to this time, apparently, each project had been submitted separately by the park, or by the regional office, or by the service center. If it was not confusing enough for the Park Service, it certainly was for the Montana State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Therefore, Edrie Vinson, a historian for the Montana Historical Society and Montana SHPO, was invited to attend the meeting held at the ranch in April. It was agreed that much of the maintenance and stabilization work could be classified as "routine" and covered under a memorandum of understanding. Since the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation had already consented to a "no effect" determination for these kinds of projects, Vaughan could simply forward a request for implementation through the regional office. They also reached a consensus that Maintenance Foreman Mike McWright would supervise these projects as the official NPS representative, thus saving the cost of maintaining a central office person in the field for long periods. This arrangement succeeded, for a while, and the stallion barn (HS-19) foundation was completed during 1978. [31]

Rehabilitating the major elements of the structures was one thing, but Vaughan and Wheaton also had to consider the future care of the buildings. The Park Service was obligated to preserve the structures for all time, a very large order for buildings that had never been intended to last for more than perhaps a few decades. One of the measures they devised was to contract with Harrison Goodall, a professor of industrial arts at Montclair State College in New Jersey, to conduct preservation training on-site at Grant-Kohrs Ranch. Wheaton learned that Goodall specialized in the preservation of log structures, a construction material that posed a variety of unique problems. Goodall had developed effective techniques for overcoming many of these and was willing to contract with the Park Service both for repairing certain structures at the ranch and to train employees, who would serve as his crew. In this way, initial preservation treatment could be applied to the buildings and, simultaneously, park staff could be trained to perform stabilization work in years to come. This was first tried in the summer of 1978 with great success. An effective working relationship was thus established that prospered into the mid-1980s. [32]

Additionally, Wheaton recommended that a written guide be prepared to assist the park maintenance staff with their preservation maintenance work. This "cookbook" would provide present and future maintenance staff with specific information to enable them to care for the buildings with a high degree of professionalism and continuity of treatment. A Missoula historical architect, James McDonald, was contracted in 1978 to research and complete a comprehensive guide for sixteen of the ranch buildings during the next year. McWright, who had attained considerable expertise himself by this time, assisted McDonald. Vaughan was lavish in his praise of the completed guide, and of Wheaton who he said had "been unduly modest in estimating its value." Moreover, Vaughan said, "I am concerned with the kind of preservation maintenance guide which becomes standardized Service-wide," suggesting that this one serve as a model. He knew that the Advisory Council placed great faith in the NPS and its determinations of "no effect" on actions involving historic properties. If the guides were prepared carefully and accurately, they could save park management a great deal of time by not having to prepare compliance documents on a routine basis. Too, the preservation guide placed emphasis on personal

inspections of buildings, thereby ensuring that park staff would do this regularly. Wheaton observed that the guide intentionally used a simplified format that was not yet computerized. It would, he claimed, give "Park Managers responsibility for their own resources. The 'other' system [regional office oversight] assumes that they and their staffs are incompetent." [33] Accordingly, the development of a preservation guide placed the double-edged sword of authority, and responsibility, for structural preservation firmly in the hands of the superintendent and the park staff. The guide would be only as effective as the degree to which it was used.

By the latter part of 1978 the most critical work of stabilizing many of the outbuildings had either been accomplished or was well underway. The restoration of key buildings could now be considered. The ranch house (HS-1) itself loomed as the single largest, and most publicly visible, project to be undertaken. The new roof that had been placed on the building in 1973 had done much to abate interior deterioration, while exterior painting and masonry repointing had provided a cosmetic face lift to the old structure. However, complete restoration had been placed "off limits," according to Wheaton, because of the high cost. The time came, nevertheless, to consider how the centerpiece of the ranch, along with associated structures and grounds, could be refurbished to its former glory.

As is common with major restoration projects, the initial price tag was staggering -- over \$2,034,000.00. The house alone would cost \$660,000. It was a massive package proposal that called for the preparation of a historical base map, archeological investigations, and working drawings for all architectural, structural, and mechanical systems for six primary and thirty-seven secondary structures. [34] The cost estimate for restoring the ranch house (HS-1) later escalated to \$755,000.00. [35]

Faced with this major project, Superintendent Vaughan again raised his concerns about disjointed communication among the involved offices, as well as the coordination of this multifaceted work. He felt that the park staff had not been adequately involved in the discussions that were affecting park resources, but he had "decided to live with the arrangement for a while and see how it developed

before I commented." Early in May, 1979 he requested a meeting with the appropriate persons in Denver to discuss the issue. Vaughan insisted that a supervisor from the Denver Service Center be detailed to the site full-time during the upcoming project. McWright had overseen certain stabilization projects during the previous year, which had resulted in higher quality preservation work and adherence to contract specifications, but had also consumed about twenty percent of his time. "You might say the price of historic preservation work is eternal vigilance," Vaughan wrote. "Turn your back and a wall disappears . . . We are learning through the school of hard knocks, but that is a poor way to do project supervision." He went on to say that when the work was eventually completed, "apparent differences in building styles should reflect differences in original building practices, not differences in preservation practices of DSC and RMR [Rocky Mountain Region]. This meeting resulted in an agreement that DSC projects would take precedence over regional projects when it came to scheduling. In those instances when both offices had projects on-going at the park, DSC would supervise in the interest of continuity. [36]



*(click on map for larger image)*

Significantly, this conference established the policy for archeology at the Site. It was decided that in consideration of archeology's inherently destructive nature, field work would only be done when it was required by law and in those instances when the suspected location of a feature could be identified with reasonable certainty beforehand. This partially accounts for the lack of subsequent investigations into privy and dump sites on the ranch for research purposes. The other determining factor was the need to store and curate archeological materials once they were out of the ground. Grant-Kohrs Ranch already had an overwhelming museum collection requiring attention.

Questions also arose with regard to the philosophy adopted for the restoration and interpretation of the various structures, collectively spanning the entire 120-year active life of the ranch. With the day drawing ever closer when the ranch house (HS-1) would be restored, Vaughan began to hear conflicting

opinions about the way that house should be portrayed. The Denver-based architectural firm of Seracuse, Lawlor, and Partners had been contracted by the Denver Service Center in the fall of 1979 to begin the process of gathering data and preparing drawings of existing conditions that would play a vital role in the restoration process. Vaughan saw this as a critical juncture where firm direction was needed. Once again he called a meeting of "the historic preservation maffia," as he dubbed the Denver professionals, in an attempt to define the future direction for restoration at the park, specifically with regard to the Grant-Kohrs Ranch home (HS-1). The work had been proceeding under the assumption that buildings were to be restored selectively, as set forth by Peter Snell in his historic structures report. However, there were those who were of the opinion that cost, feasibility, and effect on historic fabric should be considered as well. [37]

At the meeting of December 3, 1979, the group addressed the broad scope of restoration issues at the ranch. Central to these was the National Park Service management policy that articulated preservation as the preferred alternative for all historic structures, but at the same time made allowances for restoration "when essential for public understanding and appreciation of the historical and cultural associations of the park." That an evolutionary approach would be taken at Grant-Kohrs Ranch was reflected in a 1971 planning directive to restore "historic ranch buildings to the period of 1880-1900, while more modern buildings would be "retained to show historic sequence." The philosophy was later refined and reiterated in the general management plan, which stated that each historic structure would be restored "to its identified period of time." Such an approach would utilize the buildings themselves to reflect the evolution of cattle ranching at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS.

Then there was the question of how to interpret the older buildings whose use had changed through the years. The 1975 Statement for Management had defined an objective to restore the scene "as had existed during the period 1880-1910." The post 1930 buildings were to be adapted for park uses. Likewise, an interim interpretive prospectus, the only one ever prepared for the area, incidentally, narrowed the focus to circa 1890. Since the plan placed heavy emphasis on telling the story of frontier cattle ranching through the principal individuals who lived at the ranch, that naturally equated to the zenith of the Kohrs-Bielenberg era. The ranch house, therefore, should be restored that period, 1886-1910, and more specifically to c. 1900, rather than being preserved in the evolutionary condition in which it had been acquired by the Park Service. Donald A. Purse, in his summary of the meeting, wrote, "The present discussions bring the focus and direction of our ongoing work under this contract into question." It was the opinion of his staff that HS-1, the ranch house, should be restored to the period 1880-1910 and the bunk house (HS-2) to 1930, based on the region's instructions to "restore (not preserve) a late 19th/early 20th century ranch . . . ." Since changes in the contract might incur additional costs, Purse asked the regional director for written concurrence with the DSC position, or "specific redirection before work on . . . the restoration program can resume." [38]

Tom Vaughan read Purse's review with considerable interest, agreeing with him that a policy decision was needed as soon as possible to avoid jeopardizing the project with Seracuse, Lawlor. He perceived two basics that had to be considered in formulating the policy: 1) the actual resources of the park itself, and 2) the purpose for which the park was established. Vaughan pointed out that the resource changes

with time, "sometimes because of management, sometimes in spite of it. It still remains the visible, tangible, point on the earth from which the story begins to be told." The purpose, he said, "was less tangible but less transient." The superintendent was concerned that the passage of time and successive layers of NPS planning documents could very well blur the original intent of Congress through "an interpretation of interpretations." Suggesting that everyone involved make a careful re-examination of the legislation, he cautioned that if recent NPS planning directions did not accurately mirror the first generation of documents "we can very easily wind up going off in directions not in keeping with the purpose of the Site." [39] In a subsequent management review meeting, however, Associate Regional Director Kenneth R. Ashley and Vaughan agreed that it would be difficult to justify the removal of original fabric from a building simply to satisfy an arbitrary date of importance. Sensing that the regional director would uphold this view, they also agreed to keep the distribution of Peter Snell's historic structures report for the ranch house to a minimum, since it called for restoration to a specific period and the incongruity might invite public criticism. [40]

Later during that same visit to Denver, Vaughan attended a summit meeting with Regional Director Glen T. Bean and several other key staff members for the purpose of arriving at a final determination of the restoration policy at the ranch. Vaughan later recalled that he was satisfied with the direction of the meeting, until a question arose about the proper treatment for the screen porch on the ranch house. When Bean learned that this was a very late addition to the house, he remarked, "That's within my lifetime! That can't be historic." "I knew I was dead," Vaughan remembered with some amusement. [41] He was right, figuratively speaking. Bean declared that the ranch house was to be restored to the period 1880-1910. Everyone involved agreed that "original fabric should be retained whenever possible either as visible finish or as an in situ historic finish record beneath new finish of the same type." This resulted in some interiors being restored to c. 1920, and others to as late as 1945. Similar decisions for the other buildings were to "be made individually . . . based on their role as outlined in the Act of 1972," i. e., each building would represent its most active period, regardless of those adjacent to it. In announcing his verdict, Bean upheld the principles contained in the various resource management plans and re-emphasized that Grant-Kohrs Ranch had been set aside to both preserve it and to provide the public with an understanding its national values relating to the frontier cattle era. While admitting that he had no intention of denigrating the importance of later additions to the buildings, he added that "no one resource can be all things to all people at any one time..." He was convinced that the "earlier decision that the Ranch house should represent the Kohrs-Bielenberg era to be a sound one, both from the standpoint of preservation and interpretation." The Warren buildings east of the railroads, when acquired, would serve as evidence of the modern ranching era. [42]

At last, there was to be continuity of purpose and treatment for the historic structures. The ranch house would be an accurate representation of its appearance in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Or would it? There was that shingle roof on the rear wing. Everyone in the park, the regional office, and the service center knew it was historically incorrect. But what to do about it. "This is one of the last epistles on Pkg. #113 [comprehensive restoration] I will write as Superintendent," Vaughan stated in a memo just prior to his departure. "Regional Director Bean's December 1979 decision to defer replacement of this roof until it needs it effectively removes the actual re-roofing from the scope [of work]. Plans can be

made, and materials can be purchased, but we'll let the existing roof serve some more useful years." [43]

This may have made sense from a practical point of view, but the architects at DSC still were chafed at having been challenged over the question of restoration. Vaughan was no sooner out the gate and on his way to a new assignment at Harpers Ferry Center when a staff person at DSC re-opened the issue. [44] Robert J. Shelley, an assistant manager at the center, informed the newly installed regional director, Lorraine Mintzmyer, that DSC had been instructed "to restore the ranch to the determined historic period." This decision, he reminded her, was in complete concert with all of the park's planning documents. However, "it is the opinion of the outgoing area superintendent and the regional historical architect [Wheaton] that, at seven years of age, the wood shingle roof -- historically and visually inappropriate as it admittedly is -- represents too great a financial investment . . . to discard so early in its useful life." Shelley went on to say that his architects, especially Peter Snell, objected to the non-historic shingles and wanted to see them stripped and replaced with the proper standing-seam metal roofing. [45] Despite Shelley's cogent argument that it would be more economical to replace the roof while a skilled crew was on-site, the Regional Office remained convinced that it would be more cost effective to defer it for fifteen or twenty years. The shingle roof remains intact in 1997.

It appeared highly unlikely to Rodd Wheaton that enough lump sum funding would be forthcoming anytime soon to underwrite the Site's complete restoration in a single stroke. So, he and the park staff worked together to break down the comprehensive package into separate smaller ones for the electrical and security systems, general restoration of the ranch house (HS-1) and the bunk house (HS-2), and landscape restoration. [46] Wheaton used this funding strategy successfully to stabilize or restore structures at the Grant-Kohrs Ranch since his arrival in the Rocky Mountain Regional Office in 1974. Each year he reprogrammed an average of approximately \$40,000.00 in unobligated year-end funds, and awarded contracts in the following year. The smaller-size projects could either be accomplished for this amount, or the work could be phased in increments from one year to the next. [47]

With the once-endangered stallion barns both secure, Wheaton turned his attention to other structures that previously had taken lower priorities on his list. His dedication to Grant-Kohrs Ranch was demonstrated in a relentless effort to preserve all of the structures at the Site. During the next two years Wheaton, still working closely with preservationist Harrison Goodall, managed to reduce the backlog of work by several projects. Goodall returned to the Site in the summer of 1980. In addition to the park staffs efforts to rehabilitate the brooding house and the chicken house that year, Goodall completed the stabilization of the ice house. The following year he completely dismantled the derelict oxen barn, which had been leaning over against the adjacent draft horse barn. This allowed the site to be regraded and a new foundation laid before the barn (HS-7) was rebuilt. That same summer the machine shed and one of the cow sheds were rehabilitated structurally and re-roofed by the park maintenance staff. In 1982 the program rolled on to see work completed on the Leeds-Lyon Barn. Smaller structures, including the cattle scale and the beef hoist, also were restored. [48]

In 1983 Congress enacted the Park Restoration and Improvement Program [PRIP], which made large sums of money available to fund the huge backlog of facilities deficiencies throughout the National Park

System. This windfall benefited Grant-Kohrs Ranch by making the general restoration of the Site, including the ranch house (HS-1), a reality. Besides the work on the ranch house, Superintendent Jim Taylor used PRIP funding to contract Goodall to carry out a major stabilization project on the draft horse barn to bring it up to standard. This involved repairing the foundation, replacing the sill logs, rehabilitating the roof support structure, and installing new flooring and joists in the north portion. In addition to the PRIP funding, special Jobs Bill funding was made available to the Site. With this money, the park repaired four feed racks, replaced the board-and-batten roof on the Bielenberg Barn, and rehabilitated three stock shelters. By the mid-1980s, the old ranch was making a dramatic comeback. [49]

Once the direction was established for the restoration of the ranch house (HS-1) early in 1980, attention shifted to the work on the interior of the house. Wheaton, accompanied by Jim McDonald, traveled to New York City in April 1980 to scout the wallpaper and fabric districts in an effort to locate suitable materials for the restoration. It was fortuitous that excellent original material samples had been retrieved from the house, for instance paint and paper samples from the walls and woodwork. Remnants of the original sitting room carpet were found in the second floor hallway. At some time the carpet had been moved there when it was no longer suitable for the family residence. Wheaton's mission nevertheless proved to be a difficult one. He found that those few companies having the capability of producing the needed materials were not interested in gearing up to make the relatively small quantities needed for one house. Wheaton eventually located both carpet and suitable wall and border papers, which had to be special ordered at high prices; the sitting room border paper, for example, costing \$44.00 per foot. At that, some of the interior finishes still were not correct. To his astonishment, Wheaton discovered much too late that Peter Snell, who had been researching and selecting the paint schemes, was colorblind! Some of the rooms have since been repainted to the correct shades. [50]

At the same time that the interior restoration of the ranch house (HS-1) was underway, Dr. Nicholas L. Scratish, a DSC historian, was diligently preparing the formal Historic Furnishing Plan for the house. This important document would serve as the permanent guide for interpreting the Kohrs and Bielenberg era through the interior room settings. Early in 1982 Superintendent Taylor and his staff negotiated a large donation of objects from Patricia Nell Warren, Con's daughter. The gift included art objects, silver-plate, china, crystal glassware, linens, a few pieces of furniture, and a number of personal items that had belonged to her great-grandparents. These, along with the Hershey acquisition, were especially timely because much of this material could be incorporated into the final exhibit. [51]



Refurnished rooms in the ranch house.

*(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, photo by Richard Frear)*

As sometimes happens when family members donate museum objects, Pat Warren became concerned when she heard a rumor that Scratish recommended excluding items that she had understood would be displayed in the ranch house. In June 1982 she wrote a vitriolic letter to Scratish, with copies to Regional Director Mintzmyer and Superintendent Taylor. In her tome to Scratish, Warren blasted him for what she and her father perceived as faulty research providing "no factual basis whatever for removing the objects in question to storage . . . If the recommendations in your study are put into effect at GRKO," she continued, "the picture of that era will be falsified to that degree, and the American public will be defrauded . . . . The place never had a 'museum-like' atmosphere." She likewise took issue with his focus on the 1890-1900 time period, while de-emphasizing earlier and later eras. Perhaps the true source of her anger was revealed when she scolded Scratish that he was obviously "not fully aware of the proper weight that ought to be given to my father's information. So, you frequently reject his information in favor of that coming from other people whose observations are less reliable." [52]



Refurnished rooms in the ranch house.

*(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, photo by Richard Frear)*

Wheaton, who was better acquainted with Patricia Warren than perhaps any other NPS person, sent her an informal response to pave the way for Regional Director Mintzmyer's letter to follow. In this, he explained that "most of the rooms will remain much as they are," citing the decision to retain the parlor wallpaper dating c. 1910. "As you can see," Wheaton wrote, "there are no hard and fast rules for interpretation, beyond giving special consideration for the most active period of use by the Kohrs and John Bielenberg and for providing the most suitable setting for the fabulous collection of period furnishings." [53] A few days later Mintzmyer informed the Warrens that Scratish's focus on the years 1890-1910 was anything but arbitrary, because the NPS had previously made this determination and Scratish was simply following the direction thus established. The regional director conceded, however, that this "has been somewhat more freely interpreted by the park and Regional Office. As a consequence, most of the first floor rooms will be preserved rather than restored." Mintzmyer concluded by assuring the Warrens that their concerns would be considered and, if necessary, addressed in an addendum to the furnishings study. [54]

An angry Nick Scratish, insulted and dissatisfied with the decorous tone of the regional director's letter, took the liberty of crafting a frank personal retort to Pat Warren. Scratish informed her in no uncertain terms that he not only stood by his research, but that he had indeed attempted to interview her father relative to the furnishings. After one brief discussion at a local restaurant, Con Warren demonstrated the stubborn side of his personality shown on earlier occasions. According to Scratish, he approached Con

in his yard one day with more questions, but Con rebuffed him with the curt comment that "he had already said everything he considered worth saying. The message was clear." Scratish attributed Warren's mood to a poor working relationship with the park. "In retrospect," Scratish remarked, "the reference can best be described as a diplomatic under-statement. In fact, no spirit of cooperation existed." He closed his letter by explaining that many of his decisions with regard to the furnishings had been based on information gained from Mrs. Bache, whose memories antedated Con's by several years. Not once in your discussion of [various rooms] do you produce a shred of documentary evidence," Scratish wrote. "Your disagreements with my recommendations are based upon the way you think the ranch house should look for visitors . . . We operate with different principles." [55]

It is difficult to say just what factors may have contributed to the Warren outburst over the furnishings plan, but it seems reasonable to assume that it may have stemmed in part from Pat Warren's bruised ego and Con's dissatisfaction with the soured land deal with the NPS. It also was influenced by the close relationship that Wheaton had formed with Mrs. Hershey and Mrs. Bache, neither of whom had been on favorable terms with Con for many years. [56]

Plans for the complete restoration of the ranch house (HS-1) moved forward, but there was only so much that could be done to the interior until a reliable heating system was installed to stabilize the environment within the building. A key factor in the structure's remarkable state of preservation from the 1940s to the early 1970s was the slow temperature fluctuations from season to season while it was unoccupied. However, the re-introduction of heat into the building with the old coal furnace, with sometimes rapid increases during times when employees were working there, caused the plaster and paints, as well as the furnishings, to deteriorate. To prevent any more ceiling plaster from separating from the lath, James McDonald was contracted to devise a plan for correcting the problem. The park maintenance staff subsequently removed the flooring from the second story and, once access had been gained to the ceiling from the upper side, injected an acrylic adhesive into holes drilled through the lath into the plaster. [57]

Major line-item funding was then approved for fiscal year 1984 to complete work on the ranch house. This involved the replacement of the electrical system, including all of the wiring throughout the structure, and installation of security and fire suppression systems. A dry sprinkler system was designed for the Grant portion of the house and throughout the entire attic. The NPS initially considered a halon system, but questions arose about safety features to prevent accidental discharge, as well as its potential effectiveness were a fire to occur. The concept was later dropped from the project. Four new gas furnace units, incorporating humidifiers, would replace the original coal-fired heating system, although the old furnace would be retained to serve as an air exchange. An airtight environment was created by installing interior storm plexiglass on the windows and covering the ceilings of the second floor area of the Grant section with plastic sheeting. The contract was let to the Sharbono Construction firm in Helena, Montana. [58]

It had occurred to Superintendent Jim Taylor and his curatorial staff that work of such extent and magnitude would require the contractor's personnel to access virtually every part of the ranch house.

This posed a double threat of both theft and accidental damage to the furnishings. Taylor made a prudent decision to remove everything and place it in temporary storage until the project was completed.

It was not easy to find suitable storage locally, yet it was necessary for the curatorial staff to continue monitoring and maintaining the collection. Eventually, Taylor successfully negotiated with St. Mary's Catholic School in Deer Lodge to lease two classrooms in the vacant building for this purpose. The park, with the assistance of Rodd Wheaton, also contracted a local firm to install security alarms in these rooms to guard against intrusion and fire. The "great move" started in the fall of 1983 when the curatorial staff began carefully packing, labeling, and inventorying all of the contents of the ranch house (HS-1). Taylor involved the Deer Lodge community by requesting the donation of Styrofoam packing, and the townspeople responded by contributing half the enormous quantity needed. Once the packing phase was completed, most of the park staff helped transfer the collection to the former school. Jim Taylor remembered that it required over twenty 24-foot truckloads to accomplish the job. He would later recall this project with a great deal of fondness for the team spirit and unity of purpose it engendered among the staff. [59]

The HS-1 renovation project began soon after the beginning of the fiscal year, in October 1983. The mechanical and electrical portion kept workmen crawling over, under, and through the old house for nearly nine months. When they finished, however, the house was ready for the last phase of what had been a very protracted project. Regional Historical Architect Wheaton located a firm in Denver, the Grammar of Ornament Company, that possessed the necessary skills to finish the interior prior to replacing the furnishings. Their efforts resulted in the restoration of three rooms, including the application of the reproduction ceiling, wall, and cove papers that Wheaton had arranged to have made in New York. The contractor finished the work in June 1984, and the following month the furnishings were returned to the house to be placed in their final arrangement according to Snell's plan and Wheaton's familiarity with Victorian interiors and customs. Nick Scratish actually directed the placement of the furnishings.

The accomplishment was a milestone. Fourteen years after the acquisition of the ranch, and ten years after Pete Peterson and Paul Gordon had wintered in its frigid basement, the structure once again reflected Augusta Kohrs's astute good taste, and the days when Con Kohrs and John Bielenberg were among the most noted cattle kings in the Northwest.

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## Administrative History

### Chapter Five

## PRESERVING THE HOME PLACE: CULTURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued)

Superintendent Tom Vaughan had taken a major step to improve museum collections care when he segregated curation from interpretation back in 1979. Eight years later, Jim Taylor built upon Vaughan's initiative to professionalize the job when he established the higher-graded position of curator. Randi S. Bry, who had been the museum technician at the Site since 1977, was the first staff member to work under this new structure.

The lack of proper museum facilities hindered the operation. There was virtually no place to perform conservation work or to store the collections, other than in the historic buildings themselves. Faced with the responsibility for caring for a priceless collection, Vaughan elected to abandon use of the seasonal ranger apartment on the second floor of HS-1. These rooms were given over to Bry to convert into use as curatorial offices, work rooms, and storage. It was a stopgap measure, to be sure, but it was better than nothing. As time passed, Bry and her seasonal assistants were able to arrange much of the extra furniture in the second floor rooms and to procure shelving and cabinetry for the organization of a multitude of smaller items. There was no choice but to continue to store objects less vulnerable to environmental extremes in several of the outbuildings, including the garage/blacksmith shop (HS-3), ice house (HS-5), horse barn (HS-11), machine shed (HS-12), cow shed (HS-13), granary (HS-18), and the stallion barn (HS-19). [61]



Maintenance Foreman Mike McWright and Curator Randi Bry  
in curatorial workshop, 1983.

*(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

Another of Bry's priorities was to attempt to reduce the enormous backlog of cataloging. She and her small staff of one permanent and one seasonal had their hands full trying to maintain the furnishings exhibits, improve storage, and monitor environmental conditions. She devoted a significant amount of her own time to correcting and updating the accession files, which was vital to establishing proof of ownership. This left little time for the labor-intensive job of cataloging the thousands of objects.

Vaughan, whose heart was close to museum work, can be credited with convincing the regional office to approve special funds for contract cataloging and the preservation of eight horse-drawn vehicles in 1979 and 1980. [62]

In subsequent years, a meticulous Bry utilized the Youth Conservation Corps program to add much-needed extra hands to her operation. In the summer of 1982 the park employed ten local youths, most of whom worked with the collections to type catalog cards, clean the storage areas, and tag items. They also helped the professionals to clean and wax a hundred pieces of furniture. [63]

The fall of 1983 and much of the summer of 1984 were devoted to coordinating and executing the removal of all of the exhibited and stored material from the ranch house (HS-1) and placing it in an off-site facility until the renovation of the ranch house was completed. Since there was no place for the curators themselves to go in the interim, they and their supplies had to be "crammed into the downtown

office" for nearly a year. [64]

In the aftermath of the HS-1 restoration, the museum offices and storage areas were re-established on both the second floor and in the basement of the house. The basement, in fact, had been used for museum storage since the park's earliest days, but the installation of the furnaces created a more stable environment for this purpose. The space was re-arranged and fitted with both standard metal and visible storage cabinets. [65]

A new NPS computerized cataloging system also was implemented in 1984, and the curators completed over 300 worksheets. This work continued during successive years and at the time of this writing the records are still divided between the former system and the Automated National Catalog System (ANCS). Of the 16,000 records entered in ANCS, 3,000 are completed to the registration level only.

The late 1980s witnessed two curatorial events that further improved professional guidance for the collections. The first of these was a collections management report.

Funding was approved in 1989 for the preparation of this survey by an outside contractor, the Rocky Mountain Conservation Center in Denver, Colorado. This report, which noted the type of storage used, exhibit methods, and an evaluation of environmental conditions, laid the groundwork for a collections management plan the following year. This more detailed report documented records, security measures, and environment. It concluded with recommendations for all aspects of the museum operation, including staffing, storage, exhibits, records and funding. By this time, the collection that had previously been estimated at 10,000 objects, had increased to some 18,000 - 20,000 items. [66]

In the aftermath of Con Warren's death in 1993, the Warren children offered to donate the remaining photos, books, and records that related to the ranch. However, they elected to sell at auction the rest of the material in Con's estate. While the park staff regretted the public sale of so much historically significant material, the Warrens gave the NPS an option to purchase items at the appraised value, prior to the auction. Working from a list of priorities identified by the staff, the park was able to purchase, for a total of \$10,000.00, a few dozen additional items that were particularly important to site interpretation. The park gave highest consideration to those items that could be exhibited immediately in the ranch house (HS-1), along with pieces needed to complete sets already in the park collection and items directly related to the ranching operations. Just prior to the auction, the Rocky Mountain Regional Office made available an additional \$10,000.00 to purchase items at bid. The family also allowed the curators to photograph the interior of the Warren residence prior to any disturbance of the contents. Should there be a need to re-furnish the home at some future date, these photos and the furnishings purchased from the estate will enable it to be accomplished with a high degree of accuracy. [67]

Con Warren's passing resulted in an improvement in the curatorial facilities for the park. The land transaction executed with Warren in 1988 provided that his house would become government property upon his death. Numerous earlier planning documents earmarked the house for occupancy by park staff to provide an on-site presence and after hours security, but there were concerns that an employee

residence at that high visible location would adversely impact the scene. Also arguing against the idea was the projected high rental cost for so large a house. The need for curatorial space was deemed to be more critical, so Superintendent Anthony J. Schetzle elected to move the curator and her staff into the house temporarily in 1995. [68] Occupancy of this building has permitted the curatorial staff to greatly improve the organization, accountability, and access to the archival collections. This arrangement likely will continue until such time as an approved new facility is constructed near the present site of the visitor parking lot. Bid-ready plans and specifications have been prepared and await line item funding in Fiscal Year 1999.

The use of the Warren house and other buildings acquired at the same time led to a decision to give priority consideration to the adaptive use of existing historic buildings, rather than constructing new ones. Superintendent Schetzle set the tone of his administration by reintegrating that policy in 1994 soon after his arrival at the park. Cultural resources management, he said, "will emphasize the preservation and use of historic structures and grounds through preservation maintenance, rehabilitation, restoration, and adaptive use." [69] Accordingly, the proposal for adapting the red barn (HS-64) as a visitor center and park headquarters remains the preferred alternative. However, the large space and highly specialized requirements of the curatorial operation warranted a new building designed for the purpose and largely dedicated to that function.

The cultural resources aspect at Grant-Kohrs Ranch, simply by virtue of the nature of the resource, has dominated the attention of each successive superintendent to a greater or lesser extent. Each manager has faced challenges unique to his particular watch over the area. Through their efforts and those of their staffs, many of the deficiencies faced in the beginning have been overcome. Equal to the curatorial needs, which have been largely corrected, or will be, is the mandate to provide continual vigilance and preservation maintenance for the structural components at the Site. Fulfilling the NPS creed "to protect and preserve" will continue to be the watchwords guiding and challenging the management of Grant-Kohrs Ranch.

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Six: CATTLE OR COOK STOVES: INTERPRETATION

When Superintendent Richard Peterson and his historian, Paul R. Gordon, arrived on the scene in August 1974, there was much to be done before the story of Grant-Kohrs Ranch could be conveyed to the public. The park was at the bottom of the proverbial barrel, with nowhere to go but up. It needed everything.

While Peterson went to work on the issue of providing a visitor entrance and parking area, Gordon attempted to bring some semblance of order to the museum collections and began conducting basic research on the Kohrs family. Gordon's upbringing on a New Mexico ranch, coupled with a master's degree in history, particularly suited him to be the park's first chief interpreter. His efforts focused initially on setting up working files that would form the groundwork for site interpretation. Conrad Warren retained ownership of the Kohrs and Bielenberg ranch records, but had agreed to allow the NPS to access them and to have them microfilmed. When Historian Edwin Bearss perused the collection back in 1970, he had proclaimed it to be "priceless in interpreting the story of ranching on the high plains to the public." [1] However, using the collection was not as easy as anticipated. According to Gordon, Warren had "a lot of stuff in his possession and he would sort of dole it out . . . in little bits." [2] Nevertheless, Warren produced a wealth of historical material over time, while Gordon and two seasonal rangers sleuthed out additional manuscript collections relating to Kohrs at the Montana Historical Society archives in Helena, as well as some deposited at the William K. Kohrs Library in Deer Lodge.

A planning directive issued late in 1974 recognized that more comprehensive historical research was necessary to "document the complete history of Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site" within regional and national contexts. Such a study would be integral to defining both the resource itself and interpretive themes for the Site. A Denver Service Center historian, John Albright, was selected to undertake this project the following year. He and Gordon worked together closely on the history component, while architect Peter Snell contributed his expertise to develop the historic structures section. Gordon's two seasonal interpreters, having no visitors to serve as yet, were dispatched to various newspaper morgues around the state to search for related material that Albright could incorporate into the report. [3] The landmark study, characterized by Superintendent Richard R. Peterson as "one of the finest studies we have ever seen," was released late in 1977. [4] Despite Albright's recommendations for more specialized

research and the preparation of a comprehensive history of the ranch, his report remains as one of the principal source of historical data concerning the ranch.

The Site's first historian, like most park historians, was primarily responsible for laying the groundwork for a visitor service's program, not for practicing history. At that time, a park opening was anticipated in the summer 1975, allowing only a short time for the park staff to prepare for it. One of the first visitor needs Gordon identified was an informational brochure that would provide basic orientation to the Site. That required money, and the park had none. He quickly turned to the Yellowstone Library and Museum Association, one of many such private, non-profit organizations that exist to assist the National Park Service. Since Yellowstone National Park had been shepherding the new park from its beginnings, the association agreed to adopt Grant-Kohrs Ranch as an affiliated outlet. This benefited the new park by immediately making available a modest fund to establish a library for the Site, and \$600.00 for printing brochures. [5]

What had seemed like a straightforward task, turned out as one of those instances when there were too many cooks in the kitchen. A Harpers Ferry Center contractor had, in fact, already begun drafting a text for the folder, but the effort ran aground. After delays of several months, Gordon elected instead to work with the interpretive staff at the Rocky Mountain Regional Office. It was well that the dedication of the park was delayed because the folder, which underwent many draft revisions, was not completed until 1976. Pete Peterson nevertheless was pleased with the final product, recording in his annual report that it had "proven to do the job intended; an astounding feature of any park folder." [6]

Meantime, the park was in the process of adapting two old structures from Conrad Kohrs old Upper Ranch for use as a visitor contact station and public rest rooms. By the fall of 1975 these buildings had been trucked in and placed in the southeast corner of the Site near the highway. The parking lot and walkways were also built, including a trail to the boundaries of the railroad right-of-way.

This became the sticking point, however. Peterson spent the better part of two years trying to coerce the two railroad companies involved to make good on their agreements to jointly construct pedestrian underpasses that would allow visitors to safely access the historic zone of the ranch. As the

negotiations dragged on and the underpass went uncompleted until spring 1977, Peterson came under fire from the Deer Lodge Chamber of Commerce and state politicians to get the place open. This "bone of contention" had placed public relations "in a shambles," Peterson reported. In order to appease the townspeople to a degree, Peterson and Gordon devised a policy to provide guided tours of the site, on special request, if staff members were available to do so. This plan allowed 700 persons to see the ranch during 1975, a figure that jumped to 2,000 the next year. These were impressive figures for a small park that was not officially open. [7]

Gordon and his mostly seasonal staff pursued a bare-bones operation, yet made significant strides in preparing the area for its limited initial visitation, and the greater surge that was expected after the gates were open on a regular basis. Gordon himself researched and drafted bulletins about the ranch and its principal characters to provide easily accessed, consistent information to the interpreters. His staff also arranged an "imposing display" of horse-drawn vehicles, complete with labels, in the recently re-roofed thoroughbred barn (HS-15). [8] Gordon would later recall the sense of satisfaction he derived from helping the contractor to design the first exhibits, consisting primarily of photographs and text, for the visitor contact station. He also coordinated a project to produce three waysides along the trail telling of the importance of grass, as well as the winter of 1886 that forever changed the range cattle industry. [9]



Maintenance Foreman Mike McWright and Park Ranger Mick Holm installing exhibits, c. 1976.  
(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

These basic facilities were standard components of any new historic site, but Grant-Kohrs Ranch was to be a different sort of park. It had been proposed at a time when the interpretive concept of "living history" was rapidly gaining momentum in the museum world, and in the National Park System historic sites. As early as the 1950s, the dean of NPS interpretation, Freeman Tilden, had challenged park interpreters to animate their historic sites through the use of people, appropriate livestock, and the

trappings of the era represented. The general public loved it, and more important, they could learn from it. Beyond the visual impressions created by costumed interpreters, living history could add dimensions of authentic sounds and smells and it could demonstrate how things were done. [10]

When Merrill J. Mattes first visited Grant-Kohrs Ranch in 1967 there was already a growing number of so-called living farms around the country. Mattes at that time was a senior historian at the San Francisco Service Center. In response to Conrad Warren's urgings, he and another staff member were assigned to evaluate the ranch resource and to develop a brief analysis of alternatives that might be considered for its preservation and interpretation. Mattes noted that, "The range cattle industry in its frontier aspects, has great popular appeal as attested to by the extent to which the cowboy theme has preempted the literature and entertainment fields. Paradoxically, this theme is not correspondingly well represented in the field of historic site conservation." Grant-Kohrs, Mattes noted, was one of eight rare examples of old-time cattle ranches that had been identified as qualifying for National Historic Landmark status. [11]

He concluded that there were two possible alternatives for the ranch -- the older buildings west of the tracks could be acquired and developed simply as a museum, or a larger area of the bottom lands and the Warren structures could be purchased to present "a western ranch operation, with emphasis on modern as well as historic methods." His report suggested that because Warren had "preserved several of the early historic structures as well as later structures," and the complex as a whole could tell "a story of the evolution of ranching operations." Mattes pointed out that the first alternative would present problems with trying to separate historic features from the working part of the ranch. It would be simpler and more effective, he thought, to "assume responsibility for the ranch itself, complete." In his view, it would be a mistake to staff such a ranch with government employees, rather "that a working rancher would operate as a concessionaire . . . providing that his operations would be accessible to the public . . . and subject to Service interpretation." [12]

Mattes thus inspired the basic concept that would influence the long-term development and interpretation Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. Discussions during the legislative hearings for the Site in 1972 directly reflected his thinking for the potential of the ranch. Congressman Saylor, for instance, stated that the intention was to restore the ranch "to a condition to accept visitors into an operating cattle ranch scene." [13] A House of Representatives report "anticipated that the Grant-Kohrs Ranch will be a living memorial to the pioneers of the West, and that a concentrated effort will be made to preserve and recreate the historic ranch scene of the 1880-1900 period . . . The significance . . . is its potential contribution to public understanding . . . of the contributions of such cattle operations to life on the frontier." Although the final language of the enabling legislation was less specific, there could be no doubt that Congress meant this to be a living history ranch. As such, it would be, "the first unit of the National Park System to be devoted primarily to the role of the cattleman and cowboy in American history." [14]

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Six: CATTLE OR COOK STOVES: INTERPRETATION (continued)

When the NPS began preparing a master plan for the Site in 1972, not long before Congress was to consider legislation, the team found much of its guidance in the legislative support materials. [15] In considering how the site would be interpreted, the plan concluded that, "The primary objective of the interpretive program at the Grant-Kohrs Ranch will be to recreate the historic mood and way of life that characterized the operation of this early cattle ranch." It would be a mistake, the team calculated, ". . . to present a complex chronology of the ranch [that] . . . would only burden the visitor with facts he would soon forget . . ." Better, they thought, to "surround the visitor with a carefully contrived montage of authentic surroundings, sketches, anecdotes, and well-selected information that will lead, not just to knowledge, but to empathy as well." To do this, "the concept of living history exhibits must be explored." The master plan strongly recommended that an interpretive prospectus, a plan outlining themes, objectives, and appropriate media, be prepared as soon as possible. However, it was evident that living history was to be an integral part of the operation; accordingly it was included among the initial management objectives. [16]

With a clear mandate to make the ranch a "living history exhibit," Peterson and Gordon took the position that a ranch was not a ranch without livestock. They soon located a pair of Belgian draft horses that were available for transfer from Lyndon B. Johnson National Historic Site in central Texas. Belgian horses had been used extensively on the ranch, as attested by Con Warren's sale of six train car loads of them at the time he mechanized his operation. It would be a long haul from Texas to Montana, but the team was there for the taking, and Grant-Kohrs Ranch was not in a position to be selective. This first pair of horses, "Dansher" and "Prancer," was delivered to the ranch by a local rancher in January 1975. [17]

That summer Ranger Ed Griggs, who had been at the ranch as caretaker for some time, was given the mission of bringing a second pair of Belgians to their new home in Montana. The trip from LBJ turned eventful when Griggs paused at a roadside rest area in west Texas to allow the horses to stretch their legs. He no sooner removed them from the trailer when one animal bolted away. Fortunately, he was able to hold the other, while he patiently waited for the miscreant to eventually return of his own accord. Farther down the road near Cortez, Colorado the government truck broke down. Griggs was stalled again, with two very large horses on his hands. He called Gordon for advice. As luck would have it,

Gordon had a relative nearby, who rescued Griggs and pastured the horses at his farm until the vehicle could be repaired at nearby Mesa Verde National Park.

The pair of bronze Belgians finally arrived at Deer Lodge to great fanfare in mid August. Not long after their arrival, the Belgians stampeded in harness, hooked a wagon wheel on the corner of the stallion barn (HS-19), breaking off both the wheel and the post. "Those damned horses . . . caused more problems than they were ever worth," Gordon related in a 1996 interview. [18] A living history ranch sounded well in theory, but the practical aspects could be another matter entirely.



Ed Griggs and Mick Holm driving team of Belgians in harness, c. 1976.  
(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

Mattes's idea of placing the ranching operation in the hands of a concessionaire did not come to fruition in exactly that way, but he certainly was on the right track in recommending that a "working rancher" be employed to carry out those duties. It may have been feared that a concession-operated ranch would not have provided the Park Service with adequate control over the interpretive aspect and that trying enforce a contract would have been less cost effective than simply hiring an experienced rancher. In any event, a concessions contract for the entire ranching function was never seriously considered. A local Montana man, Pete Cartwright, was hired to fill the rancher position created in 1975. That Cartwright was a friend and contemporary of Con Warren undoubtedly benefited the park's working relationship with Warren. From that point forward, decisions affecting the ranching function would be made by the rancher in concert with the superintendent. [19]

With Cartwright on board, the interpretive staff moved to increase the types and numbers of livestock on the Site. By the close of 1977, Superintendent Tom Vaughan could report that the inventory included "chickens, shorthorns, Herefords, Belgians, and saddle stock on hand, plus cats for rats." [20] Through succeeding years, bulls were acquired to establish a small cattle breeding program. Oddly enough, ranching functions demonstrated at the Site have been of a generic 1930s nature, with no particular attempt made to pattern the operation after either the Kohrs or Warren practices. In recent years Herefords have been crossbred with shorthorns, and an occasional longhorn, to reflect something of the Kohrs and Bielenberg mixed-bred cattle. The herd has been maintained at a few dozen head, the cows and calves being sold at commercial auction in the fall of each year. [21]

Draft and saddle horses became an integral part of the program. At various times the draft teams were used to draw wagons for transporting maintenance materials wherever needed around the Site. Sometimes in winter they pulled a bob sled used for hauling hay to the cattle. On other occasions the horses were put to use for plowing the garden, harrowing meadows, planting, and demonstrating an overshot stacker in the Stuart field. No vehicles or machinery from the collections were used for demonstration purposes; these were acquired from other sources by purchase or donation. [22] Haying on the park lands was always done by leasing or contract, usually on a share basis, with the park retaining a sufficient supply to meet its needs and the rest sold. Proceeds from the living history operation, including sales of cattle, hay, and produce, were deposited in a special account and used to support the program from one year to the next. [23]



Pete Cartwright using team for hauling materials.

*(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, photo by Richard Frear)*

The hard work that Peterson and Gordon devoted to the park paid off during the summer 1977 when it was possible, finally, to schedule a formal dedication ceremony. Ironically, Paul Gordon received an offer to transfer to Big Horn Canyon National Recreation Area as chief interpreter just as planning started. Peterson chided him, "Here it's time for you to really start earning your money, so you're leaving." Gordon's successor, Michele "Micki" Farmer, was selected in record time in view of the coming dedication and the park's formal opening to the public. [24]

The ceremony was slated to be held on the morning of July 16, 1977. Superintendent Peterson, fittingly, presided as master of ceremonies for a program that featured a speech by Montana Governor Thomas Judge and remarks by both Con Warren and his daughter, Patricia Nell Warren. Besides the superintendents of neighboring Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, both Vern Hennesay, first administrator for the Site, and Paul Gordon were in attendance. Some 1,000 persons showed up, overflowing the available seating set up on the front lawn of the ranch house, to witness the program. The remainder of the day was filled with a chuck wagon dinner, guided tours of the house and grounds, and living history demonstrations. [25]

Peterson saw to it that surviving members of both the Kohrs and Bielenberg families were invited to attend the festivities. After the dedication, Regional Historical Architect Rodd Wheaton became acquainted with key family members during the course of his furnishings research, discovering in the process that old family conflicts had precluded the segments from speaking to each other for many years. Relatives from both sides traveled from all over the country and, surprisingly enough, rediscovered that they had much in common. Wheaton later remarked that they all got along extremely well and apparently had forgotten all about their former differences. That in itself made the event a singular success. [26]

Wheaton himself showed up a few days prior to the dedication to put last minute touches on the interior of the ranch house. Pat Warren was there too. He recalled in a later interview that they "fluffed up" the house and rearranged some of the furniture the way Wheaton thought it ought to be, "which is the way some of it still is." They cut fresh flowers, including Augusta Kohrs's favorite, roses, and placed them throughout the house on the morning of the ceremony. It was a fabulous display in both sight and aroma. The Kohrs and Bielenberg descendants were so awed by the restoration of the house that they began to express their willingness to donate antiques still in their possession. This response was an unanticipated benefit for the park. [27]

It was appropriate that "Pete" Peterson was able to see the fulfillment of his goal of developing the park to a level that it could open to visitation. On this high-note, he left Grant-Kohrs Ranch the next month to take an assignment in Washington, D. C. Tom Vaughan, who replaced Peterson later that fall, noted that, "the opening and dedication marks a distinct and significant turning point . . . we are now open to all." [28]

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Six: CATTLE OR COOK STOVES: INTERPRETATION (continued)

Virtually overnight, the area experienced new interpretive challenges in the transition from controlled group access to an intermittent flow of visitation within regular hours. Micki Farmer recognized that the quality of some programs, especially the organization of the house tours, was not what it should be. She sought to make adjustments through trial-and-error experimentation and training. She also worked out visitor flow patterns and, to ensure uniformity of historical information, she and the interpretive staff began compiling a source book of data on historical figures, ranching operations, and Kohrs-Bielenberg family stories. Shortly before the dedication, she and Superintendent Peterson requested the regional chief of interpretation, Wes Wolfe, to conduct a visitor services workshop on-site for the staff. Wolfe considered this "a piece of cake," since several employees had come from ranching backgrounds.

Wolfe may have assumed too much because he quickly saw that the primary interpretive focus was on the elaborately furnished ranch house, rather than on the ranching industry that enabled Kohrs to own such a home. Wolfe stressed that every effort should be made to "impart to visitors an understanding of the cattle industry, before they go to the ranch." After seeing the operation, he expressed concern that, "If the Ranch House becomes a furniture tour and runs away with the show . . . we aren't living up to our legislative responsibility." In comparing the house to something "between a Turkish whore house and a mafia-styled funeral emporium," Wolfe prevailed upon the staff to remove the "gilded stanchions and the 'you ain't welcome here' velvet ropes." "Throw out the Walt Disney 'runners,' he exclaimed, "Where the crap came from, who made the crap ain't the way to give an historic house tour." The flamboyant Wolfe may have tacked subtlety, but his points were well taken. He implored the interpreters to consider the furnishings merely as visual backdrop to brief tours relying on solid anecdotal material crafted to allow visitors to "feel a home, not a house." [29]

The diminutive size and primitive nature of the visitor contact station posed restrictions on visitor orientation that were difficult to overcome, short of a new facility designed for the purpose. Although some interpreters remained wedded to show-and-tell tours at the house, Farmer and her staff began designing a variety of living history activities intended to divert attention away from the ranch house (HS-1). One of these was a campfire program featuring cowboy songs. Blacksmithing demonstrations in blacksmith shop/garage (HS-3) were popular, but they presented a dilemma. Hiring skilled artisans at

the allowable general schedule grade was difficult, since they could make more money working in the private sector. Although the jobs might have been classified as wage grade positions, the park lacked the funds to pay the higher salaries. The result was that unskilled persons were sometimes hired for lower pay, with the idea that they could be trained to perform the demonstrations.

There were other problems as well. One blacksmith, while being adept at the forge, tended to produce rather ornate pieces of ironwork not usually associated with ranching. Consequently, the program became more a demonstration of that craftsman's individual skills than an enlightenment to the role of the common ranch blacksmith. In more recent years the program was been re-focused on shorter, more appropriate jobs like making hoof picks and other utilitarian items. [30]

A park "birthday celebration," initiated in 1978 became a new source of interpretive activities. Lyndel Meikle, who had come to the Site early the previous year, suggested that the park commemorate the formal opening by staging a special event on the anniversary. What began as a rather basic program that first year, quickly burgeoned into the park's most popular annual event, an event that has continued to the present day. Beyond its value for attracting a large number of visitors and attracting attention to the Site, perhaps its greater value was as a "proving ground for things that become a regular part of the interpretive program." [31] Activities such as chuck wagon cooking, talks on a wide variety of relative subjects, and demonstrations were tried at the annual celebration. Those found to be effective and well-received were sometimes been incorporated into the regular program. But, while new ideas were one thing, a small staff could do only so much to make them reality. The foundation of summer interpretive activities remained the daily ranch house tours, augmented by blacksmithing, on-going ranching activities, and self-guided walking tours of the grounds of the ranch headquarters.



Chuck wagon demonstration, 1982.  
(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

The late 1970s marked a period of experimentation that eventually inspired Superintendent Tom Vaughan to reflect that, "the program should be thoroughly evaluated" because the staff had "proceeded to expand [the] existing program in new directions without a clear conceptual base." He admitted that while some of these activities had "great potential," he saw a need to "make ranching activity more central to the interpretive operation . . . . The superintendent lamented that the 1979 summer program had been seriously crippled through the resignation of a permanent interpreter at the beginning of the season and the transfer of his historian, Micki Farmer, in mid-season. [32]

Vaughan turned this circumstance into a dual opportunity to make significant changes. Taking advantage of the vacant historian position, he segregated the museum function into an independent division under his direct supervision to place greater attention on the care of the collections. And, he reclassified the historian position as a chief of interpretation heading a new division of interpretation and resource management. These changes were in place by the time Cheryl Clemmensen, the new chief, arrived in the waning days of December. [33]

On a philosophical note, Vaughan challenged the premise upon which the NPS had established the "historic period" at Grant-Kohrs Ranch. He saw this as a critical assumption influencing both restoration and interpretation. Just before Christmas 1979, he penned his concerns to the regional director, stating

that he thought the legislative documents, which he termed "first generation documents," ought to provide the most reliable guidance in making that critical determination. He realized, however, that they also reflected NPS policy trends, if not national trends, at that particular moment in time. In the late 1960s, for instance, when Merrill Mattes had presented his alternatives for the area, and still later when the site was authorized, the living history craze was sweeping the country. It was an era that saw the widespread proliferation of such programs throughout historical areas, and even some natural areas, of the National Park System. So popular was this technique that it came to be viewed as a universal interpretive medium, regardless of its appropriateness or effectiveness in conveying the park story. There can be no doubt that living history was popular with both the public and with politicians, but that popularity failed to recognize its limitations and its disproportionately high costs when compared to other forms of media. Period clothing, training, animals, and all of the accessories needed to activate and sustain any demonstration usually escalated the per capita costs far above other types of interpretation.

Vaughan cited an interim interpretive prospectus, prepared in 1975, as "an exceptionally good example of a second generation document that should not be canonized and enshrined in cement." In his estimation, these post-legislative documents generated by the Park Service attempted to interpret congressional intent for a particular park's purpose and resources. But, he cautioned, these interpretations were always subject to "National Park Service policy in effect at the time the document is produced." Accordingly, he thought that such documents "must be flexible enough to allow the management of the resource to be adapted to unforeseen changes in the park environment . . . as well as shifts and drifts in NPS policy." As for living history, he observed that, "Both the desirability and the economic feasibility of large-scale recreations of historic scenes and activities had undergone considerable rethinking from the time of the first generation documents . . . to the present." The real danger in all of this, as Vaughan saw it, was the "interpretation of interpretations" in NPS third-generation documents, such as funding requests and operating plans wherein the true intent of Congress might be lost, or at least distorted. To guard against this, he impressed upon his interpreters the need to review the legislative dictums, bearing them in mind during their interpretive planning. [34]

Vaughan held that, regardless of the transient influences that might have affected later NPS planning, the legislation and its supporting data should be looked to as the "true cross" of what Congress had in mind when it authorized the area. The park's first Statement for Management, a second-generation document, specified in its objectives that interpretation would "instill . . . an empathy of the life and times of the cattle rancher and cowboy [and] demonstrate ranching activities to encourage an understanding of an active frontier cattle ranch."

The literal translation of the enabling legislation was challenged in 1978 when a planning team assembled at the park to create another of those second-generation documents to which Vaughan had alluded. The resulting general management plan, headed by historian John Albright, consciously steered the interpretation of the ranch in new directions. [35] While the team acknowledged the need to focus principally on "the early frontier cattle era and the Kohrs-Bielenberg operation, . . . these aspects of the Grant-Kohrs story will be described by contrasting open-range practices with what has followed." Just as Vaughan had predicted, NPS planners re-defined the purpose of the Site by taking a considerably

broader view of the story than what Congress had envisioned. On the other hand, Con Warren was an integral part of the park interpretive story, and the later-period ranch buildings could hardly be ignored. The final GMP outlined the objective as "a working ranch that illustrates the continuity and change involved in cattle ranching from 1862 to today." [36] This represented a significant expansion of the story beyond the open range frontier era personified by Grant, Kohrs, and Bielenberg, and one that profoundly affected site interpretation thereafter.

Vaughan had read the proceedings of the congressional hearings to find that the legislators clearly intended that the ranch represent "frontier life" of the "Old West" of the latter part of the nineteenth century. It may be no accident that these terms were repeated many times by the sponsors of the legislation to establish the Site. They specifically stated that Grant-Kohrs Ranch would be devoted to telling "this story" of the open range era and its contributions to the American experience. However, one of those speaking in favor of the bill qualified this by rejecting any notion that the site was "being created to memorialize any particular individual." [37] By enabling the public to "better understand the nature of ranching operations of the old cattle kingdoms," it was "anticipated that the [ranch] will be a living memorial to the pioneers of the West, and that a concentrated effort will be made to preserve and recreate the historic ranch scene of the 1880-1900 period." [38] Nevertheless, if Vaughan saw this as an example of the very divergence of purpose he feared, he did not make an issue of it.

The period of historical restoration for the ranch house (HS-1), discussed in a previous chapter, had been fixed at 1880-1900, while other buildings were to reflect their "identified periods of time," meaning their last use during active ranching operations. All of the buildings were to be "restored to a working condition," with the specific intent of using them for interpretive ranching purposes. Since it would be impossible to ignore the structures dating after the "frontier cattle era," the 1980 GMP altered the period to be interpreted so that there would be an open end extending into the future. By not establishing a firm termination date, the GMP tacitly permitted interpretation to evolve indefinitely, conceivably keeping pace with the beef industry at least through the 1970s. The evidence suggests that Congress and the NPS had in mind only the days of the open range during the latter three or four decades of the nineteenth century, specifically the "frontier era." Yet, the legislators did not clearly define that point. At the time legislation was drafted, the resource had not been fully evaluated. Their concept was confined to that portion of the ranch west of the railroads, i. e., the "old" ranch. The early planning process had been disadvantaged by not having available a basic structural history, bringing to light the mixture of buildings from various eras even in the primary historic zone of the ranch.

That first GMP also addressed the constraints imposed by nearby modern development and the limitations inherent with having only a tiny fraction of the Kohrs-Bielenberg holdings within the Site. Not only were park lands a minuscule portion of the home ranch, this area was not where the family fortune was made, for the most part. At times, the two cattlemen pastured cattle on far-flung open ranges in north-central and eastern Montana, Idaho, Canada, and even in Colorado, controlling all together over one million acres. The great herds were there, not at Deer Lodge, which was a base of operations used primarily for stock-breeding. Thus, the GMP clarified that the ranch site was "not conducive to interpreting the cattle-ranching practices employed on the open range during the early frontier era,"

which may have provided some of the rationale behind the team's decision to expand the scope of interpretation. [39]

The implications of this debate were not lost on the park chief interpreter. By 1982, when annual interpretive reports became a requirement, Clemmensen began including brief quotations from both the congressional hearings and the enabling legislation. She stated that the purpose of the ranch was "to provide an understanding of the frontier cattle era [and] the nationally significant values thereof." Yet, the influence of the GMP was evident when she went on to define the principal objective as, "the evolution of American cattle ranching from open-range to early farm/ranch cattle raising -- as well as the development of that industry at Grant-Kohrs Ranch. This industry has continued to the present day." [40] Her inclusion of the "early farm/ranch" era recognized the 1930s buildings on the ranch.

Merrill Mattes first saw the potential for presenting the broader story of cattle ranching, exemplified in Grant-Kohrs Ranch, by demonstrating the continuum of ranching operations. However, his thoughts on the matter apparently were not considered in the support data submitted by the NPS, nor in the congressional debates, four years later. Such information might have influenced those discussions, though it became a mute point. Initially, Congress did not intend for the Park Service to buy the Warren Ranch. Yet, through its planning process and its later desire to acquire the Warren easement lands, including the ranch of the 1950s, the NPS transcended the original congressional intent expressed in 1972, i. e., acquiring 208 acres in fee and easements over the remaining 1,280 acres. [41] The Warren Ranch of the post-World War II period posed an incongruity between the enabling legislation and the central theme that both the NPS and Congress thought ought to be interpreted when the Site was authorized.

Even though the 1972 legislation did not envision the acquisition of the remainder of the Warren Ranch buildings, the 1980 and 1993 GMPs stressed that these were to be used adaptively for park administrative and operational functions. While this decision might have been construed to imply that the Warren operation of the mid-twentieth century would be de-emphasized, the 1993 GMP specified an interpretive "focus" spanning from 1860 to the 1970s. Conversely, a cultural landscape analysis contained in the same document, stated that the period of significance spanned the years 1862 - 1954. The GMP admitted that "many visitors are confused as to the story being told." [42]

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Six: CATTLE OR COOK STOVES: INTERPRETATION (continued)

During the summer of 1982, the first season in which the Interpretation & Resource Management Division actually functioned as such, the regional chief interpreter, Bill Sontag, visited the area to evaluate the visitor services program. He, too, discovered the perennial problem with more attention being focused on the ranch house tours than on the remainder of the resource. He observed that demonstrations were limited to blacksmithing and unscheduled ranching tasks around the grounds. The only scheduled programs were the house tours. He informally queried the staff to learn that while most of them were in agreement that greater attention need to be focused on the ranching operation than on the HS-1 furnishings (exactly what Wes Wolfe had warned against in 1977), some argued that the furnishings could not be ignored. Their very presence, he acknowledged, could not be disputed, but he reminded the interpreters that they "should not assume that the furnishings are interpretive features separable from the primary or overall theme of the park, but should find an appropriate blend of emphasis and carefully selected media which will place the two in proper relationship to each other." Sontag recommended that the interpreters lead each group out the back door of the house to another building, perhaps the bunk house, before terminating the tour. This, he theorized, would make a less distinct conclusion by introducing visitors to other features of the ranch. He recommended that the area have more living history activities conducted on a regular basis, rather than just on the park birthday. His recommendations resulted in some minor adjustments to the program, yet it would remain basically the same. [43]

The congressional discussions preceding the passage of the bill to authorize the area specifically highlighted the unique qualities of the main house, stating that the primary purpose of the Site would be "to describe livestock ranching as it matured and contributed to the western culture and not to memorialize the individuals directly involved." [44] The interpretive challenge was to employ

Conrad and Augusta Kohrs and John Bielenberg as vehicles for telling that story without, in effect, "memorializing" them. Many visitors, especially those who had been to the Site previously, came specifically to experience the house tour. The dominance of the two-story mansion over the squat utilitarian barns and sheds on the surrounding grounds was inescapable. Its visual impact alone made it difficult to downplay and virtually impossible to ignore. One long-time staff member described the program as "resource-driven," in the respect that the house is there and people expect a tour through the Victorian wonderland. Clemmensen wrote in 1987 that many visitors "care ONLY to see the house." Even when an experiment was tried by starting tours at the bunk house, she noted that, "We still had many people who acted like the 5-10 minute introduction was a chore to sit through; they only wanted to see the inside of the house." [45] Visitors have continued to come primarily to see the ranch house and, consequently, house tours have remained standard fare in the interpretive program.



Park Ranger Lyndel Meikle giving a ranch house tour, 1982.

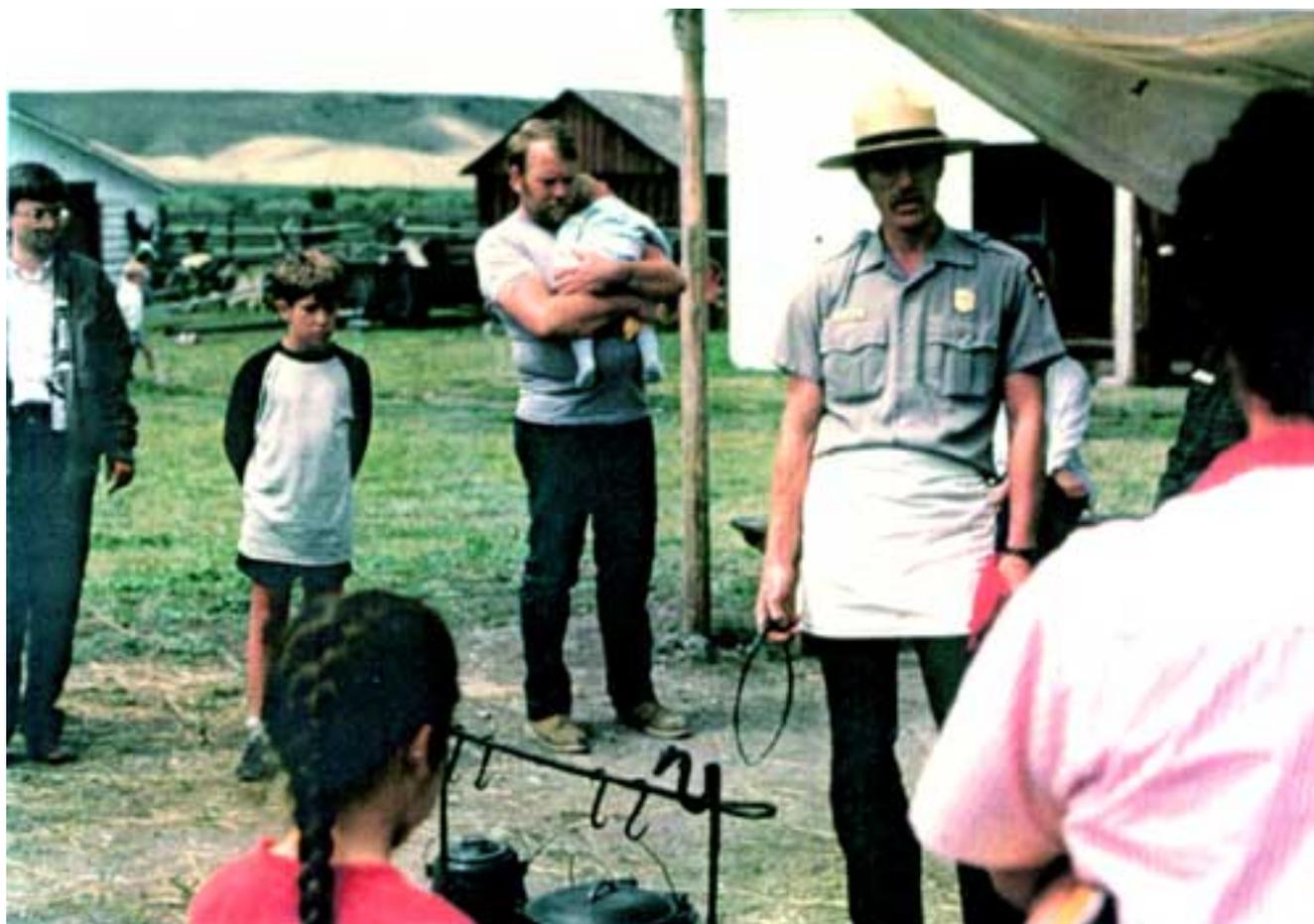
*(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

Through the years variations of program activities have been tried, with more or less success. Still, the park staff perceives a need for more orientation to the business of raising and selling cattle. "It can't be done if the staff is committed to the office, VC [visitor center], and house tours," according to Lyndel Meikle, a long-time interpreter at the Site. "It can't be done in those settings, . . . [but] it can be done with a single cow in a corral." [46]

When Superintendent Eddie Lopez arrived for duty in August 1988, he brought with him an expectation from Rocky Mountain Regional Director Lorraine Mintzmyer that living history activities would be increased at the site. This was good news to most of the interpretive staff, particularly since Lopez was not wedded to the idea of providing hourly guided tours of the house. A reduction in the frequency, if not the length, of tours would free the staff to undertake other activities.

This was easier said than done. Since Grant-Kohrs Ranch had not previously immersed itself completely in the living history concept, limiting such programs mainly to special events, the staff lacked the depth of experience necessary to conduct a more intensive program. On one earlier occasion, for instance, the staff came to loggerheads over the appropriateness and authenticity of the replica period clothing to be worn at the annual birthday event. When no one could agree, a decision was made that all interpreters, except the rancher and the blacksmith, would wear NPS uniform. When Lopez arrived, he saw an opportunity to enhance the program in this regard. However, Service guidelines mandated certain standards for the conduct of living history, so Clemmensen prudently decided that "it would require more time for research and more money for costumes than we could afford." [47] By 1990 there was still no consensus among the interpreters as to what degree the living history standards should be followed. Some were of the opinion that "modern clothes that looked 'old-timey' and appropriate" for the job assigned were good enough. Others considered this unprofessional and misleading for visitors because the interpreters were neither authentically costumed nor were they appearing as uniformed rangers. In short, they represented nothing more than quasi-modern ranch folk. [48]

These philosophical disagreements were symptomatic of more serious conflicts among the interpretive staff. To relieve this situation and provide more attention to resource matters, Lopez temporarily reorganized his staff by separating the interpretive and resource functions. This had been recommended in an operations evaluation conducted by the Rocky Mountain Regional Office in August 1990. In the resulting trial situation, Clemmensen's position was re-designated as the chief, resources management, and Neysa Dickey, formerly a supervisory interpreter, was named to head the interpretive division. This arrangement worked rather well and was later formalized so that the resources chief became responsible directly to the superintendent for overseeing natural resources management issues at the Site. This also proved to be an opportune time to transfer the rancher position to the Maintenance Division. Pete Cartwright retired late in 1990, to be replaced by Gary Joe Launderville. In consideration of the increased demands imposed by a larger land base and the purchase of the remainder of the Warren Ranch, Lopez determined that the rancher and the maintenance staff should be required to work in closer concert for mutual support. [49]



Park Ranger Bill Stalker demonstrating cowboy cooking.  
(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

The reorganization did not fully resolve the questions about the degree to which authenticity should be pursued in the living history program. But, an unforeseen influence from outside the park had a significant impact. By 1991 the Rocky Mountain Region had a new chief interpreter, Ron Thoman, who was not an advocate of living history. Building on a previous operations evaluation team recommendation, Thoman strongly urged Dickey to abandon living history in favor of returning to more basic interpretation, "challenging . . . visitors to use their own imaginations rather than relying on the 'gimmicks' of period clothing which can be expensive, misleading, and just plain inaccurate." Dickey concurred that, "The decision should be based on cost and effectiveness . . . not . . . on popularity with the staff or visitors." [50] That summer Dickey reduced living history activities in favor of introducing abbreviated "peek tours" of HS-1, lasting about fifteen minutes. This helped to satisfy the public's desire to see the interior; at the same time allowing the staff to conduct half-hour guided walks around the grounds of the old headquarters ranch. The success of this arrangement was limited, as the chief interpreter noted in her annual report. "The time constraints jammed up the interpreters and contributed to burnout. Since the tours were limited to 12 people, while the AV [audio-visual] programs had no such limit, they often ran out of seating. Also, if visitors went on the house tour first, they received the 'orientation' slide program afterwards. Some elected not to see it at all [departing after the house tour]... thereby negating the advantage." [51]

Perhaps the most significant impediment to making major changes to interpretation has been the park's

forced reliance on the improvised visitor contact station that has been in place since 1975. This small structure has been "a serious problem and a source of frustration for the staff" for most of the park's active life. [52] In hindsight, one might question whether the park would have been better off had the granary never been installed. Grant-Kohrs Ranch, like many other park units where basic visitor needs have been served with temporary facilities, has seen its funding requests for permanent facilities defeated. Compounding the situation, perhaps, the park staff rehabilitated and improved the old granary contact station in 1983. [53]



**Parking lot and visitor contact facilities.**  
*(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

The fact remains that visitors at Grant-Kohrs Ranch have been deprived of a proper familiarization to both the story and the site. If the space inadequacies of the present contact station were not enough, the building itself has been something of a deterrent to visitation. Many visitors who come to the Site mistake the rustic contact station and the adjacent log cabin rest room for the historic ranch. Too, the railroad grades block the visitor's view. Unimpressed, they have departed without ever leaving their cars, thereby missing the real ranch just beyond. The regional chief of interpretation pointed this out as long ago as 1982, as has virtually every superintendent and park chief interpreter since that time. [54]

The studs-out granary, never intended to serve the long-term needs of the park, was so under-sized from the outset, hardly large enough to accommodate more than ten persons at a time, that adding an audio-

visual program was out of the question. Yet, the need for a general orientation program was identified long ago. The 1980 GMP, for instance, stated that the open range cattle era, as well as the national cattle ranching industry, were to be interpreted through audio visual and exhibit media. Those, in fact, were the only effective means by which on-site visitors could be quickly introduced to the contextual history of any park theme. In its continuing struggle to meet this critical need, the park interpretive staff initiated a home-grown slide presentation in 1982, a program that was continued for several more seasons until an improved version was adopted. "Cattlemen and Cowboys," a program acquired from the National Cattlemen's Association in 1991 served as historical orientation until a fifteen-minute video was contracted and produced the next year. Until 1992 the slide programs were conducted in the thoroughbred barn (HS-15), at which time the garage/blacksmith shop (HS-3) was converted to a makeshift auditorium by the park maintenance staff. [55]

Still, the program has been handicapped by being almost totally reliant on personal services, one of the least effective methods of dealing with the historical contexts. Deprived of professionally produced exhibits and audio-visuals, visitors fail to comprehend the significance of western cattle ranching in the United States and the development of that industry, as exemplified at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS. Visitors who gain little or no appreciation of the significance of the Site, defeat the intent of Congress in setting aside the ranch. The solution, as expressed in the 1993 General Management Plan, is to adaptively restore the red barn (HS-64) as a visitor center. "The addition of a new visitor center and state of the art facilities," stated a 1990 operations evaluation, "would lead to more efficient and effective interpretation, higher staff morale, . . . and -- likely -- significantly higher annual visitation." [56]

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Six: CATTLE OR COOK STOVES: INTERPRETATION (continued)

The area has been plagued with meager visitation throughout its short history. Given that the Site lies along Interstate 90, directly between Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, it was not unreasonable to expect moderately high visitation. However, they failed to consider was that most people do not travel to both of these large parks on a single trip. Some in the community anticipated that great numbers of visitors would pour into the ranch, and into Deer Lodge businesses coincidentally, but these wildly speculative predictions, some as high as 240,000 per year, failed to materialize. [57]

In 1978 Lyndel Meikle suggested that the park develop a special event to garner regional attention and increase visitation. The event, which she later described as "pretty much homemade at first," was scheduled in July to commemorate the establishment of the park. Initially dubbed "The Birthday," the name has given way more recently to "Western Heritage Days" as a more descriptive title, suggested by Con Warren. That first celebration attracted only about 400 people, but it was deemed a success nonetheless. Each year has witnessed the repetition of certain programs that have enjoyed popularity, while some new activities accompany what has become an annual event. By 1983 visitation increased to 1,000 and the following year it was made a two-day event. Some 2,000 visitors attended the 1995 program, drawing more people in those two days than during the entire three-month winter season. [58]

Visitation, which has consistently averaged only about 25,000 per annum, has at once been an advantage and disadvantage to Grant-Kohrs Ranch. Modest visitor use has probably worked against the various managers' best efforts to obtain funding for a new visitor center. Low visitation equates to a low priority need, some would say. Conversely, the temporary contact station could not have accommodated a higher volume of traffic had visitation been greater. To some degree, perhaps, the intermittent flow of small numbers of people through the area has dictated the types of programs that might be feasible. This also reduced the level of human impacts on cultural resources. Small groups have lended well to the house tours, to roving contacts, and to fixed stations such as the chuck wagon and blacksmith shop where the opportunity for informal discussion is an advantage.

Aside from the success of Western Heritage Days, Chief Interpreter Cheryl Clemmensen reported in 1982 that, "The Site is still not well known within the state of Montana." [59] The next year, however,

Montana sponsored a one-time celebration to commemorate the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad across the state. Since Grant-Kohrs Ranch lay only fifteen miles from the site of the historic juncture, and the site included a section of usable track, Superintendent Jim Taylor agreed to co-host what became known as, "The Last Spike Centennial." It was scheduled for August 24-28, 1983.

It turned out to be a gala event, complete with a steam locomotive and tender car trucked all the way from California and placed on the rails at Grant-Kohrs. The program of speakers and music was conducted in front of the ranch house (HS-1). The site's public image was enhanced by the presence of additional NPS personnel from other parks and special living history presentations. Nearly 8,000 people attended the centennial celebration, yet Taylor was disappointed to find that it had no lasting effect on visitation at the ranch. [60]



**Last Spike Centennial celebration, 1983.**

*(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

In 1992 the park interpretive staff began a cooperative project with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks to provide the public an opportunity to learn about natural history aspect of Grant-Kohrs Ranch. This resulted in a successful application to the National Park Foundation for a \$15,000.00 grant. The park resource management staff collaborated with the Youth Conservation Corps, U. S. Forest Service, as well as the Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks people to develop what became known as the "Cottonwood Nature Trail," which was completed the next year. The interpreters prepared a brochure for use on the self-guiding tour and by 1994 the new interpretive feature was in full operation.

[\[61\]](#)

The stated interpretive objective for the area remained virtually the same until 1993, when a new General Management Plan took a somewhat different approach. The GMP's stated themes suggested a holistic approach presenting "the evolving American cattle industry," recognizing the inherent diversity of the historic resources. For many years, the chief interpreter repeated her plea for a new interpretive prospectus, stressing that "the plan is obsolete and rarely referred to by our staff" She considered a prospectus as "critical to the interpretive operations at Grant-Kohrs ranch." [\[62\]](#) Despite an attempt to develop a new Interpretive Prospectus in 1991, the effort floundered and was not revived, although revised interpretive themes did appear in the 1993 General Management Plan. Scott Eckberg, the presiding chief of interpretation since 1995, was of the opinion in 1996 that an interpretive Prospectus would serve no particular purpose, in light of the GMP, since that document addressed the questions of needed interpretive facilities and non-personal services media. Meantime, he, like some of his predecessors, remained distressed that the primary focus of interpretation has continued on the buildings, especially the ranch house (HS-1), rather than "on the greater story." The program, in his opinion, was still a pawn of the resource, but that it would be largely corrected whenever a formal visitor center is developed in the red barn (HS-64). Much of the story still will be told out on the ranch grounds, however. He and others on the staff felt that the interpreters need to be more familiar with animals, especially cattle, and not so reliant on the familiar and relatively easy house tour. "The tools are all here," Eckberg acknowledged, "it's the knowledge and ability that we need to cultivate among our own staff." That is the challenge.

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Seven: REAL RANCH OR NOT: NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

During recent decades, the National Park Service has arrived at a better appreciation for the interrelationships of cultural and natural resources in field units categorized as "historical." At the time when Grant-Kohrs Ranch was proposed as a unit of the Park System, the environmental movement was under a full head of steam and so it followed that concern for the natural setting of the ranch would be a basic consideration in planning the new site. The bottomlands and the vista to the west were deemed important to preserving the natural scenic integrity of the site. [1] Few would argue that the NPS saw the relatively undeveloped lands adjacent to the ranch as integral to the historic scene. "But not only as scenic surrounding," the first master plan cautioned. "While maintaining the pastoral scene, we cannot ignore considerations of the long-term health of the land and the purity of the river." [2]

Not long after the Service acquired the first small land area from the National Park Foundation, there was concern about the small acreage encompassed within the boundary. The master plan team had recommended that the Site boundary be extended across the brushy bottom lands so that the NPS would control both sides of the river. In those early days of the park's existence, Vernon E. Hennesay, the designated coordinator for the area, visited the ranch frequently from his home base in Yellowstone National Park. In February 1973 he noted that the tentative boundary included only about half the width of the Clark Fork River. It seemed obvious to Hennesay that it would be all but impossible to manage wildlife habitat on one bank without controlling the other. Furthermore, there was a concern that Conrad Warren might ". . . allow someone, in the future, to come in and clear off the woods on the bottom land and turn it into a haying field." According to the loosely-defined restrictions of the easements over the meadows west of the river, such an action would not necessarily have been incompatible under the broad definition of cattle ranching. Subsequently, the additional acreage was acquired in the initial purchase, demonstrating in this instance the perception of a higher need to preserve natural elements of the landscape than to promote the concept of a working ranch. [3]

For several years after the authorization of the Site and the arrival of the first personnel, little attention was devoted to the management of the park's natural resources. This is not surprising, given the area's historical classification and the acute needs for structures preservation and for providing visitor access to the area. A preliminary and very practical action in 1975-76 involved draining the water from the lower

yard simply to allow use of that area.

Not until 1978 did anything noteworthy occur, and even then it was nature itself that prompted a management response. In the course of his work, NPS rancher Lewis "Pete" Cartwright observed significant erosion along one bank of the Clark Fork River within the Site. Having no expertise in such matters among the staff, historian Michele Farmer solicited help from the local office of the Soil Conservation Service. Their representative evaluated the situation, concluding that if some abatement action were not taken, it might well result in "erosive consumption of adjoining hay land or may even change channels claiming more new land and/or bypassing an existing bridge." [4] Superintendent Tom Vaughan followed up by alerting the regional office to the problem, requesting emergency funding to stabilize the crumbling bank. Regardless of NPS designs for the area, he noted philosophically, the river "upsets the plans of man" and was about to leave it with a bridge leading to an island. [5] After a delay of over three months, Acting Regional Director Glen Bean responded to Vaughan, informing him that no funds were available for the project; his only alternative was to submit a request through the usual channels.

Over time, the 1980 General Management Plan became outdated in several aspects because it failed to recognize broader resource trends and needs as the park evolved. The environmental movement of the late 1960s and '70s had given rise to a greater emphasis on the interrelationships of nature. The new philosophy rejected the traditional NPS focus on preserving only its defined "islands," ignoring what happened in the larger world. Eventually, the Park Service embraced the view that what occurred beyond park boundaries often affected resources inside the parks as well. This included the value of the total landscape, and, more particularly, the natural surroundings of historic sites. Concerned about the viewshed and potential development outside the park, Superintendent Jim Taylor justified a land protection plan in 1985 to thoroughly address NPS concerns and alternatives.

During the early 1980s, the NPS became responsible for policing itself for cultural resources compliance through a memorandum of agreement with the Advisory Board on Historic Preservation. Along with this, the Service developed specific guidelines for managing both cultural and natural resources. Thus, much of the responsibility of complying with the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act was delegated to the park managers. This imposed a heavier workload on park staffs, who became responsible for initial determinations of effect and for preparing the required compliance documents for higher-level review. The increasing sophistication of these demands eventually contributed to a staff reorganization at Grant-Kohrs Ranch, to be discussed later in this chapter.

The erosion incident served as the impetus for the park to consider its need for baseline natural resources data. Up to that point, hardly anything had been compiled in that regard. During 1979 the Superintendent Vaughan submitted several study proposals to the University of Wyoming cooperative park studies unit. It took the bureaucratic machinery over a year to process the request, but the study finally claimed a priority in 1981. Unfortunately, no one responded with a proposal to conduct the research and the project languished for several more months. In the fall, three researchers responded, but by that time the

funding had evaporated.

Superintendent Jim Taylor successfully revived this effort in 1982 when he noticed the presence of noxious weeds in the park. However, funding did not become available until August, by which time it was too late in the year to begin the field work. The project finally got off the ground the next year and carried over into 1984. The research was accomplished by scientists from the University of Montana. As a result of this comprehensive survey, the park gained floral and faunal species lists, maps delineating geographical distributions of various plants, a herbarium collection of 200 specimens for staff reference, and a collection of slides. [6]

Although rare and endangered species were identified as part of this work, more significant was the confirmation that park lands indeed were infested with noxious knapweed and leafy spurge. Both of these aggressive species are the bane of ranchers. Knapweed is especially prolific, thriving in disturbed ground, such as along roads, irrigation ditches, and the railroads, and then dominating these areas by sapping the available water and choking out competitor plants. All too often in ranching country, it meant that valuable grass is replaced by a plant that is of no benefit to stockgrowers. The areas blighted by noxious weeds accordingly reduce the potential carrying capacity of pasture lands. Real ranch or not, Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS had to do something about the problem, if for no other reason that to be a good neighbor to adjacent ranchers who depended on cattle raising for their livelihood. Even though the Site did not depend on good grass to the degree that commercial ranchers did, the intrusive species would prevent the park from producing its noted weed-free hay.

A two-pronged attack involving biological means and mechanical removal was launched on the weeds in 1985. While the common method for combating these pests outside the park was chemical spraying, the NPS chose to implement an integrated pest management plan. This approach relied on the use of natural predators -- in the case of knapweed this meant the gall fly. Larva were placed along railroad right-of-way fences, whereupon the newborn flies would begin feeding on the knapweed. It was decided that chemicals would not be applied, at least until the insects were given a fair trial. [7]

Two years later the park obtained a second grant through the University of Wyoming, this time for a project to map the areas infested with noxious weeds for monitoring purposes. Several members of the staff attended training on the subject of noxious weeds so that the eradication program might become more effective. [8]

Despite a five-year agreement with the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service in Bozeman to conduct further biological control studies at the ranch, the program faltered. Several new species of insects were tried experimentally, but only two produced the desired results. All of the experiments utilized insects confined in cages. Neighboring ranchers began to lodge complaints against the NPS for not adequately controlling its knapweed and leafy spurge. Rather than risk a major public relations battle, which the NPS stood to lose, the park began chemical spraying with 2-4D on a limited basis in major public access areas. [9] This practice was later expanded to include the use of Todon on fiat, dry pasture bearing native species of grass. More recently, insects have been used in areas of the site that

cannot be sprayed because of potential danger to water or other vegetation.

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grko/adhi/adhi7.htm

Last Updated: 04-Nov-2000

# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### Chapter Seven: REAL RANCH OR NOT: NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued)

The natural resources research initiative of the early 1980s revealed a more insidious threat to park resources -- toxic waste pollution. Superintendent Tom Vaughan was alerted to the potential for harmful emissions when it was proposed that a previously inactive phosphate plant at Garrison, eight miles north of the Site, be re opened. The facility had been in flagrant violation of state air quality laws and eventually went bankrupt. The park, however, had no baseline data by which it could monitor the effects of the plant's operation, should it be opened again. Vaughan initiated requests to fund a research program in the event the plant were re-activated.

With the prospect of a significant threat at their doorstep downstream, the park staff questioned a potentially greater threat from mining activity upstream. Park Ranger Paul Kirkland installed a number of test plots along the west bank of Clark Fork as an introductory measure until formal scientific research could be contracted. The soil in the so-called "slickens," areas devoid of vegetation, was found to be dead for all practical purposes. Although the phosphate plant at Garrison failed to be revived, Kirkland's tests indicated a more serious danger than that posed by the potential for airborne contaminants from that source, or the impacts from the Anaconda Smelter at the south end of the valley. [10]

In the early years of the twentieth century both Butte and Anaconda were the scenes of extensive copper mining activity. Silver Bow Creek drained the watershed in the vicinity of Butte, while Warm Springs Creek flowed past the Anaconda smelter the ranch, the two joining near Warm Springs, Montana to form the Clark Fork River. At flood stage, this stream carried heavy metals waste from the mines in the form of tailings that were deposited along the streams. [11] Arrangements were made for Peter Rice and Gary Ray, from the University of Montana, to analyze park resources. Their Floral and Faunal Survey and Toxic Metal Contamination Study (May 1984) presented irrefutable evidence that the river floodplain within the Site contained high concentrations of copper, arsenic, and cadmium. Abnormally high levels of these pollutants were discovered in both soils and vegetation. In 1984 two areas, Silver Bow Creek (including Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS) and Anaconda Smelter, were designated for cleanup as Superfund sites. [12]

The next summer Superintendent Jim Taylor assisted the Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Department to conduct a survey to determine the effects of these heavy metals on fish in the Clark Fork. Fish were netted above and below the ranch in order to weigh and measure them. Fin clippings identified the fish tested. Above the park, where lime was added to neutralize the pollutants, the sample showed nearly 500 fish to the mile. Below the ranch, in untreated waters, a mere 31 survived. [13]

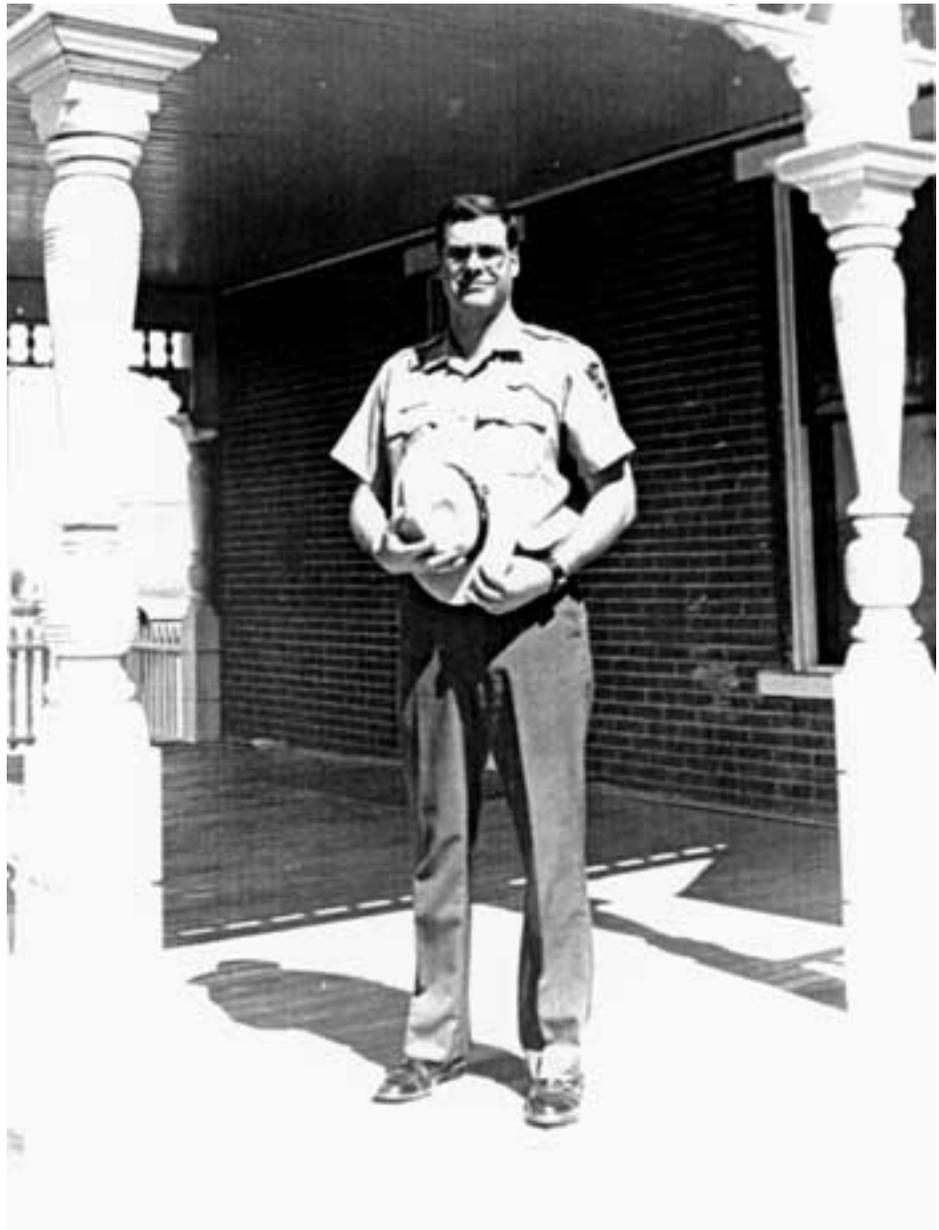
Following the Superfund designation, meetings were held in the area to afford interested parties an opportunity to discuss the issues and to tour affected sites. These meetings, which were attended by park staff, also became strategy sessions to determine just what data were needed and how studies might be accomplished. By 1985 several research projects were underway to study the effects of headwater pollution caused by the Butte mining operations. Soil samples, which were taken in every mile of river from Butte to Missoula, showed the hazard was far greater than anyone had previously imagined. As a result of these surveys, the entire 140-mile stretch of river was included in the largest Superfund cleanup area in the nation. [14]

As the Superfund issue gained momentum, meetings of Interior Department agencies were called by the Solicitor's Office during 1990 in an effort to learn whether or not managers were aware of the extent of pollution on the lands within their respective jurisdictions. The Solicitor directed each agency to develop assessments of injury; Grant-Kohrs Ranch was to have its two-miles of the Clark Fork surveyed by summer 1991. [15]

As the Superfund became the preeminent resource issue in the park, it impacted other aspects of the operation. In 1993 the staff identified several actions that were needed to adapt certain activities to existing conditions. Monitoring the quality of the river was important, since it was a primary source of water for the cattle and other livestock on the Site. While it was evident that a grazing plan was needed for the entire park in order to better manage the pastures, Superintendent Jim Taylor followed the recommendations of the Rice-Ray report by fencing the cattle from grazing in the riparian zone until the pollution problem could be mitigated. [16] Short of a major cleanup, little else could be done, except to continue to support the Environmental

Protection Agency (EPA) in its efforts and to cooperate in research activities. In recent years, Superintendent Tony Schetzle made the ranch available as an unequalled research site to gather data for heavy metals toxicity. Much of the information generated at Grant-Kohrs Ranch had application to other Interior agencies with lands in the Superfund area and would prove valuable for assessing damage and necessary corrective measures.

Grant-Kohrs Ranch is unique as the only National Park Service unit to be included on the National Priority List for Superfund cleanup. The EPA was designated as the lead agency for remedial cleanup, however Superintendent Schetzle noted that, "if they are resistant to the National Park Service taking certain remedial actions that are consistent with the final remedial plan, then it is our position that EPA must then assume our congressional mandate, acknowledging that National Park System lands are special." [17]



**Superintendent Anthony J. Schetzle.**  
(Courtesy of Deer Lodge *Silver State Post*)

The Atlantic-Richfield Company (ARCO) purchased the Anaconda Cropper Company a few years prior to the enactment of the Superfund law, the Comprehensive Environmental Response, and the Compensation and Liability Act. Subsequently, suits were filed in which ARCO accepted the responsibility for the cleanup, but did not fully realize the complexities of the rehabilitation process. But, according to the law, as Schetzle synthesized it, "if you own it, whether you did it or not, the problem is yours." [18] Some remedial work is already underway at the time of this writing on the Silver Bow Creek, Colorado Tailings, and Warm Springs Ponds, but the process of eventually settling the issue and reclaiming the Clark Fork Basin promises to be a lengthy one that will continue to challenge NPS management at Grant-Kohrs for at least seventy-five years to come.

Several years after the Site was established, it became obvious that the increased attention focused on natural resources issues would require someone on the park staff to serve as a principal contact and to

coordinate the various activities. A 1990 operations evaluation reinforced this need when it noted that the park was no longer a "new" area and ought to devote more attention to aspects of resource management beyond the cultural. Acting on this recommendation, Superintendent Eddie Lopez designated Cheryl Clemmensen, formerly the chief ranger, to head a separate natural resources management division. The supervisory ranger previously serving as the lead interpreter was realigned to function as the chief of interpretation. [19]

With the creation of a natural resources division, Grant-Kohrs Ranch ". . . had made the transition in terms of establishing the direction of the program," Superintendent Tony Schetzle recalled in a 1996 interview. "It now [1994] became time to bring in skills and expertise to take that forward . . ." and to decide ". . . who was going to do the work." [20] Schetzle originally planned to install a supervisory historical architect to oversee the combined resource operation, but later decided that he could streamline the organization by placing the two functions directly under the superintendent, without a division chief to serve as intermediary. This would reduce the a layer of supervision in concert with a Servicewide reorganization plan being affected at the time.

This segregation of responsibilities was to bode well for the park. Within a few months after his arrival at the ranch in 1994, Schetzle and Clemmensen took advantage of a special natural resources professionalization funding initiative to improve the park's capabilities in this field. The funding of this proposal enabled the park to create three new positions -- a computer assistant, an ecologist-biologist, and a resource management specialist -- to elevate the program to a new level of sophistication. A special resources laboratory also was established at park headquarters. [21] Ironically, Cheryl Clemmensen, holding a master's degree in anthropology, lacked the appropriate academic credentials necessary to qualify for any of the newly-established jobs that she had been so instrumental in designing. She therefore elected to return to interpretive duties.

Earlier, in 1992, Clemmensen had laid groundwork for programs founded on space-age technology, the Geographical Information System (GIS) and the Global Positioning System (GPS). The former was a computer software program designed especially for land management functions. While it had numerous applications in park environments, the agricultural industry has adopted it as well. GIS, relying upon a layered spatial data base, could combine data from various sources, including maps, tabular data, and remote sensing, such as aerial and infrared photography. The GPS incorporated satellites and hand-held computers to enable precise location and recordation of almost anything, anywhere on the earth's surface.

Both of these technologies held great importance for resources management at Grant-Kohrs Ranch. In fact, the site was designated as a demonstration park for GIS applications. Cultural resources, such as archeological sites and character defining features of the cultural landscape, such as fences, headgates, irrigation ditches and other structures, could be mapped with great accuracy. Areas infested with noxious weeds could be plotted to monitor them for increases and decreases. Not only did GIS have applications in the area of fire management, its ability to show relationships between soils and vegetation made it a valuable tool in the Superfund project for detecting slickens and other affected areas. Additionally, it proved valuable for managing floodplains and riparian zones. Despite these

innovations, however, these technologies have not yet been incorporated into a comprehensive monitoring system for the park's natural resources. [22]

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch

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## Administrative History

### Chapter Seven: REAL RANCH OR NOT: NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (continued)

Of constant concern at Grant-Kohrs Ranch has been the preservation of the cultural landscape. At times this has presented a dichotomy of opinion concerning two related management programs for cultural and natural resources. At the core is the necessity for maintaining the historical integrity of the ranch and its viewshed. The historic scene constitutes both the environment in which a historic place is situated, and the appearance of that feature within its environment. The degree to which that environment has been altered from the historic period must be a fundamental consideration in the overall integrity of a cultural site. The relatively pristine vista across the valley to the west was, in fact, among the reasons that Grant-Kohrs Ranch was deemed to be worthy of inclusion in the National Park System. The scenic contribution of hay meadows north and west of the ranch headquarters have been recognized for their value in virtually all of the area's general management plans dating from 1972 to the most recent one approved in 1993. The maintenance of the open landscape has been noted as a vital and integral element in helping the visitor to appreciate the cattle range of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.



Winter landscape, 1983.  
(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)

The real and potential threats to cultural landscapes emerged as a special concern of Congress as early as 1980 when the House of Representatives Sub-Committee on National Parks and Insular Affairs directed the Park Service to evaluate the boundaries of its historical areas. One park in each region was to serve as a trial sample representing one of the category types. Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS was selected as "typical of a type" in the Rocky Mountain Region. The resulting evaluation once again placed great importance on the maintenance of the viewshed, noting that the primary threat was the potential for modern development on the west slope of the valley.

The report also recommended that a restrictive easement be negotiated with the Rock Creek Ranch, owners of the westside lands beyond Conrad Warren's easement property. Within the boundary, the report cited land use on the existing scenic easement as being potentially harmful. The stipulations of the easement had trusted much to Warren's sense of what was appropriate to be "done in conformity with good husbandry practice." [23] Once he began leasing much of this ground to others, the situation became much more tenuous because the loosely-worded easement afforded the NPS practically no control over inappropriate activities. For example, there were no restrictions as to the numbers of cattle that could be grazed, nor for how long, though the NPS relied on Warren's experience and best self-interests to prescribe an optimum carrying capacity. Had he severely overgrazed the pastures or even turned the corrals into feedlots, the NPS would have been helpless to do anything about it. Fortunately, not many years passed before the remaining Warren lands, comprising the most vital viewshed, were



was much the same, the 1991 analysis identified nine distinct landscape types that contributed to the "historic character of Grant-Kohrs Ranch." The report noted that the combination of these combined "to establish an overall identity to the ranch." [25] It reiterated the need for management to endeavor to negotiate some sort of covenant over the upland pastures on the west side of the valley to preclude incompatible development or other activities in that area. With reference to the Superfund issue, the analysis advised that the riparian and woodland zones along the Clark Fork should be restored to more closely represent the conditions antedating the heavy metals toxification of those areas.

Work was begun to accomplish that end beginning in 1994. A program spanning two years administered by the Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Department resulted in the planting of willow and other species along the river banks. This accomplished a two fold benefit by enhancing the historic landscape and helping to stabilize the eroding banks that had been a recurring problem since the late 1970s. Concurrently, a complete vegetation survey was conducted by the University of Montana with NPS funds. [26]

The management of natural resources at Grant-Kohrs Ranch has matured with time. Although for many years concern for the natural environment took a secondary role to the cultural aspect, they have become virtually inseparable in a cohesive management philosophy aimed at preserving the values and historical integrity of the ranch. The NPS mission to preserve the ranch as a working cattle operation has presented numerous conflicts between the way park resources might normally be managed and the methods "real" ranchers might use in contending with the same situations. Like it or not, the NPS is bound by laws, regulations, and guidelines that dictate the treatment of natural resources. Meeting these dictates, while attempting to operate a ranch in ranching country, requires a delicate balance of science, practicality, and public relations. As one employee phrased it, "Natural resources is a can of worms on a cultural site." [27]

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### ABBREVIATIONS USED

<b>AD</b>	- Associate Director
<b>ARD</b>	- Associate Regional Director
<b>BNRR</b>	- Burlington-Northern Railroad
<b>D</b>	- Director
<b>DD</b>	- Deputy Director
<b>DOI</b>	- Department of the Interior
<b>DRD</b>	- Deputy Regional Director
<b>EPA</b>	- Environmental Protection Agency
<b>GMP</b>	- General Management Plan
<b>GRKO</b>	- Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS
<b>HFC</b>	- Harpers Ferry Center
<b>HS</b>	- Historic Structure
<b>IP</b>	- Interpretive Prospectus
<b>MWAC</b>	- Midwest Archeological Center
<b>MWR</b>	- Midwest Region
<b>MWRO</b>	- Midwest Regional Office
<b>NPF</b>	- National Park Foundation
<b>NPS</b>	- National Park Service

<b>RD</b>	-	Regional Director
<b>RMR</b>	-	Rocky Mountain Region
<b>RMRO</b>	-	Rocky Mountain Regional Office
<b>SAR</b>	-	Superintendent's Annual Report
<b>SCS</b>	-	Soil Conservation Service
<b>SFI</b>	-	Statement for Interpretation
<b>SFM</b>	-	Statement for Management
<b>USDA</b>	-	U. S. Dept. of Agriculture
<b>WSC</b>	-	Western Service Center
<b>YELL</b>	-	Yellowstone National Park

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### APPENDIX I: CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site

Feb. 3, 1961	Ranch approved for National Landmark status
Oct. 7, 1970	Advisory Board on National Parks recommends acquisition
Nov. 13, 1970	Ranch purchased by National Park Foundation
Mar. 30, 1971	Officially designated "Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS"
Aug. 25, 1972	GRKO authorized as unit of National Park System
Nov. 21, 1972	NPF deeds ranch to NPS
Feb., 1973	First Master Plan approved
January 6, 1974	Rocky Mountain Region established
Aug. 4, 1974	Supt. Richard R. Peterson arrives
Dec. 8, 1974	GRKO begins operations as an independent area
Dec., 1974	Park headquarters established at 314 Main
1975	GRKO affiliates with Yellowstone Library & Museum Assn.
May, 1977	Pedestrian underpass completed
June 11, 1976	Secretary's Advisory Board visits ranch
June, 1977	Visitor contact station/restrooms completed
July 16, 1977	Formal dedication ceremony and park opening

Aug. 27, 1977	Supt. Richard Peterson departs
Oct. 23, 1977	Supt. Thomas G. Vaughan arrives
Fall, 1979	I&RM division created. Curation segregated as a division
Feb., 1980	General Management Plan approved
June, 1988	NPS purchases remaining Warren lands
July 26, 1980	Supt. Thomas G. Vaughan departs
Dec. 28, 1980	Supt. Jimmy D. Taylor arrives
Dec. 28, 1980	P.L. 96-207 estab. new boundary/increases land and development ceilings
1981	Supt. designated Montana State Coordinator
April 1, 1981	Restrooms in HS-3 completed
Feb. 4, 1981	Water system completed
July 16, 1981	Land Acquisition Plan approved
April, 1983	Milwaukee Railroad land purchased
Aug. 24-28, 1983	"Last Spike Centennial" event
Fall, 1983	HS-1 furnishings moved to temporary storage
Mar. 8, 1984	Affiliates with Glacier Natural History Association
July, 1984	HS-1 furnishings returned from temporary storage
May 21, 1985	Land Protection Plan approved
June 17, 1987	Cultural Landscape Analysis approved
Oct. 1, 1987	GRKO and BIHO administratively consolidated
June 16, 1988	NPS purchases remaining Warren lands and structures
July 30, 1988	Supt. Jimmy D. Taylor departs
Aug. 28, 1988	Supt. Eddie L. Lopez arrives
Fall, 1990	Interpretation and resource management segregated
1991	Cultural Landscape Inventory and Analysis

March 19, 1991	Collection Management Plan approved
May 7, 1991	Land Protection Plan approved
Dec. 18, 1992	Park headquarters moved to 210 Missouri
March, 1993	EIS/GMP/DCP approved
April 15, 1994	Supt. Eddie L. Lopez departs
Sept. 30, 1994	BIHO and GRKO administratively separated
May 29, 1994	Supt. Anthony J. Schetzle arrives
1995	Natural resources function professionalized
January, 1995	Curatorial and Maint. offices moved to Warren house

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### APPENDIX II:

### ROSTER OF KEY STAFF

#### Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site

##### Superintendents

Richard R. Peterson	Aug. 4, 1974 - Aug. 28, 1977
Thomas G. Vaughan	Oct. 23, 1977 - July 26, 1980
Jimmy D. Taylor	Dec. 28, 1980 - July 30, 1988
Eddie L. Lopez	Aug. 28, 1988 - April 15, 1994
Anthony J. Schetzslle	May 29, 1994 - Present

##### Administrative Officer

Anita L. Dore	July 2, 1989 - Present
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##### Chief, Interpretation & Resource Management

Paul R. Gordon	Aug. 4, 1974 - Mar. 27, 1977
Michele (Farmer) Hellickson	July 19, 1977 - June 14, 1979
Cheryl L. Clemmensen	Dec. 30, 1979 - Fall, 1990

##### Chief, Interpretation

Neysa M. Dickey	Fall, 1990 - Oct. 14, 1994
Scott Eckberg	Feb. 19, 1995 - Present

##### Chief, Resource Management

Cheryl L. Clemmensen      Fall, 1990 - Sept. 30, 1995

**Curator**

Randi S. (Bry) Smith      Oct. 11, 1987 - 1992

Bob Chenoweth      Oct. 18, 1992 - Mar. 4, 1995

Christine M. Ford      June 11, 1995 - Present

**Maintenance Foreman**

Michael J. McWright      April 9, 1978 - Present



Staff of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, 1995:

(seated, left to right) Scott Eckberg, Christine Ford, Jeffrey Crowe, Lyndel Meikle, Bev Johnson, Marlene Stuart, Jim Johnson. (standing, left to right) Sandy Berg, Joe Lauderville, Tim Moriarty, Lanette King, Keith Edge, Hal Colburn, Peggy Gow, Kim Huston, Tine Johnson, Kelly Eighorn, Tony Schetzle, Susan Sawyer, Mike McWright, Anita Dore, Willie King, Ken Marchand.

*(Courtesy of Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS)*

*(click on photo for a larger size)*

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Last Updated: 04-Nov-2000

# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

### APPENDIX III: LEGISLATION

92D CONGRESS  
*2d Session*

} SENATE {

REPORT  
No. 92-1029

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AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE IN THE STATE OF MONTANA, AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES

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AUGUST 9, 1972.—Ordered to be printed

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Mr. METCALF, from the Committee on Interior and  
Insular Affairs, submitted the following

### REPORT

[To accompany S. 2166]

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, to which was referred the bill (S. 2166) to authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with amendments and recommends that the bill, as amended, do pass.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of S. 2166, which is sponsored by Senators Metcalf and Mansfield of Montana, is to preserve an example of a working cattle ranch commemorating the role of the cattleman in American history.

## BACKGROUND

The Grant-Kohrs ranch was built in 1862 by Johnny Grant, one of Montana's first major cattlemen. In 1866 he sold the ranch to Conrad Kohrs who, from the time of his purchase of the ranch until the 1890's when the open range cattle industry came to a close, directed a vast cattle kingdom with thousands of animals extending hundreds of miles in northern and eastern Montana. Conrad Kohrs became a leader in the area, helping to organize the Montana Stockgrowers' Association, and serving in the territorial legislature and as a member of Montana's constitutional convention.

The ranch is located in Deer Lodge Valley, which was the scene of military activity in 1877 in connection with the Nez Perce campaign and the Battle of the Big Hole. Guests at the ranch, which is the oldest habitation in Deer Lodge Valley, included W. W. DeLacey and S. T. Hauser, explorers of Yellowstone Park.

## NEED

The Grant-Kohrs ranch is perhaps the finest example of a working ranch. In addition to acquiring the physical assets of the ranch, the National Park Service will acquire the ranch records which provide an unbroken record of over 100 years of range and purebred cattle operation. The buildings on the ranch house many implements used at various periods of the ranch's operation, including a rare Doherty wagon which was used as an ambulance to bring wounded from the Big Hole Battlefield, and which is one of only three known to exist.

The Chairman of the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments, in a memorandum to the Secretary of the Interior on October 7, 1970, stated:

The Board considers this historic ranch to be one of national significance. The historic buildings and objects associated with it are in an excellent state of preservation. \* \* \* Both the ranch and its historical records constitute a unique opportunity which will not occur again.

## COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

In accordance with committee policy, the bill has been amended to limit the general

authorization in section 2 for acquisition of lands and interests in land. The report of the Department of the Interior states that the Department proposes to acquire 208 acres of land in fee and to acquire interests in land by a scenic easement in an additional 1,280 acres. The latter figure was corrected during the hearings on the legislation to 1,214 acres. The committee, therefore, amended section 2 to provide for the acquisition of not more than 208 acres within the designated area in fee and to acquire a scenic easement of over not more than 1,214 additional acres within the designated area.

The committee further amended section 4 to provide a dollar ceiling on appropriations for acquisition and development. In its report, the Department of Interior proposed to spend \$350,000 in land acquisition and \$1 million in development. During the hearings, the development costs were broken down as follows:

Roads, trails, parking areas	\$250,000
Foot bridges, drainage structures	100,000
Historical restoration of ranch building and provisions for visitor services	500,000
Utilities	150,000
Other public facilities	100,000
Housing	150,000
Maintenance facilities	250,000
Other items such as fencing	150,000
	<hr/>
Total	1,650,000
Horse and wagon type transportation system (possible)	150,000
	<hr/>
Total	1,800,000

In accordance with committee policy, section 4 was amended to provide a ceiling of \$350,000 for land acquisition and \$1 million for development. The Department was in favor of this amendment.

#### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs in executive session unanimously recommended enactment of S. 2166, as amended.

#### DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

The favorable reports of the Department of the Interior and the Office of Management and Budget on S. 2166 are set forth in full as follows:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,  
*Washington, D.C., April 25, 1972.*

Hon. HENRY M. JACKSON,  
*Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,  
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Your committee has requested a report on S. 2166, a bill "To authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana, and for other purposes".

We recommend the enactment of the bill, if amended as suggested herein.

The bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to designate not more than 2,000 acres in Deer Lodge Valley, Powell County, Montana, for establishment as the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. Within the area so designated the Secretary is authorized to acquire lands and interests therein, and to establish the area at such time as sufficient lands have been acquired. The area is to be administered by the Secretary in accordance with the act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), and the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666).

Deer Lodge in western Montana is the county seat of Powell County, approximately 50 miles from Butte and Helena. The Deer Lodge River, tributary to Clark's Fork of the Columbia, meanders through a beautiful mountain valley. The obvious abundance of water, grass, and timber here readily explains its attraction to pioneer settlers.

The Grant-Kohrs Ranch, now the Warren Ranch, is some 7 square miles in extent (not all contiguous); portions of it adjoin the town to north and west. The ranch buildings are less than a mile north of town and accessible by a gravel road west from the highway.

The ranch was first constructed by Johnny Grant, the first major stockman in the northern Rockies, in 1863. In 1866 Grant moved to Canada after selling his ranch for \$19,200 to Conrad Kohrs, a young butcher and cattle buyer from Virginia City. Once settled at Deer Lodge, Kohrs rapidly expanded his holdings of land and cattle, and by the 1880's became one of the established cattle barons of Montana. He was the first to introduce registered purebred cattle in that State. Over the years this ranch became famous for the production of Belgians and other thoroughbred horses as well as purebred cattle. In 1890 Kohrs enlarged the Old Grant home by the addition of a large brick wing (which became the leg of an architectural "T"), which gave the structure the

proportions of a mansion.

As the oldest habitation in Deer Lodge, the Kohrs Ranch had many historic associations. Guests here included W. W. DeLacey and S. T. Hauser, explorers of Yellowstone Park. Deer Lodge was the scene of military activity in 1877 in connection with the Nez Perce campaign and the Battle of the Big Hole.

The present operator, Mr. Conrad K. Warren, grandson of Kohrs, has conscientiously preserved several early historic structures as well as the later structures which together tell a story of the evolution of ranching operations. In addition, he has preserved much of the historic furniture and furnishings, historic vehicles, objects and written records.

At its 63d meeting on October 6, 1970, the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments recommended the acquisition of the ranch for historic site purposes. The Board found that this ranch is of national historic significance, and termed it a "splendid resource."

This Department will acquire 208 acres of land in fee, including the ranch headquarters and outbuildings and a small tract of land for a visitor center. The remaining acreage, approximately 1,280 acres, would be covered by a scenic easement permitting the continuation of agriculture and ranching activities. The owner has agreed to include all of the historic wagons, buggies, sleighs, and other ranching equipment as part of the acquisition.

Land acquisition costs are expected to total \$350,000, which includes reimbursement of \$257,554 to the National Park Foundation. In 1970 the Foundation acquired the ranch buildings for eventual transfer to the National Park Service for administration of the proposed national historic site. The estimated cost of operation and maintenance is expected to be \$133,400 annually, by the fifth year after establishment.

Development costs are estimated to be \$1.8 million, based on July 1971 prices. In order to relate any appropriation limitation on development costs to the actual cost at the time development takes place, we recommend the following amendment to S. 2166: On page 2, line 22, change the period to a comma and add the following:

not to exceed, however, \$1,800,000 (July 1971 prices) for development, plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuations in construction costs as indicated by engineering cost indices applicable to the type of construction involved herein.

A man-year and cost data statement is enclosed.

The Office of Management and Budget has advised that there is no objection to the

presentation of this report from the standpoint of the administration's program.

Sincerely yours,

NATHANIEL P. REED  
*Assistant Secretary of the Interior*

Hon. Henry M. Jackson  
Chairman, Committee on  
Interior and Insular Affairs  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C.

Enclosure

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92D CONGRESS  
*2d Session*

} HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES {

REPORT  
No. 92-1222

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AUTHORIZING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH  
NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE IN THE STATE OF MONTANA, AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES

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JULY 18, 1972.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the  
Union and ordered to be printed

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Mr. TAYLOR, from the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, submitted the  
following

**REPORT**

[To accompany H.R. 9594]

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 9594) to authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with amendments and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendments are as follows:

Page 2, lines 6 and 7, strike out "with donated or appropriated funds, or by" and insert "or".

Page 2, lines 20 through 22, strike out all of Section 4 and insert in lieu thereof the following:

Sec. 4. There are authorized to be appropriated \$350,000 for land acquisition and not to exceed \$1,800,000 (July, 1971 prices) for development plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuation in construction costs as indicated by engineering cost indices applicable to the type of construction involved herein.

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of H.R. 9594, by Representative Shoup, is to authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana.

#### LOCATION, DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPERTY, BACKGROUND, AND NEED

*Location.*—The lands involved in the proposed Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site are located adjacent to the town of Deer Lodge, Montana, the county seat of Powell County. It is on the western slope of the Rocky Mountains, roughly midway between Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks and about 50 miles from Butte and Helena.

*Description.*—As proposed, the new national historic site would include scattered historic structures and log buildings of doubtless antiquity constructed on a low bench above the Deer Lodge River bottomlands. In the background, the forested foothills and mountains contrast with the beautiful, lush pastures along the meandering river. Cottonwood and aspen trees add splashes of color to the picturesque setting during the fall months, and stacks of hay and grazing cattle will make the setting authentic. The natural scene is sometimes enhanced by the sight of a wandering elk, or an occasional moose. Except for its location in the proximity of Deer Lodge, this area would be the classical setting of a romantic ranch spread of the Old West.

*Background and Need.*—The significance of this area to the National Park System, however, is its potential contribution to public understanding and appreciation of the contributions of such cattle operations to life on the frontier. The Grant-Kohrs Ranch headquarters, with its century-old structures, can tell this story to the visiting public when it is properly restored, furnished, and developed.

The principal feature of the historic site will be the main historic house. It is a "T-shaped" building which was constructed in two stages. The first stage—constructed in 1862 by the original owner of the ranch—is a large, hand-hewn, log-framed dwelling with lap siding, 24 windows, and green gables. In its day, it was the finest house in the region. Later, in 1890, a two-story, brick addition was constructed by the second owner of the ranch to form the leg of the "T". Maintenance of the integrity of this structure and of the entire site has been possible because of the continuous family ownership of the property until its purchase by the National Park Foundation in 1970.

To add to the authenticity of the place, the last family owner of the property has donated a vast number of artifacts associated with ranching operations since the 1850's. Valued at over \$100,000 these irreplaceable items will help visitors visualize the life-style of the late 1800's.

The old furnishings—carpets, draperies, victorian furniture, books, paintings, statuary, stoves, kitchenware, linens, etc.—used in the house will remain as they were. Outside, in the other buildings of equal antiquity, a fine collection of wagons, buggies, and sleighs will be displayed along with various tools, saddles, and other ranching equipment. This vast collection of commonly used articles will make the ranch an authentic time capsule of the Western Frontier.

In addition to the main house, there is a row of bunkhouses—including what is believed to be the original cabin of Johnny Grant constructed in 1853—and various other outbuildings. The family ranching records and papers, which, taken together, will give a complete century of the history of the cattle ranching business, are to be accessible to aid persons developing programs for the interpretation of the site.

The objective of this historic site is to describe livestock ranching as it matured and contributed to the western culture and not to memorialize the individuals directly involved. It is interesting to note, however, that Johnny Grant, the original owner of the ranch, is considered to be the first major stockman in the Northern Rockies. His successor on the property, Conrad Kohrs, expanded the holdings of land and cattle rapidly so that in just two decades he and his partner in the Pioneer Cattle Company were running 30,000 cattle on a huge open range. In addition to being one of Montana's established cattle barons by virtue of the size of his operation, he was the first to introduce registered purebred cattle into the State. His background as a stockman and

community leader caused him to be selected as one of three Montanans in the Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City.

At present, no other place in the National Park System represents this phase of American life. While cattle ranching has a romantic popular appeal, it is difficult to locate a genuine, well-preserved historically important cattle ranch which is typical of the period of the open range. The Grant-Kohrs Ranch, however, offers an excellent opportunity to capture that period in a suitable setting with the original structures and artifacts of one of the West's most famous cattle empires. If approved as recommended, it will be the first unit of the National Park System to be devoted primarily to the role of the cattleman and cowboy in American history.

## LAND OWNERSHIP

As contemplated by the purposed legislation, the historic site would be limited in size to no more than 2,000 acres. Most of the lands involved would continue to be used for limited agricultural and grazing purposes so that only the acquisition of scenic easements would be necessary, but it is anticipated that about 208 acres would be acquired in fee. At the present time, the National Park Foundation—a charitable, nonprofit corporation chartered by the Congress in 1967 to encourage private support for parks, programs and activities of the National Park Service—holds title to the basic ranch headquarters, including 130 acres of land held in fee, and it has acquired scenic easements covering approximately 953 acres. Sufficient interest to attain the objectives of the legislation in the remaining privately held lands would be acquired by purchase, donation, or exchange.

## COST

As recommended by the Committee, the legislation limits the amount authorized to be appropriated for land acquisition to no more than \$350,000. Of this amount, \$257,544 would be used to acquire the interest of the National Park Foundation in the area (an amount equal to the investment made by the Foundation, exclusive of interest), and the remainder would be used to purchase the remaining lands and easements which are deemed necessary for the purposes of this project.

For development, the bill provides for the appropriation of not more than \$1,800,000. This money, when appropriated, will be used for the installation of necessary visitor facilities (including parking, roads, trails, and related facilities) and for time restoration and stabilization of the historic structures.

Too often in the rush to make material improvements, old structures that depict the life of bygone eras are removed from the scene rather than making the effort to preserve them and utilize them for the edification and enjoyment of the public. With this

investment now, future generations will have an opportunity to better understand the nature of ranching operations of the old cattle kingdoms. It is anticipated that the Grant-Kohrs Ranch will be a living memorial to the pioneers of the West, and that a concentrated effort will be made to preserve and recreate the historic ranch scene of the 1880-1900 period.

### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

Two amendments to H.R. 9594 are recommended by the Committee. The first merely deletes unnecessary language which has been construed as a direct appropriation. The second contains the usual provision limiting the amounts authorized to be appropriated for land acquisition (\$350,000) and for development (\$1,800,000).

### SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

*Section 1* authorizes the designation of up to 2,000 acres of land as the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site.

*Section 2* authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to acquire lands or interests in lands for the purposes of the historic site and permits him to establish the site when he determines that sufficient lands have been acquired for this purpose.

*Section 3* extends the usual administrative authorities applicable to units of the National Park System to this area.

*Section 4* limits the amounts authorized to be appropriated for land acquisition to no more than \$350,000. For development, no more than \$1,800,000 is authorized to be appropriated.

### COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

By a voice vote, the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs recommended the enactment of H.R. 9594, as amended.

### DEPARTMENTAL REPORT

The favorable report of the Department of the Interior, dated April 25, 1972, follows:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,  
*Washington, D.C., April 25, 1972.*

Hon. WAYNE N. ASPINALL,  
*Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,  
House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Your Committee has requested a report on H.R. 9594, a bill "To authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana, and for other purposes."

We recommend the enactment of the bill, if amended as suggested herein.

The bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to designate not more than 2,000 acres in Deer Lodge Valley, Powell County, Montana, for establishment as the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. Within the area so designated the Secretary is authorized to acquire lands and interests therein, and to establish the area at such time as sufficient lands have been acquired. The area is to be administered by the Secretary in accordance with the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), and the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666).

Deer Lodge in western Montana is the county seat of Powell County, approximately 50 miles from Butte and Helena. The Deer Lodge River, tributary to Clark's Fork of the Columbia, meanders through a beautiful mountain valley. The obvious abundance of water, grass and timber here readily explains its attraction to pioneer settlers.

The Grant-Kohrs Ranch, now the Warren Ranch, is some 7 square miles in extent (not all contiguous); portions of it adjoin the town to the north and west. The ranch buildings are less than a mile north of town and accessible by a gravel road west from the highway.

The ranch was first constructed by Johnny Grant, the first major stockman in the Northern Rockies, in 1863. In 1866 Grant moved to Canada after selling his ranch for \$19,200 to Conrad Kohrs, a young butcher and cattle buyer from Virginia City. Once settled at Deer Lodge, Kohrs rapidly expanded his holdings of land and cattle, and by the 1880's became one of the established cattle barons of Montana. He was the first to introduce registered purebred cattle in that State. Over the years this ranch became famous for the production of Belgians and other thoroughbred horses as well as purebred cattle. In 1890 Kohrs enlarged the Old Grant home by the addition of a large brick wing (which became the leg of an architectural "T"), which gave the structure the proportions of a mansion.

As the oldest habitation in Deer Lodge, the Kohrs Ranch had many historic associations. Guests here included W. W. DeLacey and S. T. Hauser, explorers of Yellowstone Park. Deer Lodge was the scene of military activity in 1877 in connection

with the Nez Perce campaign and the Battle of the Big Hole.

The present operator, Mr. Conrad K. Warren, grandson of Kohrs, has conscientiously preserved several early historic structures as well as the later structures which together tell a story of the evolution of ranching operations. In addition, he has preserved much of the historic furniture and furnishings, historic vehicles, objects and written records.

At its 63d meeting on October 6, 1970, the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments recommended the acquisition of the ranch for historic site purposes. The Board found that this ranch is of national historic significance, and termed it a "splendid resource."

This Department will acquire 208 acres of land in fee, including the ranch headquarters and outbuildings and a small tract of land for a visitor center. The remaining acreage, approximately 1,280 acres, would be covered by a scenic easement permitting the continuation of agriculture and ranching activities. The owner has agreed to include all of the historic wagons, buggies, sleighs, and other ranching equipment as part of the acquisition.

Land acquisition costs are expected to total \$350,000, which includes reimbursement of \$257,554 to the National Park Foundation. In 1970 the Foundation acquired the ranch buildings for eventual transfer to the National Park Service for administration of the proposed national historic site. The estimated cost of operation and maintenance is expected to be \$133,400 annually, by the fifth year after establishment.

Development costs are estimated to be \$1.8 million, based on July 1971 prices. In order to relate any appropriation limitation on development costs to the actual cost at the time development takes place, we recommend the following amendment to H.R. 9594: On page 2, line 22, change the period to a comma and add the following: "not to exceed, however, \$1,800,000 (July 1971 prices) for development, plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuations in construction costs as indicated by engineering cost indices applicable to the type of construction involved herein."

A man-year and cost data statement is enclosed.

The Office of Management and Budget has advised that there is no objection to the presentation of this report from the standpoint of the Administration's program.

Sincerely yours,

NATHANIEL P. REED,  
*Assistant Secretary of the Interior.*

Enclosure.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE—GRANT KOHRS NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, MONT.  
(PROPOSED)

	19CY	19CY +1	19CY +2	19CY +3	19CY +4
<b>Estimated expenditures:</b>					
Personnel services	\$82,192	\$81,604	\$80,406	\$90,295	\$97,115
All other	25,908	26,796	29,494	34,705	36,285
<b>Total</b>	<b>108,100</b>	<b>108,400</b>	<b>109,900</b>	<b>125,000</b>	<b>133,400</b>
<b>Estimated obligations:</b>					
Land and property acquisition	350,000	-----	-----	-----	-----
Developments	74,000	684,000	320,000	280,000	292,000
Operations (maintenance protection and management)	108,100	108,400	109,900	125,000	133,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>532,100</b>	<b>792,400</b>	<b>429,900</b>	<b>405,000</b>	<b>425,400</b>
<b>Estimated man-years:</b>					
Total, executive direction, substantive and seasonal	7.2	7.8	9.0	10.5	11.5

*Excerpts from*  
**United States of America**  
**Congressional Record**

Proceedings and Debates of the 92d Congress Second Session  
**House of Representatives**

Volume 118—Part 21  
August 14, 1972

GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, MONT.

Mr. ASPINALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for the immediate consideration of the bill (H.R. 9594) to authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the bill as follows:

H.R. 9594

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That, in order to provide an understanding of the frontier cattle era of the Nation's history, to preserve the Grant-Kohrs Ranch, and to interpret the nationally significant values thereof for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary") is hereby authorized to designate not more than two thousand acres in Deer Lodge Valley, Powell county, Montana, for establishment as the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site.

SEC. 2. Within the area designated pursuant to section 1 of this Act, the Secretary is authorized to acquire lands and interests in lands, together with buildings and improvements thereon, by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, or by exchange. The Secretary shall establish the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site by publication of a notice to that effect in the Federal Register at such time as he

deems sufficient lands and interests in lands have been acquired for administration in accordance with the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 3. Pending such establishment and thereafter, the Secretary shall administer lands and interests in lands acquired for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in accordance with the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535; 16 U.S.C. 1, 2-4), as amended and supplemented, and the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461 et seq.), as amended,

SEC. 4. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

With the following committee amendments;

Page 2. lines 6 and 7, strike out "with donated or appropriated funds, or by" and insert "or",

Page 2. lines 20 through 22. strike out all of Section 4 and insert in lieu thereof the following:

"SEC. 4. There are authorized to be appropriated \$350,000 for land acquisition and not to exceed \$1,800,010 (July, 1971 prices for development plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuation in construction costs as indicated by engineering cost indices applicable to the type of construction involved herein."

The committee amendments were agreed to.

Mr. ASPINALL, Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the legislation which is now before the House (H.R. 9594) is to authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana.

## BACKGROUND

The size of the historic site proposed by our colleague from Montana (Mr, SHOUP) is limited by the terms of the bill and dated 1971, a copy of which shall to no more than 2,000 acres. It is contemplated that a substantial portion of this area will be subjected to scenic easements and that cattle grazing will be continued as part of the historic setting.

While this area will symbolize a 19th century ranch spread, it Is only a small portion of what was once one of the huge cattle empires of the northern Rocky Mountain region.

The site would include several historic structures which made up the ranch headquarters and the personal property used in the day-to-day operation of the ranch will be used to give the place an authentic atmosphere. The estimated value of the old furnishings, ranching equipment, and the collection of wagons, buggies, and sleighs which were donated by the heirs of Conrad Kohrs is \$100,000.

The basic property, including the ranch headquarters, was acquired by the National Park Foundation—a nonprofit, federally chartered corporation—and it is being held for the purpose of conveying it to the National Park Service if the historic site is authorized.

Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize that this historic site is not being created to memorialize any particular individual. The significance of this site is that it symbolizes an important element in the heritage and growth of the West—it is, in effect, the "Home on the Range" that we think about when we reminisce about the Old West. Naturally, it is difficult to separate the ranch from its operators and I expect that a great deal will be told concerning Conrad Kohrs, who was a distinguished Montana citizen, and his family when the historic site is established.

#### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amendments to H.R. 9594 merely make it clear that any funding of this project is subject to the usual appropriation process and that the funds authorized to be appropriated are limited to the amounts specified.

#### COST

The most important lands are already owned by the National Park Foundation and it holds scenic easements covering some of the other property. It is contemplated that some additional lands within the 2,000 acre maximum will be needed but the \$350,000 authorized by the legislation includes the reimbursement of the Foundation for the cost of its holdings and any additional lands which may be acquired.

Restoration and stabilization of the historic structures, as well as the construction of appropriate visitor facilities, will require the investment of an additional \$1,800,000.

#### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Speaker, this historic site represents a significant contribution to the story of the growth and development of the West and I am pleased that we have this opportunity to consider this legislation. The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs considered this matter carefully and recommended it without opposition. I commend H.R. 9594, as amended, to my colleagues and urge its approval.

Mr. SHOUP. Mr. Speaker, evidence of the desire and need of Americans to relate to the past is widespread. Replicas and reproductions of pilgrim villages, forts, and frontier ghost towns both public and private give evidence of our desires to recognize, retain, and restore historical events and sites. History is new in our part of the country when compared with Georgetown or Williamsburg, and because it is new, because our history is still fresh in our minds makes it imperative that we act now to insure that our children and our children's children will understand and appreciate their heritage.

To the layman and historian alike, one of the outstanding aspects of the western scene pivots on the cattle industry, the Grant-Kohrs Ranch is such a historic and cultural legacy. This ranch was created in 1863 by Johnny Grant, the first major stockman in the northern Rockies. He subsequently sold the ranch to Conrad Kohrs who rapidly expanded his holdings of land and cattle and by the 1880's became one of the established cattle barons of the Northwest. He was the first to introduce registered purebred cattle in Montana and over the years this ranch has become famous for the production of Belgians and other thoroughbred horses as well as purebred cattle.

Conrad Kohrs became a leader in Montana, serving in the Territorial Legislature, helping to organize the Montana Stockgrowers Association, and serving as a member of Montana's Constitutional Convention.

The ranch we speak of today is living history. The Grant-Kohrs Ranch has been in the same family since 1866. The present day rancher is Conrad K. Warren, grandson of Conrad Kohrs. Mr. Warren converted the operation in the 1930's to a purebred Hereford operation and has been engaged lately mostly in raising feeder cattle. This is a successful cattle operation of over 109 years, duration. As I said this is living history.

Mr. Speaker, this bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to designate not more than 2,000 acres for the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. Specifically the Department will acquire 208 acres of land in fee, including the ranch headquarters and outbuildings and a small tract of land for a visitor center. The remaining acreage, approximately 1,280 acres, would be covered by a scenic easement permitting the continuation of ranching activities.

In addition to the ranch headquarters, the ranch records are intact, giving an unbroken record of the entire operation. Also included are all of the historic wagons, buggies, sleighs, and other ranching equipment. Land acquisition costs are expected to total \$350,000. Development costs are estimated to be \$1.8 million. Estimated cost of operation and maintenance is expected to be \$133,400 annually by the fifth year after establishment.

Mr. Speaker, let us not let this chance to preserve history slip through our fingers. I

urge passage of this legislation, H.R. 9594.

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, the bill which is presently before the House provides for the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana.

## BACKGROUND

Just about a year ago, several members of the Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation visited this site. At that time, we had an opportunity to go through the home and to see the setting of the proposed historic site. What impressed us most about the area was that it offers an opportunity to present to the American people a symbol of a passing way of life. If H.R. 9594, by our colleague from Montana (Mr. SHOUP) is adopted, it will preserve a part of the heritage of the pioneer West.

At one time, the Grant-Kohrs Ranch headquarters was the hub of a vast unfenced cattle empire which was running some 30,000 head of cattle. No other place in the national park system represents this aspect of America life, but it has definitely played a role in our culture.

As presently contemplated, the new historic site would include the main ranch headquarters buildings, including the original homestead cabin of Johnny Grant which was constructed in 1853 and the main house which was constructed in stages between 1862 and 1890. Adding to the authenticity of the site, the heirs of Conrad Kohrs have donated a vast number of historic objects associated with ranching operations since the 1850's, including a fine collection of wagons, buggies and sleighs which were used in connection with the ranch. All of the old furnishings in the house will remain in place so that the visiting public can get a realistic impression of life during the times of the cattle barons.

## COST

Mr. Speaker, this national historic site would be limited to no more than 2,000 acres. Most of this land would continue to be used to graze cattle and would add to the ranch setting of the historic site, however, the ranch buildings would be acquired in fee open to public visitation.

Presently, the National Park Foundation, a nonprofit, federally chartered organization, holds fee title to approximately 130 acres of land—including the ranch headquarters and related buildings—and it holds assessments covering an additional 953 acres. These lands, and, interests in lands, would be transferred to the Government at cost. Altogether, it is estimated that the lands needed for the project can be acquired for no more than \$350,000. An additional amount will be required in order to install

necessary visitor-use facilities and to restore and stabilize some of the historic structures. It is anticipated that these development costs will not exceed \$1,800,000. As usual, the committee has recommended that the appropriations be limited to the amounts estimated to be necessary.

## CONCLUSION

As one who visited the proposed national historic site and participated in the deliberations on the legislation during the various stages of committee consideration, I can assure my colleagues that this proposal merits their favorable consideration, and I am pleased to recommend the enactment of H.R. 9594, as amended,

Mr. SAYLOR. Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of H.R. 9594, the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana.

The establishment of this ranch as a national historic site will preserve and interpret another segment in the historic and cultural development of our national heritage. The Grant-Kohrs Ranch in Deer Lodge Valley, Mont., portrays in its natural setting the frontier life and spirit of the Old West and its principal industry, livestock ranching.

The Grant-Kohrs Ranch is the surviving center of a once wide-ranging cattle empire. Johnny Grant, a trapper, hunter and trader, settled in Deer Lodge Valley in 1859. In 1866 he sold the ranch to Conrad Kohrs, a cattle buyer and butcher. From the time of the purchase of the ranch until the 1890's, when the open range cattle industry drew to a close, Conrad Kohrs and his associates directed a vast cattle and livestock empire extending for miles in northern and eastern Montana.

The Grant-Kohrs Ranch has been in the same family since purchased from Johnny Grant in 1866, and the present rancher is the grandson of Conrad Kohrs. In addition to the ranch headquarters, the ranch comprises several old and historic structures, including wagons, buggies, other vehicles and ranching paraphernalia. The ranch records are intact, giving an unbroken historical record of the range and purebred cattle operations for over 100 years.

The purpose of this bill is to establish the Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site and restore the structures and area to a condition to accept visitors into an operating cattle ranch scene.

The bill provides for the site to comprise not more than 2,000 acres and authorizes the appropriation of \$350,000 for land acquisition and \$1.8 million for development of the site.

There is no unit of the National Park System, at the present time, that represents this

historical and cultural phase of our history. For this reason, I think it most fitting and appropriate that we take this opportunity to preserve and establish the Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site.

I urge my colleagues to support the passage of this bill.

Mr. SKUBITZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 9594, to authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site in the State of Montana.

The bill authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to designate not more than 2,000 acres of land in Deer Lodge Valley, Powell County, Mont., for this historic site. The Grant-Kohrs Ranch was first constructed in this valley in 1863, by John Grant. In 1866, Grant conveyed the ranch to Conrad Kohrs. Mr. Kohrs expanded both the ranch and cattle operations to become one of the famous cattle barons of Montana and the early west.

Through the years these historic ranch structures have been conscientiously preserved to include historic furniture and furnishings, vehicles, and wagons, and written records.

The purpose of this bill is to preserve this area and its historic structures and objects to illustrate and create a public understanding and appreciation of livestock ranching and the frontier life. At the present time, there is no such unit of the National Park System which represents this phase of American life. The Grant-Kohrs Ranch is a genuine, well-preserved, historic cattle ranch, and presents an excellent opportunity to place in the National Park System a unit which uniquely portrays one of the most famous cattle empires of the Old West.

The bill as recommended by the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs provides that most of the 2,000 acres proposed for this historic site will remain in limited agriculture and grazing uses. Some 208 acres will be acquired in fee which will include the ranch headquarters, other structures and a small tract for a visitor center.

The bill limits the amount of money authorized for land acquisition to \$350,000 and provides for not more than \$1,800,000 for development of the visitor center, parking, roads, trails, and related facilities and the restoration of some of the structures.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Mr. ASPINALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs be discharged from further consideration of a similar Senate bill (S. 2166) to authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana, and for other purposes, and ask for immediate consideration of

the Senate bill.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill as follows:

S. 2166

An act to authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana and for other purposes

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in order to provide an understanding of the frontier cattle era of the Nation's history, to preserve the Grant-Kohrs Ranch, and to interpret the nationally significant values thereof for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary") is hereby authorized to designate not more than two thousand acres in Dear Lodge Valley, Powell County, Montana, for establishment as the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site.*

SEC. 2. Within the area designated pursuant to section 1 of this Act, the Secretary is authorized to acquire not to exceed 208 acres in fee and other interests in lands not to exceed 1,214 acres, together with buildings and improvements thereon, by donation, or exchange. The Secretary shall establish the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site by publication of a notice to that effect in the Federal Register at such time as he deems sufficient lands and interests in lands have been acquired for administration in accordance with the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 3. Pending such establishment and thereafter, the Secretary shall administer lands and interests in lands acquired for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in accordance with the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535; 16 U.S.C. 1, 2-4), as amended and supplemented, and the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461 et seq.), as amended.

SEC. 4. There are authorized to be appropriated \$350,000 for land acquisition and not to exceed \$1,800,000 (July 1971 prices) for development plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuation in construction costs as

indicated by engineering cost indices applicable to the type of construction Involved herein.

#### AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. ASPINALL

Mr. ASPINALL. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr ASPINALL: Strike out all after the enacting clause of S. 2166 and insert in lieu thereof the provisions of H.R. 9594, as passed, as follows:

That, in order to provide an understanding of the frontier cattle era of the Nation's history, to preserve the Grant-Kohrs Ranch, and to interpret the nationally significant values thereof for the benefit and Inspiration of present and future generations, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary") is hereby authorized to designate not more than two thousand acres in Deer Lodge valley. Powell County, Montana, for establishment as the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site.

SEC. 2. Within the area designated pursuant to Section 1 of this Act, the Secretary is authorized to acquire lands and interests in lands, together with buildings and improvements thereon, by donation, purchase, or exchange. The Secretary shall establish the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site by publication of a notice to that effect In the Federal Register at such time as he deems sufficient lands and interests in lands have been acquired for administration in accordance with the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 3, Pending such establishment and thereafter, the Secretary shall administer lands and interests in lands acquired for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic site in accordance with the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat, 535; 16 U.S.C. 1, 2-4), as amended and supplemented, and the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat, 666; 16 U.S.C. 461 at seq.), as amended.

SEC. 4, There are authorized to be appropriated \$350,000 for land acquisition and not to exceed \$1,800,000 (July 1971 prices) for development plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuation in construction costs as indicated by engineering cost indices applicable to the type of construction involved.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Senate bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

A similar House bill (H.R. 9594) was laid on the table.

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GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ASPINALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that any Member desiring to do so may insert his remarks in explanation of the bill preceding the passage of the House bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.

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*Excerpts from*  
**United States of America**  
**Congressional Record**

Proceedings and Debates of the 92d Congress Second Session  
**Senate**

Volume 118—Part 22  
August 17, 1972

**ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH NATIONAL HISTORIC  
SITE, MONT.**

Mr. BIBLE. Mr. President, I ask the Chair to lay before the Senate a message from the House of Representatives on S. 2166.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEALL) laid before the Senate the amendment of the House of Representatives to the bill (S. 2166) to authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana, and for other purposes", which was to strike out all after the enacting clause, and insert:

That, in order to provide an understanding of the frontier cattle era of the Nation's history, to

preserve the Grant-Kohrs Ranch. and to interpret the nationally significant values thereof for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to the as "Secretary") is hereby authorized to designate not more than two thousand acres in Deer Lodge Valley, Powell County, Montana, for establishment as the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site.

SEC. 2. Within the area designated pursuant to section 1 of this Act, the Secretary is authorized to acquire lands and interests in lands, together with buildings and improvements thereon, by donation, purchase or exchange. The Secretary shall establish the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site by publication of a notice to that effect in the Federal Register at such time as he deems sufficient lands and interests in lands have been acquired for administration in accordance with the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 3. Pending such establishment and thereafter, the Secretary shall administer lands and interests in lands acquired for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in accordance with the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat, 535; 16 U.S.C. 1, 2-4), as amended and supplemented, and the Act of August 21. 1935 (49 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461 et seq.), as amended.

SEC. 4. There are authorized to be appropriated \$350,000 for land acquisition and not to exceed \$1,800,000 (July 1971 prices) for development plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuation in construction costs as indicated by engineering cost indices applicable to the type of construction involved herein.

Mr. BIBLE. Mr. President, the amendments of the House to S. 2166. to authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana, are technical in nature and do not change in any way the substance of the bill as passed by the Senate.

Therefore, Mr. President, I move that the Senate concur in the amendments of the House of Representatives to S. 2166.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion of the Senator from Nevada.

The motion was agreed to.

August 25, 1972  
[S. 2166]

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AN ACT

To authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana, and for other purposes.

Grant-Kohrs  
Ranch National  
Historic Site, Mont.

Establishment.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That, in order to provide an understanding of the frontier cattle era of the Nation's history, to preserve the Grant-Kohrs Ranch, and to interpret the nationally significant values thereof for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the "Secretary") is hereby authorized to designate not more than two thousand acres in Deer Lodge Valley, Powell County, Montana, for establishment as the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site.

Land and  
buildings,  
acquisition.

Publication in  
Federal Register.

SEC. 2. Within the area designated pursuant to section 1 of this Act, the Secretary is authorized to acquire lands and interests in lands, together with buildings and improvements thereon, by donation, purchase or exchange. The Secretary shall establish the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site by publication of a notice to that effect in the Federal Register at such time as he deems sufficient lands and interests in lands have been acquired for administration in accordance with the purposes of this Act.

Administration.

SEC. 3. Pending such establishment and thereafter, the Secretary shall administer lands and interests in lands acquired for the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in accordance with the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535; 16 U.S.C. 1, 2-4), as amended and supplemented, and the Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666: 16 U.S.C. 461 et seq.), as amended.

Appropriation.

SEC. 4. There are authorized to be appropriated \$350,000 for land acquisition and not to exceed \$1,800,000 (July 1971 prices) for development plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuation in construction costs as indicated by engineering cost indices applicable to the type of construction involved herein.

Approved August 25, 1972.

(11) Grant Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, Montana: Section 4 of the Act of August 25, 1972 (86 Stat. 632), is amended to read as follows: "SEC. 4. There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act, but not to exceed \$752,000 for land acquisition and not to exceed \$2,075,000 for development." ; the additional sums herein authorized for land acquisition may be used to acquire the fee simple title to lands over which the United States has acquired easements or other less than fee interests.

November 10, 1978

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*excerpts from* **PUBLIC LAW 96-607**

**94 STAT. 3545**

TITLE XI

December 28, 1980

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GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

SEC. 1101. The Act entitled "An Act to authorize the establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site in the State of Montana, and for other purposes", approved August 25, 1972 (86 Stat. 632) is amended—

(1) by inserting the following after the period in the first section:  
"The boundary of the National Historic Site shall be as generally depicted on the map entitled, 'Boundary Map, Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site', numbered 451-80-013, and dated January 25, 1980, which shall be on file and available for public inspection in the local and Washington, District of Columbia, offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior."; and

(2) by striking out "\$752,000" and "\$2,075,000" in section 4 and inserting in lieu thereof "\$1,100,000" and "\$7,818,000," respectively.

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## ENDNOTES

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6 Palmer, Journal of Travels, p. 86; Rumer, Wagon Trains of '44, p. 41; Interpretations, probably exaggerated, of Grant's role in discouraging American travelers from going to Oregon are found in, Frank C. Robertson, Fort Hall: Gateway to the Oregon Country, (New York: Hastings House, 1963), pp. 95-96, 194-96, 231-35. It should be noted, however, that Robertson confuses John Grant with his father;

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8 Meikle (ed.), Very Close to Trouble, pp. 21, 32, 34.

9 Accounts differ somewhat as to the motivation for this move. Wells, "Richard Grant," p. 185, directly attributes the exodus from Idaho to a perceived threat of Mormon expansion into that region. Conversely, John Grant himself made only brief mention of the war, implying that the main threat their security rested on any aid the mountaineers might extend to U. S. troops. Meikle (ed.), Very Close to Trouble, pp. 66-67; Granville Stuart and his party, finding themselves blocked from leaving Utah either east or west, traveled north, where they encountered the Grants. [Granville Stuart], Forty Years On the Frontier As Seen in the Journals and Reminiscences of Granville Stuart, edited by Paul C. Phillips. (Glendale, Cal.: Arthur Clark Co., 1957), I, pp. 125-27 (hereafter cited as, Forty Years On the Frontier).

10 Meikle (ed.), Very Close to Trouble, p. 67.

11 Wells, "Richard Grant," pp. 183-86; Meikle (ed.), Very Close to Trouble, p. 83.

12 Meikle (ed.), p. 72; In fact, the traffic over the trail was heavier in 1859 than it had been since 1853. Nevertheless, the total number of emigrants was lower than during the years 1849-53, to which Grant likely made his comparison. Unruh, Plains Across, p. 120.

13 Meikle (ed.), Very Close to Trouble, p. 73.

14 James Stuart confirms that both of Grant's Indian wives were still with him as late as 1862. [Stuart], Forty Years On the Frontier, I, p. 203.

15 Albright, "Historic Resources Study," pp. 10-12.

16 The Kohrs' suffered the loss of their only son, William Kruse Kohrs, to illness in 1901. Subsequently, Con Kohrs paid for the construction of the public library in Deer Lodge as a memorial to William. Ibid, p. 95.

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2 Ibid. p. 112.

3 Augusta Kohrs died October 29, 1945 in Helena. Albright, Historic Resource Study, p. 139.

4 Con also purchased the upper ranch, which had been repossessed in the 1930s. Albright, pp. 114-16.

5 This property encompassed somewhat over 5,000 acres, purchased in 1891, plus additional parcels acquired in 1893 and 1895. These acquisitions were all of part of Kohrs and Bielenberg's strategy of expanding the home ranch. Ibid. pp. 83-84.

6 Personal communication, Lyndel Meikle to the author, January 30, 1997.

7 Conrad L. Wirth, Parks, Politics, and the People. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), pp. 237-38.

8 Mission 66 eventually consumed over 1 billion dollars. Wirth provides a thorough and useful insiders examination of the program in a chapter on the subject. Ibid, pp. 237-284.

9 The National Parks: Shaping the System. (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of the Interior, 1991), p. 62 (hereafter cited as, Shaping the System); William C. Everhart, The National Park Service. (New York: Praeger Press, 1972), pp. 74-75.

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12 Warren was notified of the designation in February, 1961. Acting Director E. T. Scoyen to Conrad

Warren, February 3, 1961; Typescript statement of significance, National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings, September 9, 1960, administrative correspondence files, Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS (hereafter cited as GRKO archives). Part One of the National Park System Plan: History. (Washington, D. C.: National Park Service, 1972), p. 162 (hereafter cited as, NPS Plan).

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15 Mattes, "Alternative Studies Report," p. 2.

16 Personal communication, Aubrey C. Haines with the author, January 30, 1997.

17 Conrad K. Warren to Chester C. Brown, January 10, 1967, GRKO archives.

18 Theodor R. Swem to Warren, February 28, 1967, GRKO archives.

19 Warren to Swem, March 14, 1967, GRKO archives.

20 Russell E. Dickenson to Warren, April 6, 1967; Dickenson to Warren, July 5, 1967, GRKO archives.

21 Mattes, "Alternative Studies Report," p. 2.

22 Mattes, "Alternative Studies Report," pp. 14-15; Jay Anderson, Time Machines: The World of Living History, (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1984), pp. 35-37.

23 Mattes, "Alternative Studies Report," p. 3.

24 Swem to Warren, February 6, 1969, GRKO archives.

25 Warren to Swem, July 12, 1969, GRKO archives. By this time, Nell Warren had a serious health condition from which she would never recover. No doubt Con's sense of urgency stemmed at least in part from this situation, and because creditors were at his door. Warren interview July 10, 1980, p. 79; Meikle to the author, January 30, 1997.

26 Ralph H. Lewis to Frank Hjort, WASO, August 25, 1969, GRKO archives.

- 27 The Advisory Board was given a favorable briefing on the ranch at its 61st annual meeting early in October, 1969. Chairman Nathaniel A. Owings, Advisory Board on National Parks to Secretary of the Interior, October 7, 1970; Robert R. Garvey to Warren, November 11, 1969, GRKO archives.
- 28 Garvey to Warren, January 30, 1970, GRKO archives.
- 29 Garvey to Warren, February 19, 1970; "Proposed Sale of Land for Creation of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site or Park," n.d. typescript, GRKO archives.
- 30 Warren to Garvey, March 13, 1970; Peter Meloy to C. K. Warren, April 1, 1970; Meloy to Garvey, April 7, 1979; GRKO archives.
- 31 Shaping the System, pp. 63-65.
- 32 The "National Park System Plan" was updated in 1972. Ronald A. Foresta, America's National Parks and Their Keepers, (Washington, D. C.: Resources for the Future, Inc., 1984), pp. 136-45.
- 33 Personal communication, John D. "Jack" McDermott with the author, January 29, 1997. Specifics based on McDermott's diary. The NPS Plan was a guideline developed by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments. It was designed as a classification system, based on a thematic framework, for the future expansion of the Park System to insure that all significant eras and movements in the American experience were represented. Significant to the Grant-Kohrs story is that the plan was approved by the Secretary of the Interior on June 10, 1970, which coincided closely with Bob Garvey's site inspection. NPS Plan, p. iii; It should be noted that Grant-Kohrs Ranch had been placed on the National Register of Historic Places, authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, by virtue of its previously-conferred Landmark status. The National Register of Historic Places 1969 (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1969), p. xi.
- 34 Owings to Interior Sec., October 7, 1970, GRKO archives.
- 35 Meloy to Garvey, August 18, 1970, GRKO archives; Edwin C. Bearss to Chief, Office of History & Historic Architecture, WASO, November 17, 1970, GRKO archives; "Storied Montana Ranch Bought by National Park Foundation," Department of the Interior News Release, December 9, 1970, GRKO archives; "Foundation Purchases Pioneer Cattle Ranch for National Historic Site," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, December 18, 1970, William K. Kohrs Library, Deer Lodge, Montana. The actual number of acres varied among the early documents, e.g. RD, MWR to D, NPS, July 21, 1971 fixed the fee acquisition at 140 acres and the easements at 1180 acres. GRKO archives. See also J. Leonard Norwood to Director, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, August, 8, 1972, Lands Division files, RMRO, NPS, Denver, CO.
- 36 Warren interview July 10, 1980, p. 79, GRKO archives.

- 37 "Historic Site Use Agreement Between Conrad K. Warren and the National Park Foundation," November 13, 1970, GRKO archives.
- 38 John R. Douglass to Superintendent, YELL, November 17, 1970, GRKO archives.
- 39 Vernon E. Hennesay to Superintendent, YELL, Nov. 27, 1970; Dale L. Nuss to Supt., YELL, December 3, 1970; Giles to Director, NPS, December 18, 1970. A belated article introducing Pettet appeared in the Deer Lodge Silver State Post, February 26, 1971.
- 40 Hennesay to Supt., YELL, November 27, 1970; Supt. Jack K. Anderson to Mayor Anthony Sneberger, Deer Lodge, Mont., December 4, 1970; Hennesay to Supt., YELL, January 21, 1971. The quotation is taken from, Douglass to Supt., YELL, December 21, 1970, GRKO archives.
- 41 Ed Jahns to RD, RMR, August 16, 1974, GRKO archives; Interview with Paul R. Gordon, October 21, 1996; Haines interview.
- 42 William Brown and Ted Mannix, Deer Lodge Chamber of Commerce to Sen. Mike Mansfield, February 28, 1971, GRKO archives.
- 43 Sen. Lee Metcalf to Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel, November 23, 1970; AD Joe Holt to Sen. Lee Metcalf, Jan. 6, 1971; Hennesay to Mons L. Teigen, Montana Stock Growers Assn., January 29, 1971; Sen. Mike Mansfield to Director George B. Hartzog, March 9, 1971, GRKO archives.
- 44 Act. RD Robert L. Giles to D, NPS, December 18, 1970; Assist. Director Joe Holt to RD, MWR, Jan. 21, 1971; J. Leonard Volz to D, NPS, Feb. 4, 1971; Act. RD Bill W. Dean, MWR to D, WSC, March 15, 1971; the "Approved Planning Directive" was transmitted from John S. Adams, WSC to RD, MWR, March 26, 1971; Glenn O. Hendrix, WSC to RD, MWR, April 20, 1971; the official name was adopted in a memo from Roger J. Contor to D, NPS, March 30, 1971. GRKO archives.
- 45 DD Thomas F. Flynn to Sen. Mike Mansfield, May [illegible], 1971; Frank A. Bracken, WASO to Sen. Mike Mansfield, May 24, 1971. Hennesay to Mannix, July 28, 1971, GRKO archives.
- 46 Frank A. Bracken to Sen. Mike Mansfield, May 24, 1971; Volz to D, NPS, July 21, 1971, GRKO archives.
- 47 Hennesay to Mannix, July 28, 1971; Volz to Hartzog, July 30, 1971, GRKO archives.
- 48 "Senators Introduce Bill to Establish Grant-Kohrs Ranch As Historic Site," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, July 9, 1971; Flynn to Legislative Counsel, DOI, July 30, 1971, GRKO archives.
- 49 "Grant-Kohrs Site to be Inspected," Helena Montana Standard, July 21, 1971, GRKO archives; "Congressional Committee visits Grant-Kohrs Historic Site; Seeks Restoration, Development Funds,"

Deer Lodge Silver State Post, August 13, 1971; Hennesay to Mannix, August 18, 1971, GRKO archives; Montana Governor Forrest H. Anderson also endorsed the project shortly afterward. Anderson to Hartzog, August 30, 1971, GRKO archives.

50 The Eastern and Western Service Centers were combined into one office in Denver, effective November 15, 1971. "Historic Listing of National Park Service Officials." (Washington, D. C.: National Park Service, 1991), p. 38.

51 This figure included repayment to the NPF. The preliminary master plan proposed acres slightly different from the final figures. "Proposed Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site: Master Plan Concept," ins., July, 1971; John E. Ritchie to Chief, Environmental Planning & Design, WSC, September 9, 1971; Voltz to Hartzog, September 22, 1971; Flynn to Legislative Counsel, DOI, October 26, 1971, GRKO archives.

52 Hennesay to Mrs. Conrad Warren, March 5, 1973, GRKO archives.

53 Deer Lodge Silver State Post, February 12, 1972; That the senators from Montana felt they had been "scooped" was not voiced publicly, yet it is suggested in an article, "Approval for Grant-Kohrs Ranch To Become New National Park Follows Congressman's Testimony," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, May 5, 1972.

54 Con Warren remained bitter toward the community, stating in later years that, "I had no help from the Chamber of Commerce or the City of Deer Lodge. in fact, a few of those worthies suggested that I was getting senile to even dream that a Historic Site was possible." Warren to Lynn Thompson, RD, RMR, May 31, 1974, GRKO archives.

55 "Planning for National Historic Site Told by Congressman, Feasibility, Need for Overpass Being Studied," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, July 14, 1972; "Foundation Purchases Pioneer Cattle Ranch for National Historic Site," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, December 18, 1970.

56 Gordon interview.

57 "Senator Testifies On Senate Bill for Grant-Kohrs Ranch," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, July 28, 1972; "House, Senate Pass Bills for Grant-Kohrs Ibid, August 18, 1972; U. S., "Authorizing the Establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site: Report to Accompany H. R. 9594, 92nd Cong., 2d Session, 1972, H. Report; Ibid, Senate, Report to Accompany S. 2166. "Grant-Kohrs Bill Signed by President," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, September 1, 1972. Public Law 92-406 established the area, U. S. "Statutes," (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1973), Vol. 86, p. 632.

58 "Deed No. 87449, National Park Foundation to United States of America," November 21, 1972, copy in GRKO archives.

59 "Development of Grant-Kohrs Ranch Awaits Appropriation; Starting Preliminary Inventory," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, September, 29, 1972.

60 Hennesay to Supt., YELL, December 22, 1972; Hennesay to Mrs. Conrad Warren, March 5, 1973, GRKO archives.

## Chapter Two

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1 "Alternative Studies Report: Grant-Kohrs Ranch, Montana." (San Francisco, Cal.: National Park Service, 1968), p. 13; Ralph Lewis, chief of NPS museum operations, also voiced support for living history activities at the ranch in his memo to Frank Hjort, August 25, 1969, GRKO archives.

2 "Historic Use Agreement Between Conrad K. Warren and National Park Foundation," November 13, 1970, GRKO archives (hereafter cited as "Use Agreement").

3 "Proposed Sale of Land For Creation of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site or Park," ins., no date [c. 1970], GRKO archives (hereafter cited as "Proposed Sale"); A ten-year lease-hold agreement provision was included as paragraph 10 in the Historic Use Agreement previously cited.

4 Robert L. Giles, Act. RD, MWR, December 18, 1970, GRKO archives.

5 Joe Holt, AD, NPS to Sen. Lee Metcalf, January 6, 1971, GRKO archives.

6 Bill W. Dean, Act. RD, MWR to D, WSC, March 15, 1971; John S. Adams, acting chief planning and design, WSC to RD MWR, March 26, 1971; Glenn O. Hendrix to D, MWR, April 20, 1971, GRKO archives.

7 This road was constructed in the spring, 1974, Wheeler to Warren, April 9, 1974, GRKO archives.

8 "Proposed Sale," GRKO archives; "Use Agreement," GRKO archives.

9 "Master Plan, Proposed Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, Montana," n.d., [c. 1972] p. 20 (hereafter cited as, MP, 1972), GRKO archives. Two early master plans were found in the course of research, neither of which was dated. Although the titles vary slightly, they appear to be nearly identical in content. The document referenced throughout this study was somewhat more refined and had the advantage of being uniformly paginated, whereas the other was not. By references therein to land owned by the NPF, it may be inferred that both documents date c. 1972 and pre-date NPS acquisition of the site.

10 Ibid, p. 27; Hendrix to D, MWR, May 20, 1971; Vernon E. Hennesay to J. G. Haviland, Deer Lodge,

Montana, October 14, 1971, GRKO archives.

11 Hennesay to Supt. YELL, June 1, 1971, GRKO archives.

12 MP, 1972, pp. 27-29.

13 Ibid, p. 31; Volz to D, NPS, July 21, 1971 forwarding legislative support data, GRKO archives.

14 The city tract and the strip east of the railroads extending from the city limit north to the U. S. 10 approach road to I-90 were designated as Class II lands for visitor accommodations and administrative purposes. The remainder of the Site was classed as natural environment. MP, 1972, pp. 17, 32.

15 Hennesay to Supt., YELL, February 5, 1973; Kenneth R. Ashley, AD, MWR to files, February 22, 1973; Deputy Assist. Secretary Douglas P. Wheeler, DOI to Conrad K. Warren, April 9, 1974; Ashley to files, February 22, 1973, GRKO archives.

16 "Ranch Funding Nears Final Hurdle for \$103,000," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, August 10, 1973; "Park Service Plans Access Service Route," Ibid, October 19, 1973; Wheeler to Warren, April 9, 1974, GRKO archives.

17 "Park Access Route Up For Review; Decision in 'Near Future,'" Deer Lodge Silver State Post, October 5, 1973.

18 Hennesay to Supt., YELL, February 5, 1973; Ted J. Mannix to Hennesay, September 20, 1973; Hennesay to Mannix, September 28, 1973, GRKO archives.

19 "Grant-Kohrs Ranch Dying As Result of Bureaucratic Bungle; No Development Money Asked," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, March 15, 1974.

20 The delay in recruiting an area manager resulted from one of the periodic "freezes" on employment, followed by internal reassignments aimed at reducing personnel levels through attrition. "Park Access Route . . .," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, October 5, 1973; "Seek Ways to Expedite Development of Grant-Kohrs Historic Site," Ibid, March 22, 1974.

21 Jay Sahd, WASO, truthfully denied that any money had been requested for GRKO for FY 1974. This was probably because the area requests had not made the regional priority list and thus, were not forwarded to the Washington level for consideration. "Grant-Kohrs Ranch Dying As Result of Bureaucratic Bungle; No Development Money Asked," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, March 15, 1974.

22 Wheeler to Warren, April 9, 1974;

23 "Seek Ways to Expedite Development of Grant-Kohrs Historic Site," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, March 22, 1974.

24 Hennesay to Director, MWR, no date [c. April 1973], GRKO archives.

25 The park's first historian perceived an antagonistic relationship between Warren and the community of Deer Lodge. Interview with Paul R. Gordon, October 21, 1996; However, former superintendent Richard Peterson recalled that Nell Warren's invalided condition kept Con largely confined to the ranch, except for brief trips into town to conduct necessary business. It was Peterson's impression that by the time of his arrival in 1974, Con had relatively few contacts in town. He did maintain a relationship with his close friend, Frank Shaw, a Deer Lodge resident. In earlier times, before Nell's condition became serious, the Warrens apparently socialized to a greater extent with the town's leading people. Personal communication, Richard R. Peterson, Big Thicket National Preserve, Texas, June 25, 1997; Con mingled less with the townspeople as his lifestyle changed, a combined result of Nell's illness, his own age, and the dispersal of the registered cattle herd. Shaw remembered that Con had "a lot of friends," but he wasn't a social bug." He also commented that Con's perception of a lack of support for preserving the ranch may have stemmed from the fact that Warren himself did not reveal much about his dealings with NPS. Therefore, the townspeople simply were not fully aware of the effort and its implications. Personal communication, Frank Shaw, Deer Lodge, Montana, with the author, June 26, 1997.

26 Warren to Lynn Thompson, RD, RMR, May 31, 1974, GRKO archives.

27 Ibid.

28 Ibid.

29 Sen. Mike Mansfield to Warren, June 24, 1974; Sen. Lee Metcalf to Warren, June 25, 1974; Cong. Dick Shoup to Warren, June 27, 1974; GRKO archives.

30 Ronald H. Walker, D, NPS to Mansfield, June 17, 1974; John B. Cook, Assoc. D, NPS to Warren, June 18, 1974; Thompson to Warren, June 25, 1974, GRKO archives. Shoup, eager to get credit for resolving the issue, prematurely notified the press that he and the NPS had reached a consensus on the south boundary access. "Congressman Shoup Receives Accord for Advancing Grant-Kohrs Park Development," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, June 7, 1974.

31 "Money Asked To Push Park Opening for Summer of 1975," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, July 14, 1975.

32 "Funding for Grant-Kohrs in Appropriations Bill in House," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, July 26, 1974; "Park Personnel Arrive, Seek Office Location," Ibid, August 9, 1974.

33 Interview with Richard R. Peterson, February 5, 1997.

- 34 "Grant-Kohrs Ranch Stalled; Previous Decisions Rescinded," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, October 18, 1974; "No Approximate Time Given for Opening of Grant-Kohrs; Bureaucracies Move Slowly," Ibid, November 29, 1974.
- 35 "Grant-Kohrs Ranch to Open By Summer; Park Service Director Vetoes Delay," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, December 6, 1974.
- 36 Superintendent's Annual Report, 1975, (hereafter cited as, SAR) GRKO archives.
- 37 Ibid. By this action, Peterson concurrently was elevated to superintendent.
- 38 "Record of Comments for Environmental Assessment, Grant-Kohrs Ranch," March 26, 1974, pp. 18-20 (hereafter cited as "Record of Comments"); Forty-seven persons attended the meeting, while four others responded by mail. Richard R. Peterson to RD, RMR, April 28, 1975, GRKO archives.
- 39 "Record of Comments," pp. 24-25; While claiming to represent environmental groups, Jean Warren, first wife of Conrad Warren II, may have reflected a family bias. Nevertheless, no one else refuted her opinion. "Express Opinions At Park Service Public Hearing," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, April 13, 1975; With the ploy defeated, the City of Deer Lodge and the Powell County Commissioners eventually collaborated to develop a railroad crossing at Milwaukee. Ibid, February 6, 1976.
- 40 Peterson declared that an environmental impact statement would not be needed for this undertaking and that the assessment would be subject only to clearance under Section 106 of the 1966 Historic Preservation Act. Peterson to RD, RMR, April 28, 1975, GRKO archives.
- 41 "Summer Opening Set For Ranch-Park; Plan Pedestrian Overpass," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, May 15, 1975.
- 42 "Grant Kohrs Historical Park May Open Before Bicentennial," The Missoulian, November 22, 1974.
- 43 Glen T. Bean, Act. RD to Manager, DSC, May 5, 1975; Bean to Congressman Max Baucus, June 27, 1975, GRKO archives.
- 44 Peterson to chief, contracting and property management, RMR, May 7, 1975, GRKO archives.
- 45 SAR, 1975.
- 46 Donald A. Purse, DSC to Peterson, May 10, 1976, GRKO archives.
- 47 "Review Draft, Draft General Management Plan: Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site,

Montana." (Denver, Colo.: National Park Service, November, 1978), pp. 23-24.

48 Ibid. pp. 24-26, 57.

49 Ibid. p. 45.

50 Ibid. pp. 52-53.

51 Ibid. p. 29-30.

52 Ibid. p. 33.

53 Personal communication, Nan V. Rickey, Evergreen, Colo., with the author, February 13, 1997.

54 Interview with Thomas G. Vaughan, October 22, 1996.

55 "General Management Plan," (Denver, Colo.: National Park Service, 1980), pp. 31, 33, GRKO archives.

### **Chapter Three**

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1 "Proposed Sale of Land For Creation of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site or Park," n.d. [c. 1970], GRKO archives.

2 All quotations are from, Merrill J. Mattes, "Alternatives Study Report: Grant-Kohrs Ranch, Montana." (San Francisco, Cal.: National Park Service, 1968), pp. 3, 7, 13-15.

3 "Offer to Sell Real Property" attached to Peter Meloy to C. K. Warren, April 1, 1970; Eugene F. Lyttle to M. K. Daniels, n.d. [c. October, 1970), GRKO archives. Discrepancies in the acreages exist among various documents. The most reliable figures, detailed in the final legislative support data package, are shown here. The easement included approximately 77 acres containing the Warren residence and some pasture. J. Leonard Volz, MWR to D, NPS, September 30, 1971, GRKO archives.

4 Roger J. Contor, MWR, to D, NPS, March 30, 1971; Volz to D, NPS, July 30, 1971, GRKO archives.

5 Phillip R. Iversen, MWR, to D, NPS, October 15, 1971, GRKO archives.

6 U. S., Congress, "Authorizing the Establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site:

Report on H. R. 9594," 92nd Congress, 2d Session, 1972, Report 92-1222.

7 "Statement of Asst. Secretary Nathaniel P. Reed, Department of the Interior, in Support of Legislation to Authorize the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, April, 1972," [cite primary source]; P. L. 92-406, U. S. Statutes at Large," (Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1973), Vol. 86, P. L. 92-406; J. Leonard Norwood, assoc. director for administration, advised that the NPF should be reimbursed by reprogramming funds from the FY 73 appropriation, since the FY 74 budget submission was still a year away. Norwood, WASO to D, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, August 8, 1972; "Deed, National Park Foundation to United States of America," November 21, 1972, GRKO archives.

8 Ronald A. Foresta, America's National Parks and Their Keepers. (Washington, D. C.: Resources for the Future, Inc., 1984), pp. 223-25, 23744. (hereafter cited as, America's National Parks).

9 Vernon B. Hennesay to RD, MWR, n.d. [c. April 1973], GRKO archives.

10 Ibid.; Hennesay to RD, MWR, February 5, 1973, GRKO archives.

11 Hennesay to RD, MWR, n.d. [c. April, 1973], GRKO archives.

12 Hennesay to Supt., YELL, March 7, 1973, GRKO archives.

13 Robert D. Cox, MWRO, December 28, 1973; Hennesay to Warren, February 12, 1973, GRKO archives. The parcel was in shape of a right angle. It is shown on Map 451/80,014 contained in the Land Acquisition Plan.

14 Supt. Jack K. Anderson, YELL to RD, MWR, August 2, 1973; Cox to Mr. and Mrs. Conrad K. Warren, December 28, 1973, GRKO archives.

15 The exact location and purpose in acquiring this tract has not been determined. It was sold to NPS for \$1,000. Sherman W. Swenson, RMR, to Mr. and Mrs. C. K. Warren, September 3, 1975, GRKO archives.

16 Oral history interview, Conrad Warren, July 10, 1980, GRKO archives.

17 Supt. Richard R. Peterson to Mr. and Mrs. Conrad K. Warren, September 4, 1975, Superintendent's Annual Report, 1976 (hereafter cited as, SAR), GRKO archives.

18 Warren to Willys E. Bramhall, RMR, March 28, 1977, GRKO archives.

19 "Corporate Offer to Sell Real Property," December 14, 1977, GRKO archives.

- 20 Secretary of the Interior to Sen. Robert C. Byrd, n.d., [c. fall, 1977], GRKO archives.
- 21 This fund, created in 1964, provided funds to federal land managing agencies to acquire recreational lands from private owners. A discussion is found in Foresta, America's National Parks, p. 237.
- 22 Frank Wilson, DOI to Cleo Layton, Fish, Wildlife and Parks, DOI, March 10, 1978, GRKO archives.
- 23 Vaughan admitted that he probably went "over the line" in suggesting to Con Warren that he write to his friend Senator Melcher to get this opinion overruled. But, Vaughan said, "There was a chance there. It could have been done. . . He was just too damned stubborn to do it." Interview with Thomas G. Vaughan, October 22, 1996.
- 24 Art Eck, WASO to RD, RMR, March 20, 1978, GRKO archives. The fact that the NPS catered to Warren's desire to preserve his ranching operation is revealed in Kenneth R. Ashley, RMR to Chief, Office of Legislation, WASO, May 1, 1978, GRKO archives.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 "Telephone Message Record," Eck to Roy C. Slatkavitz, RMRO, March 17, 1978, GRKO archives.
- 27 Ashley to Chief, Legislation, WASO, May 1, 1978, GRKO archives.
- 28 SAR, 1978.
- 29 U. S., Statutes at Large, Vol. 92, P. L. 95-625.
- 30 Glen T. Bean, RMR to Warren, February 2, 1979, GRKO archives.
- 31 Daniel J. Tobin, Jr., Act. D, NPS to Regional Director, RMR, August 29, 1979, GRKO archives.
- 32 "Land Acquisition Plan," April 28, 1980 (hereafter cited as, LAP, 1980).
- 33 Robert Herbst, DOI to Congressman Stewart B. McKinney, May 21, 1980, GRKO archives.
- 34 Nell Warren died in November 1979, following a long illness and confinement in a Great Falls rest home. SAR, 1979; Vaughan to Warren, June 10, 1980, GRKO archives. Interview with Mike McWright, September 17, 1996.
- 35 This letter was copied to the entire Montana delegation, the governor, RMR regional director, NPS director, and the Secretary of the Interior. Warren to Vaughan, June 13, 1980, GRKO archives.

36 LAP, 1980; Vaughan to Congressman Ron Marlenee, July 28, 1980, GRKO archives.

37 Vaughan to RD, RMR, June 23, 1980; "Historic Site Use Agreement Between Conrad K. Warren and National Park Foundation," November 13, 1970; Hennesay to Supt., YELL, March 7, 1973; Lorraine Mintzmyer to Warren, July 1, 1980, GRKO archives. That the confrontation resulted from circumstances beyond Vaughan's control is supported by Interview with Rodd L. Wheaton, December 12, 1996. Another perspective of the incident is in McWright interview.

38 Ed Jahns, curator, RMR to RD, RMR, August 16, 1974, GRKO archives.

39 Vaughan interview; Vaughan to Warren, July 28, 1980, GRKO archives.

40 Sen. John Melcher to Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus, July 2, 1980; Andrus to Melcher, August 4, 1980, GRKO archives.

41 Melcher to Warren, August 15, 1980, GRKO archives.

42 The purchase of 840.55 acres was authorized by U. S., Statutes at Large, P. L. 96-607, Vol. 94; Russell E. Dickenson to WASO Directorate and RD, RMR, February 11, 1981; The original boundary had been delineated as Survey No. 1, accomplished by contract in the fall, 1973, Gordon E. Sorenson, Missoula, Mont., November 21, 1973, GRKO archives.

43 The deed was granted on August 11, 1987 for the price of \$10. Lawrence A. Farin to Richard A. Young, RMRO, February 12, 1988; Taylor to Young, July 27, 1988, GRKO archives.

44 Young to Chief, Land Resources Div., WASO, September 25, 1991, GRKO archives.

45 Deer Lodge Silver State Post, December 25, 1980.

46 Interview with Jimmy D. Taylor, September 30, 1996; A change was made in the land records correcting the total easement from 1102.48 to 1105.48. The 3-acre error was found in tract 106, which was corrected by Change Order 78-40, August 10, 1978. Wes Wolfe to Taylor, GRKO, January 12, 1981, GRKO archives.

47 Taylor to Warren, April 1, 1981, GRKO archives.

48 The Utah and Northern formed a link with the Northern Pacific at Garrison, Montana, a few miles north of Deer Lodge in 1883. The Milwaukee line had been a presence since its construction in 1907. John Albright, "Historic Resource Study and Historic Structure Report," pp. 47-48, 99-100, and n.138.

49 SAR, 1983.

50 SAR, 1984.

51 "Land Protection Plan," May 21, 1985, p. 11.

52 SAR, 1985.

53 SAR, 1986.

54 The acreages in the various tracts and the improvements thereon are summarized in Young to Gary Hughes, Norwest Capital Management, Helena, Mont., May 3, 1988; Lloyd L. Garrison, RMRO to Files, May 6, 1988, GRKO archives.

55 Taylor to Warren, June 15, 1988; "Bill of Sale for Warren Property," June 16, 1988; Taylor to Park Staff, June 17, 1988; Young to Taylor, June 17, 1988, GRKO archives.

56 Young to RD, RMR, April 22, 1988; SAR, 1990, GRKO archives. Personal communication with Young by the author, February 24, 1997; GMP/DCP, 1993, p. 11.

57 Young to Powell County Title Company, Deer Lodge, Mont., June 1, 1988; "Bill of Sale," Conrad K. Warren to National Park Service, June 16, 1988; The stocks were issued to the U. S. effective July 25, 1988, GRKO archives. "Notice of Location and Appropriation of Water Right," West Deer Lodge Ditch Company, June 28, 1889, Book 2, Water Right Location Records, Powell Co., Montana, copy in Natural Resources Division files, GRKO; Stock Certificate No. 32, West-Side Ditch Company, "Certificate Making Capital Stock Available," June 29, 1917, GRKO archives.

58 "Deed, NPF to USA," November 21, 1972, GRKO archives. 40 miner's inches is equivalent to 1 cubic foot of water, thus 6 miner's inches equals .15 cubic foot. This a minuscule amount that is totally inadequate for irrigation purposes. Asked why he sold the NPS such a tiny amount of water, on this and other parcels, Con Warren replied that it was all the NPS had requested. Taylor interview.

59 "Affadavit," Conrad K. Warren to Powell County, Montana, July 20, 1988 appended to Taylor to Ken Czarnowski, RMRO, July 27, 1988; An abstract of the water rights attached to the Warren lands is found appended to Hughes to Taylor, April 28, 1988; This is supplemented by Young to Chief, Water Rights Branch, April 6, 1988, GRKO archives.

60 Taylor interview.

61 "Statement for Interpretation," Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, 1996, p. 14, Chief Interpreters Files, GRKO.

62 Interview with Eddie L. Lopez, September September 18, 1996.

63 Lopez to Hughes, March 25, 1993; SAR, 1993, GRKO archives.

64 "GMP/DCP," 1993, p. 11; Mark D. Harvey to Files, GRKO, October 20, 1986, GRKO archives; According to a staff member, the Burlington Northern Railroad indicated a willingness to donate the pit area to the NPS in 1988, but management did not respond to the offer. A few years later, however, neither the Burlington nor the Western Montana, which had purchased the right-of-way, was certain about title to the borrow pit specifically. Apparently, both companies are willing to negotiate with the NPS. Anthony J. Schetzle to the author, June 16, 1997, with attached comment by Cheryl L. Clemmensen.

## Chapter Four

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1 John R. Douglass to Supt., YELL, November 11, 1970, GRKO archives.

2 Vernon E. Hennesay to Supt., YELL, November 27, 1970, GRKO archives.

3 Ibid; Dale H. Nuss to Supt., YELL, December 3, 1970; Jack K. Anderson to Mayor Anthony Sneberger, December 4, 1970; J. B. Kendrick to Anderson, n.d., c. December 10, 1970, GRKO archives.

4 Interview with Mike McWright, September 17, 1996; Douglass to Supt., YELL, December 21, 1970, GRKO archives.

5 Hennesay to Supt., YELL, January 21, 1971, GRKO archives. "Park Service Employee Moves to Warren Ranch," Deer Lodge Silver State Post. February 26, 1971.

6 Pettet was still at the ranch in August, 1971, but Griggs's presence is noted in September, 1971. "Conrad Kohrs Home Holds Rare Heirlooms," Butte Montana Standard, August 29, 1971; "Superintendent's Annual Report," 1975 (hereafter cited as SAR).

7 Ed Jahns, to RD, RMR, August 16, 1974; Hennesay to Supt., YELL, December 22, 1972, GRKO archives; The office trailer was positioned in front of HS-16, at least by early in 1975. Personal communication Mike McWright with the author, February 27, 1997.

8 "Planning Directive," March 17, 1971, GRKO archives.

9 Douglas P. Wheeler, DOI, to Conrad Warren, April 9, 1974, GRKO archives.

10 Interview with Richard R. Peterson, February 5, 1997; Interview with Paul R. Gordon, October 21, 1996.

- 11 Hennesay to files, February 22, 1973, GRKO archives; Gordon interview; Gordon remembered that he moved into town in 1976, but this is contradicted by SAR, 1975, GRKO archives.
- 12 Peterson to RD, RMR, n.d. [winter, 1974], GRKO archives.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 SAR, 1975; McWright interview.
- 15 "Congressman Shoup Receives Accord For Advancing Grant-Kohrs Park Development," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, June 7, 1974; "Appropriations Approved for Grant-Kohrs Park by House Subcommittee," Silver State Post, June 28, 1974; Grant-Kohrs Ranch to Open By Summer; Park Service Director Vetoes Delay," Silver State Post, December 6, 1974.
- 16 NPS Press Release, May 16, 1975; D. Peinovich, BNRR to Peterson, November 7, 1974; Lynn Thompson to Peinovich, April 16, 1975, GRKO archives. " 'No Approximate Time Given for Opening of Grant-Kohrs; 'Bureaucracies Move Slowly,' " Deer Lodge Silver State Post, November 29, 1974.
- 17 Peterson to Chief, Contracting and Property Procurement, RMR, May 7, 1975; Vernon D. Dame to Roy C. Slatkavitz, RMR, May 14, 1975; Dame to ARD, Cooperative Activities, RMR, May 19, 1975, GRKO archives. Gordon interview; McWright interview.
- 18 The contract for \$97,596.00 was awarded to Lyle States, Grand Junction, Colorado. "Granary to Become Visitors' Center; Parking Contract Let," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, July 31, 1975; "Completion Report, Work Order No. 1586-7601-503, Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, GRKO archives; Rodd L. Wheaton to Dame, RMR, November 5, 1975; GRKO archives.
- 19 Wheaton to Dame, November 5, 1975; SAR, 1975, GRKO archives.
- 20 Peterson to John Willard, BNRR, Billings, Montana, April 13, 1976, GRKO archives.
- 21 Slatkavitz to John R. Little, regional solicitor, DOI, May 12, 1976; Glen T. Bean to BNRR, Billings, Montana, June 4, 1976, GRKO archives.
- 22 "Advisory Board Hears of Historic Ranch's Problems," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, June 17, 1976; William J. Briggie to Peterson, August 13, 1976, GRKO archives.
- 23 Donald A. Purse, DSC to RD, RMR, August 13, 1976; See Sherman W. Swenson, BNRR to Purse, May 25, 1977 for contract date September 7, 1976, GRKO archives.

- 24 The Milwaukee RR completed its portion in December, 1976. "Bridge Work Promised by Spring For Grant-Kohrs," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, December 19, 1976; Lynn Thompson to BNRR, Billings, Montana, March 3, 1976; Completion Report, No. 503, GRKO archives.
- 25 SAR, 1977; McWright interview; This flag pole was replaced by a metal one in 1982. SAR, 1982, GRKO archives. Deer Lodge Silver State Post, May 27, 1977.
- 26 Peterson interview.
- 27 Harold P. Danz to Chief, Programming and Budget, WASO, October 20, 1977, GRKO archives.
- 28 McWright interview.
- 29 Richard A. Strait, RMR to Assist. Manager, DSC, July 11, 1979; Vaughan to RD, RMR, August 31, 1979, GRKO archives.
- 30 "New Water Line Okayed to Grant-Kohrs Ranch," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, October 18, 1979; "Grant of Water Pipe-Line Right-of-Way Easement," November 5, 1979; Vaughan to Warren, February 6, 1980; SAR, 1979, GRKO archives.
- 31 SAR, 1981, GRKO archives.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 Ibid; SAR, 1983; Interview with Jimmy D. Taylor, September 30, 1996.
- 34 The equipment room in HS-4 was upgraded by the replacement of most equipment during PRIP in 1982. McWright interview; "Development/Study Proposal," August 12, 1982; SAR, 1982, GRKO archives.
- 35 "Development/Study Proposal," March 6, 1984; Ibid, revised, approved June 7, 1984; Strait to Taylor, May 16, 1984; Supt. Peterson initiated the first request for a visitor center. "Development/Study Proposal," November 30, 1976, GRKO archives.
- 36 SFM, 1995, p. 12, GRKO archives.
- 37 At the present time, the apartment in HS-1 still is utilized for storage of the Warren furniture and cleaning supplies.
- 38 McWright interview; The rest rooms were installed in HS-3 in 1981. SAR, 1981; In 1992 a small theater and office were added to HS-3. SAR, 1992.

39 SAR, 1984.

40 SAR, 1975; Ibid. 1976; Interview with Lyndel Meikle, September 17, 1996; McWright interview.

## Chapter Five

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1 Haines's personal reaction to the site was somewhat at variance with his official report, which noted the good condition of the buildings. At the time, however, he was aware that NPS was already being pressured politically to do something with the ranch. Personal communication, Aubrey L. Haines with the author, January 30, 1997; Conrad K. Warren to Theodor R. Swem, July 12, 1969, GRKO archives.

2 Press release, Department of the Interior, December 9, 1970; Ralph Lewis, chief of the Service's Branch of Museum Operations, made an official visit to the ranch in 1969. Lewis to Frank Hjort, WASO, August 25, 1969; John R. Douglass to Supt., YELL, November 17, 1970, GRKO archives.

3 Edward R. Griggs, to Regional Historian, RMR, April 20, 1974; Griggs and his wife, Jean, were working long hours on the buildings and doing what they could to conserve the collections. Ed Jahns to RD, RMR, August 16, 1974, GRKO archives.

4 Merrill D. Beal to AD, Professional Services, WASO, February 13, 1973; Kenneth R. Ashley to files, February 22, 1973, Hennesay located a surplus fire-proof safe at the parent park and had it brought to the ranch, where it was placed in the basement of HS-1 to house records and paintings. Hennesay to Supt., YELL, March 7, 1973, GRKO archives.

5 The quotation is from Warren to Lynn Thompson, RMR, May 31, 1974, GRKO archives; Supplemental information is found in Interview with Mike McWright, September 17, 1996; Interview with Paul R. Gordon, October 21, 1996; Interview with Rodd L. Wheaton, December 12, 1996.

6 Jahns to Regional Historian, RMR, August 16, 1974, GRKO archives.

7 This was Wes Wolfe, Regional Chief of Interpretation. Wheaton interview.

8 Ibid.

9 Wheaton to David Dame, ARD, RMR, October 3, 1974; Warren had previously refused access for HABS recordation. John N. DeHaas, Jr. to Peterson, October, 30, 1974, GRKO archives.

10 Glen T. Bean to Peterson, January 14, 1975; Wheaton to Dame, March 6, 1975; Bean to Ashley C.

Roberts, March 30, 1975; and "Superintendent's Annual Report," 1975 (hereafter cited as SAR), GRKO files.

11 Paul R. Gordon to John Albright, regional historian, RMR, April 1, 1975, GRKO archives.

12 Wilfred D. Logan, DSC to Manager, DSC, April 23, 1975; Winifred M. Brown to Logan, April 25, 1975; The result of the investigation, including a test of the prehistoric site for possible National Register significance (24PW1078) is found in, Brown to Logan, July 18, 1975 GRKO archives. The latter site, hardly more than a lithic scatter, was determined to have no particular significance.

13 John Albright, "Historic Resource Study and Historic Structure Report," (Denver, Colo.: National Park Service, 1977), p. 158 (hereafter cited as FIRS); Gordon interview; Wheaton interview; SAR, 1975, GRKO archives.

14 Wheaton interview.

15 Peterson to Rudy E. Endresse, August 29, 1975; Wheaton to ARD, RMR, November 5, 1975; GRKO archives.

16 Roy Kohen, DSC to Peter Snell, DSC, October 2, 1975; Dame to Asst. Manager, DSC, January 16, 1976; Kohen to Assoc. Manager, DSC, February 6, 1976, GRKO archives.

17 Thompson to Ron G. Holliday, July 17, 1976 GRKO archives; SAR, 1976, 1977.

18 The team report is with Jahns to Snell, March 4, 1977, GRKO archives.

19 Florence Prickett Warren remarried after Robert Warren's death.

20 Bean to Florence Hershey, July 18, 1977; Wheaton to ARD, RMR October 5, 1977; Wheaton to Thomas G. Vaughan, June 29, 1978; Wheaton to Mrs. E. W. Bache, Piedmont, Calif., October 30, 1978, GRKO archives. Much detail regarding this relationship is contained in Wheaton interview.

21 SAR, 1977.

22 Interview with Thomas G. Vaughan, October 22, 1996.

23 SAR, 1975.

24 SAR, 1977.

25 Ibid.

- 26 The first contract with Joel Berstein apparently was let in 1975, SAR, 1975; Vaughan to Arthur C. Allen, HFC, December 9, 1977; Allen to Vaughan, December 28, 1977; Vaughan to Allen, January 16, 1978; SAR, 1978, GRKO archives.
- 27 Vaughan to RD, RMR, November 17, 1977, GRKO archives.
- 28 SAR, 1979.
- 29 Wheaton to ARD, RMR, January 24, 1978, GRKO archives; Wheaton interview.
- 30 Snell to Asst. Manager, DSC, March 27, 1978; GRKO archives. Vaughan interview.
- 31 Wheaton to ARD, RMR, April 21, 1978; Wheaton to Vaughan, June 29, 1978; SAR, 1978, GRKO archives.
- 32 SAR, 1978 - 1984; Harrison Goodall to Vaughan, May 18, 1980, GRKO archives.
- 33 SAR, 1978, 1979; Wheaton to ARD, RMR, June 6, 1979; Vaughan to RD, RMR, June 10, 1980; Wheaton to RD, RMR, July 11, 1980, GRKO archives.
- 34 Richard A. Strait, RMR to Asst. Manager, DSC, December 19, 1978; RD, RMR to Asst. Manager, DSC, n.d. [c. January, 1979]; Purse to RD, RMR, March 15, 1979, GRKO archives.
- 35 Estimating Detail for Package No. 113, revised July 27, 1979, GRKO archives.
- 36 Vaughan to RD, RMR, May 29, 1979, GRKO archives.
- 37 Vaughan to RD, RMR, November 14, 1979, GRKO archives; Vaughan interview.
- 38 Purse to RD, RMR, December 6, 1979, GRKO archives.
- 39 Vaughan to RD, RMR, December 12, 1979, GRKO archives.
- 40 Kenneth R. Ashley to Vaughan, January 7, 1980; GRKO archives.
- 41 Vaughan interview.
- 42 This group also determined that the second floor of HS-1 would not be publicly accessible. All quotations are from, Bean to Vaughan, January 11, 1980, GRKO archives.

- 43 Vaughan to RD, RMR, June 25, 1980, GRKO archives.
- 44 Vaughan transferred to HFC as chief of the museum conservation laboratory effective July 28, 1980, Vaughan interview.
- 45 Robert J. Shelley, DSC to RD, RMR, July 29, 1980;
- 46 Wheaton to Mrs. Florence Hershey, September 30, 1981, GRKO archives.
- 47 Wheaton interview.
- 48 Wheaton to Supv. Historical Architect, RMRO, May 8, 1981; SAR, 1980, 1981, 1982, GRKO archives.
- 49 SAR, 1983, GRKO archives.
- 50 Wheaton to ARD, RMR, September 16, 1980, GRKO archives. Wheaton interview.
- 51 Patricia Warren to Jimmy D. Taylor, January 29, 1982, GRKO archives.
- 52 P. Warren to Nicholas L. Scratish, June 3, 1982; P. Warren to Mintzmyer, June 5, 1982, GRKO archives. This remark was aimed at Florence Hershey and Anna Bache. See 56n.
- 53 Wheaton to P. Warren, June 21, 1982, GRKO archives.
- 54 Mintzmer to P. Warren, July 30, 1982, GRKO archives.
- 55 Scratish to P. Warren, August 5, 1982, GRKO archives.
- 56 The antagonism between these factions of the family originated with Con's marriage to Nell, the daughter of a Deer Lodge railroadman. Many in the family felt that he had married "beneath" his class, yet Augusta Kohrs always favored and protected Con during her lifetime. Wheaton interview.
- 57 SAR, 1982.
- 58 The contract totalled \$206,000.00. SAR, 1983, 1984; Interview with Jimmy D. Taylor, September 30, 1996.
- 59 Taylor interview; Completion Report, "Treat and Relocate Museum Objects," October 29, 1984, GRKO archives.

60 Wheaton interview.

61 SAR, 1978, 1979, 1980; Interview with Christine M. Ford, September 18, 1996. Not all of these buildings were used concurrently, but at various times as need arose to shift storage from one place to another to avoid stabilization projects.

62 SAR, 1979, 1980, 1981.

63 SAR, 1982.

64 SAR, 1984. The removal of the furnishings may have prompted the drafting of a "curatorial policy" for the Site. This informal document generally addressed the needs of the both study collections and exhibit areas. The curator outlined a series of rules relating to how the park staff should handle and document the objects. "Curatorial Policy, Grant Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site," April, 1984.

65 SAR, 1984; Personal communication, Christine M. Ford, GRKO, with the author, March 19, 1997.

66 SAR, 1983, 1988, 1989; Wheaton to Supt., Grant-Kohrs Ranch, October 3, 1989, GRKO archives. "Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site Collection Management Plan." (Ithica, NY: Maines and Assoc., 1991), p. 2.

67 Wheaton interview; SAR, 1993. Apparently, Con had discussed donating his possessions to the NPS, but, inexplicably, park management did not follow up on the offer; After the sale, the heirs donated perhaps the most important object, Conrad Kohrs's pommel bags, used during his business travels. "Comments," June 16, 1997.

68 SAR, 1994-95.

69 "Record of Decision," October 22, 1993; Supt. Tony Schetzle to All Employees, GRKO, October 20, 1994, GRKO archives.

## Chapter Six

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1 Edwin Bearss to Chief, Office of History & Historic Architecture, WASO, November 17, 1970, GRKO archives.

2 Interview with Paul R. Gordon, October 21, 1996.

- 3 "Planning Directive: Master Plan/Development Concept Plan/Interpretive Prospectus, Grant-Kohrs National Historic Site." September 13, 1974, GRKO archives. Gordon interview.
- 4 "Superintendent's Annual Report," 1976 (hereafter cited as SAR); Albright arranged to have the Kohrs Papers at the Montana Historical Society in Helena microfilmed and he scrounged a second-hand reader machine, both of which he delivered to the Site in the summer, 1978. John Albright to Regional Chief Scientist, RMR, July 12, 1978, GRKO archives.
- 5 SAR, 1975; Citing "the lack of a real business approach and organization," Supt. Jim Taylor shifted the park's affiliation from Yellowstone to the Glacier Natural History Association in March, 1984. Taylor to RD, RMR, January 16, 1984; Meeting Minutes, Glacier Natural History Association, March 8, 1984, GRKO archives.
- 6 Bruce Hopkins, HFC to Supt., GRKO, December 24, 1974; SAR, 1975; Conrad Warren also contributed information to this first brochure. Supt. Richard Peterson to Conrad Warren, March 25, 1976; GRKO archives. The quotation is from SAR, 1976; A revised and expanded park folder was developed by park staff and published in 1982. SAR, 1980, 1981, 1982.
- 7 SAR, 1975, 1976.
- 8 SAR, 1976.
- 9 Gordon interview.
- 10 Jay Anderson, Time Machines: The World of Living History, (Nashville: Association for State and Local History, 1984), pp. 36-37.
- 11 Merrill J. Mattes, "Alternatives Study Report: Grant-Kohrs Ranch, Montana." (San Francisco: National Park Service, 1968), pp. 1.
- 12 Ibid, pp. 7, 12, 13.
- 13 U. S., Congress, House, Congressional Record, 92nd Congress, 2d Session, 1972, Vol. 118, pt. 21: 28105 (hereafter cited as, Congressional Record).
- 14 U. S. Congress, House, "Authorizing the Establishment of Grant-Kohrs Ranch: Report to Accompany H. R. 9594, 92nd Congress, 2d Session, pp. 3-4 (hereafter cited as, House Report No. 92-1222).
- 15 Bill W. Dean, MWR, to D, NPS, March 28, 1972, GRKO archives.
- 16 "Master Plan: Proposed Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, Montana." n.d. (c. 1972).

17 "Dasher, Prancer Arrive at Grant-Kohrs," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, January 23, 1975.

18 Gordon interview; "Grant-Kohrs Ranch Add Belgians from LBJ Ranch," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, August 14, 1975.

19 SAR, 1975; Interview with Mike McWright, September 17, 1996; Interview with Lydel Meikle, September 18, 1996.

20 SAR 1977.

21 Interview with Joe Launderville, September 17, 1996.

22 Details are found in the various SAR; Launderville interview.

23 Launderville interview; Interview with Anita Dore, September 18, 1996; SAR, 1982,1989.

24 Gordon interview.

25 "Ranch Dedication Followed by Steady Visitor Attendance," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, July 21, 1977; SAR, 1977.

26 "Warren Family Come for Ranch Dedication," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, July 28, 1977; Interview with Rodd L. Wheaton, December 12, 1996; Wheaton to ARD, RMR, October 5, 1977, GRKO archives.

27 Wheaton interview.

28 SAR, 1977.

29 Wes Wolfe to ARD, RMR, May 20, 1977, GRKO archives.

30 Meikle interview.

31 Ibid.

32 SAR, 1979.

33 Ibid.

34 Vaughan to RD, RMR December 12, 1979, GRKO archives.

35 Personal communication John Albright by the author, March 24, 1997.

36 Both the 1978 draft and the final version contain identical wording. "General Management Plan: Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, Montana." (Denver, Colo.: National Park Service, 1980), pp. 24-25 (hereafter cited as GMP, 1980).

37 Congressional Record, August 14, 1972, pp. 28103-106.

38 House Report No. 92-1222, p. 4.

39 GMP, 1980, p. 14.

40 "Statement for Interpretation: Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS," FY 82, chief interpreter's files, GRKO (hereafter cited as SFI).

41 Congressional Record, August 14, 1972, p. 28104.

42 "Environmental Impact Statement - General Management Plan - Development Concept Plan: Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site." (Denver, Colo.: National Park Service, 1993,) pp. 5, 20 (hereafter cited as GMP/DCP). "Cultural Landscape Inventory and Analysis: Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site." (Denver, Colo.: National Park Service, 1991,) p. 7; An operations evaluation conducted August 20-23, 1990 reiterated the theme "of the frontier cattle era." RD, RMR to Supt., GRKO, October 10, 1990.

43 Bill Sontag to RD, July 21, 1982, GRKO archives.

44 H. R. Report No. 92-1222.

45 SFI, 1987.

46 Meikle interview.

47 SFI, 1990.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid; RD, RMR to Supt., GRKO, October 10, 1990 with attached evaluation, GRKO archives; SFI, 1991; Meikle interview.

50 SFI, 1991.

51 SFI, 1993.

52 SAR, 1984.

53 SAR, 1983.

54 Sontag to RD, RMR, July 21, 1982; GMP, 1993, p. 5; Both Superintendents Peterson and Taylor submitted package requests for a visitor center. "Development/Study Package Proposals" approved November 30, 1976 and June 7, 1984, GRKO archives.

55 SAR, 1992; A slide program, using a small random-access unit, was placed in the contact station in 1985 to provide a year-around introduction to the area. SAR, 1985.

56 RD, RMR to Supt., GRKO, October 10, 1990 (see attached operations evaluation), GRKO archives.

57 "Foundation Purchases Pioneer Cattle Ranch for National Historic Site," Deer Lodge Silver State Post, December 18, 1970.

58 SAR, 1979, 1980, 1983, 1984; SFI, 1996; Personal communication, Lyndel Meikle with the author, June 30, 1997.

59 SFI, 1982.

60 SAR, 1983; Meikle interview; Interview with Jim Taylor, September 30, 1996.

61 SFI, 1993; Ibid. 1994, GRKO archives.

62 SFI, 1991.

## **Chapter Seven**

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1 U. S., Congress, House, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, "Authorizing the Establishment of the Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site: Report to Accompany H.R. 9594," 92nd Congress, 2d Session, 1972, H. Report 92-1222, p. 2.

2 "Master Plan: Proposed Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, Montana," n.d. [c.1972], p. 23.

3 Vernon E. Hennesay to Superintendent, YELL, March 7, 1973, GRKO archives.

- 4 "Trip Report," Kit B. Sutherland, Soil Conservation Service, n.d. [c. January, 1978], GRKO archives.
- 5 Superintendent Thomas G. Vaughan to RD, RMR, February 15, 1978, GRKO archives.
- 6 The program also identified the presence of the Columbian ground squirrel in the park. "Superintendent's Annual Report," 1979 - 1984 (hereafter cited as SAR). GRKO archives.
- 7 "Statement for Interpretation," 1985 (hereafter cited as SFI); Ibid, 1987, chief interpreter's files, GRKO.
- 8 SFI, 1990.
- 9 SFI, 1990; Ibid, 1991.
- 10 SAR, 1980; Vaughan to RD, RMR, May 27, 1980; Ibid, July 1, 1980, GRKO archives.
- 11 Conrad Kohrs had suffered damages from mining-related pollution and filed claim against the Anaconda Cropper Company. Conrad Kohrs to John Bielenberg, November 22, 1915, GRKO archives.
- 12 SAR, 1980; Ibid, 1984. The so-called "Superfund," managed by the Environmental Protection Agency, derived its funds from fines levied against industry for violations of environmental law.
- 13 SAR, 1985.
- 14 SAR, 1984, 1985, 1990.
- 15 SAR, 1990.
- 16 The development of a grazing plan became a cooperative effort with the SCS in 1993, as did a wetlands assessment with the Atlantic-Richfield Co., SAR, 1993; Eddie L. Lopez to Robin Bullock, June 15, 1993, GRKO archives.
- 17 Interview with Anthony J. Schetzle, September 17, 1996.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Schetzle interview.
- 21 SAR, 1994-95.

22 Interview with Ken Marchand, September 17, 1996; GRKO was selected as a pilot park for developing and testing GIS in a List of Classified Structures application. SAR, 1992-1995. Mapping knapweed patches, for example, is still done visually with the aid of aerial photographs. Interview with Scott Jackson, September 18, 1996.

23 "Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site Cultural Resources Boundary Evaluation Report, 1980-1981," GRKO archives.

24 "Cultural Landscape Analysis: Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site," (Denver, Colo.: National Park Service, 1987), pp. 10, 27-31; A later request defined the need for baseline studies of the additional 1200 acres purchased from Warren in 1988. Eddie L. Lopez to RD, RMR, September 1, 1989, GRKO archives.

25 Thomas G. Keohan, "Cultural Landscape Inventory and Analysis: Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site," (Denver, Colo.: National Park Service, 1991), pp. 2 (included as an appendix in 1993 GMP).

26 SAR, 1994-95.

27 Jackson interview.

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch

## Administrative History



## PREFACE

While this study may be of passing interest to those outside the National Park Service, its primary purpose is to aid the management and staff at Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. The Park Service is, by its very nature, a mobile occupation. Most employees transfer several times throughout their careers, applying their increased experience to a variety of park management situations. This is generally beneficial to both resources and individuals. There are disadvantages, however. Those same employees not only take their experience when they depart, but their institutional memory as well. Newcomers invariably spend a great deal of time talking with those who have been at the park longer in an effort to determine how management situations and aspects of the operation have developed. One often finds himself telephoning his predecessors to query them about this issue or that. It usually requires a year or two for new employees to become reasonably well grounded in the new park operation.

Then, too, those knowledgeable veteran employees who remain at a particular park for many years, if not an entire career, eventually retire or pass away. Thus, over time the institutional memory of a park becomes obscured, skewed through generations of retelling, and some of it is invariably lost.

In accordance with Superintendent Tony Schetzle's request, this administrative history has been prepared as an issue-oriented treatment. It is not intended to be an in-depth operational history, nor is it a social study. Its purpose is to serve as a convenient, reliable reference for present and future NPS staff, both at the park and central office levels, to help them rapidly acquire a comprehensive knowledge of the park's development and past management. Because park issues often overlap, between planning and development, for instance, the reader will find that some elements of the story are repeated. This is unavoidable and, in fact, necessary. The author assumes that the document will be used as a reference more often than it may be read from beginning to end. For the reader's convenience, then, the primary discussion of a particular issue may lie in one chapter, while it may be summarized elsewhere as it relates to another issue. It is sincerely hoped that the study will fulfill the needs of future managers and staff.

This work combines the contributions of many persons, though any errors or omissions are mine alone. First, the study owes much to the entire staff at Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, who gave so freely of their time and knowledge throughout its preparation. Special thanks go to Superintendent Tony Schetzle, whose foresight in promoting a park

administrative history will benefit those who follow. Curator Christine M. Ford played a key role as the project coordinator at the park. Her hospitality, ever-ready assistance, and well-organized archival files made my job considerably easier than it otherwise might have been.

All of the staff members I interviewed graciously made time for me in their busy schedules, and many later reviewed the draft, offering insightful comments. I particularly valued the perspectives offered by Park Ranger Lyndel Meikle, who shared her remarkable knowledge of Johnny Grant and the open-range cattle days, as well as her own recollections based on long experience at the Site. Another seasoned employee at the ranch, Cheryl Clemmensen provided insights about Con Warren, in addition to her own first-hand knowledge of the park's development. And, I would be remiss if I failed to mention the always-cheerful assistance (not to mention the cookies) offered by Secretary Sandy Berg and Administrative Clerk Tina Johnson during my visits and in response to my many telephone calls.

All of the former staff members contacted, some of whom were retired, contributed generously of their time and recollections to breath life into historical record. Their interviews, along with those of current staff, were not only a valuable contribution to this study, but now comprise a significant body of historical information in the park archives. The untimely passing of former-historian and friend Paul Gordon, during the preparation of the final draft of this document, is a poignant reminder of the importance of recording oral history.

Rodd L. Wheaton, currently the assistant director for Cultural Resources and Partnerships, Intermountain Field Area, served as the Rocky Mountain Regional historical architect during the era of peak restoration activity at the ranch. Rodd provided a wealth of information and personal observations that I could not have obtained elsewhere. His careful review of the draft and constructive comments resulted in many corrections and improvements in the final product. Richard A. Young, chief of the Intermountain Regional Lands Resources Division in Denver, Colorado, lent his expertise in unraveling vague points of the realty transactions. Former National Park Service employees who shared their recollections included John Albright, Nan V. Rickey. and Aubrey L. Haines. My thanks also to Frank Shaw, one of Conrad Warren's closest friends in Deer Lodge, Montana.

I am particularly indebted to Historian Christine Whitacre, Rocky Mountain System Support Office, who graciously consented to edit the draft report. Her keen eye and sense of style added much to the final product.

Finally, I am grateful for the assistance of Librarian Nancy Silliman of the William K. Kohrs Memorial Library, Deer Lodge, Montana; the staff of the City of Deer Lodge offices, Venice Beske and Priscilla Golden at the Wyoming State Library, the Goshen County (Wyo.) Public Library staff, and Curator Vanessa Christopher at Yellowstone National Park. I offer my apologies to anyone whom I may have inadvertently overlooked.

Douglas C. McChristian  
Fort Laramie, Wyoming

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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



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# Grant-Kohrs Ranch



## Administrative History

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- [c.](#) *Congressional Record*, Pt. 21
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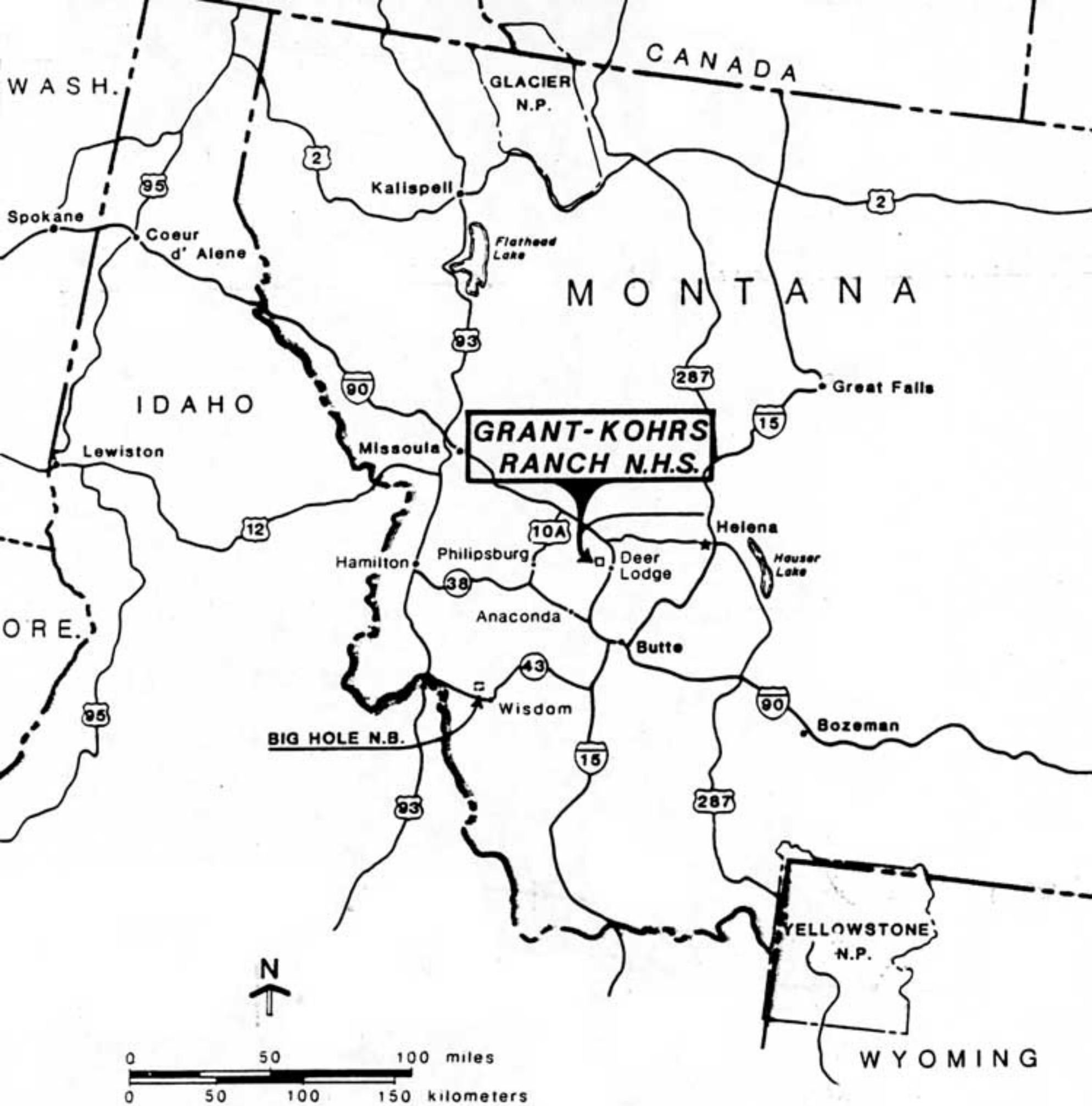
Last Updated: 04-Nov-2000

# Ranchers to Rangers

An Administrative History of Grant-Kohrs Ranch  
National Historic Site - Montana

Presented by Douglas C. McCrellan





## Vicinity Map

### Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site

U.S. Dept. of the Interior - National Park Service

451 | 80,017  
 Sept. '83 | RMRO



## Vicinity Map

Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site

U.S. Dept. of the Interior - National Park Service

451 | 80.317  
 Sept. '83 | RMRO

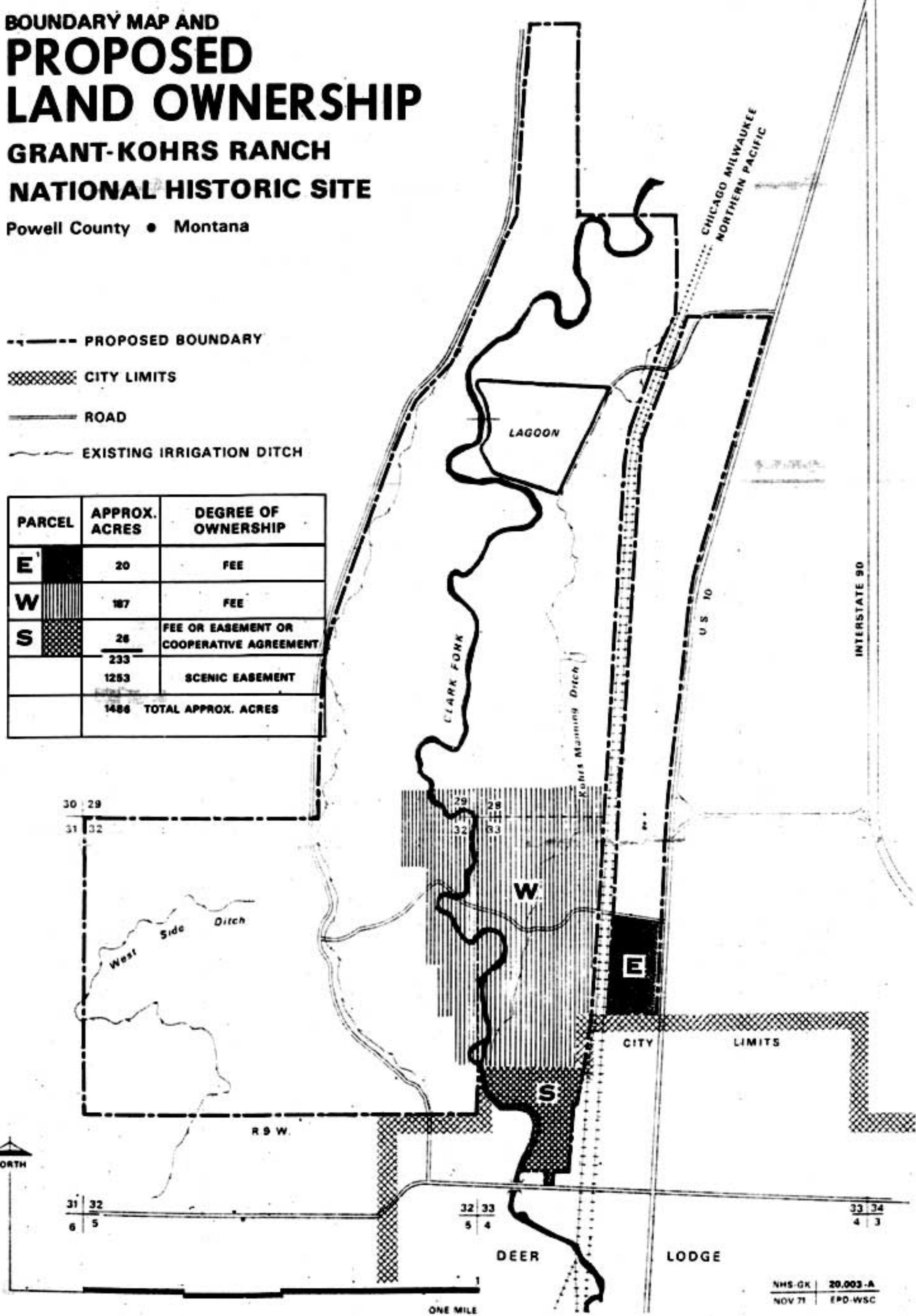
# BOUNDARY MAP AND PROPOSED LAND OWNERSHIP

## GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Powell County • Montana

- PROPOSED BOUNDARY
- ▨ CITY LIMITS
- ROAD
- ~ EXISTING IRRIGATION DITCH

PARCEL	APPROX. ACRES	DEGREE OF OWNERSHIP
E	20	FEE
W	187	FEE
S	28	FEE OR EASEMENT OR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT
	233	
	1253	SCENIC EASEMENT
	1486	TOTAL APPROX. ACRES



# BOUNDARY MAP AND PROPOSED LAND OWNERSHIP GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Powell County • Montana

- PROPOSED BOUNDARY
- CITY LIMITS
- ROAD
- EXISTING IRRIGATION DITCH

PARCEL	APPROX. ACRES	DEGREE OF OWNERSHIP
E	89	FBI
W	97	FBI
S	36	1/2 OR SHERMANT OR COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT
	1001	SCenic SHERMANT
	1486	TOTAL APPROX. ACRES



DATE 02-11-88 BY 00000 A  
 SCALE 1" = 1/2 MILE

# GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH NHS



# EXISTING LAND OWNERSHIP and CIRCULATION

## GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

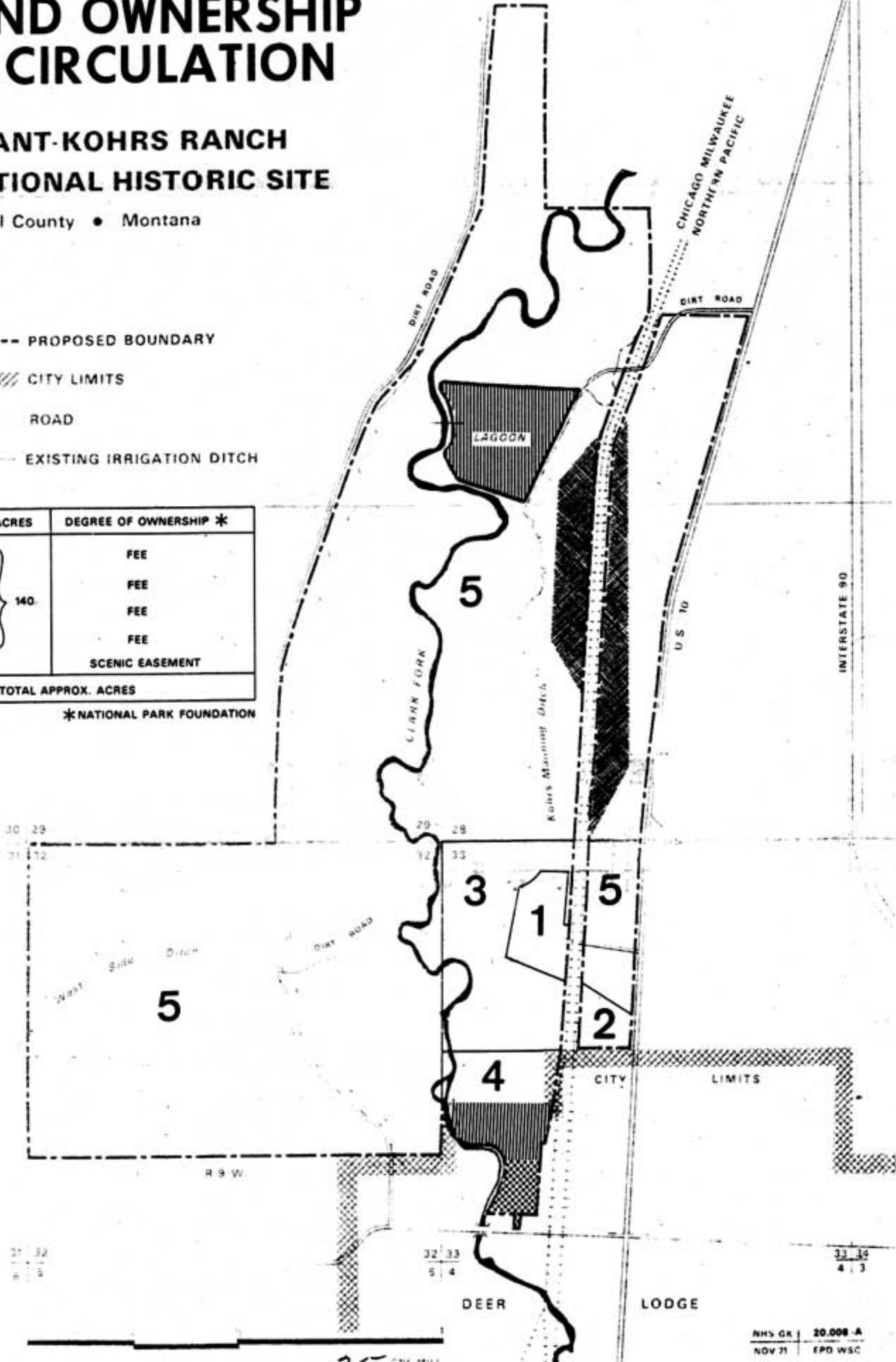
Powell County • Montana

- PROPOSED BOUNDARY
- ▨ CITY LIMITS
- ROAD
- - - EXISTING IRRIGATION DITCH

PARCEL	APPROX. ACRES	DEGREE OF OWNERSHIP *
1	20	FEE
2	10	FEE
3	90	FEE
4	20	FEE
5	1,180	SCENIC EASEMENT
1,320 TOTAL APPROX. ACRES		

\* NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION

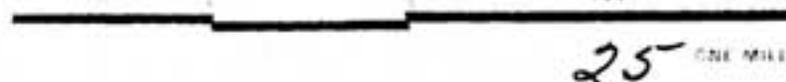
- ▨ RAILROAD
- ▨ CITY PARK
- ▨ CITY LAND



31 32  
31 32

32 33  
5 4

33 34  
4 3



# EXISTING LAND OWNERSHIP and CIRCULATION

## GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Powell County • Montana

--- PROPOSED BOUNDARY

--- CITY LIMITS

ROAD

--- EXISTING IRRIGATION DITCH

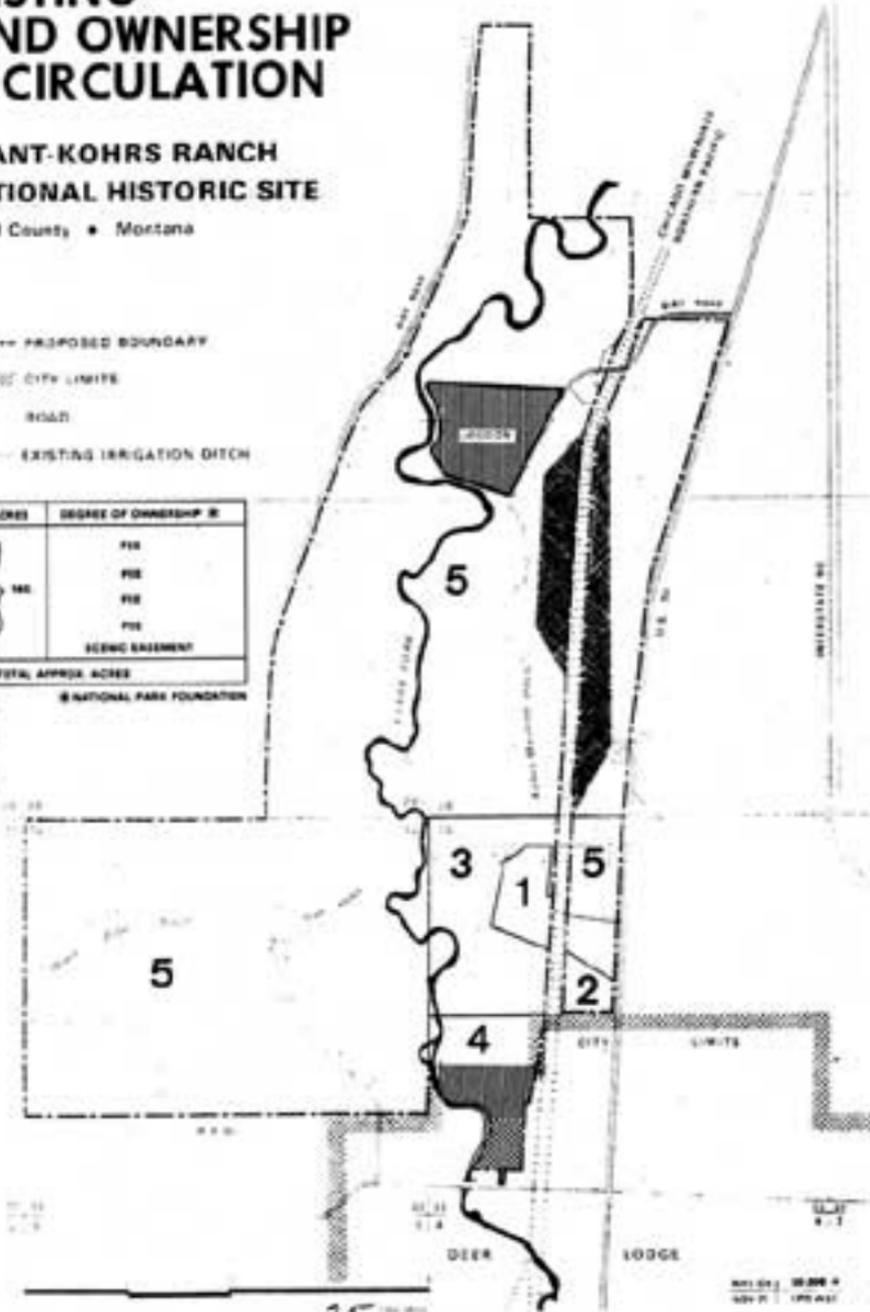
PARCEL	APPROX. ACRES	DEGREE OF OWNERSHIP %
1	20	FIS
2	10	FIS
3	90	FIS
4	20	FIS
5	180	SCENIC EASEMENT
1,320 TOTAL APPROX. ACRES		

■ NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION

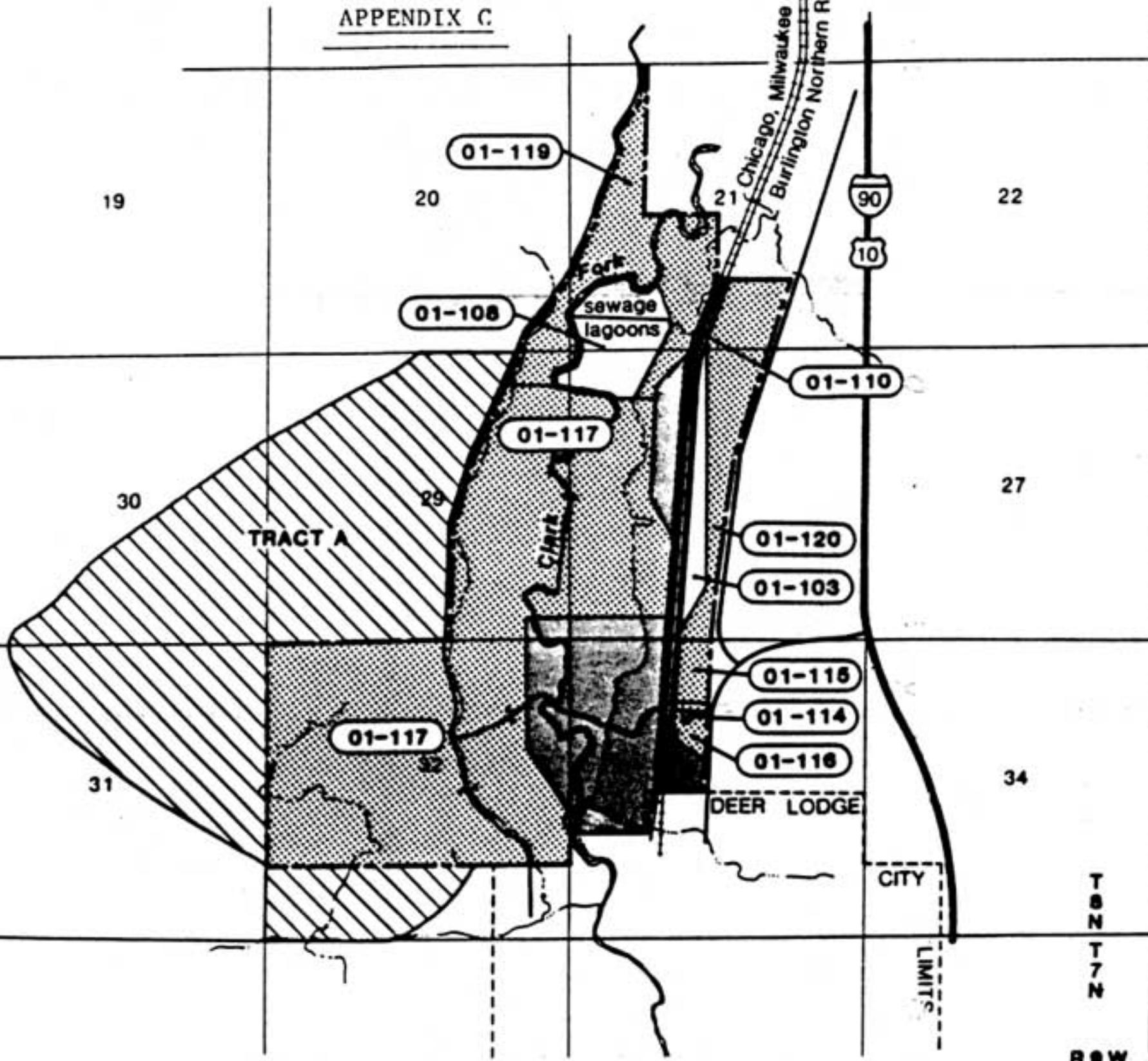
■ RAILROAD

■ CITY PARK

■ CITY LAND



APPENDIX C

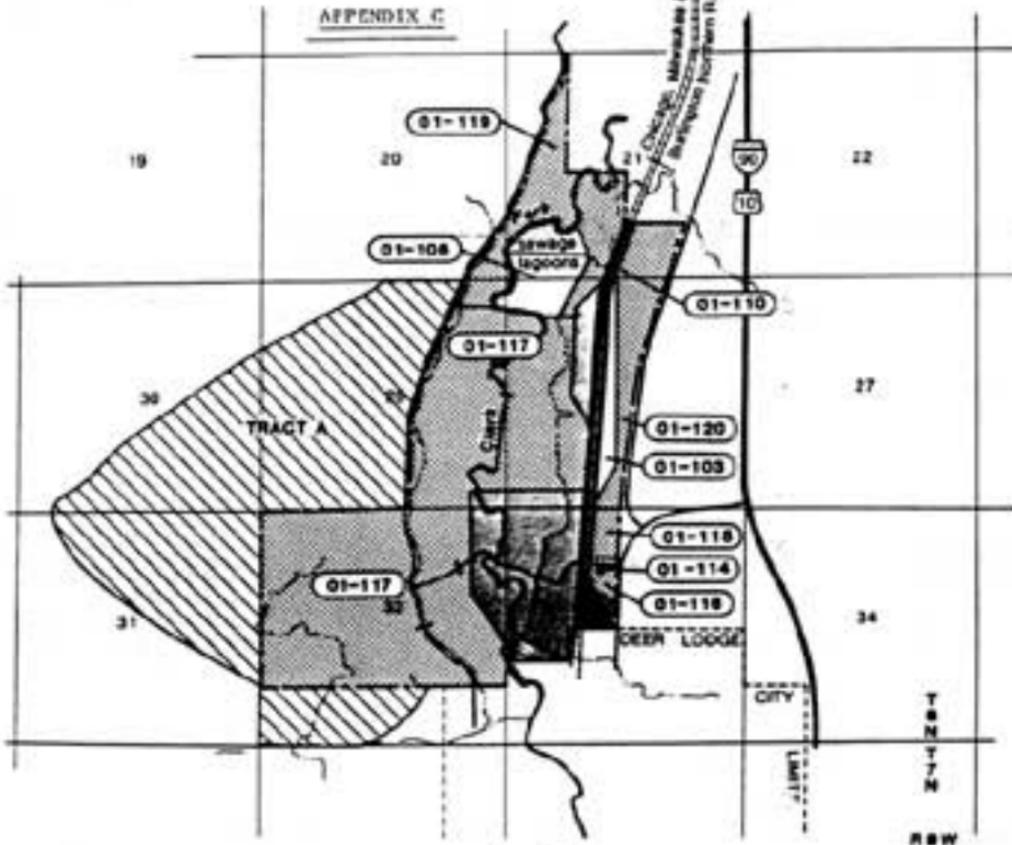


legend

-  national historic site boundary
-  tract boundary
-  federal land (fee)
-  federal land (less than fee)
-  non-federal land
-  tract outside national historic site boundary

**Land Protection Plan**  
**Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site**  
**Powell County Montana**

APPENDIX C



legend

-  national historic site boundary
-  tract boundary
-  federal land (fee)
-  federal land (less than fee)
-  non-federal land
-  tract outside national historic site boundary



0 2000 feet

**Land Protection Plan**  
**Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site**  
**Powell County Montana**

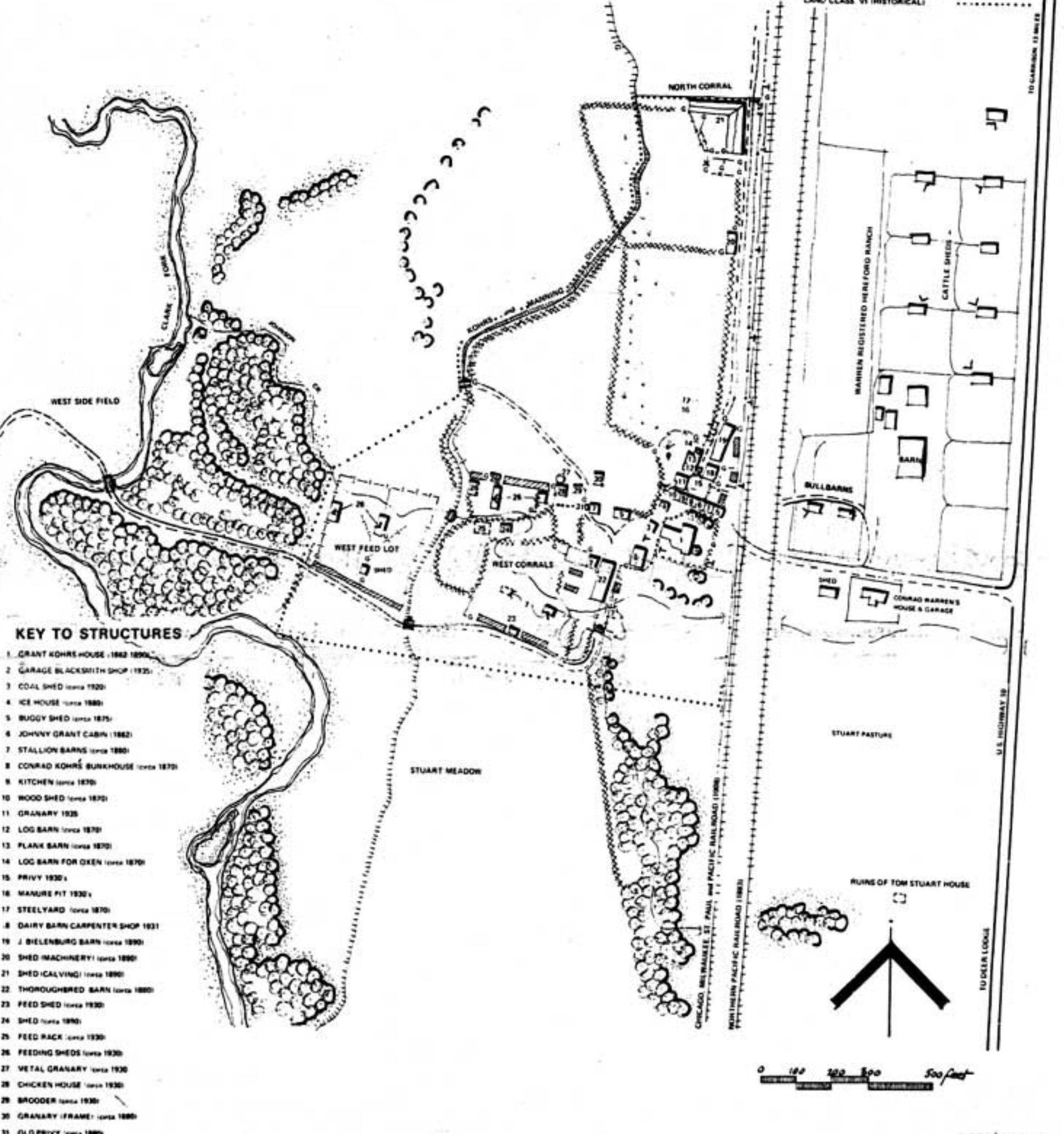
RIVERS and STREAMS	
IMPROVED ROADS	
FARM ROADS	
RAILROADS	
BRIDGES and FLUMES	
WOODS and TREES	
IRRIGATION DITCH	
BUILDINGS	
FEED RACKS	
RUINS	
WIRE FENCE	
BUCK RAIL FENCE	
CORRALS	
RAIL FENCES	
BOARD FENCES	
FENCES (not listed)	
POWER LINES	
GATES	
LAND CLASS VI (HISTORICAL)	

# HISTORICAL BASE MAP

## GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH

### National Historic Site

FAVELL COUNTY MONTANA



**KEY TO STRUCTURES**

1. GRANT KOHR'S HOUSE (1862-1890)
2. GARAGE BLACKSMITH SHOP (1920)
3. COAL SHED (circa 1920)
4. ICE HOUSE (circa 1880)
5. BUGGY SHED (circa 1875)
6. JOHNNY GRANT CABIN (1882)
7. STALLION BARN (circa 1880)
8. CONRAD KOHR'S BUNKHOUSE (circa 1870)
9. KITCHEN (circa 1870)
10. WOOD SHED (circa 1870)
11. GRANARY 1920
12. LOG BARN (circa 1870)
13. PLANK BARN (circa 1870)
14. LOG BARN FOR OXEN (circa 1870)
15. PRIVY 1930
16. MANURE PIT 1930
17. STEELYARD (circa 1870)
18. DAIRY BARN CARPENTER SHOP 1931
19. J. BELENBURG BARN (circa 1890)
20. SHED (MACHINERY) (circa 1890)
21. SHED (CALVING) (circa 1890)
22. THOROUGHBRED BARN (circa 1880)
23. FEED SHED (circa 1930)
24. SHED (circa 1890)
25. FEED RACK (circa 1930)
26. FEEDING SHEDS (circa 1930)
27. METAL GRANARY (circa 1930)
28. CHICKEN HOUSE (circa 1930)
29. BROODER (circa 1930)
30. GRANARY (FRAME) (circa 1880)
31. OLD PRIVY (circa 1880)

# HISTORICAL BASE MAP

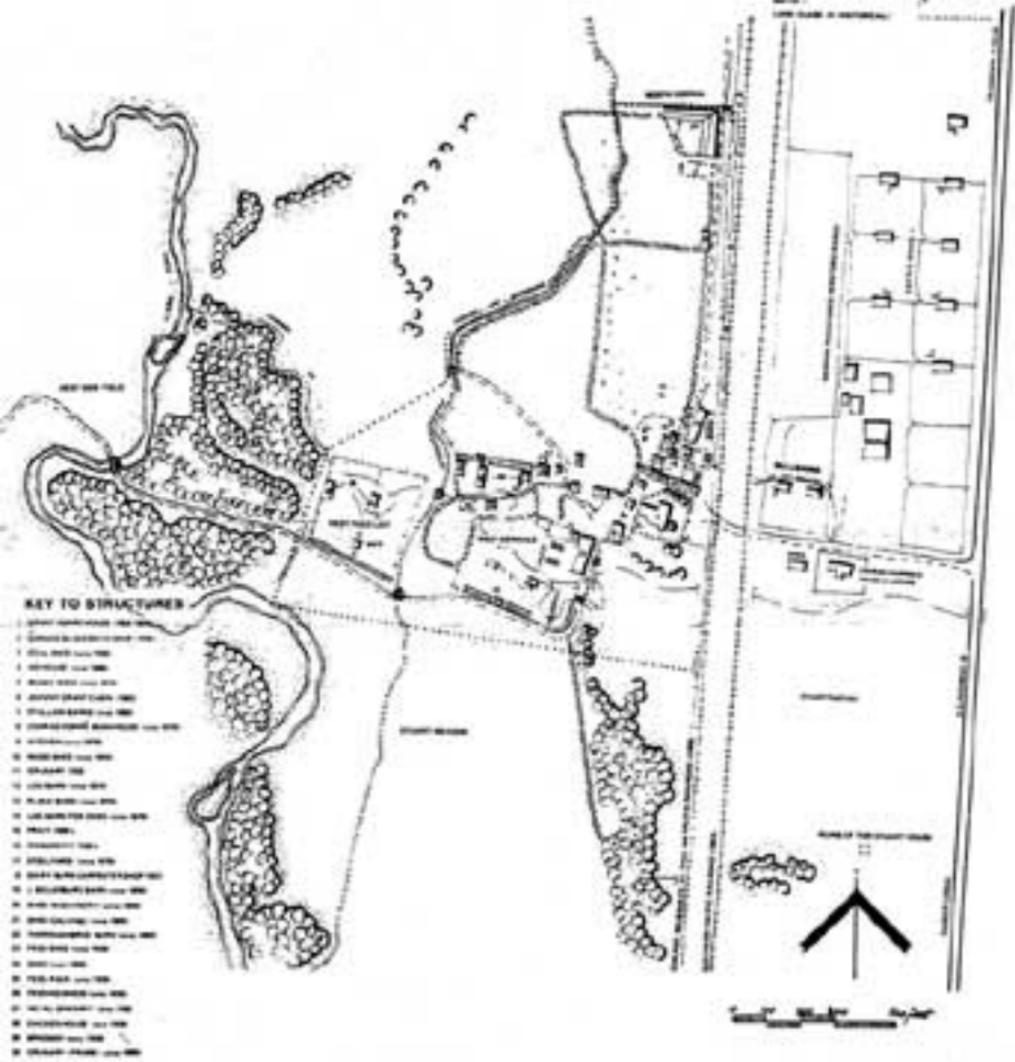
## GRANT-KOHR'S RANCH

### National Historic Site

RAVELL COUNTY MONTANA

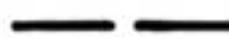
CONVENTIONAL SYMBOLS

RAILROAD	[Symbol]
ROAD	[Symbol]
WATER	[Symbol]
WOOD	[Symbol]
ROCK	[Symbol]
GRAVEL	[Symbol]
CLAY	[Symbol]
SHALE	[Symbol]
SANDSTONE	[Symbol]
PLASTER	[Symbol]
BRICK	[Symbol]
WOOD	[Symbol]
IRON	[Symbol]
COPPER	[Symbol]
LEAD	[Symbol]
ZINC	[Symbol]
ANTHRACITE	[Symbol]
BITUMINOUS	[Symbol]
COAL	[Symbol]
IRON ORE	[Symbol]
COPPER ORE	[Symbol]
LEAD ORE	[Symbol]
ZINC ORE	[Symbol]
ANTHRACITE ORE	[Symbol]
BITUMINOUS ORE	[Symbol]

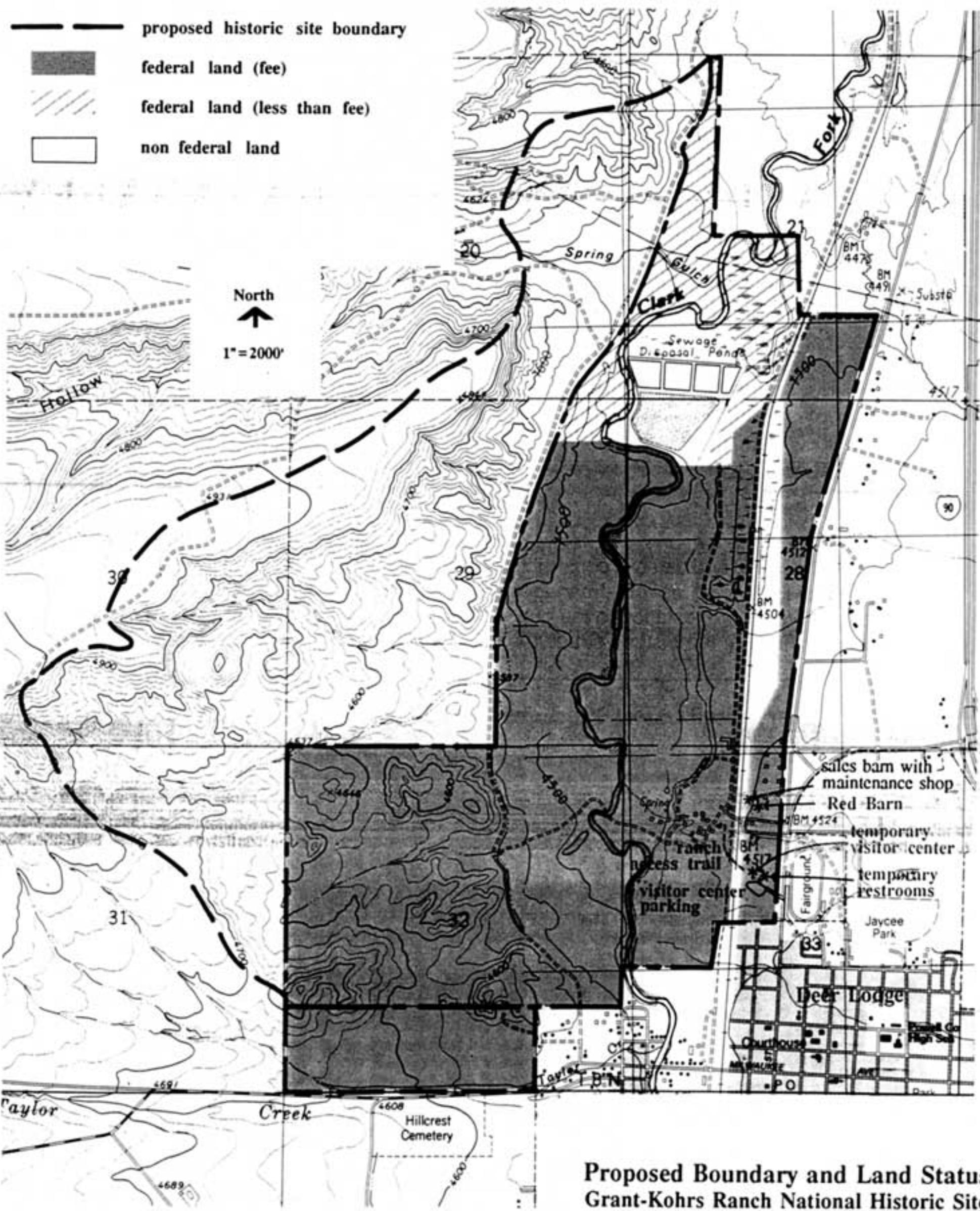


KEY TO STRUCTURES

- 1. GRANT-KOHR'S MAIN HOUSE 1880
- 2. GRANT-KOHR'S BARN 1880
- 3. GRANT-KOHR'S WOOD SHED 1880
- 4. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 5. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 6. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 7. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 8. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 9. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 10. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 11. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 12. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 13. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 14. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 15. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 16. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 17. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 18. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 19. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 20. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 21. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 22. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 23. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 24. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 25. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 26. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 27. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 28. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 29. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880
- 30. GRANT-KOHR'S WAGON SHED 1880

-  existing historic site boundary
-  proposed historic site boundary
-  federal land (fee)
-  federal land (less than fee)
-  non federal land

North  
  
 1" = 2000'

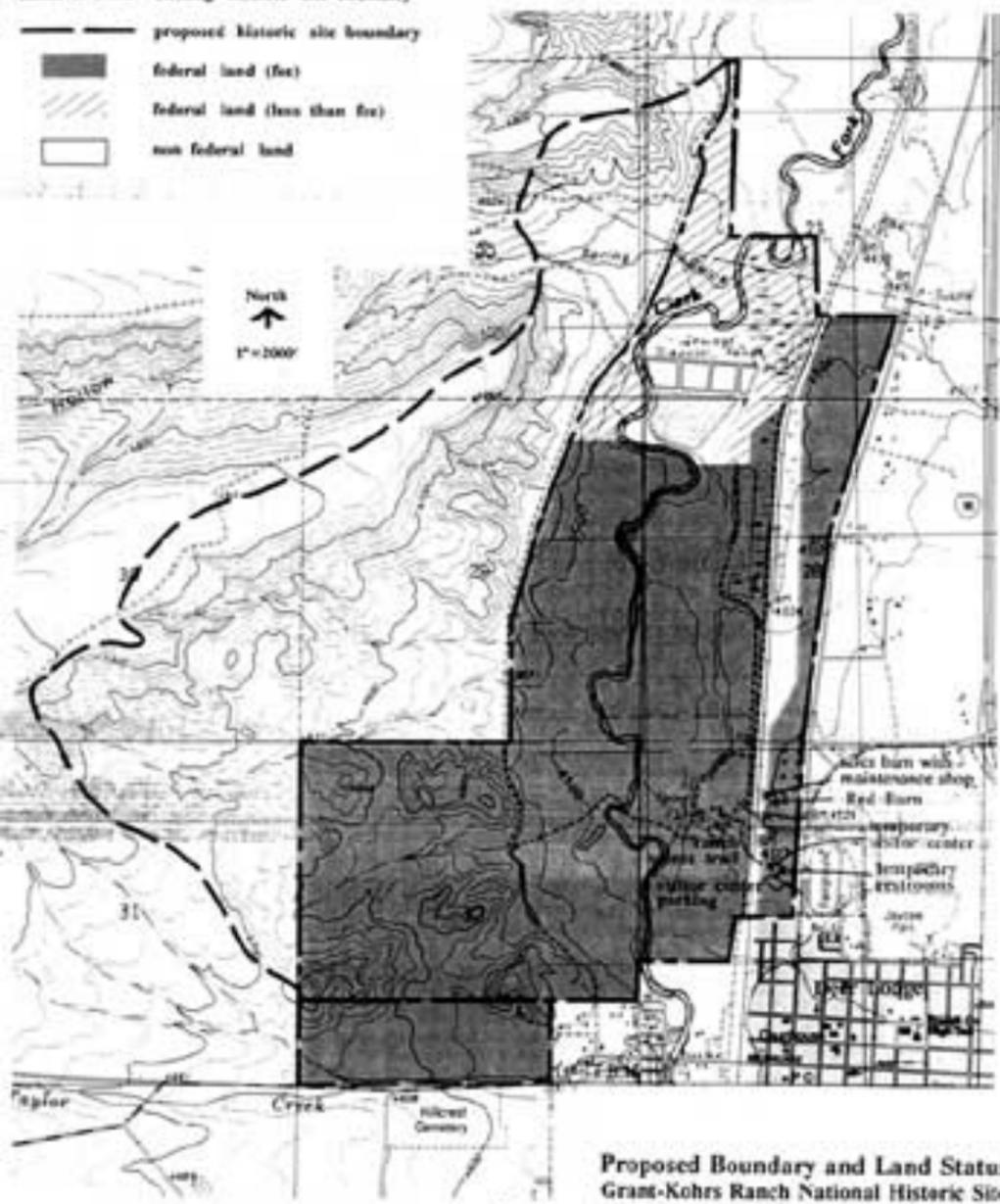


**Proposed Boundary and Land Status  
 Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site**

Montana

U.S. Dept. of the Interior - National Park Service

-  existing historic site boundary
-  proposed historic site boundary
-  federal land (fir)
-  federal land (less than fir)
-  non federal land



**Proposed Boundary and Land Status  
Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site  
Montana**

U.S. Dept. of the Interior - National Park Service

45-180,000-A  
Mar 93 KMRO







HOTEL DEER LODGE

1940

THE DEER LODGE  
RESTAURANT  
& BAR

RESTAURANT & BAR































































