

## Chapter Six

### ***HOMESTEADERS AND TOURISTS: 1878 to Present***

After 1877, the Black Hills' historical record turns on the European American prospectors, merchants, ranchers, farmers, and developers who came to the area to stake out a new life for themselves. Much of the story speaks to the drama and legend of the frontier West with its cast of notable characters, including Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane. Indeed, a large portion of the published history, popular as well as scholarly, focuses its attention on the early decades of white settlement and their romantic link to epic tales of discovery, struggle, and survival on the American frontier. With the passing of the halcyon days of the cattle industry, following the disastrous winter of 1886-1887, the history of the Black Hills turns to more prosaic stories woven out of the fabric of national events from the Depression to the Vietnam War. In fact, comparatively little attention is paid in popular and scholarly writings to what happened in the Black Hills after World War I except for developments at Mount Rushmore.

Until the 1970s, when the American Indian Movement began its occupations in the Black Hills, tribal relationships to the area were essentially erased from the region's history. Most historical writings on the Hills abandoned any consideration of an American Indian presence after 1877, except as a reminder of the now well-known stories of the wars between the U.S. military and local tribal nations. The continuing ties of the Lakotas and their allies, the Cheyennes and Arapahos, were obscured, and even when glimpses of them appeared, it was in the context of events unfolding around the white settlers who came to occupy center stage in local histories. Although largely invisible, there is an important tribal history here, one that involves a complex and continuing relationship to the Hills, and it needs to be told.

Another story that remains hidden in some of the better-known historical accounts of the Black Hills is the emergence and development of the area where Wind Cave National Park is now located. After 1878, the park's lands became wedged between two very different kinds of American settlement. At locations to the north in Custer County, much of the settlement was built around mining and logging and the services that supported these industries, while areas to the south in Fall River County were developed around ranching and farming (Geores 1990:41-42). Although the histories of the northern and southern districts of the Black Hills moved in divergent directions at the end of the nineteenth century, their paths started to meet after World War I through their common ties to the region's rapidly growing tourist industry. The southern Hills can be credited as the pioneer in the region's leisure and recreational development. The town of Hot Springs, in particular, supported the growth of a lavish resort and spa industry at the end of the nineteenth century. A commerce built around travel and leisure did not develop farther north, however, until the early decades of the twentieth century when the Hills' spectacular wilderness scenery and its legendary mining frontier started to be promoted. By the middle of the twentieth century, tourism had become one of the cornerstones of the Black Hills' economy.

## **I. HISTORIC REFERENCES**

In reconstructing the post-1878 history of the Black Hills, especially the region of Wind Cave National Park, several different kinds of source material were relied upon. Most of the secondary sources entail general histories of the region, while the primary materials include the oral and written accounts of the people who resided in the area at different points in time. Some unpublished archival material was also drawn upon to reconstruct events and trends from 1878 to the present.

### **A. Histories of American Settlement and Development**

There are a number of general histories of the Black Hills, but most of these pertain to the era before Wind Cave became a national park. These include the early writings of pioneer settlers, including Annie Tallent's *The Black Hills or the Last Hunting Ground of the Dacotahs* (1899), Jesse Brown and A. M. Willards' *The Black Hills Trails: A History of the Struggles of the Pioneers in The Winning of the Black Hills* (1924), Richard B. Hughes' *Pioneer Years in the Black Hills* (1957), and John McClintock's *Pioneer Days in the Black Hills* (2000). There are the accounts of Le Baron de Mandat-Grancey (1981, 1984), who wrote about his travels in the area during the 1880s. More recent works, such as Watson Parker's *Gold in the Black Hills* (1966), Paul Friggens' *Gold and Grass: The Black Hills Story* (1983), and Hyman Palais' various writings (1941, 1942, 1942b, 1942c, 1950) chronicle the early history of the region as well. Bob Lee and Dick Williams' *Last Grass Frontier: The Stock Grower Association* (1964), Herbert Schell's *South Dakota History* (1961), and Howard R. Lamar's *Dakota Territory, 1861-1889: A Study of Frontier Politics* (1996) are three works that place Black Hills' history in the wider context of what was happening in the state of South Dakota. Finally, Martha Geores' recent study, *Common Ground: The Struggle for Ownership of the Black Hills National Forest* (1990), offers interesting insights on the history of federal lands.

Several travel accounts, largely written for tourists and popular audiences, give a sense of the region's tourism and its most notable "attractions," including Wind Cave, during the first half of the twentieth century. These include R. Peattie's edited volume, *The Black Hills* (1952), O. W. Coursey's *The Beautiful Black Hills* (1926), Robert Casey's *The Black Hills and Their Incredible Characters: A Chronicle and a Guide* (1949), Leland D. Case's *Lee's Official Guide to the Black Hills and the Badlands* (1949), and Albert N. Williams' *The Black Hills* (1952). All of the more serious historical writings and popular travel accounts on the Black Hills include information on the southeastern regions where Wind Cave National Park is located, but this material is very general, except for Suzanne Julin's article "South Dakota Spa: A History of the Hot Springs Health Resort, 1882-1915," which appeared in the 1982 *South Dakota Historical Collections*.

Some of the best and most detailed information on the history of the southeastern Hills comes from the writings of local historians, many of whom wrote essays included in works that mark local town and county centennials (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-1970; Fall River Country Historical Society 1976; Sundstrom, J. 1977; Curl 1984; Oelrichs Historical Society 1984). Of particular note here is the exceptional historical work of Jessie Sundstrom, *Pioneers and Custer State Park* (1994), which describes events unfolding on state lands directly north of Wind Cave National Park. There is also the work of South Dakota's poet laureate, Badger Clark, *When Hot Springs was Still a Pup*, originally published by the Kiwanis Club of Hot Springs in 1927 and republished in 1983 by Linda Hasselstrom of Lame Johnny Press.

Except for John Bohi's 1962 article, "Seventy Five Years at Wind Cave: A History of the National Park," which appeared in the *South Dakota Historical Collections* in 1962, there is little in the published literature that focuses on the park. Historical research (Long 1992; Western History Research 1992) has been conducted for the National Park Service, but it remains unpublished. These sources were consulted for material on European American settlement and cultural affiliations to the park. Unpublished oral history transcripts from the South Dakota Oral History Project at the University of South Dakota-Vermillion (Bingham 1973; McAdam 1973; Petty 1973; Smith, A. 1973; Williams, B. 1973) also give some insight into the relations of local European American settlers to the park.

## **B. Accounts of Continuing Tribal Use and Settlement**

Contained within the historical and popular writings on the Black Hills, in general, and Custer and Fall River counties, in particular, are glimpses of a continuing tribal presence in the Black Hills and the region of Wind Cave National Park from the late nineteenth to the early half of the twentieth century. A Lakota and Cheyenne presence is revealed in the writings of scholars and local white settlers (Mekeel 1932; Odell 1942; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70; Fall River Country Historical Society 1976; Sundstrom, J. 1977; Born 1994; Moore, J. 1981), in the documents of federal officials (Jones 1904; U. S. Senate 1904), and in tribal autobiographical accounts (Stands in Timber and Liberty 1967; Fools Crow in Mails 1978; Black Elk in DeMallie 1984; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988; Pourier et. al in Niehardt and Utrecht 2000). In addition, there are a few unpublished oral history transcripts from the American Indian Oral History Project (Brown Thunder 1971; Circle Bear 1971) and the South Dakota Oral History Project (Bingham 1973; McAdam 1973; Petty 1973; Smith, A. 1973; Williams, B. 1973) at the University of South Dakota-Vermillion that provide additional evidence for the Lakotas' continuing relationship to the Black Hills. Most of these sources, however, contain only *ad hoc* references written in contexts devoted to other concerns. When taken together, however, they document a continuing but changing pattern of tribal relationship to the Hills after 1877.

Over the past four decades, there has been an explosion of writings on tribal ties to the Hills. Much of this originally appeared in local and national newspapers, including *Indian Country Today*, *Lakota Times*, *New York Times*, *Rapid City Journal*, *Rolling Stone Magazine*, *Sioux Falls Argus-Leader*, and the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, which covered Lakota takeovers in the Black Hills during the 1970s and 1980s. More recently, a number of writings have discussed these events in relation to tribal litigation and land reclamation efforts (Matthiessen 1980; Clow 1983; Parlow 1983a; Cassells, Miller, and Miller 1984; Giago 1984, 1999; Pemberton 1985; Lazarus 1991; O'Brien 1991; Means and Wolf 1995; Smith and Warrior 1996; New Holy 1997, 1998; Christafferson 2001). Yet, behind the more prolific coverage of the Lakotas' political relationship to the Hills is another trail of writing that indicates the slow but steady return of Lakotas and other American Indians to the Black Hills as tourists, workers, residents, and religionists (White, R. 1970; Powell 1969; Bingham 1973; Petty 1973; Schlesier 1974; Fools Crow in Mails 1978; Moore 1981; Parlow 1983a; Giago 1984, 1999; Gonzalez 1996; Whiteman in Schwartz 1988; Red Hat in Schukies 1993; Young Bear and Theisz 1994; Forbes-Boyte 1996, 1999; Dorst 2000; U.S. Census Bureau 2000; Lerner 2002).

## **II. TRANSITIONS**

The transitional lands on which Wind Cave National Park stands, bridging as they do the prairies and sandstone hills of the Hogback with the high altitude coniferous forests of the limestone and granite interiors, continued to influence the course of the history of the park area after 1878. The park and its surrounding region stood on the margins of the Hills' major centers of white settlement and economic development. It remained an area that people crossed to get to the gold fields in the interiors. Even after European Americans discovered Wind Cave in 1881 and developed it into a tourist attraction, the park's lands remained largely unpopulated. Most of the small number of homesteads within park boundaries were not settled and patented until after the 1890s (Western History Research 1992:70). Grazing, hunting, trapping, and some farming were the primary economic activities settlers pursued on the lands that now encompass park properties.

As settlement increased and the cave's popularity grew, the park's lands became less isolated. In time, they came to occupy an important place in the history of the southern Hills, and after 1920, they contributed in not insubstantial ways to the growth of the local economy. In order to get a good sense of this history, however, we need to see it in the light of the wider region of which it has always been a part.

### **A. The Emergence of a New Social Order, 1878 To 1902**

The decades between 1878 and 1902, the year before Wind Cave became a national park, were heydays in the history of the Black Hills. This was a time of rapid population growth and economic development, much of which rested on mining, logging, and ranching. It was a formative period when new and radically different kinds of political and economic relationships to the Hills were established by the European Americans who made this region their home. As their presence grew, they transformed the landscape in fundamental ways, redefined the uses to which its resources were put, and above all, imposed their own cultural meanings on its value and worth. In short, the newcomers created the foundations upon which a new social order would be built and the future course of the Hills would be navigated.

Once European Americans dominated the region, they also determined the conditions under which the Black Hills' former residents would continue to preserve some of their relationships to the region. Although many of them were forced out of the area and placed on reservations far removed from the Hills, the Lakotas and Cheyennes of the neighboring Pine Ridge Reservation were still close enough to retain an ongoing relationship, based not only on certain limited patterns of traditional use but also on new kinds of association linked to European American adaptations to the region.

#### **1. The Stories of European American Settlement**

The early stories of European American settlement in the Hills, especially in the region where Wind Cave National Park was established, focus on three subjects. First, they typically consider the trails that emigrants took to reach various locations in the Black Hills and the history of their development from wagon roads and stage routes to railway lines and modern highways. Second, they chart the chronology of the area through the discoveries of the Hills' natural resources and the industries that fostered their development. Finally, they give attention to the figures whose noteworthy accomplishments contributed to the Hills' growth and its unique history. Here the rascalians and bandits, the likes of Lame Johnny, often receive as much attention as the scions of local industry.

### *a. Trails and Crossroads*

Much of the popular romance of the region is told from the vantage point of the routes that prospectors and settlers took to reach the Black Hills in the 1870s (Spring 1949; Palais 1950; Parker, D. 1951). Initially, most of the emigrants came to the Hills on foot or horseback and by wagon, but as the region continued to boom and grow after 1877, stagecoaches and later trains brought people to the area. The newcomers came from all directions; they migrated from the mining fields of California, Montana, and Colorado, from urban centers and farms in the East and Midwest, from the cattle ranges of Texas, Kansas, and Oklahoma, and even from the foreign lands of China, Canada, Mexico, Sweden, Scotland and Germany (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:41-45, 55, 101, *et. seq.*; Bingham 1973:2; Petty 1973:1; Williams, B. 1973:1; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:10, 12, 28, 35, 48, 59, 70, 78 *et. seq.*; Sundstrom, J. 1977:261, 289, 362 *et. seq.*). Bismark in Dakota Territory, Sidney in Nebraska Territory, and Cheyenne in Wyoming Territory were the major transcontinental railway stops from which travelers embarked to follow overland routes to the Hills. Fort Pierre on the Missouri River was the nearest stop for emigrants arriving in the region by steamboat. These were the four major locations from which throngs of prospectors and settlers started their journeys to the Hills and also the central terminals for wagon trains hauling cargo into and out of these mountains.

Two of the earliest trails into the Hills and to the bustling gold towns of Custer and Deadwood crossed the southern Black Hills. The land on which Wind Cave National Park now stands was situated along one of these important routes and bordered another at the location of the park's water supply area. The Buffalo Gap, as previously noted, was a major point of entry into the Black Hills from the town of Sidney in Nebraska, and the divides along Beaver Creek and Cold Brook Canyon became well-trodden trails, leading prospectors and earlier American Indians into the high elevation interiors where the town of Custer is located. Professor Walter Jenney, the geologist who led a federally financed expedition to the area in 1875, followed this route again on horseback in 1879. He was accompanied by Dr. Valentine McGillicuddy, also a former member of the 1875 expedition, and Col. William J. Thornby of Deadwood, South Dakota (Tallent 1899:645-646; Casey 1949:87-88; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:143). As Tallent (1899:647) described their itinerary, "From Pringle, they took an old Indian trail along the divide towards the Buffalo Gap, for six or seven miles and passed within a short distance of the now famous Wind Cave." Even as late as 1881, emigrants traveled with wagon trains hauling freight to Custer along this trail (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:251). After 1877, most of the wagon and stagecoach traffic from Sidney to the Black Hills' gold fields was routed along the eastern flanks of the Hills, although the Buffalo Gap remained a major rest stop along the route (Palais 1950:226-231). By the 1880s, the Beaver Creek Trail and others nearby were used primarily for local traffic or for hauling lumber and other freight (Long 1992:6). According to Donald Williams (in Fall River County Historical Society 1976:275), a descendent of one of the pioneer sawmill operators in Hot Springs:

Most of the lumber was hauled down Cold Brook Canyon over the hill south of Wind Cave Park and on to the Buffalo Gap. The hill out of the canyon was called breakneck hill, which could be accomplished without too much effort, then over Gobblers Knob and on down to Beaver Creek.

To the present day, local residents and historians are well aware of the history and importance of Beaver Creek and the Buffalo Gap, not only to the early miners but also to the Lakotas and other tribal nations who previously lived in the region (Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:3; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:14). Even foreign visitors knew of its importance. Gallot

Francois Edmond, Le Baron de Mandat-Grancey (1981:3-6), a nobleman born in Dijon, France in 1842 and a writer of popular western stories, traveled to the Black Hills in 1883, 1886, and 1887. While visiting the Fleur de Lys ranch in 1887, he had this to say about the Buffalo Gap:

It is in this region, at the same time so rough and so changeless, that we plunge, on leaving Buffalo Gap, which is situated at the edge of the great prairie. One can enter the massive bulk of mountains by three or four gaps --(*breches*). The former was well known at the time of the Indians. They had given it the name *Breche aux buffles* of which Buffalo Gap is the translation, because it was through there that passed each year the immense herds of buffalo which, having wintered on the southern prairie, came north in the spring. Innumerable Indian wars had as their objects the possession of this hunting ground; for the tribes who could claim it for themselves would have marvelous hunting there. It is said that certain days three or four thousand buffalo were slaughtered. Even now the ground is literally covered with their skulls (Mandat-Grancey 1981:11).

He also reported on the wonders of the water that flowed in Beaver Creek:

In the southern Black Hills all of the streams of the prairie have execrable water, but none compare with Beaver Creek, which flows at the Buffalo Gap. Its water has all the properties of the spring which, in our day, has made so celebrated the name of the *Hunyadi*. The good Flynn saw himself already associated with his name on the bottles the doctor would dispatch to the entire world (Mandat-Grancey 1981:7).

By the end of the 1870s, Buffalo Gap was a major stopping point along the route of the early Northwestern Stage Company line from Sidney, Nebraska to Deadwood, South Dakota (Smith and Willards 1924:48; Biever 1984:4), and it was also one of the locations where people changed stages to ride to Hot Springs and Custer (Sundstrom, J. 1994:25, 27). George Boland and his brother established a stage and relay station here with food and overnight accommodations for passengers and freighters (Stewart 1967-70:70). In the early 1880s, during the halcyon days of the cattle industry, the Buffalo Gap grew into a bustling community with over one thousand residents (Casey 1949:86-90). It became the most important shipping point and transfer location for people and goods destined to the southern Hills.

Another important route crossing the southern Hills came directly north from Fort Robinson, Nebraska, through Red Canyon and Pleasant Valley or, alternatively, Shirttail Canyon and Pringle to Custer (Sundstrom, J. 1994:25, Palais 1950:231-238). Like the Buffalo Gap, Red Canyon was an entrance into the Hills jealously guarded by the Lakotas and Cheyennes, who regularly attacked wagon trains and stages passing through its narrow passageway during the height of the gold rush between 1874 and 1876. Both of these early gateways were also the targets of highwaymen and horse thieves, who were known to maintain their hideouts at isolated locations in the southern Hills (Spring 1949:296). One of the more well-known thieves was "Lame Johnny," Cornelius Donahue, who with his partner, Lame Bradley, shared a shack along the creek that bears his name; he was eventually hanged in 1878 on a cottonwood tree north of the Buffalo Gap, near the site where he and his accomplices purportedly robbed a stagecoach (Brown and Willards 1924:298-301; Case 1949:104; Federal Writers Project 1952:287; Bohi 1962:365; Stewart 1967-70:70; Sundstrom, J. 1994:66-67; Rezatto 1989:120-127).

Little more than two years after the gold boom, the placer mines in the "discovery" town of Custer played out. After 1877, when the region's mining development and the locus of its population growth shifted to the northern districts of the Hills, the major transportation routes were diverted to roads around the edge of the Hogback. When the U.S. Post Office Department started to carry mail into the Hills in 1878, Luke Voorhees took it over a newly established stage route

that crossed the southern Hills from Raw Hide Buttes to Horse Head, just south of the Buffalo Gap, where it joined the Sidney line going north to Deadwood. This new route bypassed Hat Creek, Red Canyon, and Custer, a change that led to the loss of mail service for many settlers in the southern Hills.<sup>1</sup> By 1880, the mail contract over this route was curtailed, although the passenger service continued from Cheyenne to Deadwood by way of Horse Head Junction (Spring 1949:292, 298-299, 303). In the 1890s, local mail was carried by stage on a route that started at the Buffalo Gap, included stops at Wind Cave and Hot Springs and ended at Edgemont (Petty 1973:13). Wind Cave served as the local post office for some of the region's homesteaders well into the twentieth century (McAdam 1973:3).

Within a decade of the invasion of prospectors and settlers, railtracks were being laid to destinations at the foot of the Black Hills. The Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad offered service between Sidney and Rapid City, following the old stage and wagon routes (Biever 1984:4). A railway station was built along Beaver Creek, and the town of Buffalo Gap was relocated farther south as a result. The first train arrived in 1885, and from there, passengers were taken by stage to destinations in the southern Hills (Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:70). With the arrival of the railway, Buffalo Gap became the first major shipping point for locally raised stock, eliminating the time consuming, long distance cattle drives of earlier years (Palais 1941:43; Lee and Williams 1964:161). The railways not only made it more convenient but also more cost effective for ranchers to bring their stock to distant markets (Schell 1961:250), and this no doubt helped to make some of the land in and around the present day boundaries of Wind Cave National Park attractive for stock raising. The coming of the railroads in the mid-1880s also opened the region to tourists and travelers, and it played a central role in the growth of Hot Springs as a nationally acclaimed resort and the development of Wind Cave as a popular tourist attraction. Eventually, branch lines took passengers into the interior regions of the Hills, and by 1891, two railways reached Hot Springs (Clark, B. 1983:72).

1891 was also the year that Fred Evans hired Chris Jensen, a Danish emigrant, to run a coach to Wind Cave from Hot Springs (Sundstrom, J. 1994:28). Later, sightseers could reach the cave in a four-seated tally-ho bus drawn by four horses and owned by Jensen, who now ran a livery stable in Hot Springs. A competitor, Edmund Petty, who ran the mail service in the 1890s, took people to Wind Cave once a day on his stagecoach, which was later sold to a promoter for Deadwood's 'Days of 76' (Tallent 1899:672; Bohi 1962:392; Koller 1970:3; Petty 1973:13; Smith, A. 1973:10; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:146; Sundstrom, J. 1977:27-28; Clark, B. 1983:14).

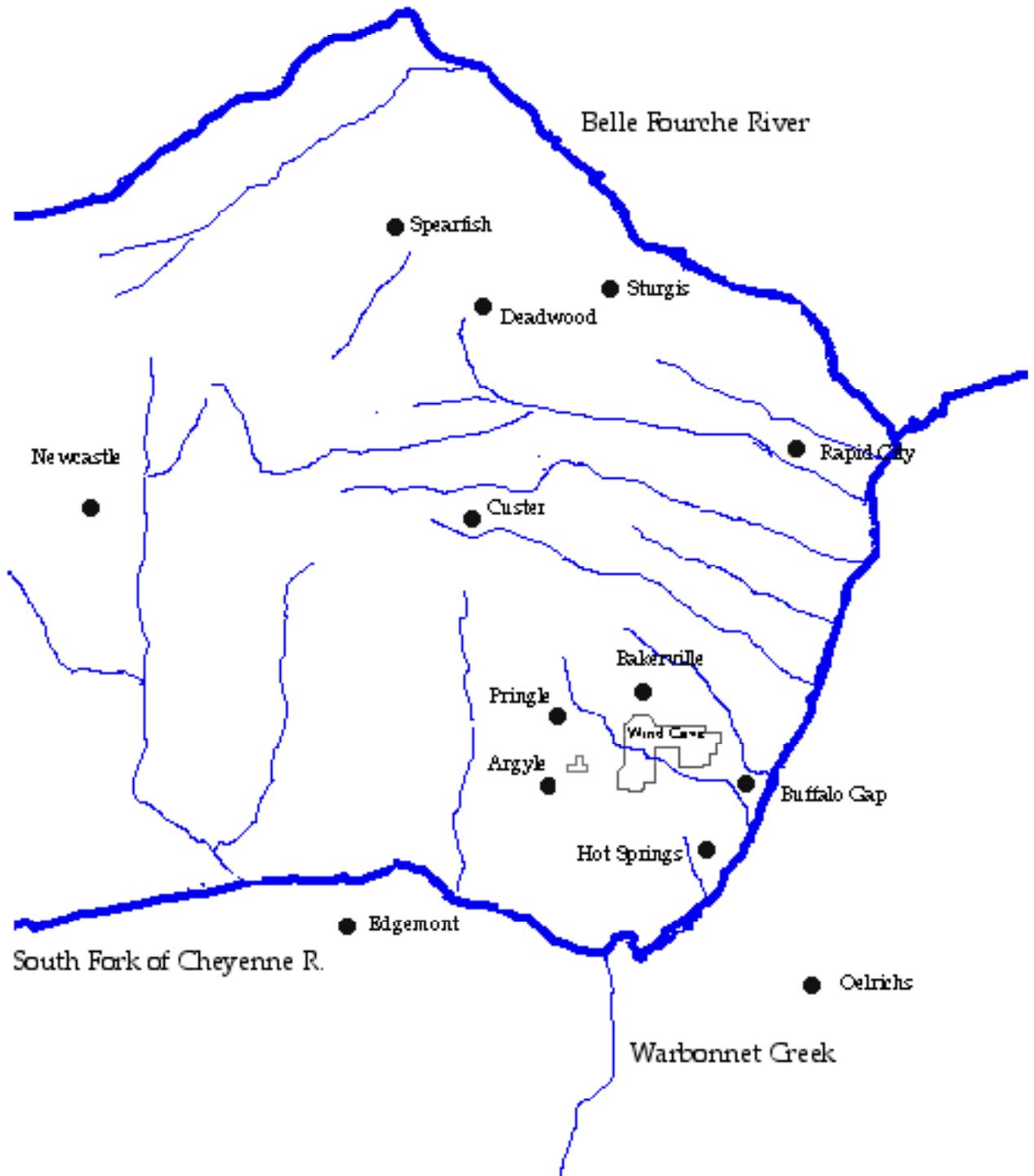
### **b. Towns and Settlements**

Wind Cave National Park is situated along the southern border of Custer County. Originally, Custer County covered the entire southern Black Hills and the grasslands as far south as the Nebraska state line. The center of its government was located at the town of Custer. By the time Lakota title to the Black Hills was extinguished in 1877, the gold rush was over in Custer. The thousands of prospectors who flocked to the area were gone and with them went much of the town's commercial development. In subsequent years, Custer's population fluctuated between fifty and four hundred people (Tallent 1899:408-409). In the face of a dwindling population and reduced commercial opportunities, it neither had the economic strength nor the political clout to

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<sup>1</sup> Before the U.S. mail was able to establish its service in the Black Hills, private individuals, such as Ben Arnold, carried mail from Sidney, Cheyenne, and Fort Crawford to the region's settlers. Until the Hills were officially relinquished in 1877, all traffic into and out of the Hills was illegal. Even though no one was ever prosecuted for this illegal traffic, some were detained by the military in the early years of European American occupation.

**FIGURE 15. Early European American Towns and Settlements in the Black Hills**



maintain control over the far-reaching county it served. When the southern half of the county experienced a spurt in its economy and population as a result of the region's cattle boom, its local citizens brought a bill before the territorial legislature to have the county divided. In 1883, a law was passed to create a new county, named Fall River, with its seat at Hot Springs and its northern boundary less than three miles south of Wind Cave National Park (Tallent 1899:641; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:339). Even though the park is still situated in Custer County, many of its most important economic links are tied to Hot Springs and Fall River County. Therefore, the histories of both counties are considered here.

At the end of the 1870s, Wind Cave National Park and its neighboring environs were still largely unpopulated. Some of the earliest European American residents were people who entered the region to prospect, but when the mining boom was over, they turned to other economic pursuits. Some made a living from hunting and trapping (Bingham 1973:2, 4; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:164). A few started small-scale sawmills and logging operations at locations north of Wind Cave and outside park boundaries (Lindsay 1967-70:899; Williams in Fall River County Historical Society 1976:274; Sundstrom, J. 1994:43-47, 103-109). Most of the people who settled in the general region of Wind Cave as squatters and later as homesteaders ended up running a wide variety of ranching and farming enterprises. Although some of the earliest settlers were prospectors who turned to ranching and other occupations when the gold fields played out, others worked as hired hands for the big cattle companies and struck out on their own when many of these operations folded after the harsh winter of 1887. Many more, however, arrived in the area for the express purpose of establishing homesteads and making a living from ranching and/or farming.

As tribal residents of the area had done before them, European Americans selected the best sites to homestead along Beaver, Highland and Lame Johnny creeks, the Fall River, and other local waterways. While these locations afforded enough resources to make a living with modest economic returns, there was rarely enough contiguous and open space inside the Hogback to support some of the larger market-oriented stock operations that had taken over the grasslands outside the Hills. Still, a few sizable ranches were situated on park lands in the 1880s (McAdam 1973:27; Long 1992:8). Most of the land squatted on and later homesteaded in the southern Hills involved family-run enterprises, which operated on a much smaller scale than some of the huge commercial operations overtaking the region outside the Hogback near Buffalo Gap and Oelrichs (McAdam 1973:3; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:4, 5, 7, 14, 28 *et seq.*; Western History Research 1992:81, 101). A few of the biggest cattle enterprises in the area, such as the L7 at Lame Johnny Creek, ran some of their stock inside the Hogback too and on land that is now part of Wind Cave National Park (Clark, B. 1983:17, 27; Long 1992:7-9).

Besides the thousands of people who came to the Black Hills to work the lands, mines, and timber stands, many arrived to offer their services as workers and entrepreneurs in other businesses. The bullwhackers who hauled freight into the Hills by wagon, and the stage drivers who brought passengers made up a significant portion of the labor force before the arrival of the railroads. The freighters supplied local entrepreneurs with mining equipment, sawmills, printing presses, furniture, fixtures, food, clothing, and caskets, which they hauled from terminals over two hundred miles away at Pierre, Sidney, Cheyenne, and Bismark (Schell 1961:152-155; Frigens 1983:70).<sup>2</sup> A variety of different people came to the area to open businesses from hotels, saloons, and billiard halls to druggists, bakeries, and liverys. Skilled professionals quickly

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<sup>2</sup> Fred T. Evans, who built Hot Springs' famous luxury hotel, owned one of the biggest freighting firms in the region (Schell 1961:154).

followed, including doctors, lawyers, and school teachers (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:2, 12, 14, 16, 35, 48, 96, 189 *et seq.*; Sundstrom, J. 1977:258, 259 *et. seq.*). Finally, a few people came to the Hills primarily as investors with the necessary capital to build and develop some of the area's resources, including Hot Spring's thermal waters and Wind Cave's subterranean attractions (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:80-82, 141-145, 234-235).

The population that occupied the Hills at the end of the nineteenth century represented a diversity of ethnic groups. Although European Americans formed the dominant group, small numbers of Asian Americans, Mexican Americans, and African Americans also made this area their home (Casey 1949:348-349; Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:70; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:84-86, 258-259, 301, 339-340; Sundstrom, J. 1977:27; Rezatto 1989:101-104). In Hot Springs, for example, the Joseph Chow family operated a laundry (Bingham 1973:13), and Fred Evans brought in African-American laborers from Chicago to work at his hotel (Petty 1973:21).

At the end of the 1870s, most of the mining and cattle towns at the northern edge of the Hills from Rapid City to Spearfish were well established, offering a full range of services and accommodations to their residents. The southern Black Hills were still isolated and barely developed until the 1880s when its cattle and resort industries started to flourish, attracting a wide range of merchants, professionals, and workers to the area. The 1880s was the decade when some of the towns surrounding Wind Cave National Park also began to come into their own.

The town of Buffalo Gap, ten miles east of Wind Cave, was the site of significant commercial development but only for a very brief period of time. During the halcyon days of the cattle industry, many of the towns bordering the southern edge of the Black Hills flourished. Edgemont, Oelrichs, and Buffalo Gap were bustling communities in 1885. Buffalo Gap had a population of over a thousand people, twenty-three saloons, seventeen hotels and eateries, two sporting houses, various retail establishments, and a bank. Fire destroyed the business section in 1895, and even though some of it was rebuilt, it never returned to its former glory days after the region's cattle boom went bust in the aftermath of the hard winter of 1887 (Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:70-71). Small scale ranches were established all along the course of Beaver Creek from the Gap to the western reaches of Wind Cave National Park, while most of the larger operations held lands that hugged the Hogback and extended across the grasslands towards the Cheyenne River (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40-45, 55, 101, *et. seq.*).

To the west of Wind Cave National Park, the small community of Pringle, named after one of the early settler families, developed around the stage station known as Point of Rocks that served the traffic between Cheyenne, Wyoming and Custer, South Dakota. Its early residents wrestled their livelihoods from ranching, logging, and mining (Smith, A. 1973:8, 17-18). By 1890, it had become a train stop for the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincey railroad (Sundstrom, J. 1977:197), and it had two stores, which local ranch families from the western sections of Wind Cave National Park patronized every fall when they laid in their annual supplies (Smith, A. 1973:18; McAdam 1973:4). Henry Sager, Ed Van Dewater and the other ranchers of another western border community, Argyle, grazed their horses and cattle on some of the lands that eventually became part of the park (Henry Sager in Sundstrom, J. 1977:363, 364, 365, 404).

On the northern border of the park, small ranching communities, such as Bakerville, were established in the 1880s. The Smith, Hight, McVeigh, and Renner families were among those who established homesteads along Highland Creek on lands bordering Wind Cave National Park (Sundstrom, J. 1977:316, 384-385, 1994:37-38, 41, 57-63, 75, 76). As was the custom elsewhere, local families undoubtedly used park lands to graze their stock, to hunt, to collect timber for fuel, and to gather berries and other plants for foods and medicines. Over time, all of the

homesteads that bordered Wind Cave National Park were purchased by the state of South Dakota and placed within the jurisdiction of Custer State Park or reconveyed to the federal government and included within the land holdings of Wind Cave National Park (Sundstrom, J. 1977:384, 385, 1994:62; Western History Research 1992:100).

In the 1880s, seven miles to the south, the town of Minnekahta, later known as Hot Springs, began to develop. Although the Lakotas and Cheyennes had long appreciated the healing properties of its thermal waters, these were not widely known to whites until 1879 when Professor Walter Jenney, Valentine T. McGillicuddy (later, an agent on the Pine Ridge Reservation in the 1890s), and Colonel William J. Thornby relocated them while on a trip to explore the geology of the area.<sup>3</sup> According to Thornby, who learned about the springs from Horatio N. Ross,<sup>4</sup> a former prospector and member of the Black Hills Expedition, the trio found the Minnekahta Spring covered in frog spawn. They sighted the large rock basin that Indian people carved into the shape of a moccasin, and they found abundant evidence of lodgepoles and tipi rings in the vicinity, suggesting fairly recent occupation by local tribes. Later in the summer of 1879, Thornby returned with George Boland who was the owner of a ranch and the stage station at the Buffalo Gap, and the two located the spring where the “plunge bath” now stands. It was during this trip that Thornby staked the springs’ locations (Tallent 1899:648-651; Fall River County Historical Society 1976: 143; Julin 1982:200-204; Clark, B. 1983:17-19).

Shortly after this “discovery,” Thornby wrote an article in the Deadwood Pioneer that attracted the attention of a local physician, R. D. Jennings. In 1881, Jennings and another physician, A. S. Stewart, set out to investigate the springs. They were sufficiently impressed to form a stock company with other investors, including E.G. Dudley, Fred Evans, and L.R. Graves, and bought up much of the land surrounding the springs, a part of which was now owned by Joe and Edmund Petty who used one of the springs to irrigate their farm. These men acquired the site at Hot Springs from its original owner L.B. Reno by trading their ranch at the Buffalo Gap.<sup>5</sup> In 1882, the northern Black Hills’ businessmen moved to Hot Springs with their families, built log homes there, and platted the original town site, which was called Minnekahta. The town was not incorporated until 1890 (Tallent 1899:649; Clark, B. 1983:20; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:143, 345; Julin 1982:205-211). In subsequent years, the entrepreneurs jointly acquired the capital necessary to purchase additional property, and in 1886, their Townsite Company was reorganized with a capital stock. The site Thornby originally staked at Minnekahta spring was sold to Joe Laravie and John Donaldson. Later, the property was purchased by the company and platted for a new town site. The site did not develop into a booming recreational center until five years later when the railroad arrived 13 miles to the east at the Buffalo Gap (Tallent 1899:652-653, 658; Julin 1982:205-210). In and around the town of Hot Springs, many families established farms and ranches (Clark, B. 1983:18-19), and many of them were related to people who held land patents on properties inside the boundaries of Wind Cave National Park.

In 1886, the Dakota Hot Springs Company was formed to spur local development. According to Badger Clark (1983:53), Fred Evans and other stockholders “went confidently to work to make

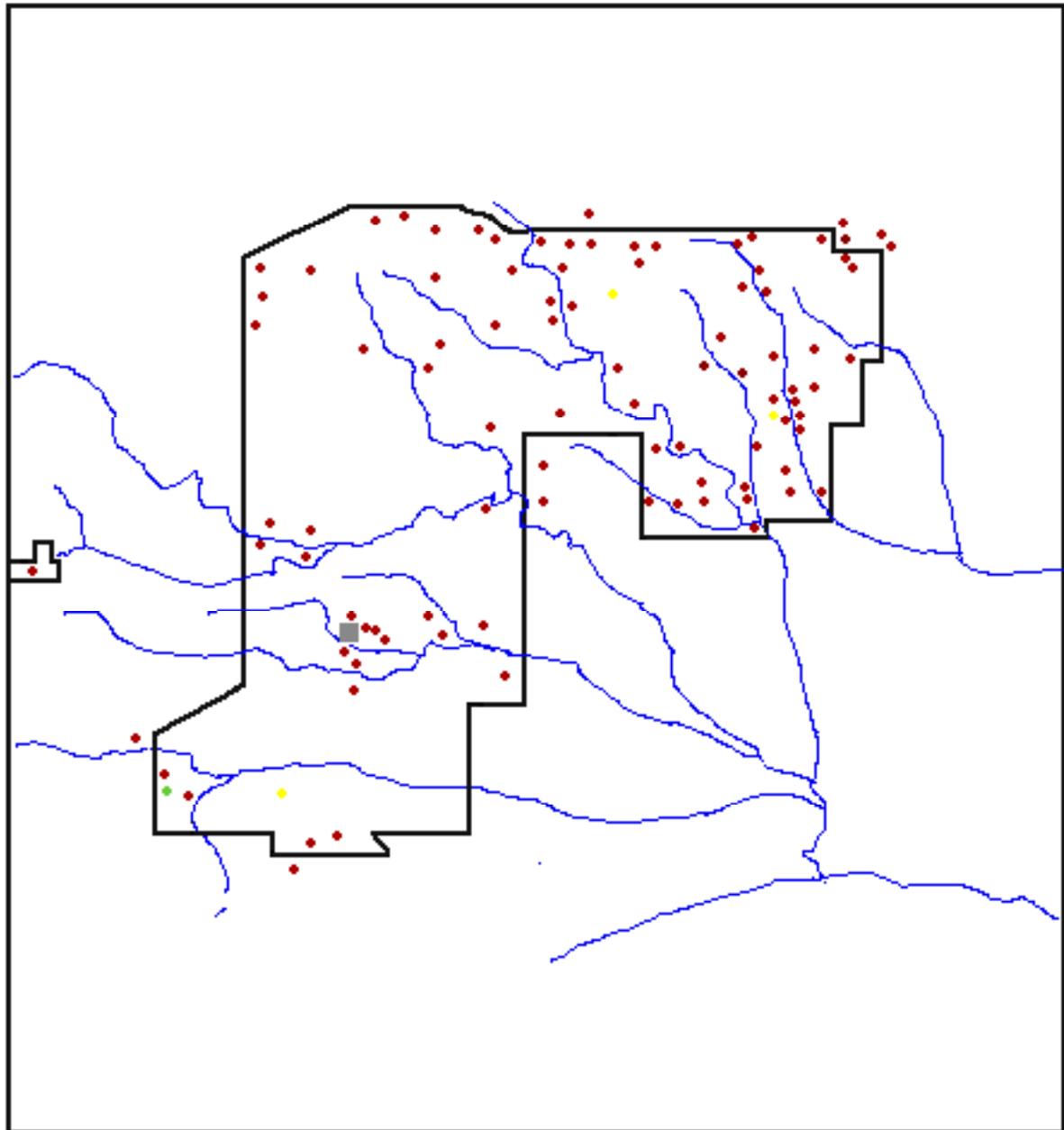
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<sup>3</sup> The thermal waters of Minnekata were first recorded by a party of the Jenny Expedition in 1875, but the big springs were not uncovered by whites until 1879.

<sup>4</sup> Ross is also credited with the discovery of gold on French Creek during the Custer Expedition.

<sup>5</sup> According to Maude Petty (1973:2-3), the land was sold because it was subject to flooding. Having learned from local Lakotas of the Fall River’s tendency to flood, many of the incoming settlers decided to stake their ranches and farmlands away from the river (Williams, B. 1973:14-16). Indeed, in 1920, after one of the heaviest snowfalls in decades, the river did flood (Bohi 1962:439; Smith, A. 1973:35; Williams, B. 1973:15).

**FIGURE 16. Locations of European American Settlement Sites at Wind Cave National Park**



• Settlement Sites	• Limestone Kiln	• Public Schools
	■ Location of Wind Cave	

Adapted from Western History Research (1992, Figures 15 and 36)

a city out of a score of ramshackle log buildings, located in a lonely canyon 13 miles from a branch railroad.” As part of the change, the town adopted a new name “Hot Springs” (Clark, B. 1983:54), built a lavish resort hotel, and established the town’s first paper, the *Hot Springs Star*. When South Dakota became a state in 1889, Hot Springs was in the midst of its own boom (Clark, B. 1983:64-68). The State Soldier’s Home and Black Hills College were completed in 1890 (Clark, B. 1983:64, 66), and within a year, the town grew from 583 in 1889 to 1500 in 1890 (Julin 1982:220-235; Clark, B. 1983:68). The next year, in 1891, the branch lines of two railways served the town (Clark, B.1983:71, 72).

Unlike the thermal waters at Hot Springs, there are conflicting stories about which of the early settlers found Wind Cave. One attributes its “discovery” to Edmund Petty, an early resident of Hot Springs (Tallent 1899:670) and another to the prospector, William Brooks, who mined iron ore in the region and who was also out hunting when he purportedly came across the cave in 1879 (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:220; Fall River County Historical society 1976:9). John Wells is also mentioned in conjunction with the “discovery” of Wind Cave (Western History Research 1992:32), and Cora Hawthorne Fingerlos (in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:508) claims her father, Horatio Hawthorne, uncovered it with some other ranchers when they were out looking for stray cattle. Some even claim that Lame Johnny, the notorious horse thief in the region, found it in 1877 (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:39; Stabler in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:85; Clark, B. 1983:22; Sundstrom, J. 1994:66-67). Most assign its discovery to the Bingham brothers, Jesse and Tom, local cowboys, who supposedly located it with their friend, John Dennis,<sup>6</sup> when they were out deer hunting in 1881 (Bohi 1962:365-366; Koller 1970:2-3; McAdam 1973:12; Sundstrom, J. 1977:105, 1994:68). With his usual flair, Badger Clark (1983:22) wrote of the discovery as follows:

Wind Cave, with its ninety miles of passages, forms a sort of gigantic lung through which volumes of air are breathed in and out. Before the present entrance to the cave was opened with dynamite, the narrowness of its throat made the Cave asthmatic, as it were, and its deep-toned wheezing was audible for some hundred yards. It was this might bronchial trouble which attracted the attention of Jess and Tom Bingham as they rode near the spot and following the sound it its source, the astonished discoverers felt the cold, subterranean air blown strongly into their faces from the black hole among the rocks.

Another brother, Matthew, may have played a role in its discovery too. According to his daughter, Mary Bingham (1973:3-4; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:33), her father not only lived and hunted with local Lakotas, but he was also a fluent speaker of their language. It doesn’t take a leap of imagination to surmise that Matthew and his brothers, Tom and Jesse, may have learned about the cave from the Lakotas. Its discovery might not have been an “accident,” as widely reported in the literature. Although the brothers may not have known the exact location of the cave, they probably learned of its general whereabouts from Lakota sources. Indeed, Charles Stabler (in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:85), the son of John Stabler, who built a hotel at the site of the cave, wrote:

The Indians who lived and hunted in the area that now comprises Wind Cave National Park, were probably the first humans to note the strong currents of air rushing in or out of a small opening in the rocks along side the gulch.

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<sup>6</sup> John Dennis came to the Black Hills from Hill City, and he homesteaded an area in Hot Springs named after the Catholican Springs (Fall River County Historical Society 1973:144; Julin 1982:203).

In his history of Wind Cave, John Bohi (1962:365) also argues that local tribal people probably knew it before what he calls the “first real discovery, that is, the recognition of the opening as something unique and interesting occurred only with the arrival of permanent settlers.” The implication that local tribes did not recognize the uniqueness and significance of the cave can be easily challenged, but not the fact that the Bingham family were probably the first European Americans to find the cave. After the Bingham family came across the cave, Jesse built a small cabin over the cave’s opening, but later, he was caught rustling cattle and eventually fled the area (Clark, B. 1983:86).

In the 1890s, during her childhood on a ranch inside the modern borders of Wind Cave National Park, Fannie McAdam (1973:18-19) recalled many people prospecting in the area but with little success. In fact, mineral claims to the lands where the cave sits had been abandoned, and in 1890, three new claims were filed on the lands around the cave and sold to the South Dakota Mining Company the same year (Bohi 1962:368-369; Stabler in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:86; Western History Research 1992:30-35). The owner of the company, J.C. Moss,<sup>7</sup> assigned one of his employees, Jesse D. McDonald, to manage and conduct assessment work on cave properties. McDonald and his family took up a homestead near the cave and applied for homestead rights to the surface lands, which they agreed to deed back to their employer. With the help of two brothers, Bob and Larry McAdam, Jesse’s sons, Alvin and Elmer, began to explore and map out the cave’s passageways, making them accessible for tours, which turned into a very successful enterprise in subsequent years (Bohi 1962:370-394; McAdam 1973:11). In 1892, the Parrot Hotel, which John Stabler leased and ran in Hot Springs, burned down. That year he entered into a business arrangement with Jesse McDonald and acquired a sizable interest in cave properties. This led to the formation of the Wonderful Wind Cave Improvement Company. A year later in 1893, Stabler built and opened a hotel at the site (Bohi 1962:395-398; Koller 1970; Stabler in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:86; Sundstrom, J. 1977:105; Sundstrom 1994:68; Pizarowicz 2001:1, 2001m:2). The same year Moss filed a suit against McDonald and his company, and Peter Folsom filed another suit against the mining company Moss owned. In 1894, Folsom acquired the South Dakota Mining Company’s claims, and in 1895, the courts upheld his ownership of the cave. The next year, in 1896, the courts ruled in favor of McDonald’s homestead rights. The U.S. Land Office, however, maintained that ownership rights were “uncertain” (Bohi 1962:394-403; Stabler in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:86; Western History Research 1992:32-36). Meanwhile, McDonald and Stabler began to feud over shares in the ownership of their joint property, leading in 1897 to a local sheriff taking possession of the cave and turning it over to Peter Folsom who, in association with John Stabler and Peter Paulson, formed the Wind Cave Company (Bohi 1962:403-405; Stabler in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:86; Western History Research 1992:36-41).

When the time limit on McDonald’s original homestead expired, the U.S. Land Office was called in to investigate the competing claims. The special agent assigned to the case, C.W. Greene, recommended that the government cancel McDonald’s homestead entry, and in 1901, the federal government withdrew the land around Wind Cave from mining and agricultural development (Pizarowicz 2001:2). The cave remained open, however, and some of the families who had had interests in it, notably, the Stablers and McDonalds, worked as guides (Bohi 1962:400-403). John Stabler’s daughter, Catherine, who directed tours in her teens, was the first female guide

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<sup>7</sup> There are conflicting reports about which Moss actually ran the company. Charles Stabler (in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:86) and Jesse Sundstrom (1994) identify the owner as J.C. Moss, but John Bohi (1962:369) and the “Wind Cave National Park Time-Line” (Pizarowicz 2001:1) attribute its ownership to R. B. Moss.

(Smith, A. 1973:15). Chris Jensen, who ran a coach to the cave from Hot Springs, also became a guide. In 1903, Congress passed an organic act that set aside over ten thousand acres of federal land for the creation of Wind Cave National Park. The South Dakota representative Eben W. Martin of Deadwood introduced the legislation (Bohi 1962:416; Koller 1971).

According to Jessie Sundstrom (1994:68), the enabling legislation to establish a National Game Preserve on lands bordering the park was introduced to Congress, nine years later, in 1912 by W.C. Martin, whose family owned a ranch along Beaver Creek. The game preserve, however, was managed by the Department of Agriculture until 1935. A year after the game preserve was established, the American Bison Association's donation of fourteen bison arrived on the reserve from the New York Zoological Gardens, and in 1914, elk were reintroduced to the area from Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and antelope were brought from Brooks, Alberta (Bohi 1962:430-432; Pizarowicz 2001:2-3; Sundstrom 1994:68). George Boland, who once ran the stage stop and the post office at the Buffalo Gap, was assigned the job of the first game manager (Bohi 1962:392-393). In fact, most of the early appointments relating to the management of the park and other federal lands in the Black Hills were given to locals. Joseph and Rufus Pilcher, two of the park's early superintendents came from Custer, and they were followed by Abraham Boland (brother of George) and his son, William from Buffalo Gap (Bohi 1962:229-231; Sundstrom, J. 1977:178, 196, 242, 349).

### **c. Industry and Development**

As with much of the rest of the Black Hills, the area of Wind Cave National Park was prospected for its mineral potential, but there was never any developed mining activity other than a small placer operation and a limekiln at the southwestern edge of the park (Bohi 1962:391-392; Western History Research 1992:56). In fact, by the time white Americans located the cave, the gold boom in Custer County was over (Parker, W. 1966:69-88). Although many mines were located with gold, mica, and tin deposits in Custer County, the necessary capital and facilities to develop most of them were lacking (Tallent 1899:401-403). The serious development of the Hills' mineral potential took place much farther north in the vicinity of Deadwood and Lead, where the hardrock mines were located, although Custer remained the center of mica and tin mining in the Hills (Tallent 1899:404; Parker, W. 1966:184-198; Sundstrom, J. 1977:45-68, 1994: 28). To the east of Wind Cave National Park, the variegated colored sandstones of Calico and O'Dell canyons, located in the Hogback near the Buffalo Gap, supported the development of an active quarry industry. At the end of the nineteenth century, the sandstone from these quarries and one at Hot Springs serviced local as well as national markets. Today, many of the old buildings still standing in local towns were built of sandstone from these quarries (Tallent 1899:415; Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:70; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:317; Julin 1982:221-222). Gypsum was also mined in the area, and for some years, the largest plant in the Black Hills was located at Hot Springs (Schell 1961:376).

Another industry developed in Custer County was logging, which in its early days was largely a subsidiary of the mining industry. Timber was required to build the mines and sluices, and it was needed as fuel and shelter for the miners too (Geores 1990:37). Sawmills of large and small scale were operated near the town of Custer and in the area that now covers Custer State Park. In 1895, Custer County was the center of the Black Hills' timber industry. It had more than twenty active sawmills and shipped more lumber than any other location in the area (Tallent 1899:411; Schell 1961:373-374; Lindsay, 1967-1970:899-900; Progulske 1974:120; Sundstrom, J. 1977:139-142, 1994:43-48; Geores 1990:29-56). Until the 1890s, when Albert Williams built sawmills along the Fall River, much of the lumber used in the southern Hills was produced at the mills on French Creek, and as already indicated, transported over a road that followed Coldbrook

Canyon, passing over a southern section of Wind Cave National Park (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:274-275).

At the dawn of the twentieth century, there was little interest in the sustainability of the Black Hills' forests. Areas were clear-cut without regard to the environmental damage this practice might cause (Geores 1990:38). There is no question that some of the timbered areas near towns in the southern Hills were stripped early on to provide wood for fuel, shelter, and commercial buildings. Luther Standing Bear (1975:17) remembered the Buffalo Gap as a wooded location. It is quite likely when he was a child that this location was more thickly timbered. Given what we know about other sites, this area was probably denuded to provide wood for European American settlement. Even though Watson Parker (1985:590) mocks Standing Bear's recollections of how the Buffalo Gap's environment once appeared, he seems to have done so without considering how this area might have changed after the arrival of European Americans. According to Edmund de Mandat-Grancy (1981:11), the hills around the Buffalo Gap were stripped of much of their tree cover before 1886.<sup>8</sup>

Although mining and logging played an important role in the history of Custer County, where Wind Cave National Park is located, neither of them was a significant part of the development on the lands inside modern park boundaries. In contrast to the northern regions of the Black Hills, where European Americans continued to develop the region's mineral and timber assets, early economic growth in the Hills southeast of Custer rested largely on agricultural enterprises. Cattle were first introduced into the interior regions of the Hills during the early 1870s by two early traders, Nicholas and Antoine Janis, both of whom were married to Lakota women (Palais 1942:9). Once the Black Hills were dispossessed from local tribes, the region was open to raise and pasture stock on its winter-hardy and drought-resistant native grasses (Friggens 1983:59-60). Entrepreneurs quickly grasped the advantages of developing a locally based cattle industry. As Paul Friggens (1983:59) wrote: "When the Fort Laramie treaty was violated, it not only opened the way for gold miners, but it also launched a beef bonanza to feed the miners." Thousands of head of cattle were "trailed-up" to the Black Hills in the summer of 1876 from Kansas, Nebraska, and even as far away as Texas. For many years, drovers brought cattle north to supply the army posts and Indian agencies surrounding the Black Hills, but, now, they brought even larger herds to supply the miners. The journeys took up to ninety days with crews of a dozen cowboys and thousands of head of cattle (Friggens 1983:59; Palais 1942:7-9).

In the 1880s, the cattle business thrived on the edges of the Black Hills, not only in the north at places like Spearfish and Belle Fourche, but also in the south where the towns of Edgemont, Oelrichs, and Buffalo Gap flourished when the industry was at its prime (Palais 1941:10-12; Schell 1961:155-157, 243-248; Biever 1981:3-4). The town of Oelrichs was named after the cattle agent, Henry Oelrichs, who managed cattle operations for wealthy investors from Wyoming, Texas, and even England (Friggens 1983:64; Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:71; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:340; Biever 1981:3-4). One of the largest and most famous of these ranching operations was the Bar T on Hat Creek, but other large operations on the southern edge of the Hills included the Z Bar, TOT, and TAN ranches (Lee and Williams 1964:100; Clark, B. 1983:27; Biever 1982:4). In 1882, the Anglo-American Cattle Company, with Oelrichs as its representative, bought out the Bar T, TOT, and TAN ranches with a total of 34,000 head of cattle, making it the largest cattle operation in the area (Biever 1981:4). For a short period of time in the

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<sup>8</sup> Many other areas of the Hills, however, became more heavily forested over time. Comparing photographs Illingsworth took on the Custer Expedition in 1874 with those taken a century later by Donald Progulsk (1974), it is apparent that much of the interior region of the Hills is more forested today than it was one hundred years ago. Much of this recent growth has been the result of federal efforts to suppress naturally occurring fires, for which there was considerable evidence when the Jenny Expedition traveled the Hills in 1875 (Newton and Jenny 1880:322).

1880s, Oelrichs supported its own meat packing plant (Schell 1961:366; Lee and Williams 1964:164). While the cattle industry reigned on the southeastern slopes of the Hills, the sheep industry started up much more slowly farther west. Several local ranchers made an effort to raise sheep in the 1880s but failed. Although a short-lived woolen mill was built at Edgemont in 1890, it wasn't until the twentieth century that this industry took hold in the region (Palais 1941:55, 59; Schell 1961:367).

Stock was run on free and open ranges, lands that were technically not owned by anyone (Palais 1942a:24). Although none of the cattle barons held title or fee samples to the land on which they grazed their cattle, they certainly maintained control through a well organized and supervised division of the ranges into cattle districts, where the cattle barons held usufruct rights enforced by the cowboys and representatives who worked their ranges (Friggens 1983:64). Unlike the plains surrounding the Black Hills, which were soon taken over by corporate cattle companies and run by employed "cowhands," the grasslands inside the Hogback were the focus of much smaller cattle operations, many of which were started by miners who moved out of the central Hills when placer gold mining went bust or by newly arriving emigrants. Indeed, some of the earliest settlers, who arrived in the area of Wind Cave National Park between 1878 and 1879 were prospectors who abandoned their mining interests near Hill City to take up cattle ranching in the southern Hills (Williams, B. 1973:1; Petty 1973:1-3; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:143; Julin 1982:203; Sanford in Clark, B. 1983:81-82; de Mandat-Grancey 1984:285-286). As one example, in 1882, August Sanson, a former prospector and freighter from Sweden, entered into a partnership with Robert Wittke and acquired property south of the park at the mouth of Wind Cave Canyon along Beaver Creek. After buying out Wittke, he held the lands through the 1960s (Sanson, F. and Sanson, A. in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40-45). According to federal and local land records, his son Adolph held patents on property inside Wind Cave National Park (Western History Research 1992: Appendix D). In the late 1880s and 1890s, a new wave of homesteaders arrived, most of whom came from Europe and locations in the eastern United States (McAdam 1973:3; Smith, A. 1973:1, 5-6, 9; Sager in Sundstrom, J. 1977:362-365, 1994:29-33, 57-63; Western History Research 1992:72). The McAdam family, who settled lands on the western edge of the park, had farming roots and came from Pennsylvania by way of Kansas and Nebraska (McAdam 1973:1). In the Wind Cave area, an exception to the small landholding pattern was the ranch operated by Charles H. Valentine from the late 1880s to the early 1890s, with support from New York and English investors (McAdam 1973:27; Long 1992:8). This was a sizable ranch that included a large herd of thoroughbred horses and a private racetrack (McAdam 1973; Smith, A. 1973:13-14).

Other large, corporate-style ranches, such as the L-7, bordered the park on its eastern boundaries. In the 1880s, some of these ranches not only ran cattle, but they also bred and raised horses. The famous Fleur de Lys ranch, established in 1885 on Lame Johnny Creek by R. Auzias de Turenne and M. Marion, imported Norman, Percheron, and Arab breeds from France. The horses from this ranch, which gained fame through the writings of Baron E. de Mandat-Grancey (1981,1984), were run on the open range, including lands that became part of the eastern extension of Wind Cave National Park (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:45; Sundstrom, J. 1977:161-164, 1994:48-51). In 1890, the ranch was sold to local homesteaders (Sundstrom, J. 1994:51). Another nearby ranch even raised polo ponies and invited youth from neighboring ranches to participate in games of polo (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:41).

In the early 1880s, the nation's prosperity combined with expanding railroad networks and skyrocketing cattle prices quickly led to ecological disaster. Throughout the west, the grasslands became seriously damaged by overstocked ranges, as the prime buffalo and grama grasses were

depleted and replaced by less desirable forbs and woody plants (Palais 1942a; White, R. 1991: 222-223). The undernourished cattle did not fare well on the “bonanza” ranches when the brutal winter of 1886-87 came. After a summer of severe drought, a hard winter followed with some of the coldest temperatures and worst blizzards ever recorded. Lacking shelter and feed, anywhere from seventy-five to ninety-percent of the open range stock died that winter (Palais 1942a:41; Lee and Williams 1964:154-166). All of the large and otherwise profitable cattle operations sustained huge losses, from which many never recovered (Schell 1961:244; Friggens 1983:64).

The final blow to the big cattle operators came a decade later, when the region was marked for homesteading. In 1897, the open ranges were closed and fenced off by the “Honyockers,” farmers and stockman who came to the area to develop the small plots of 160 acres allotted to them under the provisions of the 1862 Homestead Act (Lee and Williams 1964:126-127). The terms of this act required homesteaders to live on and work their land for a five-year period, after which they were able to acquire a private deed of ownership (Friggens 1983:87). Once the era of open-access to the range ended, stock raisers throughout the area managed smaller sized herds unless they were able to lease enough contiguous land under the jurisdiction of federal land-holding agencies (Lee and Williams 1964:127-128; Geores 1990:38-39).

Before much of the land in the region was surveyed in 1892 and opened for homesteading in 1897, the early settlers claimed it by right of occupancy as squatters (Bohi 1962:390; Lindsay 1967-70:899). Squatters’ rights could be and were sold as if the original “owners” possessed real title to their lands (Sundstrom, J. 1994:57-58). Inside the Hogback, much of the land supported modestly sized cattle operations, many of which survived the devastating winter of 1887 because the cattle had access to good shelter. As a result, many local cattle operators were able to literally weather the big storm and took relatively small losses. Also, most of them were self-supporting and sustained themselves and their families in other ways through subsistence hunting, gathering, gardening, and the raising of “kitchen” stock such as pigs, turkeys, and chickens (Bohi 1962:366, 391; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 72, 283, 419; McAdams 1973:8; Smith, A. 1973:25; Williams, B. 1973:3, 6, 20, 26; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:29, 36, 46, 128, 176, 178, 204, 232, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:103, 166, 189, 227, 261, 298, 209, 364, 365, 379, 1994:29-34, 75; Western History Research 1992:81, 88).

According to Annie Tallent (1899:642), nearly two-thirds of the land in Fall River County was capable of supporting homesteads for crops or stock-raising. The eastern regions of Custer County, including many areas in the vicinity of Wind Cave National Park, were similarly well-suited to these endeavors (Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:70-71; Sundstrom, J. 1977:160). As early as 1877, farms were established along the Fall River and Beaver Creek where good crops of vegetables, corn, wheat, barley, oats, and rye were grown (Palais 1941c:67). The same also applies to some of the well-watered locations in Custer County that adjoined Wind Cave National Park (Sanson, F. in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:42-43; Sundstrom, J. 1977:160, 293, 282, 352). Inside the boundaries of Wind Cave National Park, most of the lands supported cattle grazing, although fields from four to sixty acres supported crop cultivation, especially along the park’s flat and well-watered bottomlands (Western History Research 1992: 80-81).

1897 was also the year the federal government created the Black Hills Forest Reserve under considerable protest from Black Hills’ landholders. According to Martha Geores (1990:43), when the forest reserve was established, property rights were frozen over much of the interior region of the Black Hills. After this date, squatters were able to file their holdings as homestead claims and gain title to the land. In the southern Hills, by contrast, federal lands appeared as a checkerboard amidst larger sections of private land held and homesteaded by farmers and

ranchers. When the government began to assert its regulatory control over the region, it scrutinized the legitimacy of mining claims and homesteads, and when these were fraudulent or contested, it repossessed the land (Geores 1990:43-45). This is precisely what happened to the area on which Wind Cave National Park now sits.<sup>9</sup> Here ownership rights became so contested and legally entangled that they were eventually taken over by the federal government in 1901 (Western History Research 1992:38-41; Sundstrom, J. 1994:68). During this period, the government also began to exert its regulatory power in other areas; timber cutting and cattle grazing were now restricted by lease arrangements and no longer open-access resources (Geores 1990:46, 48).

While the government was regulating and restricting access to lands and resources inside the Hogback, it was opening the surrounding prairies to more homesteaders. Paul Friggens (1983:87) claimed that most of the land successfully homesteaded in western South Dakota was “proved-up” during the early decades of the twentieth century, a time that coincided with a moist climatic cycle on the plains, bumper crop yields, and unprecedented prices in regional commodities markets. Scores of additional people flocked to the region after 1887, when more lands were opened for settlement, especially after the breakup of the Great Sioux reservation into five smaller reservations (Schell 1961:247-248:253-257; Stewart 1967-70:71). As they had in the gold rush days, people from every sector of American life, and many foreigners too, paid the eighteen dollar filing fees and took advantage of the “free lands” to make new lives for themselves (Friggens 1983:89).

Inside Wind Cave National Park, homesteads were established over the entire area but particularly in the townships that did not become incorporated in the park until the 1940s (see Figure 16). Indeed, much of the land inside the present day boundaries of the park was patented during later land rush periods, most of which followed in the footsteps of new federal laws, including the Three Year Homestead Act of 1912 and the Stock Raising Homestead Act of 1916 (Western History Research 1992:70). The Western History Research report (1992:68) makes the important observation that the most desirable park lands, along the bottomlands with access to a good supply of water and closest to the Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs, were patented in the 1880s, but those in the northern reaches of the park with the roughest terrain were not patented until after the 1890s and well into the twentieth century. Many of these homesteads came under the provisions of later homestead acts (Western History Research 1992:70).

By the first decade of the twentieth century, thousands of families laid down their roots in the Black Hills and the surrounding West River counties. Most of them ran modestly sized farming and ranching enterprises, and while some of them succeeded and stayed in the area, many others failed and moved on. Judging by the family narratives recorded in local town and county histories, it was not an easy challenge for the small-scale operators to survive and continue their agricultural pursuits against the erratic climate of the plains and the nation’s wildly fluctuating commodities markets. In good times and lean ones, families survived and made ends meet from food grown in kitchen gardens and orchards, by harvesting timber for firewood, by hunting local game and collecting berries and other wild crops, and by working as petty commodity producers and in a host of wage-labor jobs (Tallent 1899:414, 673; Lindsey 1932 in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-1970:899-900; Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:71; Williams, B. 1973:3, 6; McAdam 1973:8; Petty 1973:3, 13, Smith, A. 1973:23, 25, 35; Fall River County Historical Society

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<sup>9</sup> Jewel Cave was also taken out of private hands by the government. Even though there was no contestation over the mining and homestead rights to the lands on which the cave sat, considerable pressure was placed on the Forest Service to acquire the lands and put them in a protective status. As early as 1908, the government studied the possibility of acquiring the cave but it didn’t have the means or interest to develop it. It wasn’t until 1965 that it was finally opened to the public under the auspices of the National Park Service (Geores 1990:74-75).

1976:29, 36, 46, 128, 176, 178, 204, 232, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:103, 189, 227, 261, 298, 309, 364, 365, 379, 412, 1994:49; de Mandat-Grancey 1981:12; Friggens 1983:88-89; Long 1992:6-9; Western History Research 1992:81, 82).

#### **d. Leisure and Recreation**

In the 1880s, the area around Minnekahta, the original name of Hot Springs, was still unpopulated. It was the resort, according to Badger Clark (1983:23), of “adventurers,” who came in hopes of relieving their rheumatism, or local tribespeople who still brought their sick to the springs to be cured. In the 1880s, accommodations were rustic, consisting of log cabins and tents (Cook 1888; de Mandat-Grancey 1984:289-291; Julin 1982:209-212). It wasn’t until the last decade of the nineteenth century, when the railroads reached the area, that Hot Springs became a flourishing resort town, which Annie Tallent (1899:655) described as having “numerous sanitariums and bathhouses equipped with all the best appliances for administering every kind of water treatment, including the plunge, the spray, the vapor, the salt, the Turkish and Russian baths.” Its mineral waters were judged by reputable physicians as incomparable in value for medical treatment (Tallent 1899:644). Upwards of ten thousand people flocked to the springs each year during its heyday (Fall River Historical Society 1976:344). Some camped with tents near the more established springs, while others stayed in bathhouses and elegantly furnished hotels (Tallent 1899:655; Julin 1982:224-234). It was a “celestial empire,” as Tallent (1899:670) put it, “forming copious springs in whose limpid waters the rheumatic, the dyspeptic, the neuralgic, the sciatic, the hypochondriac, and the hysterical may lave, and aided by frequent generous drougths of the tepid fluid be made whole.” Visitors raved about the waters and the other scenic attractions of the area, which included Minnekahta Falls, Cascade Springs, and Wind Cave (Tallent 1899:670; Julin 1982:251).

Other areas near Wind Cave were associated with privately owned ranches and hunting lodges, which provided guides and accommodations for visitors interested in sight-seeing and game hunting. Fleur de Leys Ranch to the east of park properties was one of these (de Mandat-Grancy 1981; Sundstrom, J. 1994:50). Sylvan Lake and other locations in what would later become Custer State Park also became the sites of flourishing resorts in the 1890s (Lindsay 1967-70:899-900; Sundstrom, J. 1994:90-97).

By the end of the nineteenth century, Wind Cave had become a major side attraction for many of the visitors who came to Hot Springs and other locations in the Hills to vacation (Bohi 1962; Julin 1982:251; Long 1992:10-13). One enthusiast, E. W. Jamar (quoted in Fall River County Historical Society:346), said:

The great Wind Cave, out-rivaling the Mammoth cave of Kentucky in extent, the Cascade springs, the lofty pine-clad hills, grand canyons rippling streams, beautiful falls of the Minnekahta and the Cheyenne, make up a matchless group of attractions.

In the early days, people climbed down into the cave on ladders, carrying candles on wooden sticks, and laying down string to find their way back out (McAdam 1973:11, 14; Sundstrom, J. 1977:105). Before the McDonalds and the Stablers developed the cave, it was a destination for some of the more adventurous visitors in Hot Springs (Long 1992:11). This all changed after 1888, when regular tours of the cave were established. Soon, the cave’s attractions were advertised throughout the United States, souvenir specimens from its various caverns were marketed and sold, and many improvements were made to encourage more visitors to its subterranean sights (Bohi 1962:389-391; Long 1992:11-13). Other attractions were also incorporated into the cave’s early promotions, including the exhibit of a fake “petrified man” and the arrival of a psy-

chic, Paul Alexander Johnstone, who stayed in the cave several days searching for a hidden scarf pin (Bohi 1962:404-407; Long 1992:12).

Wind Cave was not only a leisure attraction for outsiders, it was also an important source of recreational pleasure for people who lived in the Hills (Bohi 1962:366-368, 407-408; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:14; Clark, B. 1983:61-62). As Jessie Sundstrom (1994: 104) wrote:

When entertainment was lacking at home, “outings” were taken to the Needles area and Harney Peak and “excursions” were taken to Wind Cave. Before the advent of the train, families or groups visited these attractions in buggies and wagons rented from the livery stables, if none was available within the family or its circle of friends.

In the 1970s, descendants of the Pringle family from Pringle, South Dakota recalled hitching up their wagon team on Sundays and traveling with local railroad workers to explore Wind Cave (Sundstrom, J. 1977:353). Local ranchers often found themselves near the cave when they were out rounding up stray cattle or on threshing trips and took time out to visit its interiors (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:57, 508). Fannie McAdam (1973:11) remembered how the locals saved cord from store purchases and wound it into balls for the recreational spelunkers in their families. Local interest in the cave is also reflected in the custom of naming cave rooms after fraternal organizations, such as the Elks, Masons, YMCA, and Knights of Pithias (Bohi 1962:407). There were other caves throughout the Hills and at Wind Cave National Park that were never developed, but these also provided locals with many opportunities for amateur exploration (Sundstrom, J. 1977:309, 1994:55-56). Other outdoor amenities in the Hills, including the thermal waters at Hot Springs, offered the locals recreational pleasures as well. In fact, many local ranchers and townspeople built cabins or set up campsites in some of the remote and more scenic regions of the Hills’ interiors (Sundstrom, J. 1977:104-105, 1994:41; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:138).

## **2. Accounts of a Continuing Tribal Presence**

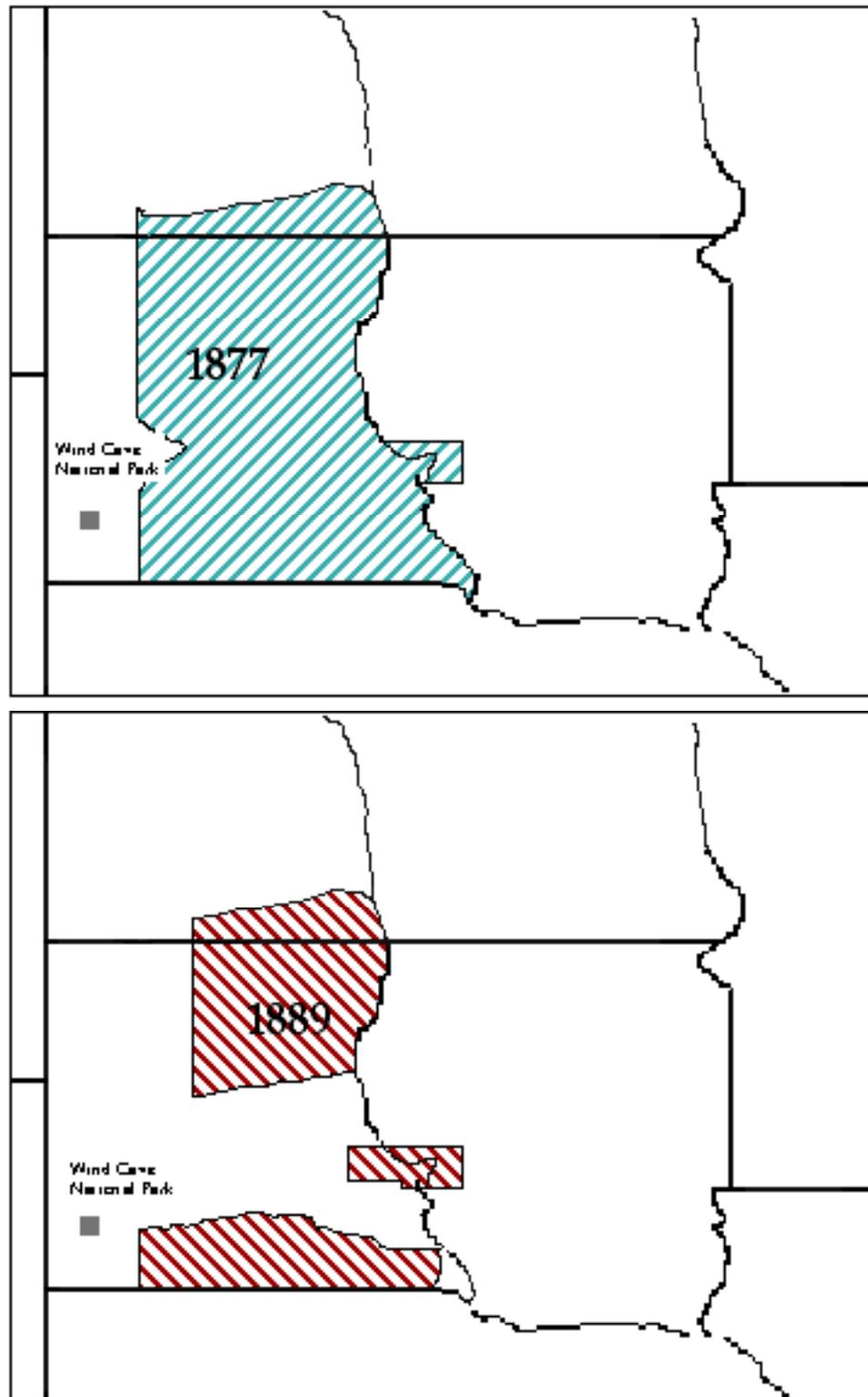
In the years after 1877, many of the people who were members of the tribal nations that once occupied the Black Hills were settled on reservations far removed from the area. The Kiowas, Plains Apaches, Comanches, Poncas, Southern Cheyennes, and Southern Arapahos ended up on reservations in Oklahoma. Some of the Northern Cheyenne were also settled in Oklahoma, but many more were eventually located on the Tongue River Reservation in Montana. The Crow ended up on a reservation in Montana that carries their name. The Northern Arapahos were settled on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming with the Shoshones, and the Hidatsas, Mandans, and Arikaras took up residence together on the Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota (see Figure 18). The Lakotas, and some of the Cheyennes who continued to live in their midst, were settled on the Great Sioux Reservation, which bordered the eastern flanks of the Hills (see Figure 17). In 1889, this reservation was subdivided into five smaller reservations, and the lands were allotted to individual Indian families with the surplus open to white settlement. Except for Pine Ridge, the primary reservation for the Oglalas and some Cheyennes, Sicangus, and Minneconjous who remained in their midst, the other reservations were situated some distance from the Black Hills. The farthest removed was Standing Rock, which straddles the North and South Dakota border; it became the home of the Hunkpapa and Sicasapa divisions of the Lakota and the Yanktonnai Dakota. Directly south is the Cheyenne River Reservation where most of the Minneconjous, Itazipcos, Oohenunpas, and some Sicasapas were located. Most Sicangus were enrolled on the Lower Brule Reservation across the Missouri from present day Pierre, South Dakota or on the Rosebud Reservation, where some Cheyennes also lived (Moore, J. 1987:232).

It is critical to recognize that despite their loss of the Black Hills and their forced removal to reservations at near or far locations, the Lakotas and Cheyennes maintained a continuing, albeit changed, relationship to the area. The relative proximity of their respective reservations to the Hills played an important role in the ways in which and the degree to which the region was accessed by these tribes after 1877. Not surprisingly, the most intense and varied pattern of use became associated with members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe who lived on the Pine Ridge Reservation. In the days of travel by horse and wagon, many locations in the Hills, especially in the southeastern region, where Wind Cave National Park is now located, took less than a day to reach from this reservation.

After the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos were forcibly confined to reservations in the 1870s, they were unable to leave them without special permission from their agents. Throughout the 1880s, the military was still rounding up bands who remained outside the reservation, bringing them to the agencies and instituting measures to keep them there (Hyde 1956; Utley 1963; Powell 1981). Scudder Mekeel (1932:278) indicates, however, that in these and later years requests were made and casually granted for Lakotas from Pine Ridge to gather plants and herbs off-reservation. This policy was also reported in government documents (Jones 1904:125-128; U.S. Senate 1904) and remembered by the descendants of early European American settlers (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:262). When government food distributions were late in arriving or insufficient to meet local needs, which happened with a fair degree of frequency, traditional patterns of food procurement helped local families stave off hunger and starvation. Many accounts from the descendants of early European settlers in Custer and Fall River counties report Lakota people traveling, camping, hunting, and collecting plants at areas in and around the Black Hills until the beginning of the twentieth century (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:12, 71, 730; Bingham 1973:4,6; McAdam 1973:6; Petty 1973:23; Smith, A. 1973:16; Williams, B. 1973:16, 30-31; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:24, 33, 47, 72, 176, 213, 262, 264; Sundstrom, J. 1977:317, 379; Clark, B. 1983:68-69).

Although the Lakotas and Cheyennes successfully ran cattle on their reservation lands in the 1880s, they were plagued by the same disastrous weather conditions as their white neighbors. In the catastrophic winter of 1886-87, they also experienced losses in their stock, but interestingly, these were much smaller than those of white cattle operators because the Lakotas took care to shelter and feed their animals. Indeed, the agent from Standing Rock reported that Lakotas on this reservation only lost thirty-percent of their herds in comparison to the seventy-five percent losses sustained by neighboring white operators (Utley 1963:25). But this success was short-lived. Two years later, economic conditions on local reservations were deteriorating, and the federal government used this as an opportunity to force the tribes to relinquish more of their land. In 1889, the year the Great Sioux Reservation was divided, many Lakotas and Cheyennes embraced a messianic movement known as the Ghost Dance, some of whose followers broke-away from the agency at Pine Ridge and tried to establish an independent camp at the Stronghold in the Badlands on the northeastern edge of the reservation. Facing hardship and starvation, some Lakotas began to raid local travelers and ranches on the Cheyenne River near Edgemont, the Buffalo Gap, Hot Springs, and even in areas of Wind Cave National Park (Lee and Williams 1964:124; Stewart, Q. 1967-1970:71; McAdam 1973:5; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:213; Clark, B. 1983:68-69). Fights ensued over the thievery, leading to the deaths of Lakotas and whites alike. During

**FIGURE 17. Sioux Reservation Boundaries 1877 and 1889**



the years of the so-called “Indian Scare,” 1888-1890, settlers in the southeastern region of the Hills took shelter in the towns or at well-defended ranches (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:12, 55, 244, 260, 261, 262, 292, 431, 506, 548, 731; Petty 1973:22; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:63, 72, 213; Sundstrom, J. 1977:289, 291, 388, 392). There were many false alarms about possible “Indian attacks” during this time, and one account tells of a teenage mail carrier who unexpectedly came across a group of Lakotas, somewhere between Hot Springs and Buffalo Gap, who were peacefully traveling to bathe at the thermal springs (Clark, B. 1983:26). Federal troops were called in to quell the hostilities that eventually led to what is widely considered the most shameful and tragic moment in the history of Indian-White relations, the Wounded Knee Massacre (Utley 1963:60-133). In the aftermath, passes were temporarily suspended for all off-reservation travel, including food procural activities (Mekeel 1932:278). The publicity surrounding this event, much of it negative, had a major impact on tourists coming to Hot Springs; in fact, local promoters made a major nationwide effort to convince the public that life in the resort town had not been disrupted by the events at Pine Ridge (Julin 1982:238-239). Nor did the conflict appear to have damaged Indian-white relations in the town of Hot Springs, some of whose early residents remembered only good ties between their families and local Lakotas during the 1890s (Bingham 1973:4; Williams, B. 1973:16-17).

For the Lakotas and Cheyennes who lived on the western edges of the Pine Ridge Reservation, the Black Hills were only a short distance away and easily accessible for various subsistence pursuits. It is quite likely that before and even after Wounded Knee, Lakotas entered the Black Hills surreptitiously to hunt, but it is difficult to determine how actively the Hills were used for this purpose. How much the Lakotas relied on the area for hunting must have been influenced by the rapid declines in local game populations. Through the end of the 1880s at least, whitetail deer and many small species of game remained fairly abundant in the southeastern Hills. However, other large ruminant species, including bighorn, elk, mule deer, and pronghorn had either been extirpated or were becoming scarce (Progulske 1974:123-124; McAdam 1973:17; Turner 1974: 136, 137, 139, 144, 147-148; Clark, B. 1983:13). In addition, larger numbers of settlers and their domesticated animals were taking up more of the land, making it difficult for local tribes to use the area for traditional subsistence pursuits unless they had permission from local land owners. Given the Lakotas’ widespread belief, then and now, that the Black Hills were taken from them illegally, it would not be surprising to learn that some amount of hunting continued to take place in remote areas of the southeastern Hills with or without the government’s knowledge and permission.

The presence of Lakotas in the Hills from 1878 to 1902 is noted with some regularity in the published recollections of early white settlers. Members of this tribe, especially Oglalas from Pine Ridge, frequently visited the southern Hills, and they did so for many different reasons besides food procural. Some were employed in jobs that took them into the Hills. Many of the freighters who hauled cargo between Sidney, Nebraska and Deadwood, South Dakota were Lakotas from Pine Ridge (Utley 1963:26). They may have performed other kinds of jobs in the Black Hills too, including work as hired hands on local ranches, although few references to their early employment were uncovered in the primary or secondary sources reviewed for this report.<sup>10</sup> Maude Petty (1973:24) emphatically stated that local Lakotas did not work in the town of Hot Springs until the early decades of the twentieth century.

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<sup>10</sup> Work as farm laborers, freighters, domestics, and guides is part of the hidden labor history of the Lakotas and many other tribal peoples in the plains, a history that has been hidden because of the prejudiced view that Indians did not work. Indeed, considerable research has taken place in recent years uncovering their rich labor history. Further study would likely reveal that the Lakotas had a complex work history in the Black Hills, too (Albers 1996b).

Before 1903, many Lakotas still came to the Hills to gather their lodgepoles in the summer-time (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:12, 730; Sundstrom, J. 1977:317). Fannie McAdam (1973:6) and Alice Smith (1973:16) both recall Lakotas traveling in “wagon trains” and camping along the roads in and around Wind Cave National Park to reach areas in the central hills where they processed lodgepoles. Many came to visit long-time friends, some of whom knew their language (Eastern Custer County Historical Society, 1967-70:727; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:72, 261, 292, 418, 505, 506, 579, 594, 700, 727, 732, 760; Sundstrom, J. 1977:293-294; Clark, B. 1983:12-13, 15), or to see relatives who were married to non-Indians living in the area (Clark, B. 1983:70-71). More came to trade their moccasins and beadwork for goods and services from local businesses and professional people, or sell them outright to visiting vacationers (Jones 1904:126; Petty 1973:23; Sundstrom, J. 1977:334). Eva Streeter (in Fall River County Historical Society 1976:12), the daughter of Bert Bayliff, who ran a local meat market, remembers her father taking beadwork from the Lakota in trade for meat. Bernice Williams (1973:16) and the descendants of Thomas and James Ball (in Fall River County Historical Society 1976:14) recall Lakotas trading beadwork for the fruit and farm produce of their parents. Dr. William McRoberts of Edgemont provided medical services to Lakotas who gave him beadwork in return (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:170). Matthew Bingham, the brother of Tom and Jesse, lived for a time in the camps of Lakotas<sup>11</sup> who stayed at Hot Springs over the summer months; he made a living from hunting and regularly supplied the Lakotas with hides, especially the antelope skins they commonly requested (Bingham 1973:4, 6).<sup>12</sup> Descendants of early settlers also described times when Lakotas stopped by their homesteads to take a meal, to camp on their property for a short or extended stay, and even on occasion to remain over an entire winter (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:292, 418, 505, 579, 594, 727, 732, 760; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:24, 72, 213, 262, 264; Bingham 1973:7; Sundstrom, J. 1977:293-294, 317; Williams, B. 1973:16). There is clear indication as well that Lakotas continued to come to the region to bathe at the thermal waters in Hot Springs and Cascade Springs (Cook 1888; Rosen 1895:473; Casey 1949:284; Petty 1973:23; Clark, B. 1983: 23; de Mandat-Grancey 1984:293-294). According to Mary Bingham (1973:13), Lakotas would dig deep into the mud near local springs until they found water, and then, sit in the water and mud for hours to relieve their aches and pains. Early Hot Springs’ residents, (Williams, B. 1973: 16; 30-31; Bingham 1973:3; Petty 1973:23) recalled Lakotas camping all along the Fall River to bathe. Many stayed at a campground on the Petty addition at the lower end of town where a tourist court is now located, and some even remained there over an entire summer season.

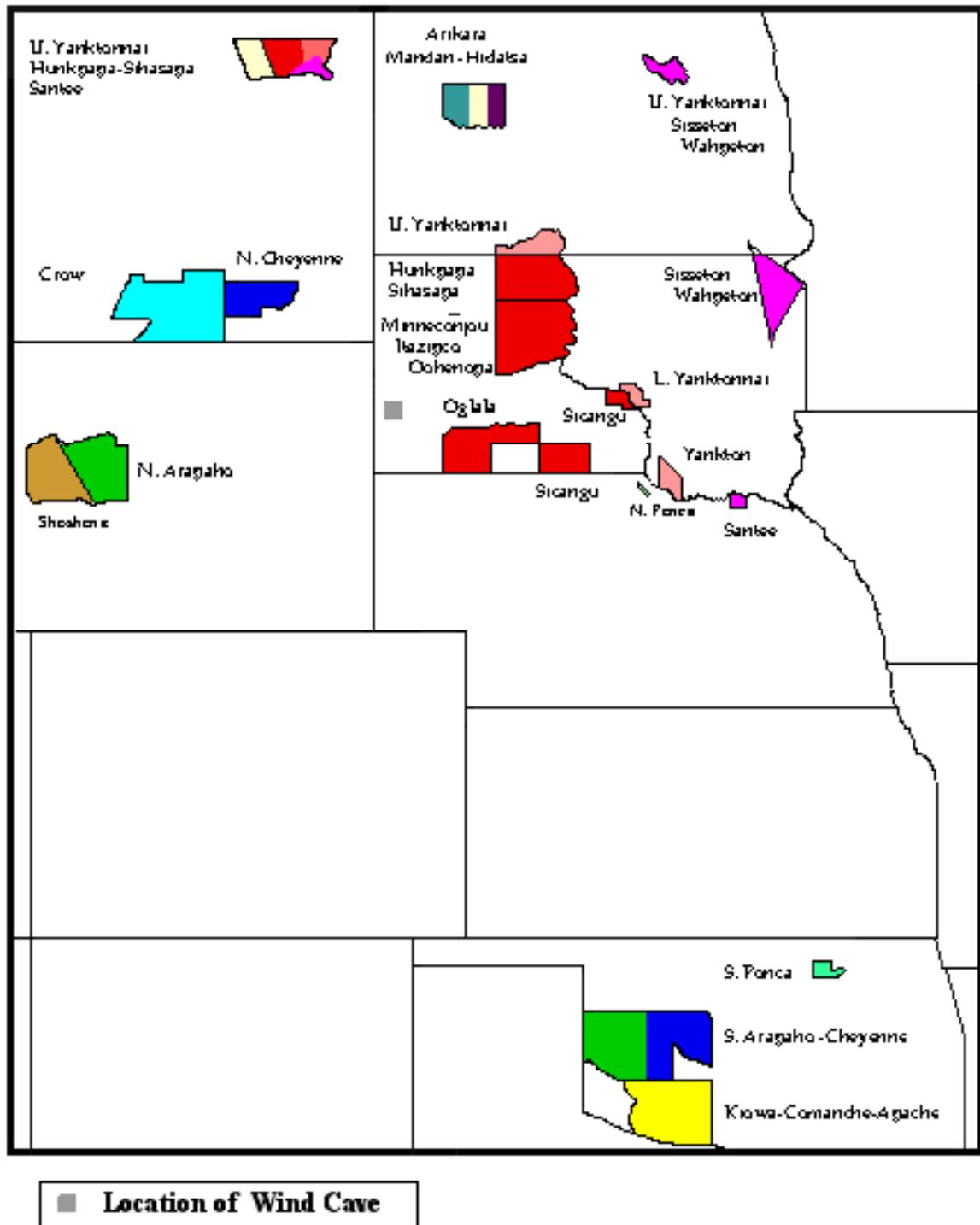
Besides a few reports (McAdam 1973:6; Smith, A.1973:16) of Lakotas camping on and traveling across park lands enroute to other locations in the Hills in the late nineteenth century, there is another reference about them coming to the park. At least one Lakota party was reported to have toured Wind Cave, although Catherine Stabler indicated that most would not enter the cave, even though they were encouraged to do so (Bohi 1962:391). Her remarks imply that Indian people were commonplace visitors in the area of the cave. The one party who did take a tour, according to Stabler (*quoted in* Bohi 1962), “chanted their Indian songs all the time they were in the cave.” Both of these reactions to the cave, avoidance and song (most likely a form of prayer

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<sup>11</sup> His daughter Mary (Bingham 1973:4, 6, 7) recalls that her father and family were especially close to Frank Bear Nose and Suzy Little Killer.

<sup>12</sup> This and information documented in a senate report (1904) on the confrontation between a group of Lakota families and a Wyoming sheriff’s posse suggest that Lakotas were procuring some of their large game hides and meat from non-Indian suppliers in Hot Springs. One can only speculate why they were doing so. Aside from the fact that large ungulates were becoming increasingly scarce throughout the region, there were policies that prevented them from hunting, including various efforts to disarm them from the late 1870s to the early 1890s.

**FIGURE 18. Modern Reservation and Tribal Locations**



reveal the respect these Lakotas held for this subterranean location, which, as described in later chapters, was a sacred place to them.

Lakotas even lived permanently in the area and were among the first “settlers” of the town of Hot Springs in the 1870s (Cook 1888; de Mandat-Grancey 1984:293-294; Clark, B. 1983:23). According to S. D. Cook (1888) the town:

...was occupied by the Indians and their half breed allies until the year 1880 when the first white men were permitted to make settlement here. At this time the squaw men were in possession of the Hot Springs. They having obtained them from the Indians, or through the privilege of the knowledge derived from them...Tents and tepees had formerly been used for hospitals. They ran the springs as a resort for Indians and any others that might come. During that time many hundreds of Indians and scores of whites were treated for various chronic diseases.

Col. William Thornby told Annie Tallent (1899:651-652) that two men, Joe Laravie and John Davidson came from Pine Ridge to visit George Trimmer, who had a Dakota wife, whose name was Mary Lone Eagle.<sup>13</sup> Laravie was suffering from rheumatism, and Trimmer took him to one of the hot springs to bathe. He and his friend Davidson, both of whom were married to Lakota women, decided to remain in the area, and they built log cabins, erected tipis, and became owners of land on which the town of Hot Springs now stands (Cook 1888; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:345; Clark, B. 1983:23). In 1881, they formed a partnership with George Turner and built a log hotel for patients near the springs (Sanford in Clark, B. 1983:82). Although the circumstances surrounding the sale of the land are not clear, the title was purchased from them in 1886 for the development of a resort (Tallent 1899:651-652; Clark, B. 1983:9).

The important point to be made from this discussion is that the Lakotas and the Cheyennes of Pine Ridge maintained a presence, albeit a diminished one, in the Black Hills after the area was seized by the government in 1877. In later years, as discussed momentarily, their use of the Hills increased substantially in association with the rise of travel and tourism in the region. Although there is little record of their presence on the lands that now make up Wind Cave National Park, other than their visits to the cave and their campsites on park lands en route to other locations in the Hills, it is highly likely that some Lakotas and Cheyennes may have used these lands for hunting and plant procurement, especially if they had close friendships with any of the park's early settler families.

## **B. The New Faces of Change 1903 to the Present**

After 1903, the year that federal lands in and around Wind Cave were turned into a national park, the Black Hills region remained important to European Americans because it continued to support jobs in the traditional mining, logging, and ranching industries. By the end of the twentieth century, many of these industries no longer provided a major source of livelihood to local residents. With the growth of tourism and other service-oriented businesses, the nature of the

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<sup>13</sup> Mary Lone Wolf was born of French Canadian and Dakota parentage in the northeastern area of Dakota territory. When she was still a child, her family moved to St. Paul, Minnesota. She was held captive in the 1862 Minnesota Conflict but returned to her parents four years later. In 1871, she married George Trimmer and three children were born to the union. The two made their way to the Black Hills and came to Rapid City in 1876. In 1877, the couple moved to Hill City, and in 1879, they moved to Hot Springs. In 1887, the Trimmers separated. A few years later Mary married a man named Lone Wolf from Texas, and they resided on the Pine Ridge Reservation (Fall River County Historical Society 1976:164).

economy and the work people performed in it changed as did the relations between Wind Cave National Park and its neighbors. The changing economy of the Black Hills not only impacted the European Americans who lived in the Hills or who visited them as tourists and recreationists, but it also affected local tribal populations who stayed in the Hills or on neighboring reservations and who continued to retain a visible presence in the region.

In the midst of this change, the Black Hills remained one of the most contested land areas in the United States. Beyond the political struggles that European Americans waged amongst themselves over the nature and status of their own user rights to the region's federally-managed lands, the most contentious and long-lasting battles were fought with the Hills' former tribal residents, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos. European Americans continued to assert their rights in the Black Hills, not only as conquerors but also under constitutional laws that grant the United States the power of eminent domain over all lands within its boundaries. Since 1877, European Americans have claimed both a *de facto* and *de jura* sovereignty over the Hills. In doing so, they have developed and imposed their own forms of governance on the area, establishing laws for the ownership of private property and for the management of public lands, which comprise much of the Hills' geographic space.

Throughout the twentieth century, various European American interest groups, from ranchers and miners to recreationists and environmentalists, have challenged the ways in which public lands in the Black Hills are used and managed. The battles have been fought with the understanding that much of the Hills are part of a public commons and a place in which competing American interest groups can establish different sorts of claims (see Geores 1990 and Chapter Seven). The American Indian tribes from whom the area was illegally seized, namely the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos, were systemically denied access to this commons and its resources (Geores 1990:127). In time, they too challenged the laws and policies that restricted their rights to access the Hills. Indeed, one of the most famous and still unsettled Indian claims against the U.S. government in the twentieth century involves the Black Hills. The economic changes and political conflicts that marked the Hills during the twentieth century have had profound consequences for the position that Wind Cave National Park occupies in the region's history and for its relationship to the diverse public constituencies it serves.

## **1. European American Interests**

During the twentieth century, the face of the Black Hills underwent many changes, most of which were closely tied to national economic cycles and federal policy. After World War II, but particularly in the last decades of the twentieth century, there was a steady decline in the relative importance of traditional extractive industries in local economic development. Reflecting wider regional trends in the American West, a growing tension emerged between the needs and interests of the older industries and a new urban-based, recreational commerce built around the preservation of the region's natural resources (Geores 1990:4-5; White 1991:496-534).

### **a. The Decline of Traditional Enterprises**

Mining, logging, and ranching, the Black Hills' three traditional extractive industries, maintained their supremacy in the region's economy until the middle of the twentieth century when their influence started to gradually erode. In the case of mining, even though the boom days of the gold rush had long passed, the Hills continued to support various mining enterprises and the thousands of workers this industry employed. From the mining of mica, gypsum, and feldspar to the production of lignite, oil, and kaolin, mineral production remained a major industry in the

Black Hills through World War II (Montgomery 1957:56-65; Schell 1961:375-378; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:340; Geores 1990:92-93; Sundstrom, J. 1977:66-68). During the Great Depression, mining sustained the economy of the Black Hills when the neighboring plains and prairie regions of South Dakota faced economic collapse (Geores 1990:93). It also played a role in bolstering the local economy during World War II and during the national post-war economic expansion (Geores 1990:94-95), although jobs in the mines dropped more than fourteen percent from 1940 to 1950 (Montgomery 1957:24). In fact, mining occupied a favored status in the Black Hills relative to other industries. Geores (1990:52-54) argues that while the timber and livestock industries were being increasingly regulated on public lands, mining remained a privileged industry; it was the one industry for which new public lands were opened to extraction, not only for minerals but also for the timber and water needed to work the mines. Also, this industry was not subject to the same degree of law enforcement when its resources were taken through illegal means (Geores 1990:51-54). In the early half of the twentieth century, mining was so highly placed in the local economy that its interests even preempted the status of wildlife reserves (Geores 1990:93-94). After 1950, the favored status of the mining industry in the Black Hills began to decline. Increasing regulations imposed on the industry, the rising costs of extracting its resources, and a declining demand for its products led to the closure of many mines, including Lead's famous Homestake Mining Company in the 1990s. In addition, stiff political opposition to the development of other mining industries, notably uranium, contributed to the reduced importance of this sector in the overall economic development of the Hills (Geores 1990:94-95).

Logging in the Black Hills was an important industry that directly supported the building and expansion of local mines. According to Herbert Schell (1961:374), the Homestake Mining Company used 2,000,000 running feet of lumber annually to support its mining operations. Over the course of the twentieth century, the timber industry became concentrated in the hands of fewer owners and its production and distribution were increasingly organized to serve outside markets over local ones. Even though timber from the Black Hills was hard to market because of its low quality and difficult to process in large quantities because of the lack of water, the prevailing direction of federal development policies for the forest continued to support the export of timber at the expense of local interests (Geores 1990:84, 85). In time, the interests of the large corporate timber companies were favored over those of the smaller, locally run mills and the domestic needs of local residents. While residents were still able to access timber for domestic purposes, the location, timing, and extent of their cutting was severely limited (Geores 1990:65-67, 81-85). Like the mining industry, the timber companies were subject to increasing restrictions in later years. As the importance of recreation and tourism gained ground in the local economy, the U.S. Forest Service came under increasing pressure to maintain the "pristineness" of the lands it managed and to protect the local wildlife. In 1969, the National Environmental Protection Act was passed, and henceforth, all federal agencies were required to assess and weigh the impacts of any user on public lands (Geores 1990:111-112). Since that time, federal policies regarding the management of the nation's natural resources have increasingly moved towards a more diversified view of public lands and their users (Geores 1990:118-120).

The economy of the Black Hills, and the West more generally, thrived in the early decades of twentieth century. Besides the profits to be taken in the local extractive industries of mining and logging, agribusiness was booming. After the catastrophic losses to the cattle industry in 1887, ranching rebounded in the West but on the much smaller scale of family-run businesses. In addition, farming became more important in the region, not only as a result of the continuing opportunities afforded by various homestead acts,<sup>14</sup> but also in response to rising commodity prices in

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<sup>14</sup> More homesteads were served up in western South Dakota in the first decade of the nineteenth century than at any other time in that century (Friggens 1983:87).

the last decade of the nineteenth century (White 1991:272). In the early twentieth century, the agribusiness sector continued to serve as the foundation of the local economy in the southern Hills. In the neighborhood of Wind Cave and Hot Springs, cattle ranching dominated, although farming was important here too (Palais 1942c:90). Farther west in the vicinity of Edgemont sheep raising gained ground (Palais 1942b:53-60), even though it was prohibited on public domain lands (Geores 1990:50-51).

The region's farmers and ranchers, however, continued to face the vagaries of the climate and the market. A severe drought in 1911 forced many of the smaller operators out of business (Schell 1961:257). The region's agricultural growth was stalled in the 1930s, when thousands of people lost their farms and ranches to the economic calamity of the Great Depression (Schell 1961:281-284). As Jessie Sundstrom (1977:193) described the situation in the Black Hills:

The bright hopes and promises of Custer County which flourished in the mid-1900s were followed by times of trial and tribulation: first, World War I, then the stock market crash in 1929, and the gradual drying of the climate and the blowing, blowing, blowing of the soil depleted by overzealous farmers who were not thinking of the consequence of their overuse of the land. The 'Dust Bow' days of the 'Dirty Thirties' were born with anger, patience, or insanity by the pioneers. They were laced with grasshopper infestations and fires from which Custer County was no more immune than the rest of the state although, by comparison, the Black Hills continued to be an oasis in the barren, blowing dust bowl. Crops were meager, income was scanty, bills mounted and tried the fortitude of store owner and customer alike.

Many agricultural areas in the west never fully recovered from the Depression. Even though some small scale stock/farm operators were able to weather the economic downturn and rebuild their businesses in the years after World War II, many others either sold or abandoned their ranches/farms and left the region entirely. Because of the more favorable climate and environment inside the Hogback, many of the farmers and ranchers in the southern Hills were affected less adversely than their neighbors who owned lands on the surrounding grasslands (Palais 1941: 100-105). Still, some suffered severe losses during the drought years of the 1930s.

The small-scale agricultural enterprises that operated within the old and expanded boundaries of Wind Cave National Park also experienced trials during the Depression Years, and a few faced foreclosure. Those who survived probably did so, as they had in the past, largely through their own self-sufficient food production activities (McAdam 1973:35). Also, as before, many supplemented their farming and ranching by seeking wage-work. Some of the women from ranch families in the neighborhood of Wind Cave National Park worked temporarily as domestics in boarding houses and hotels in Hot Springs, while many of the men worked for the Civilian Conservation Corps (Smith, A. 1973:20, 23). It was during the last years of the Depression, 1935 to 1940, that eighty percent of the private property holdings inside park boundaries were reconveyed to the federal government (Western History Reserach 1992:105). The process of reconveyance took place with little resistance, probably because it happened at a time when the agricultural sector and its producers were economically impoverished.

The post-World War II era brought federal safety nets for agricultural producers and improved prices for their commodities, allowing farmers and ranchers to liquidate their debts from earlier decades (Schell 1961:303). In the 1950s, the Sloan-Pick Act supported the development of huge irrigation projects along the Missouri, including the creation of the Angostura Reservoir on

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the Cheyenne River, no more than twenty miles south of Wind Cave National Park. This reservoir provided irrigation water that made farming on the dry highlands directly south of the Black Hills more reliable (Schell 1961:305-307). In the same era, improved farm technologies and new agricultural practices brought changes to the ranching and farming industries. Increasingly, agricultural operators combined cattle raising with the cultivation of feed, notably alfalfa, to sustain their stock over the winter months. Also, the cattle industry became more specialized. In western South Dakota, ranchers raised and then transported their stock to feedlots in the eastern part of the state where they were fattened before being slaughtered for the national market (Schell 1961:349-351). Farmers began planting more drought-resistant varieties, diversifying their crops, and employing methods of tillage better suited to the region's soils (Palais 1942:107). Despite these changes, agriculture gradually lost ground in the Black Hills. By the 1950s, it was no longer a principal source of income in the area, and the number of farms started to decrease (Montgomery 1957:38-49). These trends continued in later decades when a variety of factors forced more and more people out of the agribusiness.

Although many changes took place during the twentieth century in how the lands in and around the Black Hills were ranched and farmed, none of them raised the efficiency of operations enough to combat the vagaries of national commodities markets. When commodity prices for agricultural products plummeted in the 1980s and 1990s, more and more people were forced to give up farming and ranching. Throughout the plains, farms/ranches were foreclosed. The younger generations were no longer choosing to take up the hard and often unpredictable life of their forebearers. Increasingly families left the region, and with their departure, the population of western rural South Dakota continued to decline. In the Black Hills, where there were other economic opportunities, especially in the travel and tourism industry, local counties did not experience such dramatic population declines. Pennington and Custer counties actually gained population during this period (U.S. Census Population Profiles 1900-2000).

One of the factors contributing to the hard times that Black Hills ranchers faced in the twentieth century were the increasing restrictions imposed on their public grazing rights. In response to the damages wrought by overgrazing on public lands, the open ranges were closed in the early twentieth century. Leases were let to ranchers for the use of public lands, and those who lived within the boundaries of federal land holdings were given priority on these leases (Geores 1990:48). In time, the Forest Service decided unilaterally to stop giving out permits to new users, restrict the number of permits extended to older users, and reduce the time under which contracts were let (Geores 1990:86, 90-91). Outraged by policies from which they were being excluded, local stockman began to organize, putting pressure on their political representatives to involve them in the decision-making on their access to and use of public lands (Geores 1990:88). As Geores (1990:88-89) points out, the tension did not just revolve around the quality of the range, but increasingly responded to another set of interests, namely the quality of the forest vegetation for deer, the prime interest of the region's sports hunters. In fact, in the 1950s, the conflict escalated to a point where local ranchers were refusing sports hunters access to their property (Geores 1990:89-90). Overall, relations between ranchers and government agencies were becoming increasingly uncooperative and litigious in the twentieth century (Geores 1990:91). As more of the public land in and around the Black Hills was placed in a reserve status or became homesteaded by farmers who plowed and fenced their lands for crops, cattle operators were forced to downsize their herds but not without strong political opposition (Schell 1961:255-257; Geores 1990:46-51; Sundstrom, J. 1994:81-85). In the face of this change, some local ranchers simply sold out and pursued other endeavors to make a livelihood in the Hills (McAdam 1973:24).

Grazing rights were also now restricted on federal lands under the management of the National Park Service. Even though national policy had long dictated that park lands not be used for

agricultural purposes, exceptions were made especially in areas, such as Wind Cave National Park, with a prior history of homesteading. In fact, the first superintendent of the park, William A. Rankin, who owned land and grazed stock inside modern day park boundaries, complained in his first annual report about the park's open range, the loose stock, and the lack of fencing (Bohi 1962:421-422, 426; Long 1992:7). In 1909, a federal order authorized the park to give out permits for grazing livestock (Bohi 1962:421), but five years later, in 1914, this practice was severely restricted (Bohi 1962:434). In 1921, local ranchers who held grazing permits hired a range rider to monitor and manage the range (Bohi 1962:440). The continuance of grazing on park lands may have been a function of the fact that there was little federal support for the park's operations, so these leases may have been a necessary means for generating revenue. Also, many of the park's early workers and managers were local residents whose employment supplemented their own ranching endeavors. This work probably did not offer a living wage, and as a result, it was likely in their own best interests and those of their neighbors to make the park's range accessible to stock-raisers (Bohi 1962:430).

The Great Depression was a turning point in the American West. It began an era when the federal government played a much larger role in providing work and livelihoods for Americans living in the West (White, R. 1991:459-534). In the Black Hills, under the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the government's Works Project Administration offered thousands of jobs for the Hills' residents in construction and the arts (Schell 1961:292-293; Sundstrom, J. 1977:194). Numerous public projects were sponsored through the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps, and in South Dakota, most of these were located in the Black Hills (Schell 1961:293; Sundstrom, J. 1994:152-163). Wind Cave National Park was the site of one of the largest CCC camps in the Hills: its workers constructed bridges, improved roads, and built campsites and the park's visitor center. Along with other CCC workers in the Hills, they helped to create much of the infrastructure for the robust development of tourism in the Black Hills (Schell 1961:186-187; Bohi 1962:449-460; Geores 1990:97, 101, 109; Long 1992:42-54; Sundstrom, J. 1994:152-163). Since this interesting period in the history of the park is well represented in park museum displays and on its web site, it does not need to be elaborated upon any further here.

After World War II, the basis of local livelihoods gradually shifted away from small-scale entrepreneurial ventures and wage-work in the logging, mining, and ranching industries to service-oriented jobs and professions. In 1950, only twenty-five percent of the people living in the Black Hills were employed in the region's traditional industries. Already most of the local populace was working outside the older economic sectors (Montgomery 1957:24-25). Fifty years later in 2000, less than half of the residents in Fall River and Custer counties worked in these sectors; the vast majority was now employed in public and private service-oriented jobs (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Labor and Employment Profiles, Fall River and Custer Counties S.D). They were employed as wage workers in government agencies and in industries that serviced leisure, tourism, and recreation. As it had since 1903, the park service continued to represent an important source of employment for Custer and Fall River counties. With these economic changes, there was a shift in the population away from the rural areas to the towns and cities of the Black Hills. Although the population decreased modestly in some parts of the Hills, other areas gained population. Fall River County for example, dropped from a high of 10,439 people in 1950 to 7,453 in 2000, but Custer and Pennington counties both saw substantial increases in their numbers (U.S. Census, Population Profiles, 1900 to 2000). Generally speaking, the Black Hills fared much better than other parts of western South Dakota at maintaining their populations, and they have been able to do so largely because of their leisure and recreational assets.

By the end of the twentieth century, the traditional extractive industries associated with mining, lumbering, and ranching were no longer the backbone of the Black Hills' economy. Instead,

the leisure, travel, and recreational industry had become the mainstay and the centerpiece for regional development (Geores 1990:111). In the face of increased opposition from recreational and tourist interests, traditional users have seen their access to publicly owned areas reduced (Geores 1990:121; see also Chapter Seven). This shift is not unique to the Black Hills, however; it has taken place throughout the American West, and it has had a significant impact on the place of the national parks in regional economic development (White 1991:535-630). Like other areas of the American West with scenic landscapes and large federal land-holdings, the Black Hills have witnessed significant demographic shifts. As the work and livelihoods of the populations who live in their reach has changed, so have the expectations surrounding some of their uses. Many private holdings adjacent to public lands, especially national parks, are being subdivided to make room for what are popularly known as “ranchettes,” small acreages developed as recreational properties, notably for vacation and retirement homes. The people who purchase these properties usually support policies that maintain public lands in a “natural” state and oppose most traditional, extractive forms of development. These people typically derive their incomes from sources outside the areas in which they live, or they work locally in service-oriented professions. Most of them live off the land too, but the way they do so is passive and an extension of their leisurely, voyeuristic lifestyles.

The urbanization of the Black Hills and the movement towards a leisure-based economy have had profound impacts on the relative importance of national park lands to the local economies of the West and the Black Hills in particular. In the “New West,” the nation’s national parks have become an increasingly valuable economic asset. Their unique and relatively pristine landscapes draw tourists and leisure residents to the areas in which they are located. Although Wind Cave National Park has not as yet experienced the kinds of recreational development taking place near some of its sister parks in the West, notably Yellowstone, Glacier, Rocky Mountain, Zion, and Capital Reef, there is strong evidence that this trend is beginning to take hold here. As it does, the park will continue to play an important and increasingly substantial role in the direction of local economic growth. It will also, however, have to contend with the effects of a growing population on its borders.

### ***b. The Growth of Travel and Tourist Enterprises***

By the late twentieth century, what maintained the economic viability of the Black Hills was not the mines, the timber business, or even family farms and ranches, but recreational tourism, which first got its start in the southern Black Hills at Hot Springs and Wind Cave in the 1890s (Geores 1990:30, 42). Since its inception, the history of Wind Cave National Park has been closely linked to the growth and development of the Black Hill’s travel industry and the interests of its consumers, most of whom come from locations outside the Black Hills.

With the arrival of the automobile and the building of improved roads in the early twentieth century, the Black Hills travel and leisure industry began to shift its focus. The popularity of spas, which made Hot Springs such a popular destination, was in decline and with it the fortunes of many local businesses (Williams, B. 1973:30-31; Julin 1982). Indeed, Cascade Springs, another resort community in the 1890s, was all but deserted by 1905: most of its stone buildings torn down to provide materials for building churches and hospitals in Hot Springs (Hamelstrom in Fall River County Historical Society 1976:344-345; Resatto 1989:129-131). Increasingly, the major attractions for tourism in the Black Hills were its legendary mining history, its wildlife, and its scenic attractions both above and below ground (Clark 1952b; Julin 1982:265).

To the north, Custer State Park, originally established as a forest reserve to support the state school system through the sale of its timber, was turned into a recreational area in 1914, two

years after the creation of a game preserve adjacent to Wind Cave National Park (Lindsay 1932 in Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:900; Sundstrom, J. 1994:110-114). Other areas of the Hills under the management of the U.S. Forest Service were also becoming adapted to a growing demand for recreational use. The forest service and state park systems supported recreational interests by stocking non-indigenous sports fish, especially trout, in local streams (Sundstrom, J. 1994:73). Indeed, it is around the issue of water quality in the Hills that we begin to find early evidence of user privileges associated with the traditional mining, timber, and cattle industries colliding with the interests of recreationists who, as early as the 1920s, were starting to become a powerful lobby in the politics over public land use in the Black Hills (Sundstrom, J. 1994:94-95).

In its earliest years of operation, Wind Cave National Park remained closely tied to one of the region's traditional user groups: ranchers (Bohi 1962; Long 1992). Well into the twentieth century, as already noted, it continued to allow grazing on its land and issued permits to locals for such use. Perhaps because the primary focus of the park was its subterranean environment and not its above ground landscape, uses generally prohibited at other national parks continued here. Certainly areas surrounding the park were, and continue to be, devoted to traditional grazing uses. In later years, as more adjacent land became incorporated into the park, it carried with it a history steeped in the region's ranching culture. At least above ground, the park has never been a pristine landscape, but an area where the imprint of human activity is visibly marked on its landscape (see Chapter Seven).

As the twentieth century progressed, a dramatic shift was underway in the character of the groups with definable interests in the Black Hills. Besides the traditional mining, timber, and grazing users, there were recreationists and tourists whose growing presence would eventually reshape federal land policies. Following the successful boosterism of Hot Springs businessmen in the previous century, representatives of the railroads and local entrepreneurs started to launch massive advertising campaigns, extolling the region's scenic vistas, its unique geological formations, its wildlife, and its "gunslinging" frontier history (Lee 1987; Goeres 1990:94). According to Martha Geores (1990:96), the 1920s ushered in an era when public lands in the Black Hills moved from being "a passive recreational resource to an active one." Before 1910, the natural assets of the Hills' public lands were used primarily by local people who vacationed at cabins or campsites over the summer months, who hunted game commercially or for subsistence and pleasure in the fall, and who collected timber and gathered plants for food and other domestic uses. Thereafter, the area was increasingly opened to tourists and other recreationists from areas outside the Hills (Geores 1990:96-97). This was also true of Wind Cave National Park, where the number of "outside" visitors underwent a dramatic increase (Long 1992:38-39). In fact, there appears to have been a shift in the park's policy around this time -- away from local groups and their concerns to the new and rapidly growing tourist market and its interests. The park not only stopped issuing permits for grazing and other local uses, but it also began to actively work with the area's tourist boosters in promoting travel to the Black Hills (Lee 1987; Long 1992:39-40).

When President Coolidge<sup>15</sup> spent his summer vacation at Custer State Park in 1927, considerable national attention was focused on the Black Hills (Sundstrom, J. 1994:136-139). Even though the stature of the presidency did much to legitimize the appeal of the Hills to potential vacationers, it was not enough to sustain a steady flow of tourists. In order to successfully com-

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<sup>15</sup> So important was his presence to the area's tourist aspirations that many local sites were renamed in his or his wife's honor. The south fork of Battle Creek, once called Squaw Creek, became Grace Coolidge Creek, and Sheep Mountain became Mount Coolidge. Even though he stayed at a retreat in neighboring Custer State Park, there is no evidence in the sources we came across that he visited Wind Cave.

pete with Yellowstone National Park and draw more tourists, a better infrastructure and more attractions had to be created in the Hills. In subsequent years, developments that took place in the heart of the Black Hills National Forest played a critical role in shifting the mother lode of Hills' tourism from their southern reaches near Hot Springs to more northerly locations near Custer, Deadwood, and Rapid City. This happened in several different ways.

Beginning around 1907, automobile travel became increasingly popular, rapidly replacing the railroads as the primary form of transportation Americans used to reach tourist destinations in the West (Long 1992:38-41). The park began to arrange concessions with the owners of automobiles and tour cars to bring tourists to the cave from Hot Springs, where many still arrived by train (Bohi 1962:429). Within two decades, most of the visitors who came to Wind Cave did so by personal auto, with some of them camping during their visits to the park (Bohi 1962:442; Long 1992:38). Automobile travelers arrived in the Hills through many of the age-old routes developed along the region's gateways and "Indian trails." Overtime, these became modern highways. From the west, U.S. Highway 18 and state highway 89 entered the Hills through Red Canyon, following the old trail to Custer by way of Shirttail Canyon and Pringle. From the east, U.S. Highway 18 and state road 385 reached the Hills along the Fall River near Horsehead Junction, one of the former stage stops, bypassing the Buffalo Gap as the customary southeastern access route into the Hills. To the present day, the old Buffalo Gap entry is still along a dirt/gravel access road and hardly used by the traveling public.<sup>16</sup> Hot Springs now became the gateway town for the southeastern Hills. Through the 1930s, roads into and around the Black Hills remained poor, something Gutzom Borglum once described as their "oxen cart highway system" (*quoted from* Geores 1990:100). In subsequent decades, dirt and gravel roads were gradually transformed into paved highways and scenic byways through the efforts of Peter Norbeck, one of the region's most avid promoters of travel and tourism (Sundstrom 1994:118-126). Highway 87 connected Wind Cave National Park and Custer State Park, and in the course of its building, drained and destroyed a natural lake inside park boundaries on lands once belonging to the old Valentine ranch (McAdam 1973:28).

Notwithstanding Norbeck's attempts to improve and build additional state roads in the Hills, the American Automobile Association advised its travelers in the 1950s to bypass the Black Hills and take other routes to Yellowstone (Goeres 1990:100-101). When U.S. 16 became the major travel route to the Black Hills and Yellowstone, Rapid City, Keystone, and Custer became its primary beneficiaries. The Hot Springs region lost ground and became increasingly isolated from the flow of the heaviest tourist traffic (Casey 1949:8). After the building of I-90 in the 1970s, it became even more remote. Today, many transcontinental travelers do little more than visit the sites and towns on the northern side of the Hills within easy access of the interstate, notably, Mount Rushmore and Deadwood. For travelers who take time to explore the Hills, Wind Cave National Park remains a popular attraction on their trip itineraries, and Hot Springs serves as the primary town providing accommodations for the park's visitors. Still, the Hills south of Custer are no longer the locus of tourist activity in the Hills as they once were at the end of the nineteenth century.

Even before major highways routed traffic away from the far reaches of the southern Hills, the nation's interest in recreational spas had declined. Other than Wind Cave, there was little to attract tourists to this area, especially when more spectacular sites were being developed farther north. In the central hills, the Work Projects Administration and its Civilian Conservation Corps, created lakes, including Stockade near Custer and Pactola Reservoir and Sheridan Lake near Rapid City (Geores 1990:97). With the lakes came new campgrounds and other facilities; hun-

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<sup>16</sup> Plans are now underway to pave the road and make it a scenic bypass.

dreds were built and improved during the 1930s, including many of those at Wind Cave National Park (Bohi 1962:449-460; Sundstrom, J. 1977:145-150; Long 1992:48-54). More important than the lakes was the creation of Gustav Borglum's colossal sculpture at Mount Rushmore, which forever shifted the focus of national attention to this site and its nearby locations (Clark 1952c; Lerner 2002:89-125). Mount Rushmore was first conceptualized in the 1920s, but it was not completed for another two decades (Rezatto 1989:142-155). It has been an astounding success, drawing large crowds of people every year. In its shadows, an entire array of "manufactured" attractions started to dot the Black Hills' landscape from Rapid City to Custer. Wax museums, reptile gardens, and other "tourist traps" existed alongside the region's notable natural attractions, including the Needles and Cathedral Spires (Goeres 1990:103-106). The southeastern edge of the Hills largely escaped this form of tourist development, however, and retained an authenticity where travelers were still able to see landscapes and wildlife in a setting that at least appeared to approximate a more "original" condition.

During and after World War II, recreational facilities and attractions on federal lands deteriorated because of a lack of funding. In the 1960s, fees started to be charged or increased for the use of many facilities in order to raise sufficient operating funds for their maintenance (Goeres 1990:99). There were more recreational users too, locals as well as outsiders. With the building of Ellsworth Air Force Base in 1942, Rapid City quickly became one of the largest population centers in South Dakota, and many of its residents became active recreational users in the Hills (Goeres 1990:99). When automobile touring, as lampooned in Chevy Chase's film "Vacation," became the primary family-centered recreational activity of the postwar era, thousands of outside tourists, mostly from the Midwest, flocked to the region (Montgomery 1957: 66). During these years, Wind Cave remained one of the featured stops on automobile itineraries of the Black Hills (Case 1949:8; South Dakota Federal Writers Project 1952). Although it remains so today, it still stands off the beaten path of the most frequented travel routes in the Hills.

Beyond the scenic attractions, providing the foundation for much of the sightseeing tourism in the Black Hills, there was another important leisure activity, sports hunting and fishing. Ever since dude ranches and hunting lodges were built in the late nineteenth century, these two sporting industries have drawn many outsiders to the area. But their greatest support has come from local residents. Throughout the American West, pioneer settlers and their descendants relied heavily on the native fauna and flora to supplement their diets and/or as a commercial endeavor (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:402, 419; Bingham 1973:4, 6; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:176, 232,243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:103, 261). Today, hunting remains an important and fundamental feature of life for many European American ranch families in the Hills (Sundstrom, J. 1994:69). Berries and other wild plants continue to be collected by local residents too (Bohi 1962:366; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 402, 425, 583, 585; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:119, 243; Sundstrom J. 1977:227, 366). In recent years, a few small businesses have started to produce and market custom-made jams and jellies from the region's stocks of currants, chokecherries, serviceberries, and raspberries (Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:40, 402, 425, 583; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:119, 243; Sundstrom, J. 1977:365, 379; see also, Chapter Eleven).

As discussed in much greater detail elsewhere, the state of South Dakota did not impose game laws on its citizens until 1911, a date that coincides with the time when game reserves were established in the Black Hills at Wind Cave National Park and Custer State Park. Unlike Wyoming, whose early game legislation appears to have been enacted to protect a lucrative sports hunting industry catering to a wealthy Eastern clientele, South Dakota's game laws emerged in direct response to the overkilling of local game through the combined effects of market, subsistence, and sports hunting (Progulske 1974:123-124; Turner 1974:136, 137, 144). On federal

forest lands and in Custer State Park, where hunting was permitted in set seasons, poaching still remained a serious problem for many decades after game laws were enacted (Sundstrom, J. 1994:69). Even though hunting was disallowed inside the boundaries of Wind Cave National Park, game continued to be taken by poachers well into the twentieth century (Bohi 1962:462). Much of this illegal activity was the work of locals who resented restrictions being placed on their traditional open-access rights to the region's public lands and who certainly resisted some of the changes taking place to accommodate the interests of outside recreationists (Sundstrom, J. 1994: 69). Despite the problems with poaching, many of the game populations in the region rebounded by the mid-twentieth century as a result of the enactment of game laws, conservation efforts, and the creation of protected habitats. Today, the local wildlife is appreciated as much for its value in the spectator sport of sightseeing as it is in the actual chase.

During the twentieth century, except for Wind Cave National Park, the southeastern Hills lost much of its cachet and ability to attract large tourist audiences. Many of the classic architectural structures along Hot Springs' main thoroughfare, built during the bustling years of the spa industry, are now boarded up. The town has the "retro" feel of so many other quaint western communities long past their prime and outside the reach of trendy destinations that make up much of the modern travel and leisure industry in the American West. Today, Wind Cave and the more recent Mammoth Exhibit in the town of Hot Springs are the only attractions that bring a sizable tourist audience to the area. With the gradual decline of the region's traditional agribusiness sector in the last half of the twentieth century, these attractions have come to play an even larger role in bolstering the local economy, a subject to be discussed in more detail momentarily.

### **c. Cultural Traditions**

Over the past century, the Black Hills have become the home of thousands of European Americans and smaller numbers of African Americans, Asian Americans, and Mexican Americans.<sup>17</sup> From the Hills, all of these people have made a living in mining, logging, farming, ranching, tourism, and a host of other occupations. Through their own lives and the histories of their ancestors, now reaching back over five generations, they have established strong ties to the area. For many local residents, the attachment goes beyond the stories in their own family histories and involves a deep appreciation of the region's unique frontier history, its wildlife, and the striking beauty of its natural landscapes. One only needs to read the praises of people like Badger Clark (1952a, 1952b, 1952c, 1983) to understand some of the strong cultural feelings local European Americans hold for this region.

Over the years, European Americans have imposed their own unique cultural understandings on the Black Hills and their many diverse landscapes. Most of their cultural traditions are linked to the halcyon days of the gold rush and the cattle boom during the 1870s and 1880s. They are tied to the trials and struggles of the European American pioneers who settled the area or the epic battles between the U.S. military and the region's tribal nations. The cultural narratives uniformly focus on the adventures, exploits, and hardships associated with the taking and settlement of the Hills. Much of the discourse celebrates whites conquering the Hills against all odds, and Mount Rushmore stands as its quintessential expression (Clark 1952c; Geores 1990:102-108;

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<sup>17</sup> Asian American, African American, and Mexican American people are barely visible in the literature on the Black Hills. Asian and African American peoples arrived in the area with the Gold Rush, while Mexican Americans probably came here as early as the eighteenth century as itinerant traders (see Chapter Three). None of these ethnic groups are associated, at least in the published literature, with any distinctive set of cultural traditions regarding the Black Hills landscape and Wind Cave National Park in particular. Some of their family stories are found in local town and county histories, however.

Dorst 2000; Larner 2002). With varying degrees of embellishment and exaggeration, most of these stories derive from actual historic events. Some of the narratives, however, have been transplanted from other regional folk traditions, including the tales of Paul Bunyon and the legends of lost gold (Rezatto 1989:57-70). Others derive their origins in ersatz traditions, often mistakenly attributed to the legends of local tribes who occupied the region before European Americans arrived. One example is “The Legend of Old Scattergold” (Rezatto 1989:73-75), but of course, the classic in this genre of storytelling is the widely retold “Legend of the Rose” (Brown and Willards 1924:24-26; Price, S. 1935:37; Hughes, R. 1957:7-8; Stone 1982:28-29; Rezatto 1989: 70-72).

In relation to Wind Cave National Park, there are no mythical or legendary stories, at least that we were able to find in the course of our research, derived from European American cultural traditions. The culture of European Americans comes into play predominately in terms of how the park’s geology and wildlife are represented in park interpretive materials (Peterson 1929:149-153; Case 1949:9-10, 59-60, 89-90; Casey 1949:17, 28, 197, 283-289, 323-325; South Dakota Federal Writers Project 1952:16, 376-379; Williams, A. 1952:27-30). More broadly, it is reflected in the region’s tourism and specifically, in the ways in which the cultural values of European Americans are expressed in local travel discourse (Long 1992:18-20). Since Victorian times, visits to America’s unique and scenic landscapes have been considered a form of “extraordinary” experience, often described in a metaphoric language akin to religious phenomena and intended to invoke pleasurable emotions and morally uplifting attitudes (MacCannell 1976; Albers 1988; Sears 1989). This is certainly apparent in some of the travel writings that have described the Black Hills and Wind Cave National Park in particular (Coursey 1926; Case 1949; Casey 1949; Peattie 1952; Williams 1952; Long 1992:18-20; Raventon 1994).

The only stories of historic importance to local European American residents, as revealed in some of their own writings about the area (Tallent 1899; Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70; Koller 1971; Fall River County Historical Society 1976; Sundstrom, J. 1977; Clark, B. 1983), have to do with European Americans finding and developing the cave and the feuds that surrounded its ownership. These stories are worthy of interest and bear telling in popular travel writings (Case 1949; Casey 1949; Rezatto 1983) because they conform to wider legend-making traditions associated with the Hills. They speak to the mythological drama of America’s Frontier West, its discoveries, challenges, and above all, the conflicts and fights over access to its riches (see Chapter 15 for a fuller discussion of this). Yet, there are many other stories derived mostly from the histories of local families that give rich cultural evidence of their experiences in and attitudes towards Wind Cave National Park. Regrettably, little of this has been represented in park interpretive materials.

European Americans have also used the Hills to establish religious camps; today, New Agers flock to the Hills to seek their own spiritual epiphany. Certainly Mount Rushmore has achieved the status of a “sacred shrine,” a symbol of the nation’s democracy and above all, American sovereignty over the Black Hills (Geores 1990:103-104; Larner 2002:89-125). Today, it is a national icon, one of the most frequently visited and photographed monuments in the United States (Geores 1990:108). Standing in a contested relationship to this site is the equally significant sculpture of Crazy Horse, still undergoing completion outside of Custer. Responding to the request of Lakota leader Henry Standing Bear, Korczak Ziolkowski and his family devoted their lifetimes to carving a figure of Crazy Horse out of Thunder Mountain, an undertaking funded entirely with family funds and private monies collected from visitor’s fees and donations. Ziolkowski was able to purloin the use of the mountain by filing a mining claim, which, under the federal law of the 1950s, still superseded all other forms of use and interest on U.S. Forest Service lands. Initially, there was considerable opposition to the undertaking from local whites

and the federal government, but, in time, this opposition softened and turned to support when it became apparent that the proposed monument had considerable benefit in attracting tourists and their revenue (Geores 1990:105-107). Opposition has also emerged among tribal people. Some Lakotas supported and even encouraged Ziokowski work (Rezatto 1989:179-180). Others, however, looked at his effort very differently: they saw this monument not only as a desecration of their sacred Black Hills, but also as another attempt to commercially appropriate their culture and the image of one of their most revered leaders (Geores 1990:107-109).

Whether European Americans developed their own cultural sense of the Black Hills through the appropriation of tribal symbols or their own cultural traditions, they have had little to say about the area of Wind Cave National Park. Other than its association with major pioneer trails and the discovery of its unique cave, this is not an area of the Black Hills that appears to have a highly developed and especially strong cultural attachment for European Americans. This stands in marked contrast to the tribal nations of the region.

## **2. Tribal Interests**

In direct contrast to European Americans, several tribal nations, especially the Lakotas and Cheyennes, have a strong and continuing cultural attachment to the area of Wind Cave National Park. Historically, this relationship grew out of their ideas about the region's animal, plant, and mineral life and its relation to particular landforms in the area, notably, Wind Cave, the Race Track, the Buffalo Gap, and the Hot Springs. Today, these traditions remain a vital part of their cultures, and a significant feature of their contemporary tribal identities. Their strong cultural ties to the area are revealed not only in the continuing practice of traditional religious observances at some of these sites but also in the persisting use of the area for traditional forms of procurement (see details in sections Three and Four). There are also associations linked to their historic involvement in the region's tourism, economy, and politics, and some of these are summarized here.

### **a. In Tourism**

When tourism began to develop its stride in the Black Hills, many local communities and entrepreneurs included Lakotas in their events and attractions (Casey 1949:291-296). As early as 1908, Lakotas from Pine Ridge were invited to participate in the Buffalo Gap Fair, where they entered various rodeo contests and camped at the edge of town during the event. Indeed, some of these Lakota were well-known and highly respected bronc riders and pickup men. According to Queenie Stewart (1967-70:70-71), who described this early fair, the most popular feature of the rodeo was the "Tepee-Setting Race," which involved two women driving a wagon around the track and erecting their tipis in front of the grandstand. The winners took away a prize of five dollars (see also, Eastern Custer County Historical Society 1967-70:194). Similar festivities and competitions were held in Deadwood, Rapid City, Hot Springs, and Custer where local Lakotas were known to participate as well (Casey 1949:291-296).

Scudder Mekeel (1932:278-281) wrote that throughout the early decades of the twentieth century, prominent Lakota men were invited to organize a following to participate in the festivities of various Black Hills' communities. Each of these leaders carried full responsibility for the people who accompanied them, and they commonly organized the excursions according to the protocol bands followed when traveling in pre-reservation times. They reached the Hills in caravans, with wagons and sometimes with travois carrying tipis and other equipment for their extended summer visits. Some of them passed through and camped at Wind Cave National Park on

their way to these festivities (McAdams 1973:6) or to secure lodgepoles (Smith, A. 1973:16). In 1930, White Man Bear was the leader of a group that participated in the Water Carnival at Hot Springs, while Short Bull organized the people who went to the rodeo at Edgemont (Mekeel 1932:280-281). The town of Custer included Lakota participants in its Gold Discovery Days. According to Jessie Sundstrom (1977:124), the Lakotas were provided meat as part of their payment for participating in the parade and given a place to camp during the festivities. In 1930, Young Skunk was the leader of one of the groups who regularly attended this event (Mekeel 1932:280-281). These celebrations became part of a circuit that some Lakota families traveled over the entire summer. Even as late as the 1960s, it was a common practice for Lakotas to participate in the rodeos, stampedes, fairs, pageants, and celebrations run by local white communities in South Dakota (Albers and Medicine, n.d). When Hot Springs developed its Crazy Horse Pageant in the 1950s, Lakotas from Pine Ridge were featured participants as they had been in the old Water Carnival (Danker 1963:37, 42). Participation in some of these events was not only remembered as a pleasurable leisure activity by many Lakotas but also an important, albeit meager, supplement to their annual income (Albers and Medicine, n.d).

Also common from the 1920s to the 1960s was the practice of involving local Lakotas in commercial ventures that featured native dances and craft exhibits. Indeed, Geores (1990:101-102) notes that, after the 1940s, Indian involvement was welcome, and even actively solicited, at local tourist attractions. The most famous of these was organized by the Alex Duhamel family, who operated a large retail store in Rapid City (Born 1994:23-24). The Duhamels also owned land on the road to Mount Rushmore at Rockerville Gulch, where Sitting Bull's *tiospaye* once camped every year to cut their lodgepoles. In the mid-1920s, the Duhamels decided to develop the area into a tourist attraction (Born 1994:26). As Bud Duhamel told David Born (1994:24), Nicholas Black Elk approached his father, with whom he had had a long trading relationship, about the possibility of developing an Indian pageant at the site. It was Bud Duhamel's impression that Black Elk supported the pageant idea as a way of educating white tourists and also providing employment for his people. When the pageant first started in 1927, the Lakotas built a summer camp near Baken Park, and whenever the park's hall wasn't being otherwise used, the Lakotas performed dances for the tourists. In 1934, it was moved to Crystal Caverns, and a round building that seated several hundred people was built for Lakota dance performances (DeMallie 1984:63; Born 1994:25; Larner 2002:270). When the pageant was at its height, anywhere from twenty-five to fifty families participated in the event, and they received a twenty-five percent share of the gate sales. Pageant participants lived in a campground, which the Duhamels maintained, providing the campers with food and water. Their stays at the camp lasted from a few days to several weeks each summer. Their performances included a variety of dances, demonstrations of sign language, a peace pipe ceremony, and rope tricks. Crafts were exhibited at the campground for tourists to purchase, and a parade was held each day (DeMallie 1984:63-64; Born 1994:26). The granddaughters of Black Elk, Esther DeSersa and Olivia Pourier, fondly recalled spending summers at the camp when they were children (in Neihardt and Utrecht 2000:134-135). The pageant continued until 1957, but interest in it started to wane after Black Elk's death (Born 1994:25).

Following popular local trends in this period, Wind Cave National Park established its own Indian camp and exhibit in 1937. The park superintendent, Edward Dixon Freeland wrote a detailed typescript of the camp after its first year that is liberally referenced here. According to Freeland the park invited Dan Blue Horse from the Pine Ridge Reservation to assemble a group to set up camp, perform dances, and demonstrate traditional buffalo processing techniques. A group of nineteen families, fifty-five people in all, arrived on the 18th of July in a caravan of wagons (Ibid:1). A large area was set up for the camp, which consisted of canvas-wall tents com-

monly used by Lakotas at this time. Firewood and water for cooking were provided by the park (Ibid:2).

On the first day of their encampment, the rangers killed a buffalo and brought it to the camp where it was skinned and butchered in view of watching tourists. Raw kidney and liver were eaten by the older Indians and the children, delicacies that Freeland (1937:3, 7) was told would promote long life. The meat was cooked the old way in the paunch of a buffalo, filled with water and heated by hot rocks submerged into the liquid. After the meat was cooked, it was taken out and placed on a pile of *psoralea* leaves, the particular species not identified. Some of the leaves were also placed in the water to purify it. After prayers and song, the meat was divided evenly and distributed among the campers by the leader of the group, Dan Blue Horse, who also shared pieces of the meat with tourists (Ibid:4). The remaining meat was then cut into thin strips, soaked in an unnamed herb so the flies wouldn't touch it, and hung over a peeled pine pole to dry in the sun. The bones were broken up for soup to which wild turnips were later added (Ibid:5). The hide was staked out on the ground to dry with the hair side down, and after it dried, it was divided up among the elderly women (Ibid:6). The whole process, according to an article in the *Hot Springs Star* (July 22, 1937), was repeated on the second day of the encampment. In the evening, the group was dressed in their regalia for dances held around a bonfire. The dances drew a large crowd, arriving in seventy-five automobiles (Freeland 1937:8). On the last night of dancing, Freeland was presented a warbonnet, and he was given the Lakota name, *Wicasa Tatanka* [Buffalo Man]. The camp broke up on the 22nd of July with participants moving on to Custer's Gold Discovery Days and the Days of '76 at Deadwood (Ibid:10).

Local newspapers reported the event a success. It was well-received by the locals and tourists who came to see the activities and by the Lakotas who danced and demonstrated traditional bison butchering and cooking techniques. One article from the *Hot Springs Star* of July 22, 1937 quoted eighty year old Left Hand Bear [*Mato Chatka*] as saying:

We should keep well and free from sickness this winter on the reservation because we have feasted on buffalo here in our old hunting grounds, and our squaws have much buffalo meat drying for us to use when the snow comes again. Buffalo meat is the medicine for the red man.

The same newspaper also described the next year's encampment, which again was led by Dan Blue Horse with fifty-three people participating. This time the event apparently lasted longer, over a seven day period (*Hot Springs Star* July 1938; Bohi 1962:458). One of the participants in the 1938 program, Charley Eagle Louse (1939), wrote a letter to Freeland to inquire about the forthcoming 1939 encampment and to thank him for the buffalo he sent to Pine Ridge in December of 1938. Eagle Louse wrote:

I am say very thanks for the Buffalo meat I had last Dec. and everyone said that (Tatanka Wicasa) Buffalo Man is best friend of yours, so I said, yes. Mr. Freeland is one of the best honest man in the Black Hills. He likes the indians and treat them 'right.' Well Mr. Freeland I believe this is a Good Winter we had there was lot snow here and I think we will have lots of feed and berries for the coming summer and so I am chopping wood now so don't worry about my arms now Mr. Freeland and say Mr. Freeland my wife said ask Mr. Freeland see if we're going make the jerk meat again this summer. Well I am in condition now and I expect to see you some days and I will try to see you and have discussing in regards to 3rd Annual doings. If you believe we're going to have that Celebration. Well I will close here and I say goodbye to you and Mrs. Eagle Louse and my little boy Charlie Jr. both said hello and shake hand to you.

Eagle Louse and Left Hand Bear's remarks are important in light of evidence presented in later chapters; they support the prevalent idea among the Lakotas that this area was not only the sacred homeland of the bison and a place of health and renewal, but also a widely recognized traditional hunting ground and winter camping spot. The ability to come back to this place and feast on its bison must have been a moving experience for these Lakotas, one of whom mentions the good snow coverage of the past winter and his own well-being in a context that is widely linked in Lakota traditions to Wind Cave, the bison, and *Waziyata*, the North Wind, who brings the snow that heals the earth and brings new life to the people (see chapters Fourteen and Fifteen for further discussion).

While the encampment was well received by the Lakotas, the tourists, and the residents of Hot Springs, as judged by local newspaper accounts, it was not continued after 1938. Arno B. Cammerer (1938), the Director of the National Park Service, wrote Freeland that permission for future encampments, except for the one already planned during the coming summer, would not be granted because of the costs these incurred to the park and the precedent they might set pursuant to other groups seeking comparable accommodations. He also declined Freeland's request to slaughter four rather than two buffalo. This brief, but very successful, venture ended Wind Cave National Park's efforts to involve local Lakotas in the park's interpretive programming. Even though park lands were culturally significant to the Lakota people, and even though they were associated with a rich legacy of stories in Lakota as well as Cheyenne oral traditions, this was rarely incorporated into the promotional images and the educational materials that the park used to represent itself in the twentieth century.

Even Mount Rushmore, which had little to recommend it as a site of cultural importance to local tribes, maintained an active Lakota presence during the 1950s (Larner 2002:240-242, 262, 269-275). For many summers, Ben Black Elk and other Lakotas regularly greeted visitors to the monument (Larner 2002:269-275).<sup>18</sup> According to his daughter, Olivia Pourier, her father became associated with Mount Rushmore after the death of her brother in 1948. Wearing his best Lakota outfit, Ben Black Elk took a horse and travois to the Hills, tracking his son's spirit in the area of Harney Peak and Hill City along the old Iron Mountain Road, and leaving the area by way of the Buffalo Gap (Larner 2002:271; Olivia Pourier in Neihardt and Utrecht 2000:40-41). At the encouragement of Carl Burgess, who ran the concession at Mount Rushmore, he was convinced to spend his summers at the monument interacting with tourists, an activity from which he was able to make a decent living (Larner 2002:271).

It is also curious that Wind Cave National Park did not receive permission to continue the involvement of Lakotas in special summer activities when comparable exhibitions were instituted in the same period and continued well into the 1950s at Yosemite National Park, although not without serious misgivings on the part of the Park Service (Spence 1999:102-107, 116-120). In fact, in the early twentieth century, a few tribal groups even lived within the boundaries of the nation's parks, some continued to hunt and collect plants on park lands, and temporary tribal exhibitions and performances were held at many others (Keller and Turek 1998; Spence 1999; Burnham 2000). Over time, however, major steps were taken by the park service to minimize and/or remove tribes from the nation's parks, and by the 1950s, tribal peoples were conspicuous by their absence in interpretive programming. This was also true at Wind Cave National Park, except for an event in November of 1953, when a delegation of Lakotas from Pine Ridge was invited to the park for festivities to celebrate the park's Fiftieth Anniversary. At this event, the Lakotas "adopted" the park's superintendent, Earl M. Semingson and named him, as rendered in

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<sup>18</sup> Indeed, some of the most popular and enduring images of Mount Rushmore to appear on the postcard in the 1950s and 1960s depicted Ben Black Elk in the foreground of the picture (examples in author's photograph collection).

the park's monthly report, "Totonka To-kah Key," translated as 'Leading Buffalo' (Bohi 1962: 465). Actually, this name refers to the first buffalo man or human of the Lakota origin story, *Tokahe*, who led people to the surface of the earth from their underground home at Wind Cave (see Chapter Fourteen for details on the story associated with *Tokahe*). Aside from this event, there is little evidence of any Lakota involvement in park activities after World War II. Whatever the reason for the Lakota's disappearance from Wind Cave's public presentations and events, it appears from park documents that no further efforts were made to involve them, even during the 1950s when the region's tourist promoters were extolling the virtues of including Indians in local tourist attractions (Geores 1990:102).

Living in the Black Hills over extended periods during the summer months afforded older Lakotas a context in which to pass on their knowledge of the area to the younger generations. Indeed, one might even argue that their growing involvement in the region's tourism provided an important context for them to reassert some of their traditional practical and spiritual ties to the Hills (Pourier in Niehardt and Utrecht 2000:134-135). It also presented them opportunities to carry on various kinds of procurement activities such as the gathering of plants for food and medicine. David Born (1994:26-27) writes about this from an interview he had with Francis Duhamel, who told him that when Henry Horse became ill, Black Elk took off to the nearby hills with a gunnysack to gather herbs and roots for a medicinal tea. He cured his patient who started to dance again three days later.

Watson Parker (1985:591) has argued that the rise of tourism in the Black Hills after World War I was the major force behind the Lakota's spiritual attachment to the area. Indeed, he even asserts that this spirituality was "a fairly recent invention, created for the tourists by Black Hills publicists". In contrast to Parker's cynical interpretation of the sincerity and authenticity of some of the Lakota's religious performances at public attractions, other writers take the position that these were not fabrications but part of an overarching desire of people like Nicholas Black Elk to share their knowledge of Lakota traditions with others (DeMallie 1984:64-67,69-70, 71; Born 1994:29). It was not, as some cynics (Parker 1985:59; Worster 1992:113, 135-136, 141) have argued, a context for the creation of "traditions" that lack any link with the past. Even though their stays in the Hills and some of the economic opportunities that supported this presence were not entirely on their own terms, they did create a bridge across which some of their knowledge and use of the Hills would continue to pass to future generations. In fact, much of what was written by Parker's so-called "publicists" in the 1940s and 1950s was not new, and it follows what European Americans were writing about tribal traditions relating to the Hills as early as the 1870s. Reminiscent of the accounts of people such as Colonel Richard Dodge, Walter Jenney, and William Curtis, Leland Case (1949:5) wrote in his 1949 travel guide to the Black Hills:

Indians didn't live in them. These pine-covered hills were much too mysterious and sacred for that, for here the holy *wakan* spirit took the form of the Thunders. And The Thunders couldn't be placated by song or dance as could, say the *Wakan* of sickness, drouth, or a slain buffalo. The Thunders' blinding fire might with no warning strike a man dead.

In the same year, Robert Casey (1949:14) gave a more fantastical, and perhaps even absurd, assessment of Lakota perceptions of the Hills, when he wrote:

When the Sioux were pleading for their ghostly shrine, Paha Sapa -- the Black Hills--this place had been a place of inviolate holiness, the home of the Great Spirit, whose rocky corridors and tree-roofed halls had never been profaned by a human's prying eyes. The shamans and medicine men who had gone there on great occasion to pray had entered the Manitou's precincts only at night, with their eyes closed, feeling their way slowly along a

route made familiar by tradition. But Custer had come and the god, who wanted none of the face with his forked tongue and his gifts for destruction, had gone away.

Other than the fact that these statements acknowledge the Lakotas' sacred attachment to the Hills, they bear only a remote resemblance to actual Lakota traditions about the area.

The growing involvement of the Lakotas in the tourist industry of the Black Hills was not without its own contradictions. There was still widespread racism against Indians in the region. There was also anger over the Lakotas' persisting efforts to reclaim the Hills. Martha Geores (1990:102) quotes an editorial from the *Rapid City Journal* in 1955 that encouraged, although begrudgingly, Indian participation in local tourism. It bears repeating here: "First, stop in Indian Country...and regardless of how you feel about them, Indians still have a romantic attraction to easterners and city dwellers." The efforts to involve Indians in local tourism, however, came to a screeching halt with the rise of the American Indian Movement and their political occupations in the Hills during the 1970s and 1980s.

The Lakotas, however, were not only performers at attractions and "doings" in the Black Hills, but they were also "tourists" themselves. Tom Giago (1999:276), the former editor of the *Lakota Times* and *Indian Country Today*, wrote in 1985 about the importance of the Hills for Lakota leisure activity, and how it was curtailed in the 1970s and 1980s because of the highly politicized takeovers and demonstrations during these years. The point he made was that Lakotas, like their European American neighbors, frequently took weekend outings to the Hills for recreational pleasure. Today, Wind Cave National Park is also a destination where school districts from the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations commonly bring their students on educational outings (Terry 1999, Personal Communication; Albers and Kittelson 2002). Local tribal organizations use the Hills to establish camps and retreats for their young people. In 1996, the Sioux Sans Alcoholism Hope Lodge Youth Component of Rapid City sponsored a camp at Storm Mountain, aimed at preventing alienation among the youth and building their leadership and creative talents (Roach 1996: B1).

### **b. In Other Economic Pursuits**

Throughout the early half of the twentieth century, the Black Hills remained a space that Lakota people continued to visit, and like many other Americans, they often accessed it in the context of tourism. There were other ways Lakotas used the Hills as well. Before and after tourism developed in the region, the Black Hills continued to be a location for food procural, especially for the Lakotas from the neighboring Pine Ridge Reservation. In the early twentieth century, the agent at Pine Ridge, John Brennan, customarily gave small groups of Lakota permission to camp and gather plants for foods and medicines in the Black Hills (Jones 1904:125-128; U.S. Senate 1904). In October of 1903, passes were issued to two small parties for the "purpose of visiting the Black Hills and vicinity to gather berries, roots, and herbs" (Jones 1904:125). The parties included women and children, and each numbered about thirty-five people. They were headed by Charles Smith and William Brown, who were described "as intelligent, law abiding, well disposed men." The two parties happened to meet by accident on the Wyoming side of the Hills, and they decided to return home to Pine Ridge together. While encamped on Dry Creek in Converse County, Wyoming, they were approached by Sheriff Miller of Weston County with a posse of seven men and a warrant for the group's arrest for supposedly violating state game laws in Wyoming. The leaders, Smith and Brown, refused to be taken under arrest, denying that anyone in either of their parties had violated Wyoming law. The sheriff and his party remained to have dinner, which was served by Brown's spouse. After the meal, the parties broke camp to return home and the sheriff attempted again to have the group follow him. The sheriff's posse and

the Lakota party went their separate ways, and after traveling twenty five miles, the Lakotas camped. On October 31, their train of fifteen wagons traveled until noon, stopped for a meal, and then moved on along Lightning Creek where they came to a fence. A young boy and girl, guiding some ponies rode ahead, opened the gate. After the three wagons had passed beyond the gate, they discovered the Sheriff ahead of them with a posse of thirteen well-armed men (Jones 1904:126). The stories diverge, as to what happened next, but a fight ensued in which four Lakotas were killed and two wounded along with the sheriff and a deputy. A few days after the incident, nine of the Lakota were arrested and stood trial on November 13 but were acquitted. The federal investigation following the incident determined that the Indians were law-fully absent from the reservation and were justified in resisting arrest and defending themselves.

Other than this much publicized incident, which became the focus of congressional hearings (U.S. Senate 1904) and was recorded in two Lakota winter counts for the year 1903 (Kindle in Beckwith 1930:366; No Ears in Walker 1982:155), we know very little about tribal hunting in the Hills from published sources during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Badger Clark (1983:68-69), however, implies that Lakotas commonly came to the southern Hills to hunt game and stray cattle during this time. Recollections of early settlers in Custer and Fall River counties confirm this as well, and they report other kinds of food procural activity and the processing of lodgepoles in the area too (Smith, A. 1973:35; Fall River County Historical Society 1976:72; Sundstrom, J. 1977:293, 379). Clearly, the Black Hills and particularly the region near Wind Cave National Park were important hunting locations in pre-reservation times and singled out in scores of stories and references (see Chapter Nine). How much hunting actually took place here after 1877 will probably never be known. The passage of state game laws, declining game populations, increased European American settlement, and the creation of game reserves in areas closest to the Pine Ridge Reservation no doubt combined to substantially reduce tribal hunting. There is no specific evidence in the sources studied for this report on the Lakota's hunting, legal or illegal, in this part of the Hills after Wind Cave National Park was established in 1903.

After 1877, but especially after 1903, when the National Park Service took over lands near Wind Cave, this area ceased to function as one of the Lakota's favorite winter camping and hunting grounds. From the 1930s to the 1950s, however, Wind Cave would regain its reputation as an important source of game when the National Park Service began a program to distribute surplus game to local tribes. In 1934 and 1935, the park donated live bison to the Oglala Sioux Tribe to start their own herd (Isenberg 2000:190-191). Two years later, House Resolution 8773 was passed on December 20, 1937, authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to sell or otherwise dispose of surplus bison and elk from Wind Cave National Park to tribes in the region. In 1938, the annual report of the park superintendent reveals that 2 cows and 2 bulls were given to Pine Ridge (WCNP Annual Reports for January and May, 1938:3). Over the next two years, these reports document in some detail the numbers of bison and other game distributed to local tribes. In the fiscal year ending in 1939, eighty-nine bison were given to the Pine Ridge, Rosebud, Cheyenne River, Standing Rock, Crow Creek, and Wind River reservations (WCNP Annual Report 1939:2-3). The next year, 40 bison and five elk were given out to the same reservations and Fort Berthold (WCNP Annual Report 1940:2). In the following years, detailed breakdowns are not given. The 1941 report indicates that 21 elk were given to reservations (WCNP Annual Report, 1941:1), and for the fiscal year 1942, 30 elk were distributed at Pine Ridge and 1 buffalo was given to Standing Rock (WCNP Annual Report 1942:2). In 1943, Standing Rock again received 1 buffalo and 37 elk were given to various reservations (WCNP Annual Report 1943:2). 1946 lists 3 buffalo killed for Indian agencies, while 1948 indicates that all of the animals eliminated in the park were given to local Indian schools for food (WCNP Annual Report 1946:4). In 1953, it was reported that twenty percent of the game was being held in cold storage to distribute to Indian reservations for "ceremonial, religious, and food purposes" (WCNP Annual Report 1953:

9). And in 1955, the report (WCNP Annual Report 1955:7) states that Indian reservations received 184 quarters of buffalo meat, 24 of elk, and 124 of deer and antelope. After this date, these distributions are no longer reported. Whether this practice continued or not cannot be determined from written park records. Ruthann Knudson (*quoted* from White, D. 2002:23-24), however, claimed in 1997 that these distributions remained “a standard policy of the parks in the Great Plains;” she also noted that “Badlands and Wind Cave traditionally provided bison to the inter-tribal council and directly to tribes annually or semiannually depending on the culling practices.” One thing is clear: this would have been an important and much valued gift for local tribes until they began to play a more active role in raising their own bison herds. Custer State Park also gave bison meat to local Indian families as reported by Olivia Pourier (in Niehardt and Utrecht 2000: 146).

While the importance of the Black Hills for hunting declined over the twentieth century, it remained an important area for traditional plant procurement. In fact, there are a number of sources which reveal that the Hills continued to be a preferred and frequently used spot for collecting plants.<sup>19</sup> As described in greater detail in chapters seven and Eleven, the Black Hills remained an important location for Lakotas and Cheyennes to find any of a variety of different plants, especially those used in their medicinal practices and religious observances. Although there are no direct published data on Lakota collecting plants on park properties, it is highly likely that they did so in the early twentieth century when they camped here on their way to other locations in the Hills.

In the early half of the twentieth century, Lakotas were not only entering the Black Hills to perform at local celebrations and tourist attractions, or to carry on traditional procurement activities, but they were also employed in other kinds of work. Early on, Lakotas were hired out as wage-laborers to work on ranches and farms owned by local whites. Raymond Brown Thunder (1971) worked on a horse ranch in his younger years in the Black Hills. The CCC camps of the Depression years were also a source of work for the Lakotas, and many worked on WPA projects in the Black Hills (Lewis, L. 1980:135-136; Red Shirt 2002:237-238). In the 1930s, the Sylvan Lake Resort hired young Lakota women to work as waitresses and domestics (Sundstrom, J. 1994:102), and in the same period, Lakotas were hired as practical nurses and in other occupations at hospitals in Hot Springs. There was also an Indian School in Hot Springs that maintained a staff of Indian employees (Petty 1973:24-25).

Although the economy of the Hills has struggled to survive in the twentieth century, it has always been wealthy compared to the reservations that surround it. Over the past century, reservations in western South Dakota have ranked among the most economically depressed areas in the United States (DeMallie 1978; Biolsi 1992; Pickering 2000; Christafferson 2001). The lack of work opportunities on their home reservations forced many Lakotas to move to locations in the Hills to find work during the twentieth century. Much of this movement took them to Rapid City, where after World War II, the local Lakota population increased dramatically (White 1970). But even other towns in the Black Hills, including Spearfish, Custer, and Hot Springs, became workplaces and homes for Lakota people (Petty 1973:24-25; Amiotte 1977:228-232). The 2000 census figures reveal that more than 5000 people of American Indian ancestry live in the Black Hills. In

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<sup>19</sup> Although Martha Geores (1990:68-70) claims the Lakotas were prohibited from using lands in the Black Hills National Forest, she does not identify any laws or policies that formally excluded them. Clearly, as she points out, there was considerable sentiment in local newspapers to keep the Lakotas out of the Hills as residents and permanent users. Yet, she does not address how the celebrations local white communities sponsored actively encouraged a Lakota presence in the Hills during the summer months, and how they no doubt created some opportunities for procurement activity on forest service lands.

Fall River county, they make up 6.1% of the resident population, in Custer 3.1%, and in Pennington 8.1% (U.S. Census 2000, Population Profiles).

Whether Lakotas lived in the Hills or on nearby reservations, it is clear that they maintained a continuing presence in the region during the twentieth century. In 1949, writing in reference to Lakota participation in the Days of '76 and other local celebrations, Robert Casey (1949:292) stated:

What comes out of all this backsighting is the realization that the Sioux are still a part not only of the scene but of the life of the West River country. When you see them meandering aimlessly through the streets of any of the Hill towns, they are more likely to be wearing faded blue jeans than bright blankets and ceremonial skins but you won't mistake them for Scandinavian corn planters and you'll know instinctively that you are somewhere on the far side of the Missouri.

Even today, Lakota people are ever-present in the Hills. They are permanent residents of the Hills' towns and cities, working in a wide range of professions (Larner 2002:21-23). They are also consumers, shopping, securing medical treatment,<sup>20</sup> seeking entertainment, and pursuing a host of other services in towns on the eastern side of the Hills. Today, the Hills remain a fundamental part of their life and experience. Most of the Lakotas who live in or visit the southeastern Hills still come from the Pine Ridge Reservation. Many of the communities on Pine Ridge are less than a few hours away by automobile. Travel from other Lakota reservations is considerably longer, and this bears some consideration when looking at the modern use of the Hills, which, with the exception of Bear Butte and Bear Lodge Butte, has been reported and documented mostly for Lakotas from the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations. Certainly the area around Wind Cave National Park is most easily accessed by these Lakotas.

### **c. In Politics**

At the end of the nineteenth century, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos began to seek legal avenues to reclaim their interests in the Black Hills. As described in much greater depth in Chapter Eight, these tribes started organizing their efforts as early as 1891 (Lazarus 1991:119-120). Twenty years later, in 1911, the three tribal nations sought legal ways to pursue their claims through the federal court system, and in the 1920s, they went to Congress to get jurisdictional acts passed to have their cases heard in federal courts (Fowler 1982:134; Lazarus 1991:138). Only the Lakotas, however, were able to get very far in this effort (Fowler 1982:165, 173). Through a complicated history of congressional acts and court decisions, which stretched over sixty years, from 1920 to 1980, the Lakota's case, *United States v. Sioux Nation of Indians, No. 79-639*, sought monetary compensation for the illegal seizure of the Black Hills and reached its final hearing at the Supreme Court in 1979. The nation's highest court ruled in 1980 that the Black Hills had indeed been seized illegally by the United States as a Fifth Amendment taking and that the Sioux were entitled to over one-hundred million dollars in settlement for this unconscionable theft (Lazarus 1991:378-379; see also Chapter Eight for more details).

While the Black Hills case was winding its way through the courts, the grounds on which the Lakotas chose to reclaim their interests in the Hills radically changed. After years of frustrating delays and with settlement terms many Lakotas were unwilling to accept, some of the tribe's

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<sup>20</sup> The sanatorium in Hot Springs served many Indian TB patients including Nicholas Black Elk (DeMallie 1984:21-22). The Soldiers' Home in Hot Springs also became the residence for a number of Lakota of mixed ethnic ancestry including Susan Bettelyouan and her spouse (Bettlyouan and Waggoner 1989: xviii).

elders and traditionalists aligned themselves with younger tribal members who were part of the American Indian Movement, and together, they launched a series of protests and land takeovers in the Black Hills and on the neighboring Pine Ridge Reservation (New Holy 1998:336-33). Supported by the belief that the Sioux Nation still owned the Black Hills under the provisions of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 and that they never actually extinguished their interests under the 1877 Act,<sup>21</sup> some Lakotas began to hold demonstrations in the Black Hills to draw public attention to their case. Lee Wilcox led a protest at Mount Rushmore in 1970 that focused on Lakota land claims (Larner 2002:278-279). Later, Lehman Brightman of United Native Americans as well as Russell Means, his brother, William, and other members of the American Indian Movement arrived to support Wilcox's protest, which turned into an occupation that lasted four months (Means and Wolf 1995:167; New Holy 1998:336; Larner 2002:280-289). Three years later, the American Indian Movement staged its highly publicized and now nationally televised takeover at Wounded Knee on the Pine Ridge Reservation, using this as another forum to push their agenda on treaty rights forward (Matthiessen 1980; Means and Wolf 1995:257-93; Smith and Warrior 1996:198-199; New Holy 1998:337-338). According to Alexandra New Holy (1998:338), the occupation at Wounded Knee "climaxed a reawakened treaty-and-land centered Lakota identity," one inspired by tribal elders who were descendants of and raised by leaders who had signed the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty and who were familiar with the stories of how *Paha Sapa* had been taken illegally from the Lakotas. It marked a significant turning point in Lakota history, one which established the conceptual grounds for the Lakotas' efforts to reclaim lands in the Black Hills instead of accepting a monetary settlement for their illegal seizure by the United States government (Lazarus 1991:325).

Frustrated by the continuing failure of the U.S. government to respect their treaty rights and refusing to take a monetary settlement for the Hills, the Lakotas began to launch another series of occupations in 1981, one year after the Supreme Court issued its ruling on Sioux claims. By this time, many Lakotas had become adamantly opposed to any monetary settlement. Proclaiming that the "Black Hills are not for sale," a group of Lakotas (along with supporters from other tribes) who were associated with the American Indian Movement, left Porcupine, South Dakota on April 4, 1981 and established a settlement called Camp Yellow Thunder on National Forest Service Land in Victoria Creek Canyon west of Rapid City. This camp was viewed as a first step in reasserting Lakota rights to the Black Hills, and the legal basis for its occupancy rested on provisions guaranteed to the Lakota in the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, and an 1897 federal law granting access to U.S. Forest Service lands by educational and religious groups. With the support of many local non-Indian groups, including the Black Hills Alliance and the American Friends Service Committee, tipis and other equipment were set up at the site for an extended occupation. The camp was named after Raymond Yellow Thunder, who had been brutalized and murdered in 1972 at Gordon, Nebraska (Egner 1982: C2; Matthiessen 1980:526-527, 608; Means, W. in Parlow 1983a:31-34; Cassells, Miller, and Miller 1984:114-115; Geores 1990:127; Means and Wolf 1995:410-418).

Two weeks after the camp was established, the Lakotas applied to the U.S. National Forest Service for a special use permit, which was denied as had all other previous and similar requests, according to documents released in subsequent court hearings (New Holy 1998:341). In August of 1981, the camp pursued an administrative appeal, and a month later, the United States filed an action to evict the campers (New Holy 1998:341). In the face of the U.S. Forest Service's rejec-

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<sup>21</sup> Under the terms of the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868, Article 16, no additional lands were to be relinquished by the Sioux unless three-quarters of the male population agreed to a cession. Since the 1877 Agreement did not contain the required number of signatures for the sale of the Black Hills, it was an illegal act.

tion of their application for continued use, and its subsequent orders to disband the camp, the Lakotas refused to move, held onto the site, and filed suit against the government on the grounds that the campers had been illegally denied their legitimate right to a special use permit to 800 acres of forest service land (Matthiessen 1980:530-531; Cassells, Miller and Miller 1984:115-116; Wolf and Means 1995:15-17; New Holy 1998:341). The actions were consolidated, and in 1985, the first court opinion on the case in *United States v. Means* 627 F. Supp. 247 in the United States District Court for South Dakota, was given. The court held that the grounds on which the campers had been denied a permit were arbitrary and that forest service regulations violated the First Amendment and “burdened” the free exercise of Lakota religion. It further ruled that the plaintiffs were entitled to a special use permit for a religious camp (New Holy 1998:341). The case lasted another four years on appeal, and in the intervening years, the camp served as a site for traditional religious observances and also as a location for a spiritual youth camp where efforts were made to educate younger Lakotas in the traditional ways of their people (Egner 1982: C2; Means and Wolf 1995:417). In 1988, the Eighth Circuit Court, in *The United States vs. Means* 858 F.2d 404, overturned the ruling of the district judge in Sioux City that had given AIM permission to establish a permanent religious camp at the site, and a year later, when the Supreme Court refused to hear the ruling of this court, the occupation was over (Kimball 1989:B2; Worster 1992:109; New Holy 1998:342).

During the years of its existence, there had been a great deal of public support and also opposition to the Yellow Thunder Camp. Dr. Larry Zimmerman of the University of South Dakota, for example, worked with some Lakotas to get the site nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, a controversial move among state archaeologists who argued in 1983 that a Multiple Resource Nomination should be pursued instead. There was also support for a petition to allow the establishment of permanent structures at the site under a Special Use Application that was signed by thirty eight members of Congress (Cassells, Miller and Miller 1984:115-116). The long occupation helped to focus national attention on Lakota claims to the Black Hills and to mobilize a widespread and rare consensus among the Lakota people and their tribal governments that stressed the return of public lands in the Black Hills rather than monetary compensation. However, legal impasses and internal disputes among the Lakotas over tactics for holding the Yellow Thunder Camp ultimately led to a lack of resolve on pushing the occupation any further and the use of this political strategy was largely abandoned (Worster 1992:109; New Holy 1998: 343).

Two other occupations also took place in the Black Hills in 1981. One was led by the *Tokala*, or Kit Fox Warrior Society, and made up of people largely from the White Clay community on the Pine Ridge Reservation. This group occupied a site on Flynn Creek near Custer, South Dakota in early November of 1981, but the takeover was short-lived when the occupiers were arrested and jailed by a combined force of Custer County sheriffs and the state police (Matthiessen 1980:608). The other took place at Wind Cave National Park. This one was launched by the Tokala Society, Lakota Treaty Council, and members of the Oglala Sioux tribal council, who passed a resolution in support of an occupation that became known as the “Crazy Horse” encampment (Parlow 1983b: xv; Loud Hawk in Parlow 1983a:45 ). It was led by tribal chairman Stanley Looking Elk (in Parlow 1983a: 20) who, two years later, recounted how he and other members of the tribe applied for a ten day camping permit from the park. The occupation, began on the 25th of June, the 105th anniversary date of the Battle of Little Big Horn. More than two-thousand people showed up at this encampment, some of whom were tribal elders, including Nellie Red Owl who was in her eighties (Looking Elk in Parlow 1983a:20). Although originating with the Oglalas, it eventually drew other tribal supporters including Arapahos and Cheyennes (Parlow 1983b: xv). One of the leaders, Robert Fast Horse, a young Lakota lawyer, was very explicit about the reasons for the occupation, and as quoted in Edward Lazarus’ book (1991:412),

he proclaimed the takeover was a “symbol of protest that the Black Hills are not for sale“. The camp was set up in an isolated area on the northern edge of the park. As the occupation extended beyond the ten days allowed by the permit, representatives from Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Indian Affairs attempted to negotiate terms for removing the protesters. According to some of the Lakotas who participated in the takeover, various federal officials promised them that they would negotiate for the return of the Black Hills but this never happened. Instead, the promises were used as a ploy to disband the camp (Parlow 1983b:xv; Looking Horse in Parlow 1983a:20; Loud Hawk in Parlow 1983a:45). In the meantime, a power struggle developed within the encampment between the tribal representatives and some of the younger protestors over the proposed negotiations with the federal government. Eventually, many of the younger protestors abandoned the camp and moved on to occupy a site at Sheridan Lake (Looking Elk in Parlow 1983a:20). According to Stanley Looking Horse (Ibid.), the Crazy Horse encampment was eventually abandoned because of warrants issued by the state of South Dakota against the protestors who had taken over lands at Sheridan Lake. After sixty days, the takeover at Wind Cave National Park eventually ended without any legal intervention, but the occupation was an unmitigated disaster from a public relations standpoint. The debris left behind after the camp was deserted led the news media to mock the Lakota’s spiritual regard for the Black Hills (Matthiessen 1980:532, 543-546; Powers, M. 1986:206; Lazarus 1991:412; Young 2001). This occupation did not have widespread support among the Lakotas or its news media. Tom Giago (1984:295-296; 1999:236), the well known editorialist and owner of two American Indian newspapers, strongly opposed it and chastised the leaders of the Oglala Sioux Tribe for embarrassing the nation by its ill-advised, poorly organized, and self-defeating tactics.

Besides the occupations, the Lakotas launched other strategies to regain their proprietary interests in the Black Hills (Greider 1987:37-40, 60, 62, 64). In the 1980s, they attempted to secure title to public lands in the Black Hills through congressional legislation, but their effort, described in more depth in Chapter Eight, did not succeed. More recently, Lakotas and Cheyennes have started to take new steps to pursue their interests in the Black Hills. Notable among these have been their efforts to play a more active role in the public deliberations that surround the use of federally managed lands in the area. Along with other user groups, the Lakotas are demanding a place at the table when public policies and environmental impacts are considered that affect the Hills. In 1995, they opposed the Costner brothers’ plan to exchange their own real estate for forest service land, and they demanded to be involved in the consultative process (Melmer 1995b:A1, A3, 1995c A1, A3; New Holy 1998:348). In 1996, several groups representing Lakota tribal constituencies in alliance with the Sierra Club and Audubon Society filed for an intervener status in the revised management plan of the Black Hills National Forest. One group, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, asserted in a tribal council resolution that the forest service plan did not adequately weigh the balance of industrial timber users against wildlife, grazing, and tribal cultural interests (Porterfield 1997:A1; New Holy 1998:348-349). In addition, tribes have taken efforts to gain ownership of private lands in the Hills through gifts and purchases or as settlements in civil cases. The Northern Cheyenne and Southern Cheyenne-Arapaho tribes bought small sections of private land at the base of Bear Butte (Parlow 1983b: xiv-xv), while the Lakotas of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe sued the Homestake Mining Company for damages to the waters that flowed on their reservation and sought compensation in the form of land in the Black Hills (Porterfield 1997b: A1,A2; New Holy 1998:349-350).

Since the 1970s, the federal government has enacted several pieces of legislation (see Chapter Eight for more detail) to protect tribal cultural properties and religious freedoms especially on federally-owned lands. In the 1980s, the Lakotas and Cheyennes went to court to seek protection for sacred sites in the Black Hills under the provisions of one of the new statutes, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, but this effort did not achieve favorable results either. As

discussed in greater detail in Chapter Eight, the federal courts have tended to diminish the intent and power of congressional laws governing traditional cultural properties and religious freedoms. In recent years, this has led to renewed lobbying efforts on the part of tribes to strengthen some of the laws protecting their cultural and religious interests. No matter how the courts have ruled in cases affecting traditional cultural properties and practices, federal agencies have been ordered to evaluate the impact of the new laws on their own policies and the lands under their jurisdiction. Increasingly, the managers of the nation's public lands have had to consider how various tribal rights might be respected without jeopardizing other regulations and the interests of other user groups (Forbes-Boyte 1999). What this means, as Martha Geores (1990:112) argues, is that tribal interests "can no longer be ignored" by the agencies responsible for managing public lands, including those located in the Black Hills. Given current federal laws, the question of whether tribes have access to sacred sites on public lands is no longer a source of debate and contention. The central concerns now revolve around what kinds of protections are afforded these sites and what sorts of concessions are given to tribes to permit them to conduct their religious observances at these sites in culturally appropriate ways.

Much of the responsibility for making decisions on these matters appears to hinge, at least in part, on the local administrators who manage public lands. Devil's Tower National Monument is a case in point. In 1995, local tribal representatives were parties to a consultative process with environmentalists and rock climbers regarding management plans for the use of this site. A decision was reached to place a mandatory restriction on this site in the month of June in order for tribal people to conduct their religious observances without interference from tourists and recreationists (Melmer 1996:A1, A3; 1996b:A1, A2; Dorst 2000:315-318; Larner 2002:321-330). Some rock climbers challenged the park service's decision on the grounds that it denied other legitimate uses of public property, and the courts declared the ban unconstitutional. In 1998, a voluntary restriction on climbing was instituted and upheld by the federal courts. Subsequently, most climbers and other visitors to the monument have respected the voluntary ban (New Holy 1998). Similar efforts to resolve conflicts between tribal and other users of public lands have surrounded Bear Butte (Forbes-Boyte 1996, 1999; Young 1996:A1,A2; Larner 2002:331-333).

Wind Cave National Park is another example. Several times, between 1978 and 1982, the Lakotas performed a ceremony, identified as the "Indian Oyate to the Paha Sapa," at Wind Cave National Park, and according to one of the park's former cultural interpreters (Terry 1999, Personal Communication), requests were made and granted for holding Sun Dances and other religious observances on park properties. This is also confirmed by Lakota cultural preservation officers, who also note that most of the larger group observances have declined during the past decade. Still, they point out that smaller and more solitary observances continue to take place at locations in the park (Albers and Kittleson 2002). In the case of Wind Cave, the sites that have been chosen for these activities do not appear to have conflicted with or compromised the interests of other user groups in the way that they have at Devil's Tower National Monument and Bear Butte State Park. Held in some of the more remote regions of the park, away from the cave entrance and the roads that carry the heaviest tourist traffic, these activities have not become a source of conflict between competing user groups, and as a result, little formal intervention, management, and negotiation appear to have been required on the part of park staff and administrators. Nonetheless, other issues relating to park regulatory policies require further discussion, and most of these are addressed in other sections of this report. What can be said here is that the use of sacred sites in the Black Hills, specifically at Wind Cave, Bear Butte, and Bear Lodge Butte, became increasingly common after 1970 (New Holy 1998:350; Larner 2002:319-331).

Over the past four decades, the Lakotas and other tribal nations have attempted in various ways to secure their interests as rightful owners and/or users of public lands in the Black Hills. They have used legal and political means to achieve their ends. Whether or not these have succeeded, tribal peoples are commanding the use of the Hills' public spaces on their own terms and for their own purposes. In recent years, various Lakota groups have started to organize new protest rallies in the Black Hills: one took place in 1994 at Bear Butte over the exploitation of the site by "New Agers," another was held in 1997 at Mount Rushmore to call attention to Lakota treaty rights (New Holy 1998:349), and most recently, the Stronghold area of the Badlands became the site of an occupation in a controversy between the National Park Service and members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe (Lurie, J. 2002:12-14). Before 1970, much of the tribal access to the Hills was initiated by European American entrepreneurs, community boosters, and government administrators and defined by their interests. Now, the Lakotas, Cheyennes, and Arapahos are pushing their own agendas forward and doing so with full knowledge of the rights and protections afforded them under various federal laws.

### **III. WIND CAVE NATIONAL PARK AND ITS MODERN MILEAU**

In the years after 1877, the date when the federal government took possession of the Black Hills, the region where Wind Cave National Park is situated remained a backwater, largely isolated from developments unfolding elsewhere in the Hills. The private mail, stage, and freight traffic, which once followed trails crossing park lands along Beaver Creek and its tributaries and near the water supply area in the vicinity of Shirttail Canyon, were much reduced after the gold fields became exhausted around Custer and after transportation to the more populous and developed areas of the Hills was rerouted along the outer edge of the Hogback. Sections of the park, however, remained convenient routes for local travel between Custer and the southeastern Hills. Until the mid-1880s, some wagon drivers continued to haul freight along the old Sidney-Custer trail, and loggers still used neighboring Coldbrook Canyon to move lumber along trails on the southern edge of the park.

Other than an area to cross en route to other locations, much of the park appears to have been used by early European American settlers as it had been when the Lakotas and Cheyennes inhabited the area, as a location to hunt game. It was part of a range where the area's dwindling herds of elk, mule deer, and pronghorn commonly browsed and where, in earlier times, bison grazed before they were extirpated from the region and replaced by cattle. The region's rich native grasses made it a popular grazing ground for the livestock and horses owned by the European Americans who established homesteads within and around present day park boundaries. Once park lands came under a restricted user status, where most extractive activities were prohibited, including grazing, the park's 180 square miles were returned to their original use as a shelter and feeding area for wildlife. Hunters still culled the herds, but these were government employees (often professionals trained in biology), not local tribespeople or non-Indian ranchers and recreationists pursuing the animals for subsistence or sport.

The park was also an area where mineral claims were staked but never really developed. Prospectors certainly searched the area for gold and other valuable minerals, but it was a group of hunters in pursuit of deer that came across the cave in 1881 and made its whereabouts known to other European Americans. When investors of the South Dakota mining company took out a claim on the cave a decade later, they hired Jesse McDonald to manage the property and encouraged him to homestead the surface lands around the cave. His two sons, Alvin and Elmer, and their friends, Robert and Lawrence McAdam, whose family homesteaded land a few miles west of the cave, began to explore and map its subterranean passageways. Two years later, John

Stabler entered into a business partnership with Jesse McDonald to develop the cave as a tourist attraction for the scores of tourists who were starting to flock to the spas in the neighboring town of Hot Springs. In time, the partnership between McDonald and Stabler became a source of litigation that led the U.S. Land office to retake and reclassify the lands in 1901. Two years later the area was turned into a national park.

From the late nineteenth century to the present, Wind Cave and the town of Hot Springs have been umbilically connected to each other. Until the early twentieth century, the success of Wind Cave as a tourist attraction was largely dependent on the growth of the leisure industry in Hot Springs. Without its presence, it is unlikely that the cave would have been developed in any serious way during the early twentieth century, as was the case with Jewel Cave. By the second decade of the twentieth century, however, the tables had turned. Now, Hot Springs, whose spa industry was floundering, became dependent on the cave's successful development for maintaining its place in the Black Hill's growing leisure, travel, and recreational industry. Over time, and for a wide variety of reasons described earlier, Wind Cave National Park became the major attraction beyond the town of Custer to draw tourists to the far reaches of the southern Hills. Even though the area remains off the beaten path of the most heavily traveled areas, the Hills' popular travel guides continue to route tourists along itineraries that lead them to Wind Cave.

Although the park's development was closely tied to the region's tourism, much of the area in and around park boundaries was ranching country. Local ranches were originally squatted on and then homesteaded from the 1890s through the early early decades of the twentieth century. On its northern borders, the original homestead lands were eventually returned to public ownership and transferred to the park in the 1930s, creating a contiguous and unoccupied boundary with Custer State Park. To the west of its border, some of the land remains in private ownership, but most of it is publicly owned and part of the Black Hills National Forest. One tract of land and its water rights, located outside the main boundaries of the park, was purchased from the McAdam family to provide the park with a continuous source of water. Ranching, logging, and mining historically took place on some of the private, state, and federal forest service land not far from the northern and western sides of the park, but in later years, most of this activity took place at some distance from the park, near the town of Custer and in areas much farther north. Ranching has remained the primary activity on the park's southern and eastern borders where most of the land has stayed in private hands. Over time, however, the boundaries of the park were gradually pushed farther east when public lands were reclassified or private acreage was purchased by the federal government for the park.

In direct contrast to neighboring lands under the management of the U.S. Forest Service and South Dakota's Game, Fish, and Parks Commission, which have been obligated by law and policy to attend to the interests of multiple users and contend with the conflicts wrought by their competing interests, the park service has been largely insulated from this kind of contestation because of the reserved status of the lands under its management. But it has never been isolated and unaffected by the social and economic interests of the communities that surround it. Throughout much of the early half of the twentieth century, the park was embedded in a social environment where most of the residents in the area lived directly or indirectly off the land. Ranchers and farmers were the ones whose interests were most directly affected by park land/water management policies and actions, especially when these entailed the transfer of private and other public lands into the park's more restricted user status. Until the 1920s, most publicly held land in the Black Hills was managed by people who were long-term, local residents, and this was true for Wind Cave National Park when the Pilcher and Boland families were employed in important administrative positions. Equally, the park was impacted by its neighbors' land uses, including their legal access to grazing lands until the 1920s, the persisting problem with game poaching, and the

illegal taking of timber on park property. Most of these uses, both lawful and unlawful, did not detract, relatively speaking, from the overall health of the park's environment. Nevertheless, once grazing was prohibited, concerted efforts took place to rehabilitate and return the park's grasslands to a "natural" state. Fortunately, during most of its history, the park was located in an area largely removed from some of the most damaging ecological impacts of practices routinely followed by the mining and logging industries in other areas of the Hills.

With the exception of fishing, wild fruit collection, and limited livestock grazing, most forms of extraction have been prohibited on park lands. Since 1903, when Wind Cave National Park was first established, spectatorship has remained the primary legitimate use of park properties with the cave serving as its central attraction, closely followed by the bison and other wildlife. Like other units in the National Park System, a major and continuing function of Wind Cave National Park is to serve the national travel industry and its respective regional and local economies. Outside of protecting the spaces they manage from harmful development and preserving the local landscape and wildlife, the original purposes for the park's creation, park staff and administrators are there to serve the interests of their visitors, both local residents and tourists who arrive from distant locales. Over the years, Wind Cave National Park has played a substantial role in capturing a sizable portion of the tourism in the Black Hills and bringing its revenue to the neighboring town of Hot Springs. Indeed, it can be said without exaggeration that after the collapse of the spa industry, Wind Cave remained the central, if not the only, attraction drawing tourists to the far southeastern reaches of the Hills. It can also be said that, after 1950, when the role of agriculture and other extractive industries started to decline in the Black Hills, the relative importance and contribution of tourist attractions like Wind Cave to the local economy increased. Today, the leisure, travel, and recreational industry is the backbone of the Black Hills' economy, and in the southeastern Hills, Wind Cave National Park occupies a position that is not inconsiderable to the economic health and vitality of its neighbor, Hot Springs.

Wind Cave National Park has not only been part of the ongoing relationships that sustain the well-being of Black Hills' tourism and the European American interests that these support, but it has also occupied a place in the lives of local tribal people. It is difficult to know exactly what kinds of onsite activities the Lakotas carried out in the immediate area of the park before it was established and in the decades immediately following its creation. There are few records of a tribal presence here between 1877 and 1930, although there are several reports of Lakotas camping, hunting, and gathering plants in the Black Hills and also staying at nearby Hot Springs, where they continued to return every summer to bathe in its thermal waters. Most of the reports on Lakota food procural activity in and around the Black Hills are recorded for the years before 1920. Since Wind Cave National Park sits on lands that were once a popular winter hunting ground for the Lakotas and Cheyennes, and one that remained close to the western boundaries of the Pine Ridge Reservation, it would not be surprising to learn that some amount of subsistence game hunting and plant gathering continued to take place here until the early part of the twentieth century. After 1911, when the state of South Dakota started to impose game laws, Lakotas would have been subject to arrest for hunting without a license outside the borders of their reservations.

In the same period, the federal government was placing restrictions on timber cutting on its lands in the interior regions of the Hills. Before 1910, there are numerous reports of Lakotas processing their lodgepoles at various locations in the Hills' interiors, especially along the upper reaches of Spring Creek. There are records of them picking berries, digging turnips, and collecting a host of other plants at various locations in and around the Hills. In addition, there is also evidence of Lakotas camping on and traveling across Wind Cave National Park on the way to the places they procured their lodgepoles. It is highly likely that they used these travels as opportunities to procure other plants used as food or medicine and in manufacture or ceremony, and

some of this procural probably took place on park properties. As the twentieth century progressed, some of this activity was reduced because permits were now required to take timber on U.S. Forest Service lands. As the government began to privilege the big timber companies in its leasing policies, the access of local domestic users to the forest was restricted. This not only impacted the Lakotas, but it also affected local ranchers who depended on an unfettered access to the forest to acquire timber for their fuel and other domestic uses.

After 1920, Lakotas were still coming to the Black Hills in the summer months, but now they were largely doing so to participate in the rodeos and celebration festivities of local white communities, and/or to perform at privately run tourist attractions. Once again, there are references to Lakotas traveling to these events along routes that crossed Wind Cave National Park and camping along the way. For a brief period of time between 1937 and 1938, the park involved Lakotas in some of its interpretive programming. Because of opposition from the Director of the National Park Service, Arno Cammerer, the participation of the Lakota in future park activities was never pursued or encouraged, even during the 1950s when the region's tourist boosters actively promoted the presence of Indians in the area's various tourist attractions.

Since Wind Cave, the Race Track, and probably other sites too<sup>22</sup> were of considerable religious importance to the Lakotas and the Cheyennes, it would also not be surprising to learn that unobtrusive forms of ceremonial observance (for example, fasting and other prayerful observances) were still conducted in the park and that plants and minerals used for medicinal and religious purposes were collected here as well. Between 1903 and 1936, we uncovered only two accounts (Stabler in Bohi 1962:391; Pilcher 1964) about Lakotas coming to the park to visit the cave for ceremonial purposes. It is hard to know what to deduce about the lack of any other evidence confirming their onsite use, except to say that the Lakotas may have stayed away, fearing the consequences of practicing ceremonies that were no longer sanctioned either on or off their reservations. Whatever traditional religious practices the Lakota maintained during these years were typically held in remote reservation locations where they would not draw the attention of outsiders. Nonetheless, many accounts (*see* Section Four) from the same period reveal that the Lakotas and the Cheyennes continued to hold important traditions about the cultural meaning of Wind Cave and the Race Track, as well as the neighboring Buffalo Gap and Hot Springs.

Whether intentionally or unintentionally, the park largely ignored the cultural interests of its tribal neighbors after the 1930s. The park did embark on a program, however, to supply surplus wild game meat to tribes from 1938 until the mid-1950s, when park reports cease to record these distributions. As elaborated upon in greater detail in Section Four, one of the Lakota's continuing and fundamental attachments to the park centers around the animals, especially the bison. In the twentieth century, this entailed an interesting, and perhaps ironic, set of exchanges. In the 1930s, Wind Cave National Park supplied the Oglala Sioux Tribe with bison to start their own herd (Isenberg 2000:176). Two decades earlier, bison captured by a Lakota of mixed ancestry, Frederick Dupree, from the Cheyenne River Reservation became part of the famous herd of Scotty Philips and his Oglala wife. This herd provided the original stock for Custer State Park (Schell 1961:247-248; Sundstrom, J. 1994:112), and one source (Casey 1949:17) claims a few of the animals ended up at Wind Cave National Park as well.<sup>23</sup>

After the 1950s, as reported in Section Four, a rich body of stories about Wind Cave, the Race Track, and other nearby sites in the Black Hills appeared in the published literature based

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<sup>22</sup> Other sites within park boundaries have cultural significance too, but these have not been identified in any of the published and unpublished sources consulted for this report.

<sup>23</sup> We have been unable to find additional evidence to corroborate this claim.

on tribal oral traditions. While some of these traditions became an integral part of the way in which Europeans advertised and interpreted the Black Hills' landscape for tourists, especially from the 1930s to the 1950s, they were hardly present in the park's own promotional and interpretive materials.

With the revitalization of tribal religious beliefs and practices in the 1970s, Wind Cave and the Race Track were among a number of different sites in the Black Hills that were singled out as holding significant spiritual values. Beginning in 1978, the same year the American Indian Religious Freedom Act gained congressional approval, Lakotas began to approach the National Park Service to gain permission to hold some of their ceremonial observances inside park boundaries. In 1981, the Oglala Lakota Tribe received a two-week permit to use park lands for an encampment which turned into a politically engineered occupation, whose motives and tactics created considerable dissension within the ranks of the Oglala people. In the same year, other takeovers took place in the Hills, and all of them served as a pretext to raise public awareness about Lakota treaty rights. They represented one of many strategies the Lakotas pursued in the 1980s to regain ownership of and/or access to the Hills. In more recent times, the Lakotas have launched other efforts to work with federal and state agencies, which manage much of the land inside the Race Track, to make their cultural interests in the area known and respected. Using the power afforded them by several recent pieces of federal legislation, they are now playing a more active role in the advisory processes that surround decisions governing the protection and use of culturally significant and sacred properties managed by the federal government. These consultations have become part of the standard procedure of the offices of the National Forest Service in the Black Hills, and they are required of the National Park Service as well.

What has been presented in this section, and what appears in the forthcoming ones as well, is aimed at providing a strong evidentiary background for such consultation in the future. More specifically, it will be argued that the involvement of the Lakotas and Cheyennes in park consultative processes is necessary not only because these are the two tribes with the longest continuing relationship to the lands that make up the park, but also because these tribes share important historical attachments to the area and significant cultural affiliations with many of its resources, some of which also hold religious significance to them.