In the United States during the last 30 years there has been a shift from extractive natural resource-based economies of the Old West to a New West defined by environmental protection. Over the past century, a growing national support for environmental protection has influenced a lengthening list of national and state parks, national monuments, national wildlife refuges, and wilderness areas in the western United States. Increasingly, urbanites seeking outdoor recreation and enhanced “quality of life” are attracted to the rural towns, or “gateway towns,” bordering these protected natural areas. Boulder and Escalante, Utah, traditional ranching communities that became gateway towns to Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument on September 18, 1996, are western rural towns currently experiencing such change. President Clinton created Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) by invoking the Antiquities Act and thus bypassing congressional approval and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. As a result, the local people of Boulder and Escalante have expressed anger and hostility toward the federal government and environmentalists, which has led to community dysfunction and polarization, leaving Boulder and Escalante in disadvantageous positions as gateway towns faced with the task of planning for increased tourism and population growth. In my thesis I utilize cultural survival theory and perspectives on environmentalism, tourism and growth management to explore the various impacts of GSENM on Boulder and Escalante’s local culture and to identify possible
remedies or alternatives to these impacts. Methods used in collecting data include background research, participant observation, recent related survey data, and in-depth interviews with Boulder and Escalante residents. Research findings show that GSENM threatens the local culture by infringing on local territoriality, introducing outside values, beliefs and ideas, forcing rapid and unwanted change on a traditional people, and leaving locals feeling voiceless and powerless in the face of change. In sum, I found that a lack of both trust and cultural sensitivity have played roles in fostering community dysfunction and polarization. However, I believe that common ground and community solidarity can be achieved in Boulder and Escalante through the re-establishment of trust, a greater sensitivity toward the local culture, and proper leadership.
Where Old West Meets New West:
Confronting Conservation, Conflict and Change on Utah's Last Frontier

by

Jennifer Jensen Leaver

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Dean of Graduate School

I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

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Jennifer Jensen Leaver, Author
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Old West vs. New West

In the United States during the last 30 years there has been a shift from extractive natural resource-based economies of the Old West to a New West defined by environmental protection. Due in large part to this shift, many rural towns dotted across the western United States have been increasingly impacted by tourism and in-migration. This type of change can impact rural towns' traditional cultural values and cause local displacement (McLaren 1998; Smith 1989). Over the past century, a growing national support for environmental protection has influenced a lengthening list of national and state parks, national monuments, national wildlife refuges, and wilderness areas in the western United States. Increasingly, urbanites seeking outdoor recreation and enhanced “quality of life” are attracted to the western rural towns, or “gateway towns,” bordering these protected natural areas. Boulder and Escalante, Utah, located in the remote region of south-central Utah (see Figure 1.1), are western rural towns currently experiencing such change.

1.2 Monumental Moment

Boulder and Escalante, Utah, have recently been termed “gateway towns” to the 1.9 million acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (see Figure 1.2). On September 18, 1996, urged by a growing American environmental constituency, President Clinton created Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) using the Antiquities Act of 1906. By invoking the Antiquities Act, Clinton bypassed Congress and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which normally requires the assessment of potential social and environmental impacts.
Figure 1.1 Location of Boulder and Escalante, Utah

Source: Map by Andrew Dubrasky From BLM's GSENM Website: http://www.ut.blm.gov/monument/Visitor Information/Maps/location_map.html
Figure 1.2  Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM)

Since the early 1990s, environmentalists have promoted federal protection of the GSENM area as a way to preserve wilderness for future generations. Prior to its designation, GSENM proponents stressed that non-extractive industries, such as nature-based tourism, are economically and environmentally more sustainable than the traditional extractive industries of mining, logging, and ranching. However, after Clinton’s designation of GSENM, local residents of surrounding gateway towns, including Boulder and Escalante, felt purposefully left out of the democratic process that usually precedes national monument designation. Many Boulder and Escalante locals claimed that Clinton bypassed gateway towns’ input due to their traditionally extractive (ranching, mining, and logging) economies and their unsuccessful dealings with federal agencies and environmental groups in the past.

GSENM’s designation has created conflict in the rural gateway towns of Boulder and Escalante, Utah, between people with different ideas about public land management. For instance, whereas environmentalists fear that the southern Utah landscape surrounding Boulder and Escalante is threatened by traditional ranching and logging practices, local ranchers and loggers fear that their livelihoods and cultural values are threatened by environmentalists and environmental protection. At the same time, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the federal agency that manages the public land surrounding Boulder and Escalante, has faced attacks from local residents who believe the BLM’s policies are too restrictive, and environmental groups, who believe the BLM’s policies are too lax. What has resulted from these value battles is polarization.

1.3 Monumental Conflict

Since GSENM’s designation in 1996, the polarization of different stakeholder groups in Boulder and Escalante has hindered the implementation of land-use regulations within GSENM and has influenced episodes of community dysfunction, including vandalism, harassment, illegal road blading, civil disobedience, environmental degradation, and death threats. This breakdown in community solidarity—or what Israelsen (1999b) refers as the fallout of traditional residents feeling increasingly frustrated and powerless in
the rapidly changing politics of federal land management—has left both towns of Boulder and Escalante in highly disadvantageous positions when faced with the task of planning for increased tourism and population growth. Similar conflicts are not unique to rural gateway towns of southern Utah, but are, in fact, common in rural gateway towns across the American West (Howe et al. 1997) where public land is aplenty and public land policy rapidly changing.¹

1.4 Research Question

My thesis research attempts to answer the following question: What have been the impacts of GSENM designation on Boulder and Escalante’s local culture and do alternatives or remedies to these impacts exist? In attempting to answer this question I will address the following items:

- What has kept polarized groups apart and what will it take to bring them together?
- How is the economic, environmental and social role of tourism perceived by Boulder and Escalante residents?
- How do local residents perceive change and is it possible for either town to identify a community vision for the future?

In order to answer the above questions, I will utilize cultural survival theory to assess the impacts of GSENM on the local culture. I will also examine residents’ environmental and social values, perspectives on tourism, and perceptions of change, and identify commonalities shared by polarized groups. The ultimate goal of my research is to recommend ways that polarized groups can work toward building common ground and how local residents might better integrate lifeways of the Old West and the New West. In a broad sense, my research will offer timely information for rural communities nationwide faced with similar conservation, conflict and change.

¹Between January 2000 and 2001, President Clinton designated 12 new national monuments located in the western states of Arizona (4), Oregon (2), Montana (2), New Mexico (1), Idaho (1) and California (2).
1.5 Thesis Format

Chapter 2 of my thesis looks at theories and perspectives used in this research study, including cultural survival theory, environmentalism, tourism, and growth management. Chapter 3 discusses methods used in collecting research data. Chapter 4 describes the research setting. Chapter 5 describes the people studied. Chapters 6 through 9 present research findings and analysis. More particularly, Chapter 6 takes a look specifically at GSENM designation, planning and management and discusses resulting impacts on the local culture, Chapter 7 addresses environmental values and conflict, Chapter 8 takes a look at GSENM and tourism and Chapter 9 covers perceptions of community change. Chapter 10 summarizes research findings and offers recommendations. Chapter 11, the Conclusion, analyzes the research process, suggests how my research can be applied as well as suggests possible future research, and offers a few closing words.
CHAPTER 2
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 A Distinct Designation

When President Clinton, urged by environmental groups, designated Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument (GSENM) on September 18, 1996, it was for the sake of environmental protection, but it was without a social impact assessment or local community input. Instead, Clinton turned the federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) into a national monument manager for the first time in history. In addition, Clinton gave the BLM three years to come up with a GSENM Management Plan (“Plan”) and directed the BLM to involve the public in drafting the Plan. Barber (1998:112) admits that despite the flawed process that led to GSENM’s declaration, GSENM created a unique opportunity to establish a new model for environmental management and inter-governmental coordination. This new model, according to former GSENM manager, Jerry Meredith, involved a multi-disciplinary planning approach and more interactive community involvement (Meredith 1998). Between 1996 and 1999, the BLM gave the American public, including local gateway community residents, the opportunity to voice their concerns and opinions about the management of GSENM. But how successful was the BLM’s new multi-disciplinary, integrative planning approach, and especially their innovative attempts to incorporate local input into GSENM’s final management plan?

Since the creation of GSENM in 1996, many longtime residents of gateway towns like Boulder and Escalante, Utah, have expressed a great deal of anger toward GSENM, the BLM, and the GSENM planning process. Longtime residents’ anger is a reaction to the threat GSENM poses to local cultures by limiting (and, in some cases, prohibiting) traditional practices, increasing environmental regulations, and attracting outsiders, such as tourists and newcomers.

\[1\text{National monuments have traditionally been managed by the National Park Service.}\]
2.2 Cultural Survival Theory

In the introduction to their book *Resident Peoples and National Parks*, West and Brechin (1991:12) discuss anthropological research that has led to four key prerequisites for cultural survival in the face of externally imposed change. These prerequisites include: 1) recognition of territorial rights; 2) protection from introduced diseases; 3) time to adapt; and 4) the right to self-determination. Although these four prerequisites are theoretically most relevant to isolated indigenous groups, I apply these prerequisites, and variations of them, to the local culture of Boulder and Escalante, Utah. Based on this assumption, it is crucial that the above prerequisites are met for Boulder and Escalante locals to maintain their cultural values and traditional ways of life in the face of GSENM designation. As West and Brechin (1991:xix) point out, “the preservation of representative world ecosystems, species, genetic diversity, and natural wonders is indeed a noble and important goal; but the protection of local human cultures and the opportunities for economic improvement through appropriate rural economic development... is also a critically important goal and moral imperative.”

Applying these four theoretical prerequisites to the isolated rural communities of Boulder and Escalante, Utah, raises many research questions. The territorial rights issue raises the following questions: whether longtime locals believe they have territorial rights to the federal land on which they have worked and lived for over a century; if so, how they define their territorial rights; and finally, whether or not they believe the federal government has recognized their territorial rights. In *The Rural Component of American Society*, Hassinger (1978) defines territoriality and describes the origins of American territoriality. Hassinger (1978:6) states that “territoriality represents the locus of society... territoriality also includes the properties of space, including topography and natural resources.” Hassinger (1978:17) goes on to explain that “much of the history of American society can be seen in the acquisition and settlement of a continent and the molding of the area into a nation.” In other words, rural Americans’ acquisition, settlement and “molding” of certain landscapes and the development of natural resources upon these landscapes has created powerful connections between many rural American
people and their land. Therefore, these human-territory connections need to be explored and understood.

The second prerequisite for cultural survival, "protection from introduced diseases," will be modified for purposes of this research. Because the threat of biologically introduced diseases brought by outsiders to Boulder and Escalante, Utah, is relatively minor at this point in time, my research instead takes a look at the potential threat of "ideological diseases" (i.e. foreign values, beliefs and ideas that may affect or alter existing cultural values, beliefs and ideas). Ideological diseases, as I have defined the term, may have significant effects on the ethnically and religiously homogenous cultural groups of Escalante and Boulder, Utah, which have been relatively isolated for over a century. Thus, longtime locals' perceptions of outsiders' values, beliefs and ideas, and whether these outside "diseases" threaten to infect, weaken or decimate traditional cultural values, is an area of exploration in this thesis.

In reference to the third prerequisite of cultural survival, I explore whether longtime Boulder and Escalante locals believe they have had sufficient time to adapt to GSENM and what (if anything) is considered "sufficient" adaptation time. As West and Brechin (1991:12) state, "time to adapt has been frequently ignored by planners eager to save the dwindling wildlands of the Earth." Therefore, I will investigate whether or not the overnight transformation of 1.9 million acres of BLM land into a federally protected national monument has had a significant impact on the local culture of Boulder and Escalante.

Finally, the fourth prerequisite, the right to self-determination, is an especially important aspect of cultural survival as well as a highly valued right in America. Ideally, American citizens' right to individual freedom promises free will and the right to determine one's own fate, but this is not always the case. For instance, the day after the designation of GSENM, local residents in the GSENM area held a "loss of rights" rally during which they released black balloons into the Utah sky and expressed anger at the President's proclamation and abuse of power (AP 1996). Four years after GSENM's designation, locals continue to express feelings of powerlessness and complain that their
self-determination has been squelched by a powerful, oppressive federal government (Fahys 1998; AP 1999; Israelsen 2000). In one news article, Garfield County [Escalante/Boulder] Commissioner Maloy Dodds lamented that, “The attitude...is that we have been beat down by the federal government so many times, what’s the use of getting involved [in the GSENM planning]?” (AP 1999).

All four prerequisites of this anthropological model, discussed by West and Brechin, informed the interview questions created for collecting qualitative data (see Appendix A). Research findings related to issues of territoriality, ideological diseases, adaptation, and self-determination are presented and discussed in more detail in Chapter 6 as well as throughout my thesis.

2.3 The Environmental Factor

GSENM was designated as a result of efforts made by national environmental groups. In the 1960s, the modern environmental movement emerged in America and has since had tremendous power in local, national and international policy arenas. In fact, during the last ten years there have been many works produced about the environmental movement and theories created about various cultures’ environmental values. Barry (1999: 22) states, “When we think about the environment and when we apprehend it, we do so from particular perspectives and in more or less distinct ways. One way of saying this is to say that humans (and nonhumans) have particular modes of apprehending the environment, that is distinct and different ways of seeing, feeling and thus ‘constructing’ the world (the world as it seems to them).”

Greider and Garkovich (1994:1) define human constructs of the natural environment as “landscapes”. According to Greider and Garkovich, “landscapes” are reflections of a person’s values and beliefs, or essentially, their cultural background. In other words, there is no inherent meaning in the natural environment, but rather the natural environment’s meaning is culturally-determined. Thus, individuals from different cultural backgrounds perceive the environment around them in different ways, something which oftentimes leads to conflict. Such is the case in Boulder and Escalante, Utah. For
example, whereas an urbanite might view GSEN M as a recreational mecca, an exotic piece of natural art, or an oasis for self-discovery, a Boulder rancher who grazes cattle on GSEN M might regard this same natural environment in more practical terms, such as a symbol of economic profit, or ultimately, a symbol of his or her very own survival. Greider and Garkovich call these clashing cultural definitions of the natural environment “competing landscapes” (1994:13), conflicts which are particularly common when there is an environmental change in favor of one landscape over another. Greider and Garkovich (1994:21) argue that when exploring an environmental conflict there exists a need to “explore the symbolic creation of landscape...and the values and beliefs that sustain these symbols and their meanings.”

In Boulder and Escalante, Utah, conflict has resulted from the creation of GSEN M (i.e. environmental change) and the competing landscapes of the local people and urban environmentalists. Commenting on urban environmentalists’ “construction” of the environment, Barry (1999:25) writes that the “removal from the natural environment in part [leads] to [an urbanite’s] heightened sense of the symbolic status of the natural world and a concern for its preservation.” Put another way, the less direct and daily contact urbanites have with the natural world, the more symbolically powerful the natural world becomes to them.

Milton defines environmentalists as humans who value “natural” things. Milton (1996: 124) states that to environmentalists, “Nature is seen as inherently good; natural processes and circumstances are consistently valued more highly than those that result from human activity. Nature is at its most valuable when it is untouched by human hand.” In addition to environmentalists’ value of “untouched” nature, Milton (1996:27) believes that humans are obligated to protect the environment from the harmful effects of human activities. This notion stems from environmentalists’ belief that nature is not capable of defending itself against humanity (Milton 1996:125). Milton thus defines environmentalists as those who believe that: 1) nature untouched by human hand has inherent value; and 2) it is humans’ duty to protect the “defenseless” natural environment from damaging human impacts. (I use Milton’s definition of “environmentalists” to
Because urban environmentalists' definition of the GSENM landscape has "out-competed" the local people's definition of the same landscape, environmentalism is viewed by many Boulder and Escalante locals as an "ideological disease" that threatens their local culture. As Greider and Garkovich (1994:17) state, "The particular landscape that comes to dominate and thereby influence social actions and the allocation of social resources is the one that represents the group exercising the greatest power." Boulder and Escalante locals believe that many environmental ideals are impractical and are not based in reality. In addition, they realize that environmental ideals have the power to impact traditional practices and local territoriality by enforcing greater environmental regulations and management on the land. In general, environmentalism is viewed by the locals as a powerful, and unwelcomed, agent of change. Issues relating to environmental values and conflict are presented in Chapter 7.

2.4 The Tourist Trap

In order to preserve nature's inherent values and protect the natural environment from human impacts, environmental and social advocates have developed the concept of "ecotourism" (or nature-based tourism) as a viable economic alternative to natural resource extraction. Ecotourism can be defined as responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and improves the welfare of the local people. Environmentalists who support environmental protection tend to support the potential ecological and social benefits of nature-based tourism because, as Hannigan (1995:56) states, "there must be visible economic incentives for taking action on an environmental problem." Reeder (1998:136) of the Utah Travel Division discusses this shift from the resource-based Old West to the tourism-based New West and its implications:

Since Utah was settled, in the late 19th century, the extraction of natural resources has been a principal economic activity. Today, tourism may be the single largest factor affecting the future of rural Utah. This is especially true of the areas within the Colorado Plateau, including the Grand
Staircase-Escalante National Monument...where travel and recreation-related jobs represent a large portion of total employment.

Reeder (1998:136) goes on to say that the biggest challenge facing GSENM gateway communities is maximizing income and minimizing costs without degrading visitor experience, rural community values, and the region’s fragile ecosystem. Acknowledging the need for this integration of human processes and natural systems, or “ecosystem management,” the Utah Travel Council developed a concept paper in 1994 titled “Canyons of the Escalante: A National Ecoregion” (Reeder 1998:134).

However, the goals of ecotourism—environmental protection, local economic stimulation and cultural preservation—are seldom fully realized. Within the last decade, anthropologists and sociologists have documented many case studies in which tourism (even of the ecological variety) has actually led to greater environmental and cultural degradation, local dependency, and local displacement (McLaren, 1998; Smith, 1989). In his work Singing Stone: A Natural History of the Escalante Canyons, Fleischner (1999) discusses the environmental curse that popularity can bring to wildlands. In regards to the little known Escalante region of southern Utah, Fleischner (1999:xiv) writes “since [the Escalante Canyon region] became part of the name of a national monument...the word Escalante arouses fewer puzzled looks.” Fleischner (1999) goes on to discuss the predominant activity of livestock grazing in the Escalante region that has existed for the past twelve decades and questions throughout Singing Stone whether this transition from Old West to New West is a panacea or a curse. Part of the curse is tourism’s seasonal nature, especially in high arid regions like Boulder and Escalante where hot summers are followed by cold winters.

The invasion of big business and resulting local displacement is also an impact associated with increased tourism. Deborah McLaren (1998) illustrates the negative impacts big business can have on indigenous peoples and local communities. In regards to rural American towns that become tourist corridors, McLaren (1998: 40) states:
Locally owned, mom-and-pop gas stations, restaurants, and shops have been replaced by Exxon, Denny’s and Wal-Mart. As public funds are used to finance infrastructure in rural areas, these corporations follow along, colonizing the communities along the transport routes to tour destinations. These corporations put mom and pop out of business, and ultimately locals become service employees rather than business owners.

Corporate chains and franchises are not the only threat to local business owners. Highly skilled and well-educated entrepreneurs migrating from urban areas can also out-compete local business owners and replace rural residents in higher paying managerial positions. Drawn by the untapped opportunity and unmatched “quality of life” in small towns, urban business people often relocate to rural communities and bring with them their money, education, business experience and professional skills. This in-migration of wealthy urbanites also tends to raise property values and property taxes in rural communities, which can eventually force local residents off of their land (McLaren 1998). Smith (1989:16) also discusses local displacement and warns, “One of the significant trends in tourism currently...is the effort to disperse tourism into the...small towns, to better distribute its economic benefits. In this regard, it is imperative that cultural assessments be undertaken to identify potential tourist use and to develop marketing plans that will maximize the benefits of tourism without sociocultural impacts.”

Similar to environmentalism, tourism is also viewed by many longtime Boulder and Escalante locals as a threat to their local culture. Tourism infringes on local territoriality, encourages the infiltration of outside ideas (via urban tourists and newcomers) and stimulates awareness of the area which can lead to increased in-migration (population growth) and local displacement. An examination of the real and perceived impacts of tourism in Boulder and Escalante is presented in Chapter 8.

2.5 Preparing for the Worst

When faced with increased tourism and newcomer in-migration, proper city planning in rural gateway communities is essential. In the mid-1990s, the Conservation Fund and the Sonoran Institute performed case-studies of 17 American gateway
communities bordering America’s national and state parks, wildlife refuges, forests, historic sites, wilderness areas, and other undeveloped public lands. The Institute’s research included personal interviews with gateway community residents and extensive surveys of land-use and economic patterns within these communities (Howe et al. 1997). At the conclusion of their research, it was found that many gateway communities are overwhelmed by rapid growth that fails to meet local needs and aspirations (Howe et al. 1997: 6). In addition, results showed that most gateway community residents felt a strong attachment to the landscape and character of their town, but that residents generally lacked the information about development options available to them (Howe et al. 1997: 7). It seems reasonable, then, to suggest that the gateway communities of Escalante and Boulder, Utah, would benefit from identifying “local needs and aspirations” to inform future decision-making and city planning. Therefore, in Chapter 9, I attempt to identify community values, needs and aspirations to better inform Boulder and Escalante residents, city planners and local decision-makers.

Blattenberger and Kiefer (1998:71) sum up well the issues facing GSEN M gateway communities:

Planning can help to reconcile the conflicts that will develop between established residents and newcomers who come to work or to marvel at the landscape. Moreover, serious efforts must be made to find ways of compensating the ‘losers’ that are financed by the ‘winners’. And similar efforts are required to find ways of preserving the land-based western lifestyle along with the natural treasure of the countryside.

Along the same line, Smith (1989:273) argues, “Things can be done by anthropologists to help people consolidate their goals and find means to certain ends...anthropologists can isolate major economic, social, and political inequalities that may be brought about by the development and promotion of tourism and...suggest logical alternatives to tourism as a means of economic development.”

Recommendations in regards to community growth issues derived from my research findings are explored and discussed in Chapter 10.
2.6 Defining a Framework

I utilize this theoretical background to create a framework within which I examine the current status of the isolated rural communities of Boulder and Escalante, Utah, post-GSENM. In order to complete this retroactive sociocultural impact assessment, I have consolidated aspects of cultural survival theory, as discussed by West and Brechin, as well as perspectives related to environmentalism, ecotourism, and growth management. In addition to identifying impacts caused by GSENM on the local culture, my research explores Boulder and Escalante residents' social and environmental values, perspectives on tourism, and perceptions of change in order to better understand causes of polarization and to identify community values, needs and aspirations in the face of externally imposed change. Finally, using my research findings, I attempt to recommend ways in which polarized groups can find common ground and ways in which residents can seek interactive and innovative community solutions as the Old West and the New West collide.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

In exploring the existing values, perspectives and perceptions of various communities of interest in Boulder and Escalante, Utah, including but not limited to environmentalists, ranchers, business owners, federal land managers, newcomers and longtime residents, I used the triangulation of various data collection methods to compensate for any weakness of one single method. Methods used included background research, the specific selection of research time, participant observation, document review, sampling, semi-structured, open-ended qualitative interviews, and recent survey results.

3.1 Background Research

First, I believe it is important to point out that I am a “native” Utahn of Mormon pioneer stock. Second, between 1992 and 1994 I spent 13 months living and working in the rural southern Utah town of Moab, which is a gateway community to both Arches National Park and Canyonlands National Park. Moab, like Boulder and Escalante, Utah, is located on the geological region known as the Colorado Plateau, thus sharing a similar geography, climate and local culture with Boulder and Escalante. Moab was once a natural resource-based community (mining) that now caters to nature-based tourism. While living and working in Moab, I familiarized myself with the local people, economy and environment of rural southern Utah.

During the two years prior to my field research, I conducted a literature review in order to familiarize myself with current GSENM issues, related topics and pre-existing research, if any. This literature review included news articles, magazine articles, journal articles, informational websites, books, brochures, and pamphlets written about GSENM and the GSENM controversy, which prepared me to ask relevant questions and gave me a basic understanding of topics that informants brought up often.

Four months prior to my field research, I made contact with a few Boulder and Escalante residents as well as with GSENM management (BLM) in order to gain their
firsthand experience with, and knowledge of, the issues to be addressed in my research and to inquire whether similar research had previously been conducted. Based on the feedback regarding to my proposed research and the firsthand accounts I received about local issues, I scheduled my field research to take place in Boulder and Escalante during both towns’ tourist season (see Chapter 3.2.).

Before departing to Escalante (where I had established lodging for the entirety of my field research), I spent one week in Salt Lake City, Utah, concluding research preparations. In addition to purchasing supplies, solidifying lodging plans, and mailing out letters to all key informants, I scheduled a meeting with a professional mining engineer/government liaison who had spent a significant amount of time in rural southern Utah towns delivering talks about coal and oil exploration. This particular mining engineer had recently spent time in Escalante and was extremely well-versed in the GSENM controversy from the time of GSENM designation in 1996 until present. During my meeting with the mining engineer I was offered a unique perspective of Escalante’s local culture and the historical events’ that have influenced current conflicts. The mining engineer also gave me a stack of related reading materials that offered me a more “extractive” perspective to consider before leaving for southern Utah.

3.2 Research Period

Because my research deals not only with impacts related to GSENM, but also residents’ perspectives on tourism, I specifically planned my field research to coincide with Boulder and Escalante’s tourist season. Due to climatic conditions, Boulder and Escalante, Utah, experience the greatest influx of tourists between the months of March and October. According to records kept by Escalante’s Bureau of Land Management/Forest Service Inter-Agency Office, over the past five years Escalante has experienced the greatest number of tourists during the months of May/June and September/October (Roundy 2000: 341). Field research was therefore scheduled during the month of September to correspond with the second highest tourism month so as to best observe interactions between residents and tourists.
3.3 In The Field

Upon my arrival in Escalante, I spent the first 48 hours engaged in participant observation and familiarizing myself with each town and its surrounding landscape. Time was spent walking around town, informally interviewing people, eating in local restaurants, shopping at local grocery stores, reading bulletin boards, viewing historic sites, exploring dirt roads, photographing the landscape and unique physical structures, exploring the section of GSENM along Scenic Biway 12 between Boulder and Escalante, mapping Main St. with a complete listing of local businesses and locations, eavesdropping on conversations among residents and tourists and observing both the exterior and interior design of businesses and civic centers. A notebook and pen stayed with me at all times for taking fieldnotes. Fieldnotes were either written up in my notebook or typed on a laptop computer before and after each interview and at the beginning and end of each day in the field.

In addition to participant observation, I conducted a document review in the field. This included reading the local newspaper, The Garfield County News, examining maps (town maps, tour maps and maps of the geographic region), and purchasing books by local authors containing unique oral histories and graphs showing socioeconomic trends over time.

3.4 Informant Sample

Over the course of my research, I conducted semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with 17 informants varying in age, gender, occupation, and time in residency. Key informants were selected from a variety of newspaper articles, related websites and word of mouth and were specifically chosen based on their community roles, diverse backgrounds and age and gender differences. Key informants consisted of local business owners, environmentalists, ranchers, public land managers, newcomers and longtime residents. Addresses for key informants were located using the internet and letters were mailed to all key informants approximately ten days prior to the onset of field research.
(see Appendix B). A list of backup informants was also created using newspaper articles, related websites and word of mouth.

Upon arrival in Escalante telephone contact was made and interviews scheduled with 11 key informants. All other informants (6) were selected using the snowball method and were contacted by telephone during my time in Escalante. All interviews were held at the homes, businesses or some other mutually agreed-upon location. Of the final 17 informants, 14 lived in the town of Escalante and three lived in the town of Boulder. Of this sample, 11 informants were men and six were women. Informant age ranged from 19 to 92 years. Occupations of informants included local business owners (5), ranchers (2), city officials (3), sawmill workers (2), BLM employee (1), retiree (1) and other (3). Years in residence varied with 11 informants having arrived in town within the last 10 years, two informants living in town for 11-30 years, and the remaining four informants living in town for 31+ years. The variety of informants offered diverse values, perspectives and perceptions to this research.

3.5 Interviews

With the help of background research I developed three sets of interview questions (see Appendix A), each with specific informant types in mind, including local ranchers, public land managers, and local residents. The purpose for three sets of questions was to elicit specific responses from those groups with a particular expertise, such as ranchers and BLM employees.

Interview questions were broken down into five categories and were labeled "cultural survival," "environmental values," "social values," "perspectives on tourism" and "perceptions of change." "Cultural survival" questions examined the processes and impacts of GSENM designation, management and planning on longtime local residents and local ranchers. Questions also explored issues of territoriality, impacts of outsiders, adaptation time and self-determination based on the four prerequisites of cultural survival discussed by West and Brechin (1991).
“Environmental values” and “social values” attempted to identify what informants’ value most about the living landscape that surrounds them, opinions about the environmental movement and ranching (including perceived characteristics associated with environmentalists and ranchers), as well as to explore social networks in each town, what is valued most about fellow residents and what each town offers them that an urban center could not.

“Perspectives on tourism” questions were designed to better understand what informants think about tourism in their town (and tourism in general), whether they believe tourism will one day completely replace more traditional occupations, how much they think tourism has contributed to their town’s economy, what role, if any, GSENMM has played in attracting more tourism, and their perspectives on some of the benefits and drawbacks of tourism.

Finally, “perceptions of change” involved the most general questions relating to the future of informants’ town such as their perception of change, how they see their town changing, how they would like to see their town change, what they would not like to see change, their perception of the American West in the 21st century and how they feel about the future of the American West.

All interviews took place face-to-face and all but one were tape-recorded. Interviews lasted anywhere from one to three hours in length. Before commencing interviews, informants were handed two Informed Consent documents (one to sign and one to keep) giving them a description of my research project and assuring them of anonymity and confidentiality (see Appendix C). Informants were asked to read, sign and return one Informed Consent document before initiating each interview. In addition, I created and filled out a Documentation Sheet (Flick 1998:173-174) for each informant on which demographic information was listed and kept separate for my personal use (see Appendix D). At the time of interview, each informant was assigned an identification number (#00121-00221), which was used in lieu of personal names on all tapes and transcripts for my personal convenience during thematic coding and thesis writing. In
addition, any identifiable data (e.g. personal names, places, occupations, specific experiences, etc.) were omitted from transcripts to protect informants' identities.

My interviews allowed me to get a more intimate look at the people and lives of Boulder and Escalante residents. For instance, during my interviews, one Escalante informant took me hiking in the cliffs west of Escalante; I spent an evening chatting with a local rancher in his front room surrounded by pipe smoke, western decor and Range magazines; I was invited to lunch at another informant’s house, sharing in a fresh salad, white wine and great conversation; and the list goes on and on. In general, I was able to experience Boulder and Escalante and its people firsthand, including the utter remoteness and beauty of canyon country when the full moon rises in the east and the gripping, shocking silence falls over town like a cloak, interrupted only by the howling of coyotes.

Background research of the local people also informed me of local attitudes, which influenced my dress and manner while in town conducting interviews. For instance, realizing that environmentalists are not highly regarded (and sometimes outright hated) in Boulder and Escalante, I felt it was not wise for me to show up at a local resident’s house wearing Birkenstocks or other fashions that tend to be associated with environmentalism. Thus, I left my Birkenstocks and tie-dyed t-shirts at home and opted for more conservative sandals and blouses. Also, understanding that family and church are very important to the local people, especially the Mormon residents, I made sure to ask about informants’ families, where their children or grandchildren served [LDS] missions, how they liked their [LDS] ward or church, etc. I found this to be an excellent way of gaining acceptance as an outsider, particularly by the longtime locals, some of whom were initially suspicious of me and my motives. In other words, showing an understanding and respect for the local culture served me well.

I transcribed all tape-recorded interviews both during and after field research and all interview transcripts were coded for themes using grounded theory (Bernard 2000:443). This involved identifying emerging categories and concepts in the transcript text and examining how emerging themes were linked together in order to produce
appropriate recommendations. Research findings are presented in Chapters 4-9 and recommendations are presented in Chapter 10.

3.6 Survey

In 1996, southern Utah’s Five County Association of Governments (FCAG) distributed to the towns of Boulder and Escalante, Utah, an “Attitudinal Survey” seeking responses related to community growth. Of the 60 closed-ended, quantitative surveys mailed to Boulder residents, 22 (35%) were returned and of the 353 surveys mailed to Escalante residents, 117 (33%) were returned. Throughout my thesis I have used FCAG’s quantitative survey data to compliment my qualitative data where appropriate. FCAG published its survey results in an October 15, 1999, report that was submitted to Utah’s Quality Growth Commission.
CHAPTER 4
TERRITORY

For over 100 years the rural towns of Boulder and Escalante have been isolated ranching and farming communities. Agriculture in the southern Utah desert has always been relatively difficult due to the arid climate, rocky terrain, and general remoteness from services and supplies. The first Anglo-American settlers of Boulder and Escalante took great pains to establish communities and “scratch a living” from the desert floor. As Stegner (1942:91) points out about the Mormon pioneers who settled the Boulder and Escalante area, “they could colonize and make a living out of ground that an ordinary frontier farmer would have scorned to camp for the night on.” Today, farmers and ranchers in Boulder and Escalante are still reminded of the limitations and nuances of their geographical location. Due to long years spent learning about and persisting on such formidable territory, many longtime Boulder and Escalante residents have a special connection to their land and exhibit a sense of territorial ownership. It is this sense of place that makes it difficult for many longtime locals to “share” their territory—most of which is public land—with outsiders.

4.1 “The Last Frontier”

I chose the rural Utah towns of Boulder and Escalante (see Figure 1.2) as target communities of my research for several reasons. First, both towns, due to their sheer ruggedness and remoteness, are considered two of the last places in the continental United States to be explored, settled, mapped and “connected” to the outside world with modern conveniences such as electricity, telephones and roads (May 1998:43). As Roundy (2000:12) explains, “The last river to be discovered and named in the Continental United States was the Escalante River. The last place in the United States to carry U.S. Mail on mules and horses [until 1940] was the mail carried between Escalante and Boulder, Utah. Indeed, [this area included] some of the last places in the United States to be explored and
mapped.” In fact, the first year-round, all-weather dirt road (now Scenic Biway 12) connecting Boulder and Escalante was not completed until June, 1940, and was not paved until the 1970s. Escalante did not have a paved highway until the 1950s and Scenic Biway 12, leading out of Boulder to the north, was not paved until the 1980s. Both towns’ remoteness was also brought up in interviews by informants who referred to their town as “the far corner of the earth,” “never-never land,” and “the last frontier.”

Second, Boulder and Escalante share a similar heritage. Both towns were settled in the late 1800s by Mormon pioneers and got their start as ranching and farming communities. Over the past 100 years, members of both towns have participated and continue to participate in many traditional activities together.

Third, Boulder and Escalante are separated and surrounded by Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument [GSENM], making them gateway communities to the new monument. When traveling between Boulder and Escalante one enters and exits GSENM one time. In addition, both towns are located halfway between and in the “shadows” of Bryce Canyon National Park (to the west) and Capitol Reef National Park (to the northeast—see Figure 1.2), causing them to experience similar “drive through” tourism rather than “destination tourism.”

Finally, Boulder and Escalante both draw urban tourists and newcomers who enjoy the limited number of people, abundance of wilderness, and rugged wildness of the land. In fact, many urban individuals (that I know personally) have expressed a budding interest in the towns of Boulder and Escalante as other recreation hot spots like Park City, Utah, and Moab, Utah, suffer increased population, traffic and pollution. When asked, many townspeople of Escalante and Boulder, Utah, described their surrounding landscape as “color country” or “rainbow country” due to the canyons, cliffs and pinnacles colored in brown, purple, red, pink, yellow, grey and white. It is this unique beauty that may be considered either Boulder and Escalante’s saving grace, or greatest threat, depending on one’s perspective. This is a fact that residents of both towns live with every day.
4.2 Boulder, Utah - Settlement

In 1872, nine men in the Almon H. Thompson exploration party, a group commissioned by American explorer Major John Wesley Powell, traveled through the Boulder region and became the first to place the names of Boulder Mountain and Boulder Creek on the map. Seventeen years later, in 1889, Amasa and Roseannah Reynolds Lyman established the first homestead in Boulder, Utah (Roundy 2000: 136). The Lymans came to Boulder from a small town to the north, called Bicknell, and were later joined by additional settlers that filtered in from small towns to the north. Early Boulder settlers faced similar hardships of building homes, clearing ground, and getting water onto their property.

Some have argued that Boulder was the last town in the United States to have automobile access when the Escalante River was finally bridged in 1935. According to Utah historian Dean May (1998: 43), electric power did not reach Boulder until 1948. Boulder was established as, and remains today, a ranching community due to its proximity to summer range (Boulder Mountain) and winter range (GSENM desert), and the many nearby canyons that create natural holding pens for cattle.

4.3 Boulder, Utah - Today

Boulder, Utah, population 186¹, is located at an elevation of 6,000 ft. above sea level in south central Utah. It is bordered to the north by 11,133 ft. Boulder Mountain, which is covered in the beautiful ponderosa pines, clear streams and lakes of the Dixie National Forest. Scenic Biway 12, a circuitous and steep two lane highway, acts as Boulder's only paved access in and out of town. Traveling north on Scenic Biway 12 from Boulder, the highway climbs 3,200 ft. in about 16 miles until it reaches it's summit, at which point the highway drops sharply and winds its way another 16 miles or so down towards the small town of Grover, Utah. Scenic Biway 12 could potentially spell disaster to those possessing sensitive stomachs and I would imagine that making the journey over

¹This number based on FCAG's 2000 projections (http://www.qget.state.ut.us/Projections/Demographic/Scripts/CityProi.asp)
Boulder Mountain in the winter might best be described as “treacherous.” On a warm and sunny day in September it took me an hour driving time, in a passenger car, to make the 32 miles from Grover, Utah, up over Boulder Mountain, and south down into the town of Boulder, Utah.

Despite its challenges, Scenic Biway 12 is just that—intensely scenic. Approaching the summit of Boulder Mountain, breath-taking and ever-changing views of the vast Colorado Plateau stretch out eastward. Turn-out areas are offered on the road’s shoulder for gawking passers-by, photographers, and the occasional overheated vehicle. As one Escalante newcomer put it, “Can you imagine driving [Scenic Biway 12] every single day of your life? I’d never get bored with it. I mean and you’re only seeing the touristy stuff, you’re not seeing down, backwards, the best. How can you not like this area?”

Open cattle range also exists along this stretch of highway, forcing awe-struck drivers to turn their eyes away from the spectacular view and back onto the road. Diamond-shaped yellow signs sporting black cow silhouettes dot the sides of Scenic Biway 12 when approaching Boulder from the north and cows lingering on the side of the road become more frequent as one closes in on town.

As Scenic Biway 12 drops down into the town of Boulder, the grandness of Boulder Mountain is experienced to the west. Despite it’s impressive 11,133 foot elevation, Boulder Mountain is not of the Mt. Hood or Grand Teton variety. Instead, it is a seventy-six square mile plateau that creates a wide, sprawling, domed presence to the northwest of Boulder. Boulder Mountain is a geographic entity that frequently came up in conversations with Boulder residents. The Mountain not only offers an excellent summer range for local ranchers, but it also fosters a wide array of fauna and flora:

I go up on the [Boulder] Mountain here and any more I can sit on a point and gaze for 15 days walkin’ and just...just enjoy it [Local, Boulder].

I was running, two weekends ago, on Boulder Mountain. I stirred up elk, deer, a bear, wild turkeys...[Newcomer, Escalante].
I can go up on the [Boulder] Mountain and park at one of the scenic lookout at night and I can look out over all of this country and I can’t see a light. I know there are some people that live out there someplace, but there’s not many places in this country you can do that. We can sit and just listen to the silence. It’s really nice [Newcomer, Boulder].

Boulder might be described as a “blink-and-miss-it” town, the center of which takes up the space of only a few blocks. Entering from the north of town, there is a sprinkling of ranches, log-style homes, old wooden barns, cottonwood trees and distant trailers. As Scenic Biway 12 sweeps through the center of town, there are a couple of shops, such as an eatery and gift shop, on the west side. The exterior of these small businesses are “Old West” style, resembling a Hollywood backdrop in a James Dean movie or a scene from Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. On the east side of Scenic Biway 12 are a series of similar “western eclectic” buildings which are part of the Boulder Mountain Lodge. The Boulder Mountain Lodge is a resort that provides upscale lodging and dining to those seeking the remoteness and beauty of GSENM. There is also a tiny post office, a cafe, a gas station, and a convenience store with attached office space and separate “Men’s” and “Women’s” bathrooms resembling outhouses. All of these buildings are designed in the “Old West” style and blend together nicely. In fact, when driving through Boulder there is no indication of a corporate chain business. Once past the tiny cluster of Boulder businesses, Scenic Biway 12 continues past a few more distant scattered homes and a couple of ranches before entering into GSENM approximately one mile south of town and marked with a large, colorful sign.

When Boulder is entered from the other direction (south) on Scenic Biway 12, it resembles a more compact town, nestled amongst strikingly white mesas (see Figure 4.1). It is almost as if the white rocks are large palms, cupping Boulder, or holding Boulder up towards the sky. In fact, one of the most distinct geographic features of Boulder are the white sandstone rock formations that jut up out of the ground like petrified breasts, scaly and cracked, surrounded at their bases by intermittent pine, juniper, cottonwood and sagebrush. These white rocks rise in stark contrast to the green agricultural land connecting them and the deep blue sky bearing down on them, creating a surreal image.
Figure 4.1  Photos of Boulder, Utah

Source: Photos by Jennifer Jensen Leaver

a) Photo Taken From Scenic Biway 12, Facing North Toward Town of Boulder

b) Close-up of White Sandstone Mesa in Boulder, Utah
4.4 Escalante, Utah - Settlement

Formerly known as “Potato Valley,” Escalante was settled in 1875 by Mormons from neighboring towns to the west who were looking for a milder climate and closer proximity to winter and summer range for grazing cattle and sheep. They found what they were looking for in Escalante where the average temperature is about 48 degrees (rarely does the heat soar above 100° F or drop below 0° F) and where the nearby Aquarius Plateau (Boulder Mountain) drops from 11,000 feet to 3,000 feet creating ideal year-round grazing conditions.

Although Native American groups, including the Fremont, Anasazi, Navajo, Ute and, most particularly, Southern Paiute, bands, occupied the GSENM area on and off since the 1300s (May 1998:44), when Mormon settlers arrived in Potato Valley in the 19th century, no permanent Native American settlements existed there. It is believed that the “limited game, inaccessible rivers and difficult terrain” of the GSENM area prevented regular Native American habitation (May 1998:49). May (1998:44) believes that “the relatively sparse reference to historic Indians by settlers of the GSENM towns suggest that these people [Native Americans] found the landscape formidable.”

In 1872, a Major John Wesley Powell exploration party led by Almon H. Thompson discovered an undocumented river which flowed through Potato Valley to the mighty Colorado River. Thompson named this river the “Escalante River” after Spanish explorer and priest, Silvestre Velez de Escalante. Father Escalante had led an exploration party through the Colorado Plateau region nearly a hundred years earlier and had documented all of the great tributaries of the Colorado River except for the Escalante River (Roundy 2000:14). Therefore, Thompson’s party named the undocumented river after him. In 1875, when the first Mormon settlers arrived in Potato Valley from Panguitch and Beaver, Utah, they ran into Almon H. Thompson’s second exploration party. At that time, Thompson advised the Mormon settlers to name their new town “Escalante” after the river and the valley, not directly after Father Escalante the explorer and priest (Roundy 2000:72). By 1880, 623 people lived in Escalante (Keiter 1998:45).
4.5 Escalante, Utah - Today

Heading south out of Boulder on the way to Escalante, Scenic Biway 12 passes through about 20 miles of rugged GSENM territory. Due to GSENM’s deep-cut sandstone ledges, it once took the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) a great deal of blasting powder, time and precision to complete (1940) this section of highway between Boulder and Escalante. Today this impressive stretch of road, which narrowly and steeply drops and rises through various sunset-colored sandstone formations, is known as the “million dollar highway” or the “million dollar road to Boulder” (Roundy 2000:203).

From Boulder, Scenic Biway 12 climbs in elevation and winds its way to the top of GSENM’s Escalante Canyons area, offering spectacular views of “bubbling” slickrock formations and steep canyon walls that seem to drop off into nowhere. The highway crosses the Hogsback—a narrow ridge with steep cliffs on either side—and dives down toward the lush and verdant riverbanks of the Escalante—a virtual oasis in the desert. From the Escalante River, the highway begins another steep and winding ascent until it plateaus out on top of GSENM canyon country and heads west toward Escalante, leaving behind the colorful slickrock canyons for more subdued tones of earth and topography.

Entering Escalante from the east on Scenic Biway 12 is a gradual experience. First there is the occasional sign or billboard on the side of the road. Then, to the sides of the road appear scattered trailers and livestock grazing off in the distance. Next, a few more signs and billboards. Then one encounters custom homes being built on the outskirts of town, a chain gas station/food mart, the local high school, some empty fields, and an elementary school. Eventually Scenic Biway 12 becomes Escalante’s Main Street, bordered on either side by decaying barns, residential homes, and local businesses.

The first thing that comes to mind when describing Escalante, population 937 (Roundy 2000:335), is an overwhelming sense of history. The town of Escalante is located in a wide, open valley surrounded by beige-colored mesas dotted with sagebrush, rocky terra cotta-stained ledges, gnarly white sandstone formations, and deep-cut canyons. The interesting geography surrounding Escalante is made more complex by the interesting human structures that still exist in the valley (see Figure 4.2).
Figure 4.2  Photos of Historic Structures in Escalante, Utah

Source: Photos by Jennifer Jensen Leaver

a) Historic Barns in Escalante, Utah

b) Historic Homes in Escalante, Utah

c) Historic Building in Escalante, Utah
The town of Escalante is laid out in traditional Mormon settlement fashion. Jerry C. Roundy (2000:86-87) describes this tradition as follows:

The streets were six rods wide and each block was twenty-eight rods square, or five acres. Each block was then cut into four equal lots of one and one-fourth acres. This gave ample space for a house, garden spot, orchard and some corrals and outbuildings. Lot assignments were made by the head of each household drawing a piece of paper from a hat with the lot assignment written on it.

Remnants of these “Mormon Acres” are still prevalent in town. These square properties sometimes contain an older house, a garden, fruit trees, animals, backhouses (used for laundry cooking and storage) and decaying, but still functional, corrals and outbuildings. Many of these lots sit empty where once stood a home or building and are kept empty due to what more than one informant explained to me as a way of preserving a connection to the past. For example, one informant told me that some of the empty lots symbolize an original settler, a family member, or an active community member’s old home site. In fact, present locations are often explained in terms of their past:

People don’t even have numbers on the buildings in this town. If you ask them where they live they will say 200 North and 700 East, or whatever, but there are no numbers. What it is is the history. The people here have a history, so it’s the _____’s place or the ____’s place or it is the so-and-so house. And that name actually probably goes back for generations. It isn’t the most recent owner, it is the name that the community has associated with it over time. It’s more than just ‘my house’, it’s the ‘owners for generations’ [Newcomer, Escalante].

Historic buildings, in addition to historic homes, are prevalent on the streets of Escalante. For instance, the present Daughters of the Utah Pioneers building is located in the first Escalante high school building (built in 1878) and the present Senior Citizens Center is now located in the former LDS North Ward Chapel (built in 1932). Although some historic buildings are in use today, many contain boarded windows, dilapidated
facades, and caving roofs, making better homes for birds and vermin than human inhabitants. Despite these historic buildings' inhospitality, however, they continue to stand as important symbolic connections to the past for the people of Escalante.

Escalante's Main Street, which is actually Scenic Biway 12 as it sweeps through town, is about one mile in length and is bordered on either side by gas stations, grocery stores, antique stores, restaurants, motels, small retail businesses, office space, a bank, a post office, private residences and open fields. While I was conducting field research (September 2000) I noted that a surprisingly small number of cars, trucks and RVs fill Main Street during the day, including weekends, and at night cars on the road are close to non-existent. The vehicles that do pass along Main Street are usually—but not always—one of two varieties: 1) rental cars, jeeps, motor cycles, recreation vehicles (RVs) and/or campers containing domestic and foreign tourists; or 2) large 4 x 4 trucks, sometimes with two or three large dogs running around freely in the truck bed, which are driven by the local ranchers, farmers and townspeople. On the side streets and in the residential areas it is also common to see children or adults heading off into the distance on ATVs (All Terrain Vehicles, or "four wheelers") and on horseback.

4.5 Contrasting Features

A recent (1999) survey conducted by Utah's Five County Association of Governments (FCAG) compares the sources of family income for Utah's Garfield County, including a breakdown of family income sources for Boulder and Escalante, Utah. These numbers highlight the differences between Boulder and Escalante's current economies. Utah state projections and FCAG's (1999:10) recent survey describe sources of income for each town, which I have used to create a chart (see Figure 4.3).

As this chart indicates, ranching/agricultural interests, private service and "other" businesses, and state government agencies (Anasazi State Park) play a larger role in Boulder's economy than in Escalante's economy. In contrast, logging (Escalante Forest Products Lumber Mill), ranching, and agriculture businesses, private retail businesses, and local and federal government agencies (BLM) have a greater presence in Escalante than in
Figure 4.3  **Sources of Family Income for Boulder and Escalante, Utah**

Source: Five County Association of Governments' Quality Growth Act Report (1999:10)

Boulder. Families of both towns receive a similar percentage of income from private businesses, retirement (government or private income) and all "other" sources.

Differences between the two towns also came up in discussions with residents from both Boulder and Escalante. I was told by informants that Boulder is considered more of a resort town than Escalante and is more diverse due to the ratio of its relatively small population and greater number of newcomers. Boulder newcomers were described by local residents as wealthy urbanites seeking a remote and beautiful site for their vacation home. Escalante seemed to have, according to its residents, a larger local working class population with greater increases (compared to Boulder) of entrepreneurs, artists, and retirees. The differences and similarities between the two towns are discussed throughout Chapter 9.
CHAPTER 5
LOCAL CULTURE

Utah historian Dean May (1998:49) describes the people of the GSENM area as "a tough, hardy breed, people of grit and with character as solid and sometimes as eccentric as the rocks that surround them." May is pretty accurate in his description, especially in regards to longtime local residents whom I found to be very independent and interesting people. Boulder and Escalante's unique territory reflects an equally unique local culture. As one Escalante newcomer put it, "I look at Escalante like a lot of anthropologists look at a tribe in Tibet." The same can be said for Boulder. A large percent of longtime Boulder and Escalante residents share a similar heritage as well as common cultural values, religious beliefs, traditional practices and political orientation. Therefore, outsiders who possess beliefs, ideas and values contrary to those held by the local majority are viewed by many Boulder and Escalante locals as threats to the local culture. On the other hand, outsiders who assimilate into, show respect for, and suffer hardships along with the local culture are more readily accepted into the community by the local people.

5.1 Demographics

Both towns are largely Anglo-American (>98%) with a small percent (<2%) of Hispanic, Native American and Asian residents (http://quickfacts.census.gov/cgi-bin/county?cnty=49017). Many Boulder and Escalante residents are descendants of the first Anglo-American settlers, but the mix is growing to include newcomers with no genetic or cultural link to the area's first people. A recent survey indicates that there are presently seven Native American families living in the town of Escalante, some of whom can trace their ancestry back to the Native Americans that traveled up across the Colorado River in the first half of the 20th century to trade their wares with Escalante citizens (Roundy 2000:336). Boulder and Escalante residents' ages are evenly distributed with a slightly greater percentage of men than women (Roundy 2000:335). According to census information (http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/gazetteer?city=Escalante/Boulder
&state=UT&zip=) for Garfield County, Utah, which includes Boulder and Escalante, 42% of residents have a high school education (slightly higher than the state average) and 8% have a college education (slightly lower than the state average). An impressive 82% of Garfield County's population own homes (compared to 68% in Utah state) of which 44% are single family homes (compared to the state's 19%). However, annual income for Garfield County residents is lower than the state average ($30,149 compared to $38,884) and 14% of residents live below the poverty level, compared to the state's slightly lower 10%.

5.2 The Laws of Being “Local”

After a few days in the Boulder/Escalante region, I noted one word that was used repeatedly: “local.” It was soon apparent that to be considered a “local” in either town goes beyond the definition of “local” in other American towns and cities. For a Boulder or Escalante resident to be considered a “local,” he or she must meet a few prerequisites. These prerequisites include kinship ties and a deep loyalty to the community, which means lifelong contributions to, support of, and participation in traditional community life.

Length of residence in either town, or affinal relationships with Boulder and Escalante locals, does not hold the same significance as consanguineal ties, or blood ties, to Boulder and Escalante locals. In fact, the definition of “local” in Boulder and Escalante is so particular that I have divided all Boulder and Escalante informants into “locals” and “newcomers” (i.e. “non-locals”) for analysis purposes and simplification.

Kinship ties are of utmost importance in distinguishing Boulder or Escalante locals and are communicated in the form of surnames. Surnames, or what Americans refer to as “last names,” generally have to match those of the original pioneers and settlers of the area, or of those folks who arrived in town soon after the first settlers, or of those folks who made a significant community contribution. A survey conducted in 1923 showed that 60% of Escalante shared only 11 surnames (Fleischner 1999:96). In Escalante today, 40% of Anglo-American residents can trace their ancestry back to the original pioneers and settlers (Roundy, 2000:337). Being able to trace one’s roots to the original pioneers and
settlers is the source of particular local pride and is something that helps distinguish the “locals” from the “newcomers.”

I’m a fifth-generation rancher here. And not right here, but in Garfield County. My mother is from here and her dad is from here and so I’ve got the fourth generation right here in Boulder on my mother’s side. The original settlers. I’ve got the homestead that they homesteaded, where I developed my home [Local, Boulder].

Four years is a newcomer, ten years is a newcomer. I don’t have family that was born and raised here and was pioneer stock, so I will always be a newcomer [Newcomer, Escalante].

In both towns the local surnames of Alvey, Griffin, LeFevre, Lyman, Munson, Porter, Roundy, Shurtz, Spencer, and Woolsey were omnipresent. According to a couple of informants, many of the families possessing the above surnames share a unique bond. As one Escalante newcomer put it, “If I ever did something [bad] to someone with one of the big last names around here, I’d be in trouble. They all band together and look out for each other. So if you hurt one of them, they’ll all turn on you.” Another Escalante newcomer discussed the trouble he had when running for City Council because he did not have one of the local surnames: “I’m not a Griffin, Spencer, or a Woolsey. I’m a ______. And that’s totally unrecognizable, you know.”

There were even stories of individuals who completely fit in with or married the bonafide locals and who have lived and worked in town for several decades, but who are still not considered to be “local”.

[A longtime Escalante resident] said one time that her husband brought her here in the middle of the night so she couldn’t figure out how to leave. [Laughs.] She was just from a little over a hundred miles away from here. And still, after all those years, I’m sure she became much more a part of the community because she was Mormon and she was married into a family from here, but even spouses are suspect compared to the original born-in-town members. The biases against people that are from the outside are just more than we can conceive [Newcomer, Escalante].

You get the old ranchers that have been here for a lifetime. And the there’s a guy here in town that’s a rancher, fits in with everybody, but he’s only been here for 30 years and they say he’s a newcomer! [Newcomer, Esc.].
Being born, growing up, living, working, and raising a family in the community are other important aspects of being "local." For instance, one informant told a story about an Escalante man—the star of the Escalante High School basketball team—who left town after high school to fight in World War II. This informant told me that when he returned to Escalante after the war, no one in town would sell him property because he had left. Other informants implied that this is not always the case and that there are many locals who have left town to attend college or find a job in the city and were well-received by locals upon their return to the community. Perhaps part of the reason that some "returnees" have not been accepted back into the community after leaving has to do with locals' fear that these returnees might use their new "worldly" knowledge to institute community change. As one informant pointed out:

You’ve got three types of people in town. You’ve got people who were born and raised here and have never lived anywhere else; you’ve got the ones that were born here, moved away and came back; and then there’s the move-ins....The ones that have sort of a more neutral view on things are the ones that were born here, moved away for a number of years, and then came back, because they understand what’s out there and what’s here. They can see the whole picture [Newcomer, Escalante].

5.3 Insiders vs. Outsiders

In addition to the concept of “local,” the concept of "outsider" and the “us vs. them” distinction surfaced and resurfaced in my interviews with Boulder and Escalante residents. The “us vs. them” distinction made by locals can be viewed on four levels: 1) locals vs. non-locals; 2) Utahns vs. non-Utahns; 3) westerners vs. easterners; and 4) ruralites vs. urbanites.

Comments were often made by locals about "outsiders" or "newcomers." Newcomer residents agreed that locals have a definite resistance to "people from the outside" who do not share in the area’s cultural heritage and who do not share local values, beliefs and ideas. There were also many locals who described feeling controlled by decisions made “in Washington D.C.,” by nature-lovers in “New Jersey,” and by “New Yorkers” who are telling us westerners what to do. One Escalante newcomer pointed out
that this easterner/westerner distinction goes even one step further. He told me that Utah’s Mormon heritage and unique history is something that further distinguishes Utahns from other westerners outside the state of Utah (“non-Utahns”). In addition, there were plenty of allusions made to the ruralite vs. urbanite conflict. Local ruralites discussed feeling outnumbered and financially out-competed by urbanites who want to preserve the west for themselves as a recreational playground. All of the above “insider vs. outsider” distinctions surfaced in my interviews.

“Outsiders” include, but are not limited to, urban newcomers to the area (whether recreationists, retirees or new residents), non-Mormons, non-Utahns, easterners, environmentalists, college students, researchers and government employees. Based on what I gathered from interviews, outsiders symbolize to the local people new ideas and are seen as carriers of ideological diseases and agents of change. Therefore, outsiders are ignored, avoided, resented and criticized by many local people.

[There is] a lot of fear for outsiders and for people who they [locals] may think might show them something different from what they know. They are afraid of new ideas...I’ve heard talk about blocking off Highway 12 and not letting anybody that’s not a local in. Putting the toll booth on the Highway...Everybody [local] is so nasty to anybody [outsiders] that comes in [Newcomer, Escalante].

Because of locals’ strong sense of identity and opinions about outsiders, I asked Boulder and Escalante newcomers to talk about whether they felt accepted into their new community. All newcomers whom I asked this said that they ultimately felt accepted into their new community, even though they all acknowledged the fact that they would never be considered “local.” Acceptance into the community, according to many informants, was contingent upon assimilation into the local culture or exhibiting a deep respect for the local culture. Ways of gaining local acceptance, according to Boulder and Escalante newcomers, included working in a traditional occupation (logging) with the local people, exhibiting a Protestant work ethic, formally introducing one’s self to the community and not outwardly flaunting “environmental tendencies.”
5.4 Family, Church & Politics

Because they are so closely linked, it is as difficult to separate family from church in rural southern Utah as it is to separate church and state in Utah’s rural, and predominantly Mormon, towns.

Of the pioneer families who first settled in Boulder and Escalante, the majority were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS Church), who are commonly known as “Mormons.”1 In a cultural sense, Mormons are extremely family-oriented and socially active. Their spiritual beliefs lead them to place great importance on tracking their ancestral lineage as well as extending their own blood lines through reproduction. As Limerick (1987:203) states, “The Mormon family, properly conducted through this world, would reassemble in the afterlife.” Because the family unit is the locus of spirituality for Mormons, Mormon families tend to be large (upwards of four children per family) and tight-knit. LDS members are taught to spend quality time with family members, whether it be “Family Home Evening” or annual family reunions. Families pray together, attend Church together, and even encourage their youngest family members to bless meals and bear testimony before adult church congregations.

The LDS Church is also an extremely organized, socially-complex institution that runs much like an efficient business. As one Escalante newcomer put it, “Mormonism is not just a religion, but it is a way of life. And it’s very practical.” In the LDS Church, each church-goer is given a particular “calling,” or assigned a church-related job, which encourages that person to participate in church activities and to work with other members in a team-oriented environment. In fact, some non-Mormons would argue that the LDS Church encourages, whether intentionally and unintentionally, exclusiveness and social cliquishness. As one Escalante newcomer expressed matter-of-factly, “We’re not LDS. That precludes a great deal. I would not open a business that depended on the local trade not being Mormon. I wouldn’t open a business in a Mormon town because they wouldn’t come in.” On the other hand, a non-Mormon Escalante local told me that a person’s

1“Mormon” was originally a nickname given to members of the LDS Church by non-Mormons because of LDS Church members’ belief in the Book of Mormon.
religion is secondary to a person’s character. This informant believed that attributing non-Mormon status to non-acceptance in the community is “just an excuse.” Instead, this Escalante local said that “kinda going along with” the town and not making waves with “all these damn wild ideas” is the real key to gaining community acceptance among the religious majority.

Based on a survey conducted in Escalante in 1923, only four residents out of a population of 1,010 were reportedly non-Mormons (Fleischner 1999:96). Research conducted by local Escalante resident and author, Jerry C. Roundy, indicates that religious demographics are changing due to the influx of newcomers. Roundy shows that of Escalante’s 927 residents in 1999, 738 residents (80%) are Mormons. (One non-Mormon newcomer told me that probably 80% of that 80% do not actually attend Church, a fact that was later confirmed by a Mormon newcomer.) Roundy (2000:337) also states that the influx of non-Mormons into Escalante has come in the last half of the 20th century, with 102 (53%) coming during the 1990s. Like Escalante, Boulder has also traditionally been a Mormon community. However, due to Boulder’s comparatively smaller population of 183 (based on FCAG’s 2000 projections, found at http://www.gget.state.ut.us/Projections/Demographic/Scripts/CityProj.asp) and larger increase in newcomers, it is religiously, and culturally, more diverse than Escalante today. In general, both religiously homogenous and isolated towns are seeing more diversity as non-Mormon newcomers move into the area.

Despite recent changes, non-Mormon Boulder and Escalante informants complained that the constitutionally directed separation of church and state is still non-existent in their town. An Escalante newcomer recounted a recent elementary school field trip:

We went to Calf Creek and we had a great big cookout and they put on a Mormon pioneer dance. It wasn’t a pioneer dance, it was a Mormon pioneer dance. And that’s all well and fine, you know, but this is a school system where you’ve got to separate them, too. If they [Mormons] want to keep their heritage, then go to Church on Sunday, to your LDS Church and let the LDS Church bring you down to Calf Creek and put on a Mormon dance, a Mormon pioneer dance and that was the thing. It gives
the kids a feeling that there’s only ‘Mormon-this’ and there’s only
‘Mormon-that’ and that’s not fair. That mix of Church and State, it’s very
tough to get it out.

A non-Mormon Boulder newcomer agreed that the mix of church and state is still
extremely prevalent. When asked what improvements could be made to Boulder’s
community, this particular resident responded, “Well I don’t think the Mayor oughta be
the [Mormon] Bishop! That’s off the charts! I mean, c’mon. [Laughs.] It’s like,
‘Separation of church and state? Why?’” It appears like things have not changed too much
from the past. As Roundy (2000:230) explains, “Before 1900 each new [Mormon]
settlement [in Utah] had its ready-made town council in the form of the presiding officers
in the [LDS] church. Whenever a group was sent to colonize a new area a ‘Presiding
Officer’...became the de facto mayor of the town.”

Thus, it is fair to argue that in Boulder and Escalante politics are still closely tied
to the LDS Church, stirring up images of “theocracy” rather than “democracy.” As one
Escalante newcomer explained, political decisions in the community are usually
determined by the local Mormon Bishop or other Mormon leaders. Several informants
alluded to the fact that it is almost unheard of for a Mormon community member to go
against the value-laden political mandates from the higher-ups in the church—especially in
such relatively small communities as Boulder and Escalante. As Stegner (1942:98) states,
“It takes courage for a Mormon to dissent. Generally speaking, it is the country Mormon
who can be depended upon to do as he is told.” In other words, if community well-being
depended on taking measures that run contrary to Mormon values, beliefs, and ideas—or
those held and promoted by church leaders—finding local community members to support
these contrary measures would be challenging at best.

5.5 Tradition

Just as history permeates from the buildings and homes that line Boulder and
Escalante streets, tradition is equally prevalent in Boulder and Escalante today. Not only
are many agricultural practices of yore still practiced, but celebrations and traditional
reunions dating back to the early 20th century are also observed annually. Both towns’ ranching, farming and pioneer heritage is well respected and valued by locals and newcomers alike, despite fears that this heritage may be disappearing.

Today many local residents continue to practice the traditional agricultural methods of years past: growing fresh vegetables in their gardens for consumption; canning and making juice from fresh fruit picked from their fruit trees; growing alfalfa to feed their cattle; and keeping cows, goats, sheep, pigs, turkeys and hens to provide them with dairy and meat products. For instance, during my research in Escalante I was shown how to make apple juice with an old-fashioned apple press, asked to help milk goats in a resident’s back yard, and invited to can salsa in a resident’s basement. As an urbanite, with easy access to stores, services and supplies, never before had I ever seen or done any of those things. An Escalante newcomer also expressed fascination with some of the local, traditional practices: “There’s one interesting thing about ranching around here that you don’t find in most communities: the ranchers, besides doing their open grazing, also grow alfalfa and harvest that to feed their cows in the winter.” This informant went on to explain local ranchers’ self-sufficiency stems out of necessity. Due to the remoteness of Boulder and Escalante, it is simply more practical for local ranchers to grow their own feed rather than travel great distances to purchase it.

To quote Stegner (1942: 182), “Mormons are not, except when the Church calls them, migrant people. They cling to the family patrimony. One of their most regular wanderings is the annual [family] reunion, and they come a long way for it.” In addition to the traditional family reunions held each year by local families, annual celebrations of the pioneer heritage and other social reunions are also observed by local residents today. One such celebration is “Pioneer Day,” which is held across the State of Utah on July 24th to celebrate Utah statehood and to remember the Mormon pioneers’ journey westward. Jerry Roundy (2000:89) describes the origins of such celebrations as follows:

The new settlers in Escalante celebrated July 24, 1876, listening to speeches about their pioneer forefathers, singing songs, eating good food, and topping the day off with a lively dance. Celebrating July 4 and July 24
with a parade, dinner, program and a dance has continued to be part of the Escalante tradition. With both Escalante and Boulder being extremely isolated, they soon began sharing the celebrations, with Boulder being in charge of the ‘4th’ celebration and Escalante in charge of the ‘24th’.

Another annual party worth mentioning is Escalante’s “17th of March Party.” This party honors the 1842 founding of the LDS Church’s women’s group, the Relief Society. However, according to Jerry Roundy, “After the 1940s when [locals] began migrating from Escalante to accept employment, the 17th of March Party became a reunion time. Former citizens made it a point to schedule a trip to Escalante to attend the festivities and renew old friendships” (Roundy 2000:269). Both the Pioneer Day and 17th of March celebration show the importance of tradition and a respect for the Mormon pioneer heritage in both towns.

Overall, Boulder and Escalante locals and newcomers showed a great deal of respect and honor for their town’s ranching and pioneer heritage.

The heritage of the area should be protected and it is important for the children to understand what their great-grandfather, grandfather, and father did to make a living and sculpt a live in this area [Local, Boulder].

I like and respect that cultural way of life [ranching] and had I been born into it I’d want to make sure that it stayed in place [Newcomer, Escalante].

I hate to see the cows go. I hate to see ‘em go, for a lot of reasons [Newcomer, Boulder].

It’s the pioneer character that’s just, almost, gone. The stubborn, bull-headedness is part of it, but you know, it is still a very valuable thing and I admire the people that have been able to hack it out here with nothing [Newcomer, Escalante].

5.6 The Patriotic Paradox

Whether a Boulder and Escalante local or newcomer, the informants I spoke with exhibited American pride and openly valued freedom, democracy, independence, private property rights and the “Protestant work ethic.” However, despite all the patriotism
exhibited by many of the informants I spoke with, frequently informants’ patriotic rhetoric was accompanied by even stronger words about America’s “dishonest” and “controlling” federal government. It is this unlikely combination of American pride and federal government distrust that I call the “patriotic paradox.” Distrust in, fear of, and anger toward the federal government is particularly rooted in the local people’s long history with the federal government and, more generally, in the belief that the federal government impedes upon and inhibits the American values of independence and freedom.

5.7 Seeds of Distrust

Utah, like most western states, largely consists (80%) of federally-owned land. Since the mid-nineteenth century, Utahns have had many tenuous encounters and dealings with the federal government. Because of the culturally-determined aesthetic value of the southern Utah landscape, southern Utahns share a particularly interesting past with the federal government. In southern Utah alone there are six national parks, five national monuments, a national recreation area, and several federally designated wilderness areas. As I discuss in detail in Chapter 6.1, many Boulder and Escalante residents are still affected by federal land policies that were made over 50 years ago.

The [local] people have been under the rule of the government back here in this end of the State because of the Parks for many years and so they’ve been held in all kinds of restrictions that us up in the cities weren’t even concerned with, you know? People have been sensitized, too, and so if you’re talking to a major group of people whose lives’ work was in town, that’s different. Like the difference of talking to the chicken who lays the egg for breakfast and talking to the pig who’s gonna furnish the bacon [Newcomer, Escalante].

Other federal actions, unrelated to federal land management, were also mentioned as seeds of local distrust in the federal government. One example is the Nevada nuclear test site and its resultant downwinder situation. After the federal government performed atomic bomb tests at the Nevada test site between 1951 and 1962, radioactive fallout blanketed the country, particularly impacting Utah and other northwestern states (http://www.downwinders.org/nci.html). Thyroid cancer, which has been linked to the
radioactive isotope Iodine 131 found in nuclear fallout, has plagued southern Utah counties in above-average numbers since the 1960s. Therefore, many southern Utahns have either been directly affected by federally-funded and federally-directed nuclear testing, or have friends and relatives who have died as a direct result.

A more recent federal action that has reinforced locals’ distrust of the federal government—or at least supported locals' negative perceptions of the federal government—is the Cerro Grand Prescribed Fire set by the National Park Service in Bandelier National Monument, New Mexico, on May 4, 2000. Boulder and Escalante residents watched as this federally-set “prescribed burn” got out of control and turned into a federally-set wildfire. This wildfire led to the evacuation of 18,000 people, the destruction of 235 homes and even threatened national security as it closed in on Los Alamos National Laboratory (http://www.nps.gov/cerrogrand/introduction.htm). As one Escalante newcomer warned me, referring to the locals, “You’re talkin’ to people who trust government [brings his forefinger and thumb together, making a zero].” Here are some examples of distrust of and anger toward the federal government in regards to GSENM:

They [the federal government] are not keeping the promises that they made us. They promised that when Clinton first made this [Monument] everything would stay the same down there and that we would be allowed to have our cattle and to take care of them. That’s not true. He’s a liar... I don’t want to do anything with the government. You can’t trust ‘em and you can’t believe ‘em [Local, Escalante].

We can try to discuss these things with each other in some kind of intelligent debate. The [local] people said that would be okay if we had an honest, legitimate chance, but they said, again, since they’re [the federal government] in the position of power, while we’re doing the debates, they’ll be busy closing down roads, saying we cannot have cattle graze in these areas, and they’ve [the federal government] already started doing that, I think...so the [local] people are pretty uptight about it [Newcomer, Escalante].

There’s a lot of angry people, too. They’re angry at the government. They’re angry, angry, angry! [Newcomer, Boulder].
Locals’ distrust of and anger toward the federal government is accompanied by a fear of government control and, in some cases, a suspicion of federal conspiracy. Control is greatly feared by the independent locals who are devout believers in Americans’ right to freedom. Federally-placed restrictions are a form of government control that limits local access to traditionally-used places and prohibits traditional practices. Many informants expressed how locals could not compete with the government because the government had more money, more numbers and more time. Some even alluded to the conspiratorial forces of government.

They’re [the federal government] just controllin’ everything. I mean, they are! I’m under so much control. I’ve got a million dollars tied up with them [cattle] rights and the federal government, they control it!...See what they’re [the federal government] doing in Oregon? Fence all the streams. And then once you’ve got control of the water, you’ve got control of the people [Local rancher, Boulder].

How does a community decide its future in a place like this? Where it’s...as they say, ‘land outside of your control’ but the heritage of the community is to be a ranching community? But you [the people], essentially, have no control? You, the rancher has no control, you the community has no control of whether the ranching stays or goes? [Newcomer, Boulder].

The mission of the People For the USA (PFUSA)—a national grassroots organization 25,000 members strong—is to advocate for responsible natural resource development, multiple use of public lands and protection of private property rights. Generally, PFUSA’s mission focuses on re-introducing people to multiple use and opposing “overzealous” environmental regulations (http://www.anwr.org/features/news1-98.htm). From January, 1999, to October, 1999, PFUSA’s membership in Utah increased from 600 to 2,000 members. PFUSA’s presence was particularly strong in Escalante (see Figure 5.1) and was another topic of discussion brought up by Boulder and Escalante residents. Boulder and Escalante residents agreed that although the local PFUSA chapter was growing in numbers, it was still lagging behind environmental
groups in power and strategy. Some told me that PFUSA is just as “extreme” as environmental groups, something that keeps many residents from joining.

There's a group called the People for the USA. They're radical. They're just as radical as these enviros, but they're havin' some impact now [Local rancher, Boulder].

This People for the USA, their attitude is 'we don't want to hear your ideas because your ideas are connected to...' 'conspiracy'...and that conspiracy is international and comes through all of these connections, internationally, through the federal government down to local environmentalists. I mean, conspiracies in this kind of culture just don't work. With this kind of informational age, it's not possible. You can't do anything without ten people knowing about it. The People for the USA tell all these people who are connected with this to 'go to hell' 'we don't need their ideas', 'we don't need their money' [Newcomer, Escalante].

5.8 Victimization

In addition to locals' historical dealings with the federal government in regards to land policy are locals' cultural ties to a past defined by persecution. Mormon pioneers who arrived in Utah's Salt Lake Valley in 1847 were fleeing religious persecution in the eastern
United States and were, much like the first American pioneers who fled England two centuries earlier, in search of religious freedom. Francaviglia (1978:3) states that, "As persecution and flight are Mormon history, deliberate isolation in a harsh land called Zion is the crux of Mormon geography." Limerick (1987:282) agrees that Mormons escaped persecution by seeking out a "spatial quarantine" where "the dimensions of the continent itself would guard them."

Beginning in 1850, however, the Territory of Utah (as it was then known) received from the federal government the usual territorial machinery: federal judges and "watchdogs" to keep Utah's Mormon theocracy from gaining too much power. The resulting "poor fit between American territory government and the LDS theocracy" (Limerick 1987:284) prompted the federal government to dispatch the U.S. Army to the Territory of Utah in 1857, an action that resulted in a rather minor squabble that is today known as the "Mormon War." In 1856, just prior to the Mormon War, America's newly formed Republican party set out to eradicate the "barbaric" Mormon practice of polygamy2 (Limerick 1987:285). Since 1870, the eradication of polygamy in Utah was attempted by several congressional acts, including the Edmunds Act of 1882, which made the contracting of polygamous marriage a felony and cohabitation a misdemeanor. Arrests for polygamy under the Edmunds Act led to a $500 fine and 5 year prison sentence, with a $300 fine and 6 month prison sentence for cohabitation (May 1987:126). In reality, the Edmunds Act, which later became known as the Edmunds-Tucker Act, was designed by the federal government to destroy the Mormon Church's economic and political power. As Bodley (1999:94) points out, cultural traits such as polygamy were usually prohibited "more because they represent challenges to state authority rather than because they are universally recognized as immoral." The federal government's anti-polygamy campaign led to the arrest and imprisonment of 1,035 Mormon men, forcing many Mormon

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2 Actually, the correct term here is 'polygyny,' which is the practice of taking more than one wife. I have chosen to use the term 'polygamy,' which is actually the practice of taking more than one spouse, because it is the familiar term used in Mormon history discussions. To clarify, although some Mormon men did marry multiple wives, Mormon women did not marry more than one husband, despite the common usage of the term 'polygamy.'
polygamists into hiding and encouraging Mormon polygamist families to flee to more remote and isolated regions of Utah prior to Utah statehood in 1896.

Mormons' history of persecution by the federal government is something that, I believe, figures into the local people's distrust of and anger toward the federal government. In fact, one Mormon newcomer even compared the locals' relationship with the federal government to the American forefathers' relationship to Great Britain:

[The locals] are hostile, with reason, because it makes no sense what they're [the federal government] doing out here. It's very much as I liken it to the same feeling that the forefathers had about Britain ruling from a foreign area. So when I went through and I read the Declaration of Independence, we're exactly the same as to the fact that nothing we say is of value, they're [creating] restrictions that show their ignorance, they get all the benefits, we get all the detriments, taxation without representation, so to speak...everything that prompted the forefathers to declare war is being now currently inflicted by our own federal government on us [Newcomer, Escalante].

Another aspect of locals' concern about the federal government “ruling from afar” is the belief that the federal government lacks local knowledge about and connection to the GSENM area. The federal government's lack of connection reinforces locals' sense of public land “ownership” and resultant territoriality. Because Boulder and Escalante's first settlers and their decedents suffered many hardships in an effort to develop the Utah desert (or to “make the desert bloom”) while the federal government simply observed from afar, locals believe they deserve more say in how these public lands are managed.

We developed this country and kept it goin' and took care of it and if we hadn't taken such good care of it, they [the federal government] wouldn't want it so damn bad [Local, Escalante].

[The locals] have worked hard. They've managed to bring the phone out here and the electricity out here and no one was helping them with all of that. They never got help from the federal government on doing that, but now the federal government is coming in and now they're saying, 'We want land from your High School to be donated, we want this and that and whatever'...Like I said, it gives you the feeling of King George. I mean, if the federal government had opened up this land and it had brought out the
water and it had worked out a way to scratch a living out of never-never land, and it had done all of these things, then yes, it would have more rights. But it did not pioneer this location. It did not suffer all the hardships that were out here. I didn’t either, so I don’t resent the fact that I’m always going to be called a newcomer [Newcomer, Escalante].

Negative perceptions of the federal government have lead to feelings of victimization by locals. A few informants I talked to even compared the locals’ relationship with the federal government to Native Americans’ relationship with the feds.

They [the locals] say, ‘No, there isn’t any room for talking because they [the federal government] had talked a good game, like with the Indians, and then they just keep moving us to reservations.’ [Newcomer, Escalante].

There’s no good ranchers left. I’m one of the last of ‘em. I know how these ol’ Indian felt when he was goin’ to the reservation [Local rancher, Boulder].

Western historian Patricia Limerick (1987:42) agrees that many rural, western Anglo-Americans have acquired the role of the “innocent victim.” Limerick (1987:42) explains this phenomenon by stating that “contrary to all of the West’s association with self-reliance and individual responsibility, misfortune has usually created white Westerners to cast themselves in the role of the innocent victim.” Limerick (1987:44) goes on to say that “blaming nature or blaming human beings, those looking for a scapegoat had a third, increasingly popular target: the federal government.” Limerick (1987:47) claims that by blaming the federal government one eliminates the need to consider one’s own participation in “courting misfortune.” For Boulder and Escalante locals, “courting misfortune” might take the form of grazing cattle on the arid desert floor, which is prone to drought. In fact, during my research, the GSENM region was experiencing severe drought conditions (see Chapter 6.5). When the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) ordered the cattle off GSENM land in August, 2000, a few local ranchers resisted, blaming the federal government and not the drought. As one BLM employee told me, “When we’re seein’ here less than 50% of our normal rainfall we have
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to take action... and then people say, 'Well the BLM’s runnin’ ‘em out of business!’ They’re just usin’ the drought’, or whatever, for an excuse, and that’s just not the case...It’s a perception, or a fear. In some cases, it’s just easier to blame the BLM than it is to blame poor management.”

5.9 A Federal Presence

As a branch of the federal government’s Department of the Interior the local Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which has an office in Escalante, takes its share of verbal abuse from the local people. Ironically, the majority of BLM employees in the Escalante office are local people. This makes locals’ relationship with the BLM even more complicated.

If you have to deal with [the federal government] on a daily basis because you run cows on the BLM [land], they are your enemy [Newcomer, Escalante].

There’s a few more government [BLM] people living here. But, you know, maybe we’d a been better off if they didn’t live here. I mean, there’s not been that much advantage in taxes and they use our infrastructure and a lot of them are living out of town [Local, Escalante].

The thing that amazes me about the BLM...is that most of the people that work for the BLM are all [locals] and the local people don’t trust the BLM. So from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Jones, or Mr. Smith and Mr. Harris, who works for the BLM can’t be trusted, but from 5:01 p.m. to 7:59 a.m. the next mornin’ they’re your friends and neighbors and you can go play together [Newcomer, Escalante].

The local BLM is not the only federal presence that Boulder and Escalante have had to deal with historically. In the post-Depression years (1933-1942), President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) created the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). FDR instituted CCC Camps across the United States in order to stimulate jobs while simultaneously working towards soil and water conservation (Roundy 2000:177-179). During this time, CCC Camps were created in the Boulder/Escalante area to provide employment for many young local men and to return a cash flow to the area. FDR’s CCC
Camp workers made improvements to roads and campgrounds and worked on conservation projects throughout what is now the GSENM area (Roundy 2000:177). In fact, between 1935 and 1940, an Escalante CCC Camp constructed the first all-year road between Boulder and Escalante (now Scenic Biway 12), which is still used for travel between the two towns (Roundy 2000:203). On September 16, 2000, a ceremony was held in Escalante to honor the local men who worked in the CCC Camps.

During my interviews with Boulder and Escalante locals, however, contributions made by the federal government to the towns of Boulder and Escalante, such as the federally-funded CCC, were rarely mentioned. As one Escalante newcomer pointed out:

Where did the CCC Camp money come from? It came from the feds. But that was something that happened to support this area. Some of these people here worked in those camps and they received direct money. And then the Camp people would come down into the town on weekends, so they [the town] would receive money that way. But ask me if you hear very much about the positive side of that [a federally-funded program] compared to this other. If you’re going to look at the bad side of what they’re [the federal government] doing on one account, then—if you want to be objective—you should at least look at the other side.

Another Escalante newcomer commented that the local ranching industry owes a great deal of its resiliency to the federal government. According to this informant, government subsidies over the years have also allowed ranching to continue under harsh economic realities. This informant pointed out that, “without government subsidy and not having to pay taxes or the construction of roads, or a number of things...I mean, the West is really a product, to a large extent, of the [federal] government.”

5.10 Education

According to Jerry Roundy, “education has always been important to Mormon people” (2000:93). Yet, based on informants’ responses (particularly local Escalante residents), I found that education is only important relatively-speaking. In other words, if education is thought to be connected in any way with the government or environmentalism
(outsiders and outside ideas), it is something to be avoided. Even I, as a researcher from a
government-funded University, felt suspect at times. One local Escalante resident told me
she believed that government-funded educational institutions were promoting
misinformation about traditional livelihoods.

I’m sad because my little daughter, it’s the same thing at the colleges—the
Sierra Club and the people have come in and they tell the kids all kinds of
bad stories at the universities. They think that everybody in these rural
communities are killing the trees and the animals and...that’s absolutely not
ture. They’ve [locals] kept a balance for a hundreds of years.

In another respect, a local rancher expressed regret that more local kids have not
pursued higher education as a way to prevent the spread of misinformation about
traditional livelihoods. Ironically, he saw locals’ lack of educational pursuit as a
contributor to the “downfall” of the local rancher:

How do you whip a country? You educated the people. So if you raised a
bunch of dumb ranchin’ kids, guess what? I don’t know that I want my kid
workin’ for government, I don’t want my neighbor’s kid workin’ for the
government. I want somebody who’s gonna feel for the land like I do
workin’ for the government. See what we done back during the 1960s and
1970s? We filled all the government slots with hippies. The ranchers sat
home and bitched and they got run over.

In September, 2000, plans for the construction of an education and research
center, the Escalante Center (EC), were put on hold due to the inability to reach
consensus and lack of local support. In 1999, the concept for the EC was described as “a
community-based initiative to develop a destination for researchers and science
conventions, as well as tourists” (Israelsen 1999). The board of this private, nonprofit
venture includes representatives from the city, the county, the local school district, a state
university, a local center for arts and humanities, the Utah Travel Council and the BLM. In
it’s conceptual phase, the proposed EC’s campus-like setting would consist of a science
learning center, an arts and humanities center, and a GSENM visitor center to be built on
28 acres of Escalante High School land (Israelsen 1999). However, many local residents expressed concern about the proposed plans for the EC.

When interviewing Escalante residents I discovered that the EC was a very hot topic and one that offered a variety of perspectives. In general, newcomers felt much more positive about the proposed EC than the locals. Of my informants, 28% (all locals) were against the EC. Reasons given included competition with local businesses, attraction of outsiders, perpetuation of the "environmentalist perspective," government involvement, problems with the proposed location (Escalante High School land), and EC’s potential tax burden on the community. The other 72% (some locals, mostly newcomers) supported the proposed EC because it would offer greater educational opportunities to the community’s children, while at the same time increasing local diversity. A local Escalante resident summed up the EC conflict:

I really think that the Escalante Center would be a benefit to town if it ever did happen. And I guess I’ve been in favor of that all along. ‘Course it’s just like everything else. There’s parts of it you like and parts of it you don’t like and you’ve got to accept the bad with the good. The research potential and the opportunities for the kids at school—I think it’s great. Of course there’s a lot of people that think it’s not because they’d be teachin’...I guess both sides of story instead of...I guess there’s a lot of people in town that’s afraid that there kids would be brainwashed or influenced by college researchers and things like that that would be associated with the high school. I don’t see that. Hell, I went out to college and got brainwashed, I guess, and then returned but my core values didn’t ever change. I think the Escalante Center, especially the opportunities it’d bring for the kids to be not only exposed to the researchers and college-type thing, but it’d give ‘em the opportunity to participate. And I think that’d be great.

5.11 Community Life

Whether rural locals or urban newcomers, Boulder and Escalante residents of all backgrounds are forced to share at least one thing: the realities of life in a small, rural, southern Utah town. This translates into living in a remote place with
few people and even fewer services. This also means that residents must be self-sufficient, independent and creative when it comes to many things.

Everybody that’s out here, that stays out here has to learn to be self-sufficient and multi-talented. You have to be able to do more than just one thing. If something breaks down you have to figure out, you’re either going to have to do without, or you’re going to have to fix it yourself, or you’re going to have to create a whole different way around it, so there’s, I think, creativity is necessary around here [Newcomer, Escalante].

At the same time, however, the aspects of remote and rural living create a certain level of interdependence. Residents told me that because of the lack of services in town they must help each other and work with each other often, a reality that forces a neighborliness or “family-like” bond between locals and newcomers.

Well we have to help each other because we don’t have services like you do have in the city. We don’t have taxi cabs, so when somebody needs to be hauled some place, you haul them. If your neighbor needs to go to the doctor, you take ‘em to the doctor. If your neighbor is sick and their family is gone and they need to go for a checkup or something, you know, you take them. You know, if they need to go to the store, you run them to the store to get some groceries. In a small community we have to help each other [Local, Escalante].

Despite the help from neighbors and community members, life in Boulder and Escalante was repeatedly described to me, particularly by newcomers, as challenging.

The fact of the matter is, it’s hard to earn a living here. This country runs people out for whatever their views are. There’s tons of people who are winter kill. There’s tons of people in this town who can’t do it, because they don’t get a big enough, whatever....they don’t get a big enough woodpile. Because they miss the mall. for a million reasons! [Newcomer, Boulder].

It’s tough living here. I really see everything with a two year window. If people last here for two years then they last. I don’t think that’s necessarily exemplary of here but of rural life, in general. We’ve watched people come and go and they’ve often left within the two year window [Newcomer, Escalante].
CHAPTER 6

GRAND STAIRCASE-ESCALANTE NATIONAL MONUMENT

When President Clinton invoked the Antiquities Act of 1906 to designate Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) on September 18, 1996, history was made. Although the Antiquities Act of 1906 has been used over 66 times by all but three (Nixon, Reagan and Bush) U.S. Presidents to designate over 100 national monuments, GSENM is unique for many reasons. First, President Clinton designated GSENM without previously informing Utah politicians or local residents. Second, Clinton held GSENM’s designation ceremony outside of Utah on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon in the state of Arizona. Third, the size of GSENM is larger than any national monument previously designated in the continental United States at 1.9 million acres. Fourth, Clinton proclaimed that GSENM is “subject to valid existing rights” (meaning existing water rights, grazing rights, etc.). Finally, GSENM is the first national monument to be managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and not the National Park Service. Taking these facts into consideration it is easy to understand the level of controversy surrounding the creation of GSENM, but Utah’s political history helps to clarify Clinton’s controversial actions.

6.1 Conservation, Utah Style

Like most western states, the majority of Utah land (80%) is federally-owned and regulated public land. In addition, the southernmost third of Utah contains a relatively unique geology, culture, and history, all of which have drawn the attention of conservationists since Mukuntuweap National Monument (now Zion National Park) was designated by Presidential Proclamation in 1909 (Fleischner 1999:132). During the 20th century, Utah has been the recipient of several federally designated national parks, national monuments (some of which later became national parks with proper passage through Congress), national recreation areas, and wilderness areas. The southern Utah landscape is also the home of many rural natural resource-based (ranching, farming, logging, mining)
 communities. This said, over the last century, Utah’s relationship with the federal government has been tenuous at best.

Prior to the Great Depression, the National Park Service had already secured from Congress Zion National Park, Bryce Canyon National Park, and six other national monuments in Utah via Presidential Proclamation (Roundy 2000:315). In the aftermath of the Great Depression there was a movement in the United States, led by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, to rejuvenate rural economies. During this time, Utah Planning Board (UPB) was formed with federal assistance in order to find ways to stimulate rural Utah economies. Recognizing the economic success of tourism in southern Utah’s Zion and Bryce Canyon National Parks, UPB came up with the concept of a national monument in south central Utah, which was to be called “Escalante National Monument.” This proposed national monument would cover 6,986 sq. miles (8% of Utah) and include the Colorado and Green rivers, transposing what is today Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Canyonlands National Park, and GSENM.

It was also during FDR’s presidency that conservation-minded and ambitious Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes proposed a bill to enlarge the entire National Park System. However, Ickes’s conservation goals were too extreme for many Americans at the time. According to historian Jerry Roundy (2000: 316), “When Ickes’s plan was presented to Congress, other departments joined western representatives in blocking what seemed to be an alarming extension of the Department of the Interior’s jurisdiction.” As a result, Ickes’s final bill instead called for a survey of recreational resources in the United States.

In May, 1936, federal representatives from the Parks and Wildlife division came to the rural town of Price, Utah, to present the concept of Escalante National Monument to the local people. Of the 463 families that lived in the region of this proposed national monument, 87 people showed up to hear about the proposal (Fleischner 1999:133). Included in this group of 87 were cattle and sheep raising interests, agents of grazing districts administered by the Taylor Grazing Act, representatives of southern Utah civic clubs, and Park Service attendants (Roundy 2000:316). Worried about their traditional
livelihoods and potential restrictions on mineral exploration and water resource development (e.g. dams on the Colorado and Green Rivers) as a result of national monument designation, the local people immediately clashed with and distrusted the Parks and Wildlife people. This was especially true when the Parks and Wildlife people assured the locals that grazing would continue in the new Monument until “ultimate non-use status could be brought about” (Roundy 2000:317). Locals, many of whom were unable to understand the scenic value of their land, felt that tourism was overvalued.

Following the Parks and Wildlife’s presentation of their Escalante National Monument proposal, a vote was taken and the proposed 6,968 square mile monument was unanimously opposed (Fleischner 1999:133). As a result, the Park Service reduced the proposed monument to 2,450 square miles, which still would make it second in size to Wyoming’s Yellowstone National Park (Roundy 2000:319). The locals’ stressed that they wanted both a monument and continuation of traditional practices and access, but government officials believed that mineral exploration and other economic activities in the monument would defeat its whole purpose. Before any agreement was reached, the locals became increasingly concerned that the federal government would go around them and exercise it’s power to designate Escalante National Monument anyway. They were repeatedly assured that no such steps would be taken.

However, in 1939, Harold Ickes’s office drafted a bill to amend the Antiquities Act of 1906 to make it easier for the President to create National Recreation Areas (Roundy 2000:319). During this same time in Utah, Arches National Monument (100 miles northeast) was created and Dinosaur National Monument (250 northeast) was extended by Presidential Proclamation without local notice (Roundy 2000:320). These federal actions only deepened the local people’s distrust of the federal government. Nearly predicting things to come 60 years later, Utah’s governor (at the time) wrote a letter to Utah’s Congress that said, “Some morning we may wake up and find that...the Escalante Monument has been created by Presidential Proclamation, and then it will be too late to forestall what we in Utah think would be a calamity” (Roundy 2000:320). But while the locals decried distrust of the federal government, the federal government complained that
the locals were reticent and discourteous in dealings with them. In a well-stated analysis, Elmo Richardson (Roundy 2000:321) placed the blame on both sides:

In [the National Park Service's] consultations with Utahns and in their preparation of a proclamation, the Interior Department officials did not exercise the necessary political skill. Each group acted upon mistaken assumptions about the motives of the other; neither of them cleared up these misunderstandings; and personal antipathies transformed every move into seeming duplicity. Perhaps both sides were equally guilty of assuming that the virtue of their desire was self-evident.

Before Escalante National Monument ever made it onto paper, World War II broke out and America's Department of the Interior shifted its focus away from natural resource conservation and back onto natural resource extraction. Even conservation-minded Ickes admitted that, because of the War, mineral, hydropower and irrigation pursuits across the west seemed more urgent and practical than national park and national monument pursuits. It was during the years following World War II that the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation, with a budget six times that of the National Park Service, set out across the west, constructing dams of relatively large proportion to produce hydropower for the American people. Escalante National Monument became nothing more than a faded memory in Utah's consciousness.

Aside from a few National Geographic stories about the Escalante Canyon region, written between 1947 and 1954, which generated little interest in the GSENRM area, no other political action would be taken to designate a protected area in the Escalante region until 1991. In the interim, 1976 saw the birth of Federal Lands Protection and Management Act (FLPMA), which was essentially a Congress-mandated overhaul of the BLM (Fleischner 1999:143). FLPMA directed the BLM in each state to commence an inventory of it's roadless areas in order to make recommendations to Congress as to what land qualifies as wilderness as per the Wilderness Act of 1964. According to the Wilderness Act, true wilderness must 1) be roadless; 2) be at least 5,000 acres in size; and 3) meet the wilderness characteristics described in the Wilderness Act (Fleischner 1999:143). If, in the opinion of the BLM employees, certain land did meet all the
requirements of wilderness, that land would be recommended to Congress as a potential wilderness area. In the United States, designated wilderness areas offer the highest level of protection for natural areas. Wilderness areas, unlike national parks and monuments, prohibit many recreational and traditional uses, including motorized and mechanized vehicle use (chain saws, trucks, cars, bulldozers, off-road vehicles, helicopters, mountain bikes), chaining, water development, timber harvesting, and mining, with rare exception. Horse riding, herb gathering, hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, wheelchair access (if medical necessity) and limited grazing are the only activities allowed to continue in wilderness areas (Http://www.suwa.org/faqpart1.html#BLM).

FLPMA gave the BLM 15 years to complete its inventory of roadless areas. In Utah, even though 40% percent of the land (22 million acres) is BLM land, it only took Utah's BLM two years to complete their wilderness inventory. At the conclusion of their inventory in 1980, the BLM in Utah reported to Congress that only 3.2 million acres met the requirements of "wilderness" as per the Wilderness Act and they recommended that only 2 million acres be designated as federally protected wilderness areas. Utah environmentalists reacted immediately as stories about the BLM's biased and faulty surveying practices mounted. Claims were also made that a large percent of the roadless areas that Utah's BLM denied wilderness status contained coal, tar sands, and minerals. Even the Director of the BLM in Washington D.C. found the BLM in Utah guilty of violating FLPMA policies (Fleischner 1999:146).

Thus, in 1980, faced with one of the most anti-wilderness Congressional delegations in history, a handful of environmentalists came together and filed several appeals (2,000 pages worth) to the Interior Board Land Appeals (IBLA) claiming that the BLM conducted a biased and faulty survey of Utah's roadless areas (Fleischner 1999:146-147). Three years later, IBLA ruled that Utah's BLM was, in fact, in error in 90% of the appealed lands and ordered BLM to re-consider it's decisions. As a result, the BLM reinstated less than half of the appealed lands (Fleischner 1999:147). Disappointed by the BLM's reinstatement, Utah environmentalists and organized environmental groups came together and formed the Utah Wilderness Council. The Utah Wilderness Council's
mission was to conduct its own independent survey of roadless areas on BLM land in Utah. At the conclusion of their preliminary survey in 1985, the Utah Wilderness Council recommended that 5.1 million acres of BLM land in Utah be designated as wilderness. This figure was later increased to 5.7 million acres due to improvements in mapping equipment. As of today (November, 2000), however, the Utah Wilderness Council’s wilderness recommendation has nearly doubled to include 9.1 million acres of BLM land.

In 1991, the Escalante National Monument idea from 55 years prior resurfaced when Utah Representative Wayne Owens proposed that Congress create a national park in Escalante Canyon lands (Roundy 2000:322). Owens called for a ‘feasibility study’ and met with local county commissioners, telling them that a national park would “protect the land and stimulate tourism in southern Utah” (Roundy 2000:323). But the locals were not convinced by this promise. As a result, a Garfield-Kane Land Use Task Force (Task Force 1) was created to rise above historical wilderness protection gridlock and work toward consensus. Task Force 1 was made up of representatives of the NPS and BLM, cattle, mining, timber and tourism interests, hunters, local business people, mayors and county commissioners. The NPS and BLM used this venue to discuss the nuances of federal wilderness designations. In the end, Task Force 1 voted unanimously to designate 800,000 acres of the Escalante Canyon lands as a National Conservation Area (NCA), a special designation for BLM land that would offer more flexibility for preserving and protecting traditional uses (Roundy 2000:323). Many people, including the Director of the BLM in Washington D.C., praised this NCA as a “showpiece of multiple uses,” but environmentalists wanted to see this land become congressionally-designated wilderness.

Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance (SUWA), a well-funded and politically powerful environmental group based out of Moab, Utah, castigated Task Force 1’s NCA Plan, calling it a “bogus designation that would allow local elected officials to convert the Escalante River Canyons into a three-ring circus” (Roundy 2000:323). The combination of timing (Presidential election year, 1992) and strong environmental opposition (SUWA) put Task Force 1’s NCA proposal on hold. This was the first failed attempt at designating federal protection for the GSENM area.
A second attempt for protection failed two years later in June of 1994, when Utah's governor, Mike Leavitt, put together the Canyons of the Escalante Task Force (Task Force 2) in charge of proposing "Canyons of the Escalante National Eco-region" (Roundy 2000:325). Task Force 2 drafted a concept paper to address the real and economic benefits of this eco-region to local communities. Their proposed eco-region was composed of four land classifications, including Wild Lands (wilderness), Natural Lands (protection, but human impacts), Multiple Use Lands (protection of traditional uses) and Enterprise Lands (open to development). However, local residents associated the name "eco-region" with the Bio-Diversity Treaty¹ and, fearing the two were somehow connected, opposed the proposed Monument (Roundy 2000:325).

It was two years later (1996) when Clinton stood on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon and, using his executive power, designated Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument—a 1.9 million acre national monument named for "the great series of cliffs and terraces that rises from the Grand Canyon in Arizona to the summit of the High Plateaus in Utah" (Roundy 2000:326). According to Escalante resident and author, Jerry B. Roundy (2000:325), "Perhaps the Department of the Interior felt that interaction [with the local residents] would result in a third failed attempt and it was better to create the Monument without local input." However, some would argue that there may be even more to it.

Prior to the 1996 Presidential election, President Clinton lost a large percent of voters due to signing an appropriations rider for salvage logging in the Pacific Northwest

¹The Convention on Biological Diversity, commonly referred to as the Biodiversity Treaty, was one of two major treaties opened for signature at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992. The treaty defines biodiversity as "the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems." Parties to the Biodiversity Treaty "affirm sovereign rights over the biological resources found within their countries, while accepting responsibility for conserving biological diversity and using biological resources in a sustainable manner," according to an International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) assessment of the treaty. Having secured its 30th ratification in September 1993, the Biodiversity Treaty entered into force December 29, 1993. One hundred sixty-seven nations have signed the treaty since it was opened for signature at UNCED (http://www.ciesin.org/TG/PI/Treaty/html3-6/treaty-bio.htm).
(Fleischner 1999:159). Some suspect that he felt he could gain back some of those environmentalist votes by taking action on a popular environmental issue. Utah wilderness issues happen to be very popular in western states surrounding Utah, such as Colorado, New Mexico and California. Not only was Clinton surely aware of the two previously failed attempts to create a protected area in Escalante Canyon country, but there was another issue that currently had environmentalists concerned. Both Andalex Corporation, a Dutch coal operation, and Conoco Oil Company, possessed mining leases on southern Utah’s Kaiparowits Plateau and were preparing to dig and to drill, much to the distress of environmentalists. By establishing GSENM and including in it the coal-rich Kaiparowits Plateau, Clinton could kill two birds with one stone, so to speak, in order to regain his popularity with environmentalists in surrounding states. In addition, at the time of GSENM’s designation, President Clinton, the first lady, and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt had all been influenced by western writers and Utah naturalists, like Terry Tempest Williams, who most likely inspired them to protect the open, wild spaces of Utah’s canyon country (Fleischner 1999:162).

Despite Clinton’s ulterior motives, the BLM-managed GSENM became the first national monument of its kind and has made a lasting impression on both the local people and the West as a whole. For instance, after GSENM’s designation, delegates from several western states, including Utah and Idaho, proposed legislation to limit the size of new national monuments and legislation to prevent future monumental “surprises” by requiring a 60 day “warning” period.

6.2 The Designation Process

According to Howe et al. (1998:142), “the torpedo that most often sinks a promising effort is not disagreement over goals or strategies but the resistance that comes from people who feel left out of a process or who believe—fairly or unfairly—that an effort was ‘planned on’ them rather than ‘with them.’” When I asked Boulder and Escalante residents to discuss how they felt about the way in which GSENM was designated, I was not surprised to find that residents felt their self-determination was
squelched when GSENM was ‘planned on’ them rather than ‘with them.’ In fact, 16 of the 17 informants (94%) interviewed disliked the way in which GSENM was designated, although a total of eight informants (47%—all newcomers) admitted they were glad that GSENM exists. Interestingly, the only informant who did not have a problem with the way in which GSENM was designated was a BLM employee. An Escalante newcomer agreed that although the designation process was “intrusive,” it was probably the only “practical” way to protect the land based on previous failed attempts to do the same. When asked why GSENM was created, informants answered that it was created both for preservation and political reasons, and there was a general clumping together of environmentalists and the federal government. The overall feeling was that it was an undemocratic way to go about it. During the discussion of GSENM designation, emotions ran high. Words used to describe the designation process included “tacky,” “cheap,” “scary,” “sad,” “political,” and “illegal.”

Those informants (36%) who felt like the GSENM designation process was “illegal” made reference to specific verbiage of the Antiquities Act of 1906, the legislation that Clinton used to create GSENM. The Antiquities Act, Section 2, June 8, 1906 (34 Stat. 225, 16 U.S.C. 431) authorizes the President, in his/her discretion, to declare by public proclamation “historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest” that are situated upon federal lands. It goes on to say that these reserved parcels of land must be “confined to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management” of the protected objects. In fact, the original intention of the Antiquities Act was to give the President power to protect threatened Native American ruins and artifacts. Therefore, GSENM opponents have claimed that Clinton abused his executive power by creating a national monument with few “objects of historic or scientific interest” that does not, at 1.9 million acres, conform to “the smallest area compatible” clause.

Opponents of GSENM have also argued that it was unconstitutional for Clinton to evade NEPA requirements (public involvement) and to bypass Congress. As a result, in 1997, the Utah Association of Counties (UAC) filed a lawsuit against President Clinton in
attempt to overturn the President’s decree, establish a legal precedent limiting future national monuments to “scientific and historic” and “smallest area compatible” and determine which branch of government has the Constitutional authority to set aside wilderness areas. The U.S. Justice Department filed a motion to dismiss UAC’s case, but a U.S. District Judge struck their motion in August, 1999, at which time UAC’s case was referred to a jury trial.

Another topic that surfaced in my interviews with residents involved the differences between “national monuments” and “wilderness areas.” While a couple of Boulder and Escalante newcomers viewed GSENM as a first step toward expanding Utah’s designated wilderness areas (wilderness areas can be established within national monuments), one Boulder newcomer saw GSENM as a step backwards for wilderness protection. The relatively large size of GSENM compared to other national monuments and national parks was another area of concern for informants. As one local Escalante resident put it, revealing a strong sense of territoriality, “[Clinton] took more land than he should have done.”

Finally, informants were asked to analyze the designation process and, in retrospect, comment on how the process might have been done differently. Although the concept of more flexibility on the part of the federal government was discussed, most importantly, locals and newcomers agreed that local input was important and should have been given more consideration prior to the designation. In other words, the general opinion was that GSENM should have been planned with the people rather than planned on the people, granting the local communities a renewed sense of self-determination and creating a stronger conservation effort.

I would give communities a sphere of interest, of responsibility for it and input to it and even a higher value for their perceptions. I think historical use brings arguments to the table, which they [federal government] would not listen to me. They are willing to listen to the fact that in a national setting there are different publics and so they’re willing to say that this part’s for recreation and this part will allow for more...But they need to get where traditional and historical use is part of the determinant. You know we tried to make that argument at all the [planning] meetings
that we had prior to and during the planning process, but they [federal government] refused to listen to them. They [federal government] need to be more flexible on their negotiations and they always approach things legalistically and so I guess in some senses you would have to change some of the laws to allow illegal actions to become legal [Newcomer, Escalante].

I thought there should have been more input by a lot of people, locals, and you know, let’s throw everybody in the pot. And talk about it. Let’s talk about this whole area, this 1.9 million acres if that’s what they’re gonna do and say, ‘Okay folks, this is our plan. Let’s have...what do you think about it? Environmentalists, what do you think about it? Cattlemen, what do you think? Miners...locals...out-of-staters...whatever. It’s public lands, what do you think about this Plan? And have some input. Instead of, ‘Okay it’s designated. Now what do you think about it?’ Especially when something has a potential to affect them either negatively or positively. I think a lot of the locals will tell you it’s a pretty negative impact on them [Newcomer, Boulder].

6.3 The Planning Process

Because public input did not go into the actual designation of GSENM, President Clinton promised local residents and the general public that they would have an opportunity to influence the future management of GSENM. In order to allow for public input, Clinton gave the BLM three years to put together a GSENM Management Plan (“the Plan”). During this three year period, the BLM was to hold open houses for public comment in the rural towns surrounding GSENM as well as in a few American cities. The BLM was also to accept written comments from local community members and the general American public. The goal was to let the American people have a say in how GSENM is managed and to create a Plan that takes into account the wishes of all stakeholders. In Resident Peoples and National Parks, West and Brechin (1991:23) support this approach, stating that “if conservation is to become sustainable, approaches and methods must be developed that more actively involve resident peoples in the planning and decision-making process.”

Traditionally, public comment periods held by federal agencies have involved a public hearing format where interested citizens attended, listened to government proposals,
and then, at the end, had an opportunity to stand in front of a microphone to ask questions, make comments, raise arguments, or express general approval or disapproval of proposed plans. However, under monument manager, Jerry Meredith, the GSENM public comment period ran a little differently. Meredith wanted the GSENM planning process to be “more open and more interactive” than past planning processes with the goal of engaging in “as much two-way communication as possible” (Meredith, 1998:102). In other words, say goodbye to the traditional “three minutes at a microphone” and say hello to a new series of “town meetings.”

The GSENM planning team’s 13 town meetings (or “open houses”) followed the BLM’s general scoping period during the winter of 1998-1999. The town meetings, held in school gymnasiums, town halls, and hotel conference rooms across rural Utah, as well as in San Francisco, Denver and Washington D.C., opened with a 20 minute video describing the BLM’s four proposed Draft Management Plans for GSENM. Following the informational video, attendees had time to look at all four proposed Draft Management Plans (on posters) and then were broken into smaller discussion groups (Hanscom 1999). Comments “for the record” were written down and either given to the BLM at the end of the town meeting, or mailed, emailed or faxed to the BLM at a later time. By March, 1999, the BLM had received 6,500 letters, emails and faxes from interested citizens. Of these 6,500, 38% were received from Utahns and the other 62% were received from residents of outside states. Ninety percent (90%) of all written comments were stimulated by environmental groups (Fahys 1999).

So how effective was the BLM’s new public comment format according to the townspeople of Boulder and Escalante? Although many informants agreed that the BLM had their work cut out for them, 81% of informants (locals and newcomers) expressed a sense of powerlessness and futility. Many believed that the town meetings during the public comment period were just for show, stating that the BLM came with a “plan in hand.” Other residents felt like the input period was an unfairly matched competition between locals and the rest of the United States, particularly money- and member-wealthy environmental organizations. Boulder and Escalante locals, who regarded urban/
environmental comments as more numerous than their comments, believed that the BLM gave the urban/environmental comments more weight. Thus, despite responses (18%) suggesting that the BLM did a good, fair job under difficult circumstances, the majority of residents felt that their input regarding GSENM management fell silent on the federal government's deaf ears, reinforcing what locals' considered their lack of self-determination.

Finally, when I asked informants whether they thought the three years allotted for GSENM planning was a sufficient amount of time for the local townspeople to adapt to the new monument, responses were mixed. A tourism-related business owner and two ranchers agreed that there was "plenty of time." On the other hand, some locals and newcomers agreed that there was not enough time and that it all "happened too fast" for the local people. One local Escalante resident told me, "We [locals] just need to work into this a little bit at a time and others [outsiders] need to be a little bit more patient and understanding." An Escalante newcomer agreed, "You [outsiders] gotta try to get along with 'em [locals] and you don't shove 'em 'cause country people are slow movers, so you know, you just kinda help 'em try to see what you want 'em to see and let 'em take their time getting there." One BLM employee said that although the BLM could have used more than three years, anything over three years would probably have been too much time because of the rate at which social and scientific data change.

6.4 The BLM's New Role

Not only were GSENM's designation process and planning process the first of their kind in public land policy, but also, for the first time in history, the BLM, and not the National Park Service, would manage a national monument. The Bureau of Land Management (once referred to as the "Bureau of Livestock and Mining" by environmentalists), which had traditionally dealt with overseeing grazing on public lands, would now serve an expanded role as both conservation and recreation manager. Because GSENM was previously BLM land, Clinton's decision to assign the BLM as GSENM manager rather than the National Park Service seemed to offer the local people a sense of continuity and familiarity. I was not only curious, then, about how Boulder and Escalante
residents perceived the BLM’s role as the new GSENEM manager, but also how and if the BLM had experienced many internal changes since the transition from BLM to GSENEM land.

When informants were asked about Clinton’s decision to appoint the BLM as GSENEM manager, a slight majority of locals and newcomers (55%) agreed that Clinton had made the right decision and that the BLM was preferable to National Park Service as GSENEM manager. However, all other locals and newcomers (45%) expressed neutrality, or uncertainty, in regards to the BLM’s new role. “I guess we’ll have to wait and see” said one Boulder newcomer. A few locals also expressed dissatisfaction with the changes within the BLM since the establishment of GSENEM, such as a larger BLM staff, including new, non-local BLM employees. Generally, the government-resistant locals saw the whole monument manager choice as a “lesser of two evils.” In other words, whether the National Park Service or the BLM, it was still just more un-welcomed federal bureaucracy in the neighborhood.

When discussing changes in the BLM since their new role as GSENEM manager, informants said that the BLM has grown in size, which has created a larger bureaucracy. For example, one Boulder rancher pointed out that before GSENEM he had one range conservationist and after GSENEM he had seven. But according to a BLM employee, the growth of the local BLM staff has been a positive change because it improves the BLM’s management capabilities. This BLM employee also told me that since GSENEM designation, the local BLM has shifted from a multiple-use to a more preservation-type attitude, focusing more on recreation and wilderness issues than before. (For instance, the BLM is now more stringent on environmental reviews preceding grazing permit renewals.) Others summed up the internal changes of the BLM as “basically a more uptight atmosphere.”

When discussing the changes of the BLM post-GSENEM, the topic of local knowledge vs. scientific knowledge was brought up repeatedly. Many informants made it apparent that traditional hands-on knowledge is more highly valued than scientific knowledge gained through educational institutions and books. Local residents and
ranchers expressed that local knowledge is superior to scientific knowledge, while newcomers simply agreed that non-local BLM employees had some hands-on learning to do. Therefore, having a larger BLM did not seem to be as negative as having more BLM employees who do not possess local knowledge.

There have been definite changes in the BLM in the past three years, since the Monument. There’s a large number of new employees fighting over a computer. Before, the local BLM consisted of mainly locals who understood the practical, common sense of the desert. The Monument brought in a whole new group of book-learned employees with no practicality. They understand things in a book and dates, but they don’t understand the reality of it [Newcomer, rancher, Escalante].

I’ve got the same degree that these guys have got. Okay, so I’m an old man now, alright? But I have the same degree. I don’t think plants have changed that much. I don’t think grazing has changed that much. And we keep changin’ it. Okay, you don’t overgraze. Alright, all the scientific facts of grazing...I could run any range there are with a rain gauge. All I need’s a rain gauge. If I’m down 50% of normal on a range, your range is down 50%. If I’m down 75%, your range is down. So you run a range according to rain gauge and it beats all this scientific crap they throw at ya. So if you get moisture, you get feed, if you don’t get moisture, you don’t get feed, it’s just as simple as that. But you cannot make them understand that because we put 7 of ‘em out of work. Each rancher with a little ol’ $20 rain gauge could do what [the federal government] spends millions on. [Local rancher, Boulder].

[Clinton] didn’t know what land he was takin’. He had never been out on the land. He took Gore’s word for it. And Gore is a terrible environmentalist. He’s a book environmentalist. It’s a little bit different when you get out on the land than it is when you see it in a book. Let’s continue to take care of the land. But let the people who have been on the land, that know the land, and understand it, be the ones to help say how to take care of it. Because, you know, it’s just different than in a book. Gore doesn’t have the local knowledge [Local, ex-rancher, Escalante].

I think with the new Monument and the new BLM Monument personnel, they don’t necessarily know what grazing land should look like. I mean, they’re hired to supervise people and they’re just getting to know the land and whatever. So it’s like a learning curve. They’re trying to find out what they’re supposed to be doing and kind of strike a balance. And the ranchers
need to learn, too, about the land and how the government works and just to work with ‘em, you know [Newcomer, Escalante].

Scientists are kind of funny to deal with. You deal with these scientists and they’re very territorial and they’re very focused. And I wonder who’s gonna bring all of that together and put it in the framework of the whole ecosystem and then not only that, the whole community. That’s my question: Where does the human enter into that and how does it all fit together? [Newcomer, Boulder].

Despite the opinions of those interviewed, the local BLM has faced many challenges in the past four years and has learned a great deal in the process. When I asked one local BLM employee to comment on the BLM’s biggest challenges in the past four years, the response was that limiting local access to certain roads within GSENM was the BLM’s biggest challenge (see Chapter 6.6). Because of the restrictions placed on certain user groups, challenges for the BLM have included trying to appease polarized interest groups such as multiple-use proponents (e.g. People for the USA) and environmental groups (e.g. SUWA). According to this particular BLM employee, “We [the BLM] must be doin’ somethin’ right because nobody agrees with what we’re doin’.”

Neither the BLM employees nor the ranchers interviewed believed that ranchers’ relationship with the local BLM has changed that much since the designation of GSENM. However, one BLM employee indicated that the BLM/rancher relationship may change in the future when road-related lawsuits are settled and the BLM must enforce road closures. In other words, although the BLM agrees that they will continue to manage the grazing as they have in the past, ranchers with permits to graze on GSENM land will be restricted from accessing certain roads that they have traditionally used, limiting ranchers’ cattle management capabilities. When these road restrictions are enforced, the relationship between ranchers and the local BLM will most likely grow more tenuous.
6.5 GSENM Impacts

David F. Hales (1991:247) argues that “any protection approach that is effective will have impacts—positive and negative—on local residents.” Hales (1991:276) also believes that “adverse impacts can generate hostility on the part of the affected people which is dysfunctional to the protected area itself.” I was therefore interested in what exactly has changed since the creation of GSENM and how GSENM has impacted the local culture.

Social impacts can be defined as “consequences, anticipated or not, of some preceding event or action that has altered the ability of a social unit (ranging from an individual to a community) to function as it has in the past” (Brechin et al. 1991:23). The biggest social impact caused by GSENM and reported in interviews is access. Within GSENM, the federal government (BLM) has placed restrictions on such things as road access, firewood gathering, group size and grazing. Limiting such traditional access was perceived by most informants (locals and newcomers) as causing negative social impacts on Boulder and Escalante’s local culture. As one Escalante newcomer explained it, “Access is another traditional use. It’s just the idea that they [locals] could have the access that they need it, and so it’s more of a right than a practicality.”

GSENM’s Final Management Plan ("the Plan"), which was issued for public comment in July, 1999, was supposedly designed with public interests in mind. The Plan divided GSENM’s 1.9 million acres into four management zones (Israelsen 1999) as follows:

1) The “front country zone” (4%): includes highways, allows improvements
2) The “passage zone” (2%): includes secondary dirt roads, allows rudimentary improvements
3) The “outback zone” (29%): more primitive land with limited vehicle use
4) The “primitive zone” (65%): primitive land, limited groups size, limited fires, and no vehicle use or improvements

The BLM gave the general American public 30 days (until August 30, 1999) and Utah’s state government 60 days (until September 30, 1999) to comment on this final Plan. GSENM’s Final Management Plan was issued on February 22, 2000.
6.6 Roads

Because of the large area of GSENM's "primitive zone," which is managed like wilderness, the BLM has proposed in the Final Management Plan to close many existing dirt roads in these areas to permittees and the general public, including local residents. In fact, of the 2,000 miles of dirt roads winding through GSENM, the BLM has proposed to close half of them and to restrict use on some or the rest of them. The local response to the proposed closing of roads within GSENM has been huge. In fact, in protest, rural counties throughout southern Utah began blading new roads (Woolf 1999). Currently, local counties and the state of Utah are preparing to file a Quiet Title suit which seeks to determine ownership of certain roads within GSENM. In addition, some local people have made R.S. 2477\(^2\) claims that need to be settled as well. A BLM representative told me that the BLM has decided not to enforce GSENM road closures until all road claims are settled, even though BLM management must presently abide by all road closures.

Based on a recent survey performed by Five County Association of Governments (FCAG) and my interviews with Boulder and Escalante residents, roads are viewed by locals as symbols of economic and personal freedom. Planning consultant Robert Hugie (FCAG 1999:33) explains that "road access is not just about the right 'to drive on dirt roads that seemingly go nowhere.' Questions of road access go to the heart of a much more fundamental question: The 'right of a community' to have access to 'potential resource opportunities.'” Hugie (FCAG 1999:33-34) goes on to state that most rural households in southern Utah require multiple sources of income for survival and that "threatening to block or restrict access is to threaten the perceive 'rights' of a community to grow and continue to exist."

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\(^2\)R.S. 2477 is an 1866 grant that gave the right of access across federal public lands to the States over roads and trails that can be proven to predate federal claims to an area. Congress repealed this grant in 1976, recognizing its purpose had ended, but R.S. 2477 rights were 'grandfathered'. If not repudiated, an R.S. 2477 road claim will prevent an area from becoming a wilderness area, or at the very least will cause the wilderness to be 'cherry stemmed' around the road so that the road is not included in the wilderness area (http://www.suwa.org/faqpart4.html#monument).
A recent survey conducted in Boulder and Escalante found that 68% of Boulder residents and 79% of Escalante residents support doing “whatever it takes” to ensure that access is protected (FCAG 1999:36,52). In the same survey, only 18% of Boulder and Escalante residents agreed that the County should negotiate with federal land agencies to restrict vehicle access to County-maintained roads (FCAG 1999:37,52). In my interviews, whereas locals exhibited emotional responses to the road issue, newcomers exhibited more neutrality about the proposed road closures, showing the different level of significance placed on access by locals vs. newcomers. Both locals and newcomers, however, believed that prohibiting access to some of the roads impacts the local culture and that these road closures should be re-evaluated. Several newcomers also agreed that a policy of “no new roads” might have been better than closing existing, usable roads.

Territoriality issues pervade the argument against road closures within GSENM. Several local residents argued that under R.S. 2477, the state or county—not the federal government—legally owns certain roads within GSENM and therefore has the authority to make road decisions. Local residents also discussed local taxes, road development, and road maintenance as symbols of road ownership.

Our tax money built those roads and we didn’t build those roads just to be buildin’ the damn road, we built the road because we needed the sucker! You know, to take care of it [the land]. We didn’t build them to just go out there and view the beauty because most generally we didn’t have time to do that type of thing. But they weren’t built for tourists and I don’t know how you keep ‘em off from it now they done all the advertising, but, you know, we didn’t overuse the roads, we didn’t misuse ‘em, and we built ‘em and we kept them up and took care of ‘em and now they [the federal government] just go close ‘em [Local, Escalante].

One Escalante newcomer complained that closing roads within GSENM restricts the local values of independence, freedom and isolation by forcing too many people onto one or two main roads throughout the monument. This resident felt that the purpose of GSENM—a place in which to experience solitude—would be compromised by the
crowding resulting from too many road closures. Ranchers and land managers agreed that certain road closures inhibit proper land management.

[A lot of these GSENM road closures] really inhibits our [BLM]—what I think our ability—to properly manage that area...[For the permittees] to do their management that they’ve done in the past, like just drive out on the road to see how the cows look or to just check on ‘em, they’re not gonna be allowed that, it’ll just be for maintenances, facilities and things like that. When we [the BLM] start enforcin’ it, I think they’ll [the ranchers] not like us as much. They don’t like us much as it is. A lot of it depends on the area. Certain areas I guess I’m glad to see that we’re limitin’ the use on there, other areas I can see absolutely no need to close some of those roads...Quite frankly, most of the open roads go to trail heads and things like that, they don’t go to areas where people traditionally went hunting or people went on picnics and things like that. It’s to a trail head or an overlook or something for the tourist to go see, not to facilitate local use. But then that’s caused a lot of concern with the locals. Like I said, though, I think the road issue is the biggest thing in the whole Plan.

Proposed road closures within GSENM, which have squelched locals’ self-determination and have infringed on locals’ territoriality, triggered local rebelliousness. In response to GSENM and potential road closures, local opponents have personally documented as many roads (jeep trails and washes) as possible in hopes that R.S. 2477 will ultimately prevail in allowing continual access within GSENM.

The County is saying, ‘Well there’s umpteen thousand miles of road that we can document.’ They’re documenting roads that don’t even exist. There’s [a road] that went from Silver Falls, clear down Silver Falls, across the Escalante River, up Harris Wash that was used back in the ‘50s, I think, to haul uranium ore out. And the road up the gulch, pretty much the same thing. These things are gone. I mean, you can’t even hardly find a piece, even a remnant, of the road that goes up the gulch. But it was there because—even though it hasn’t been used for 20-25 years that I’m aware of—it used to go up the wash. They’ll say, ‘Well technically, because it was a road, then it still is a road’ [Newcomer, Boulder].
6.7 Grazing

Although Clinton and Interior Secretary Babbitt directed the BLM to continue to allow grazing within GSENMT, many informants expressed fear that GSENMT has already begun to negatively impact the local ranching culture due to tougher environmental regulations. Some locals even believe that Clinton’s designation of GSENMT was a calculated first step to “squeeze out” the rancher and eliminate grazing altogether. For example, during the summer of 2000, GSENMT country was experiencing severe drought conditions. In July, 2000, GSENMT manager, Kate Cannon3 directed ranchers with grazing permits in the monument to remove their cattle due to poor grazing conditions. Immediately, some locals perceived this mandate as part of a federal “conspiracy” to “squeeze out” the rancher. In fact, locals and some newcomers alike argued that grazing is being targeted.

If the GSENMT wasn’t here, then the ranchers could continue on...but now this Monument is strangling it, so they’re strangling all of it, the last of it. [Ranching] is getting squeezed out [Newcomer, Escalante].

Oh yeah, it’s being stolen from us. They’re putting so many regulations on the cattle that there is no way that a cattleman can keep going. No way [Local, ex-rancher, Escalante].

I get the feeling that some of the cattlemen are kind of getting the short end of the stick. Clinton said nothing would change, things would remain the same as far as uses, but there are some changes that are being made [Newcomer, Boulder].

I think [local ranchers] are behind the eight ball, totally, and they have been for a long time [Newcomer, Boulder].

Other residents perceived the removal of cattle from the desert as purely common sense due to the drought.

I have some friends who are cattlemen. We’re in a drought situation now and the BLM is telling some of the ranchers that they need to get their

3 Kate Cannon replaced acting GSENMT manager, Jerry Meredith, in January, 2000.
cows off early and they say, 'See this is what happens when there's a Monument.' Well, I don't know if it's the Monument. I think it's the conditions. The southwest has had droughts. These people have gone through droughts before. They may have to take some of their cows off early on the Mountain, but there's no feed down in the lower country for winter range. I talked to these guys that say, 'The grass isn't growing down there so there's no winter range.' And then if they stuck 'em out there and we got heavy snows, we'll start losin' cows. They'll start starvin' because they can't, I mean, there's nothin'. The cows that come off the winter range, generally look pretty puny. There's not a lot out there anyway during the good years [Newcomer, Boulder].

I moved [my cattle off the Monument] on purpose. But then I figure myself a good rancher, so I'm not gonna leave a cow out there to get hungry. If there's nothing there, I'm not stayin' [Local rancher, Boulder].

A local BLM employee told me that it was the drought conditions and not a federal conspiracy behind the removal of cattle from GSENM in July, 2000.

I don't think that we're [the BLM] squeezin' 'em [ranchers] out. Especially this year, it's tough. We are doin' some things this year more based on the drought than the Monument. When we're seein' here less than 50% of our normal rainfall we have to take action—'course most of the permittees have taken it on their own. Unfortunately some of the others have not. And then the innuendoes and misinformation that gets spread, you know, and things and then people say, 'Well the BLM's runnin' 'em out of business!' They're just usin' the drought', or whatever, for an excuse, and that's just not the case. This isn't the first time we've done reductions and made adjustments for drought and I'm sure it won't be the last. But as far as us squeezin' 'em out, I don't think so. It's a perception, or a fear. In some cases, it's just easier to blame the BLM than it is to blame poor management.

History helps to explain locals' fear of the federal government's power to squeeze out the rancher. Even though GSENM currently allows grazing under its Final Management Plan, longtime local residents know that national monuments can potentially become national parks with proper passage through Congress, and that national parks do not, in most circumstances, allow grazing. For example, in 1928 Congress doubled Utah's Bryce Canyon National Monument (west of GSENM) in size and re-designated it Bryce
Canyon National Park. In 1971, Utah’s Capitol Reef National Monument (northeast of GSENM) was also expanded and granted national park status (Fleischner 1999:132). For purposes of this research I will call these historically and culturally memorable monument conversions “national park shadows.” Of these “national park shadows,” the largest and darkest one for longtime Boulder and Escalante residents was the conversion of Capitol Reef National Monument into Capitol Reef National Park.

Utah geographer and politician Ralph Becker (1998:56) states that “the designation of Capitol Reef National Park was similar to that of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument.” Becker goes on to point out that local residents supported the designation of Capitol Reef National Monument in 1938 because the National Park Service’s management was kept minimal and locals were allowed to keep their homes and orchards that were within the new monument. However, in the 1950s, conflicts over community uses arose including grazing and uranium mining proposals. Thus, as Becker (1998:57) tells us, “In 1968, as Lyndon Johnson was leaving office, he expanded Capitol Reef by proclamation...No notice was given to state or local residents. The [nearby] town of Boulder was so enraged that the town council adopted the resolution changing the town’s name to Johnson’s Folly. The townspeople believed that the expansion of Capitol Reef and resulting impacts on their winter grazing areas would lead to the demise of the town.” Soon after, Utah’s attorney general ruled that Boulder’s name change was illegal, so Boulder was forced to keep its name. But in time the NPS purchased—and even tore down—many local homes and orchards within the new national park without consulting local residents (Becker 1998:57). Therefore, Capitol Reef National Park’s turbulent history has cast a very big “shadow” on Boulder and Escalante locals—something that many residents pointed out to me during interviews.

Grazing will continue, at least until they shut it like in that [Capitol Reef]
Park up north [Newcomer, Escalante].

I do know that these people who are conversant with the [GSENM
Park].’ They say, ‘They’ll do the same thing that they’ve done in the last
30 years. They'll just take a little bit here and a little bit there and before you know it, about 20 years after it was made a Monument it became a federal park and bingo! They shut it all down!...The people are really hurt by all this. The biggest hurt is they believe that like Capitol Reef, in the end, they’ll be shut down. So because they saw all this happen over there in Fruita [Utah], and Capitol Reef, wow, are they concerned! [Newcomer, Escalante].

When the Monument was created, and we first started hearing about it, I was very concerned, for example, for the cattle rights. And I was very concerned about what I thought had happened at the Capitol Reef closure. So I immediately called up to Capitol Reef and talked to [a knowledgeable person] and he kind of dialoged with me how it had happened [Newcomer, Escalante].

Local ranchers and residents also discussed the possibility that, because of either the reality or the perception of being squeezed out, more ranchers—faced with tougher environmental regulations accompanying GSEN— are feeling pressured into selling their grazing permits to environmental conservation groups. In January, 1999, for example, environmental conservation group, Grand Canyon Trust, purchased from a Boulder rancher all of his grazing permits along the Escalante River in order to protect the river’s riparian zones. According to Roundy (2000:304), “Since 1980 several allotments have been bought out by conservancy and recreational groups...this has reduced the number of range cattle on BLM land from 12,000 in 1980 to around 9,000 in 2000.” Some informants told me that the federal government might soon allow grazing permits to be put out on public bid, which would allow environmental groups to purchase them.

Now the environmentalists are trying to talk ‘em [ranchers] into putting the cattle permits out on bid. But do you think these farmers can bid on them? Well, they’ll [the environmentalists] give a big bid for ‘em and get money from people all over to get these and then they won’t use them. And that will be a way of getting rid of us. Because we cannot pay big price. [Local rancher, Escalante].

Cattle permits cannot be put out on bid at this point in time, but they’re [environmentalists] pushin’ the same legislation to do that so when one comes up for sale they can buy it [Local rancher, Boulder].
When I asked a representative for the BLM how the BLM felt about ranchers selling their permits to environmental groups, this was the answer I got:

As the BLM, we’re not encouraging the Grand Canyon Trust and the permittees to sell to these guys or anything like that. So it’s up to them if they want to buy. We don’t care. On others we’ve told ‘em [environmental groups] that ‘if you buy that allotment we’re probably not gonna close it to grazing. We will use it either for emergency purposes like we did in the other where we created the grassbanks, or else we will maybe move one permittee to that area that’s in a different allotment or somethin,’ just to reduce the use or to spread it out. Because, like I say, there’s no reason to close every area just because somebody wants to buy the permit and the [FLPMA] regulations say that if it’s available for grazing and it’s not causing impacts or there’s not higher values there, then they stay open for grazing. So that’s what we’ve been doin’.

6.8 Other Impacts

In addition to restricted road access and real and perceived grazing restrictions, informants noted that new group size limitations within GSENM was another negative impact on the local culture. Group size restrictions apply to both private groups and commercial groups. Many families in the Boulder and Escalante areas who have traditionally held picnics and reunions on what is now GSENM land expressed concern over the new restrictions.

You can’t go out on the Monument to have a family reunion if there’s more than ten of you! And there isn’t a Mormon family under that many people. It’s extremely caustic for these people to have to ask permission to go out on what has heretofore always been their land...or at least what they have used to reap benefits to exist out in this locale [Newcomer, Escalante].

We can no more have the family reunion on the Monument now than we could fly. I’ve got ___ brothers and ___ sisters and they’ve all got three or four kids and if we tried to get a family group together, there’s no way. We’d have to go to Calf Creek or out on the highway and that’s not where we want to go...The Plan was made for tourists...they didn’t take in enough for locals [Local, Escalante].
Other impacts of GSENM mentioned by informants included restrictions barring the gathering of plants (prickly pears for prickly pear jam, pine nuts, etc.) and rocks from GSENM land for personal use; restrictions limiting off road vehicle use on 1,386 miles within GSENM; restrictions banning helicopters (used to fix power lines and count wildlife) from landing in "primitive zones"; restrictions banning motorized vehicle travel (used to conduct scientific research) in "primitive zones"; and restrictions banning the machines used to strip non-native vegetation in "primitive zones."

6.9 "If I Was King (or Queen) of the World?"

Even though the BLM's Final GSENM Management Plan ("the Plan") was issued on February 22, 2000, I thought it would be interesting to ask informants how they would change the Plan since it is obviously still highly controversial. Of those asked, two newcomers said they were not sure while one newcomer said the Plan was "the best one for the area." Other informants said they would give locals a larger sphere of interest, not close any current roads, give more support to local ranchers who graze within GSENM, and re-evaluate the firewood gathering restrictions. One BLM employee summed it up well:

If I was King of the World? Yeah, there's quite a few things I woulda done a little differently. I would of looked more into the traditional uses and things like that that was goin' on and maybe I would have taken that into consideration more and tried not to alienate the locals as much as we [the BLM] have with some of the decisions we've made. Not necessarily the entire Monument needed to have the same blanket put over it. A lot of that goes to the road access and firewood cutting, things like that that we no longer allows out there. I guess I could quote some of these guys here. They say, 'Well, hell, if it was good enough to be made a Monument the way it was, then why are we changin' it.' And that's their biggest attitude, you know, 'Why do we have to go lock everything up now if it was good enough for Monument and Wilderness and all that before, why change it?'

In order to change GSENM’s Final Management Plan, the only other option, in addition to utilizing the American judicial system, is to convince the President to reverse the GSENM designation. Interestingly enough, my field research preceded the 2000 Presidential election by two months. Republican George W. Bush and Democrat Al Gore
were the 2000 presidential candidates. Upon arrival in Escalante, I heard talk around town that, if nominated, George W. Bush planned to reverse Clinton's GSENM designation. Although this seemed like a pretty incredible feat for one person to accomplish (president or not), I was curious what local residents thought about this, and how they perceived presidential candidate Bush's intentions and ability. Of those asked, 37% (locals and newcomers) believed that a presidential reversal of GSENM would never happen, 37% (all newcomers) felt that there might be a slight possibility, and 25% (locals and newcomers) believed that, if elected, George W. Bush would, in fact, pursue a GSENM reversal.

Overall, a majority of Boulder and Escalante residents indicated that both GSENM's designation and planning processes prevented local residents' self-determination. Informants also expressed a common belief that GSENM access restrictions placed by the BLM (and mandated by the federal government) have impacted the local culture by infringing on local traditions and territoriality. In fact, 83% of informants felt like portions of the GSENM's Final Management Plan need to be re-evaluated, especially in regards to impacts on the local culture.
CHAPTER 7
ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

The natural environment plays a significant role in the daily lives of Boulder and Escalante residents. Much of this has to do with the agricultural heritage and geographical remoteness of each town. Because local grocery stores are small and offer a limited supply of fresh produce, many residents maintain vegetable gardens and orchards on their property to provide them, and their neighbors, with fresh vegetables and fruit. It is also common to spot large animals grazing in residential areas. During my research I observed everything from goats, horses, cows, pigs, hens and a small herd of sheep in either the front yard or back yard of specific resident’s homes. Although most Boulder and Escalante residents use these animals for sources of food, milk, wool, or income, local residents sometimes keep their animals and garden plots around to preserve their connection to the past. In fact, many of the longtime local residents share a symbiotic relationship with the land and animals—a relationship that goes beyond pure utility. Because of this direct connection to and dependence on the natural environment, the ways in which local residents apprehend and value the environment tends to differ from the ways in which urban outsiders apprehend and value the environment. These differences create misunderstandings between Boulder and Escalante residents and outsiders (particularly urban environmentalists), and reinforce the stereotyping and polarization of rural residents and urban outsiders.

7.1 Humans and the Environment

One thing that became apparent in my interviews with informants, both longtime locals and newcomers, was the belief that humans share an important connection to the environment. Local informants expressed concern that urban individuals, isolated in their human-constructed enclaves, tend to forget or “lose” their connection to the natural environment. They believed that spending time in Boulder and Escalante helped urbanites reestablish this human-environment connection.
I see out-of-towners and city folk who come here who think that it is the most wonderful thing in the world to see a cow standing on a highway! So they all get excited. It makes me chuckle. But I guess [city] people distance themselves so much away from animals. It’s so, so sad, and so it’s fun to watch the tourists. You know, here we have some sheep herders and they’re herding ‘em across the street and everybody’s stopping and ‘Looky, there’s sheep!’ [Newcomer, Escalante].

I can remember some [city] people come through and stayed in a motel up town here and they had some kids and they had never seen little animals. The motel owner said, ‘Oh gads, you gotta go down to ______’s! He’ll show your kids animals.’ And they came down and we had little lambs, you know, and they’re really cute and they’re pets and they’ll come right up to you. And the kids could pet ‘em and love ‘em. We had some baby chickens and they got to hold the baby chickens and this little girl from New York cried when she held the baby chicken. It was so cute and, you know, we love to do things like that [Local, Escalante].

7.2 Conservation vs. Preservation

Human beings, as part of a living ecosystem, are dependent on the environment for survival whether this fact is consciously acknowledged or not. Living close to the environment and the realities of humans’ dependency on the environment, both the locals and newcomers of Boulder and Escalante tended to view the natural environment in more utilitarian terms. In contrast, it is understandable that individuals who do not pick vegetables from their gardens, graze and fatten their livestock for a paycheck, or slaughter a pig for breakfast, have an inclination to separate themselves from the environment as it relates to their survival. For many urbanites, the natural environment is generally viewed in a more abstract sense, whether aesthetically, spiritually, or scientifically. As Barry (1999:22) points out, “Different...value-based views of the environment means that not all humans...will necessarily have the same meaning of ‘environment.’” The resulting value conflict between the “utilitarian” group and the “abstract” group as it relates to the environment can be seen in the “conservation” vs. “preservation” distinction, with Boulder and Escalante residents leaning towards the conservation side and urban environmentalists leaning towards the preservation side.
The conservation/preservation distinction, symbolized by conservationist Gifford Pinchot and preservationist John Muir, was formed a century ago when battles over natural resource development in American wilderness areas erupted. Professional forester Pinchot, representing the conservationist argument, believed that natural resources had economic value and should be made available to humans. At the same time, Pinchot argued that these natural resources should be used wisely, in a sustainable or "conservative" manner—one which would secure resources for future generations. Although Muir understood the utilitarian value of natural resources in his daily life and agreed with Pinchot’s desire for sustainability, Muir valued pristine wilderness too much to completely support Pinchot’s ideas of “wise use.” In Muir’s eyes, using natural resources while at the same time attempting to preserve a wilderness area’s inherent natural values was impossible. This was based on Muir’s spiritual views that wild nature provided the best “conductor of divinity” because it was least associated with man’s artificial constructs (Nash 1967:125). Thus, a schism “ran between those who defined conservation as the wise use or planned development of resources and those who have been termed preservationists, with their rejection of utilitarianism and advocacy of nature unaltered by man” (Nash 1967:129).

The ideological battle between conservationists (rural residents) and preservationists (urban environmentalists) continues today in regards to American wilderness. Milton (1996:124-125) describes environmentalists as those who believe: 1) nature is at its most valuable when untouched by human hand; and 2) nature cannot defend itself against humanity, therefore depending on human interaction for its very survival. In contrast, Milton (1996:223) describes a more conservationist perspective as one in which “a dam built by people is as natural as one built by beavers, computer technology is as natural as collecting fruit from the rainforest.”

I was curious to see how many of my informants supported a conservationist philosophy vs. a preservationist philosophy in regards to the environment and to what extent these values were attributed to each informant’s socioeconomic and educational background. Not surprisingly, a few informants (33%) who were newcomers to the area
with college educations believed that legally protected wilderness areas that prohibit motorized or mechanized travel and limit human impacts are important and that these protected areas have economic value. At the same time, however, nearly all informants (88%), whether locals or newcomers, took a more conservationist stance. Informants generally expressed that humans are a part of, and not apart from, the environment and that “building a dam” is a “natural” act vs. the “unnatural” act of preserving nature undisturbed. Therefore, many residents believed that “moderation” is more appropriate than “abstention” in regards to natural resource conservation.

Nature is valuable if it’s in service to the inhabitants, whether that is the animals or whether it’s the people. If you’re gonna destroy it to make it valuable...then you have to weigh the costs/benefits and balance it out. If you’re gonna have to drive a road through it and destroy x amount of your acres so that you have people come through it, then you have to weigh that. But, the nature and the very value of the whole location is the fact that people can go off and be alone. I would never want things to be all paved up into a parking lot and that’s wrong. But animals are a natural part of it, whether they’re cows or whether they’re those stupid skunks [laughs], you know, they all have their value, and moderation in all things [Newcomer, Escalante].

Even when I was goin’ to college there was way too many people out there that think that man and humankind is not part of the ecosystem or the environment and that we should stand back. Well, we can’t stand back everywhere, you know. We gotta be somewhere and our actions are definitely gonna affect what we do, you know. Hell, we’d all be hungry and cold if all’s we did is just stand back and look at nature. ‘Course there wouldn’t be nearly as many of us either. We’d be all dead [Local, Escalante].

It depends on where it is and what it is, I suppose. I don’t think you should go in and pillage and plunder, but on the other hand I’m not sure that you need to preserve it for all eternity and not let anyone on it, otherwise they can’t enjoy it. So I really think that there should be a middle ground where you have to use it but you need to preserve it at the same time and monitor that. Like the grazing. If you’re overgrazing here, take the cattle off and move them somewhere else. I’m not opposed to people earning a living off the land...but, on the other hand, it shouldn’t be totally destroyed. There has to be a happy medium [Newcomer, Escalante].
Although informants disagreed slightly about the value of “untouched nature,” all
(100%) local and newcomer informants asked agreed that “nature cannot defend itself
against humanity” and that it is humans’ obligation to protect nature from human impacts.
This tells me that Boulder and Escalante locals and newcomers do value their
environment, despite existing stereotypes to the contrary.

7.3 Environmentalists

In the 1960s, the modern American environmental movement, born out of the
earlier conservation/preservation movement, was accelerated by what one author (Nash,
1990:287) calls, “the antiestablishmentarian mood of the decade.” From Rachel Carson’s
alarming publication of *Silent Spring* in 1962, to the inception of Earth Day in 1970,
modern American environmentalism was on its way to maturity. Whereas preservationist
“forefathers” such as John Muir, Aldo Leopold, and Robert Marshall sought legally
protected wilderness areas, their environmentalist successors have sought everything from
national environmental regulations to environmental (social) justice using a combination of
media savvy and political and scientific expertise. As Libecap (1981:xvi) explains, “In the
1970s the old time conservationist interest was greatly augmented by demographic change
and the emerging and politically vital environmental interest.” Since the 1970s, the
American environmental movement has continued to grow in size and complexity. Sale
(1990:288) discusses modern environmentalism’s “fuzziness” as follows:

This upstart movement has no agreed-upon name, nor even much in the
way of cohesion or self-identification. It is taking shape in perhaps as many
as a hundred different organizations, not more than half a dozen of them
national in scope. It has roots in, and derives its basic tenets from, a
confounding variety of ideas and doctrines, including bioregionalism, Green
politics, deep ecology, animal liberationism, ecofeminism, permaculture,
steady-state economics, ecophilosophy, native spiritualism, and social
ecology—and that’s just for starters. It puts forth everything from
academic quarterlies and slick monthlies to occasional newsletters and
street-corner handouts, with a few hardcover books for added
respectability. Its tactics run the gamut from petitions and letter-writing
campaigns to alternative assemblies and even full-scale ecological sabotage
(‘ecotage,’ as it is known in the trade).
Despite modern environmentalism’s complexity, one thing that is very certain to longtime local residents of Boulder and Escalante is the belief that it was “environmentalists” who used their political expertise and media savvy to influence, persuade and encourage President Clinton’s designation of GSENM—an act which impacted the local culture by squelching locals’ self-determination, infringing on locals’ territorial rights, and paving the way for the infiltration of outsiders into their isolated and rural towns.

During my interviews, I explored Boulder and Escalante residents’ perceptions of “environmentalists” and whether perceptions differed between local and newcomer informants. What I encountered was a long list of negative adjectives in regards to environmentalists from 85% of all newcomers and locals. Newcomers and locals agreed that environmentalists tend to be urban, elite, arrogant, judgmental, demanding and controlling, which are all turn-offs to Boulder and Escalante residents who value the rural way of life, the more egalitarian social roles enjoyed in their rural setting and the freedom of choice. Environmentalists were also described as misled, misinformed and “out in left field” because they do not understand the “truth.” It was believed that environmental groups specifically tailored and targeted fraudulent “facts,” via the media, to their unsuspecting and gullible members. Money was another issue that came up in discussions about environmentalists. Both newcomers and locals agreed that environmental groups are money-motivated and that environmental groups use fraudulent information to “keep the people writing checks.” Therefore, environmental groups were described as fraudulent and untrustworthy, characteristics in direct conflict with truthfulness and trustworthiness, which are highly valued by locals. One local informant even compared environmentalism to a religious cult, where brainwashing is used to keep the membership up and money coming in. Here is what informants had to say, in their own words:

Q. What comes to your mind when I say ‘environmentalist’?

Goddamn. That’s one word: goddamnenvironmentalists! That’s generally what comes to mind, just jokingly. The SUWA [Southern Utah Wilderness Association] position is important. On the other hand, I just have a hard
time with the approach, I really do. It’s too extreme. It’s ugly, it’s nasty, it’s snide. It’s just so mean-spirited, and a lot of their stuff is just **sarcastic**! Sarcasm isn’t a good form of communication. It really isn’t. It’s kind of alienating in that form. But they’re in the business of generating funds. You’ve gotta keep the checks rolling in. It’s important to keep the money coming in. So whatever keeps the people writing checks, and I’m not saying that that’s necessarily bad, I’m sure there’s a lot of good there, too. I don’t necessarily like their approach. A lot of people who, especially people who are urban and elite, quantify other people’s recreation experiences. There’s absolutely no empathy at all involved in looking at the guy, in the motor home, whose watching it all on video camera while his wife drives. There so much **disdain** for that person and that is not the way to experience it. Well my attitude is that guy is experiencing this Park as to the best of his ability, in fact, it’s as good as mine, because I do it to the best of my ability. It takes a completely different form, but it’s equally valid and it produces the same thing in two different individuals, so what the hell’s the difference? ‘We’re backpacking, you should backpack.’ ‘Those horses shouldn’t be here.’ ‘Those people, if they can’t come on their own, they shouldn’t be here.’ They’re not **qualified** to be here. Well who the hell are you to say that? So, there’s a lot of that. There’s a lot of qualifying people’s recreation experience against your own. So that concerns me [Newcomer, Boulder].

A misled group. Motivated with money. The directors and the people runnin’ it [environmental groups] is gettin’ filthy rich. They’re not tellin’ the truth. They’re not gettin’ the real story out and if they haven’t got a controversy, they haven’t got the money comin’ in. It’s just a scam. It’s like a pyramid. They take pictures of a water hole and they send it out and they claim a half a million dollars and take it to Court. The guy spends $100,000 of it in Courts and pockets $400,000. They’re smart [Local rancher, Boulder].

They’re demanding. Radical. Programmed to create trouble. They’re against private entities, although they want things private for themselves, like wilderness set aside for the few who want to experience solitude. They’re clear out in left field. We take care of the land. They ruined where they’re from and now they want to take away our land. There is an ironic story about the Escalante River. The environmentalists wanted the cattle off the river so the Grand Canyon Trust purchased all grazing rights along the River. But because there are no cattle down there anymore, the willow and tamarack has filled in the whole area with thick growth making it impossible to hike in there now. Before the cattle would graze a trail for hikers and keep the growth down. This helped hikers avoid things like
quicksand. So, now the environmentalists want the BLM to spend money to build a trail along the river and keep it in working condition [Newcomer, rancher, Escalante].

Some of these environmentalists, it is like a religion to 'em. Do you remember when Jim Jones killed all those guys down in Guiana and had them all take poison? That religious group he had down there? And he talked to them enough that they all took poison. Well that's what they are doing with this environmentalism. They're [environmental groups] just telling 'em [environmentalists], 'oh, the cattle are ruining the desert down there.' Well, they're not ruining it, they're spreading the seed, they're keeping the fire hazard down, they're maintaining it so that we don't have so much erosion. [Environmentalists] use the media, too. Oh do they ever! To the 'nth degree! And the internet...They stopped our reservoir. They wanted to stop it because 'Well, we want to stop it because you'll make this big reservoir up here and you won't use it for agriculture and keep the town the way it is...you'll use it for population increase and...'—cause we are short of water and culinary water—and they're afraid we'll use it for that. And legally, we could. But we don't want to, we want it for the farms and for our gardens [Local, ex-rancher, Escalante].

My biggest argument against the environmentalists is that they're arrogant. I don't like that, anywhere [Newcomer, Escalante].

There was even the belief among locals and newcomers that environmentalists have made direct attacks on the local culture with both actions and words. Whether or not the following statements are based in reality, the very fact that these perceptions of environmentalists exist help to better explain the stigmas placed on environmentalists and the resulting polarization of the local people and individuals associated with environmentalism.

I was an environmentalist, I thought, before I came down here. I personally thought that one should—one has to be very careful of what one designates as, you know, open to everybody and that it's good to save land and things, and trees and space for people and future generations. I came down here and not only heard the stories, but started meeting the personalities that were associated with environmentalists and I was appalled. No wonder! No wonder they [locals] hate them [environmentalists]! Environmentalists have done illegal and irresponsible and aggressive things. They have said that there isn't a road when there are roads. They have gone out and removed surveying stakes for ranchers,
burned down homesteads and farms, and have poisoned water holes and anything they can do to get the ranchers off the land. Now how can anybody who’s a rancher feel good about somebody who claims to be an environmentalist? [Newcomer, Escalante].

[Environmentalists] write ignorant things on the internet and tell how backward we are and uneducated. We’ve even been told that we were inbred! They come to City Council meetings and they sit—we finally got them to stand up now—but they won’t pledge allegiance to the flag. They really respect our government! [Local, Escalante].

Only one informant to whom I asked this question showed neutrality when discussing environmentalists:

[An environmentalist is] someone that is aware of the environment and cares about what it does. I don’t have a lot of trouble with that word. I think most people are environmentalists so the label has nothing to do with the word. I think people can use it wrongly...manipulatively. But the people that were here [locals] were taking care of the environment and they’ll be arguing with you for two weeks telling you that they’ve been taking care of the environment, that they’ve been doing a good job. They had to live here, they had to make it work, they were ‘environmentalists.’ It’s a buzz word. It doesn’t have anything to do with the definition [Newcomer, Escalante].

7.4 Ranchers

To compare with my data on environmentalist stereotypes, I asked my informants to describe ranchers. In contrast to “goddamn,” “money hungry,” “misled,” “demanding,” “radical” and “arrogant” environmentalists, ranchers were generally described by local and newcomer informants as “honest,” “broke,” “hard working,” “funny,” “opinionated,” “trustworthy” and “independent.” Newcomers and locals exhibited a sense of respect for ranchers that they did not exhibit for environmentalists. However, informants were also quick to point out that there is a difference between a good rancher and a bad rancher (based on a rancher’s treatment of the land and animals and their work ethic). Also, possible weaknesses indicated, by newcomers only, were ranchers’ inability to organize, their anger toward the federal government, and their resistance to change.
Q. What comes to your mind when I say 'rancher'?

They are honest people, hard workers. Their cattle’s important to ‘em and there’s just a different feeling about working with the land and going out and changing the water and trapping gophers [Local, ex-rancher, Escalante].

Some are hard-working. Some are funny as hell. Amusing, opinionated. Like I said, though, hard-working. Generally do what they say they’re gonna do. I would say honest, trustworthy. The older ones are for sure [Newcomer, Escalante].

[Ranching] is something they’ve been doing for years and years. Some of ‘em are not as good at it as others, some of ‘em ought to have their hand slapped and they ought to be punished for trespass or they ought to be punished for different things. But a lot of the guys are pretty good at what they do. They work hard. It starts early in the morning and it goes to late, late at night. I hate to see those people [ranchers] suffer. I really do. Some of ‘em [Newcomer, Boulder].

Ranchers are an independent breed. One of their failures thus far has been their inability to organize. But they’re fed up, they can only handle so much of this stuff. They just don’t have the time to do it effectively [Newcomer, rancher, Escalante].

They hate the federal government. Anything having to do with the government, it doesn’t matter what it is, they hate that ‘cause they like to do what they want to do when they want to do it and they don’t like somebody else tellin’ ‘em what to do. They’re spunky people, they’re very independent, they’ve done ranching and stuff for generations and that’s what they know, that’s what they like, they don’t want to give it up and I can understand that. But they’re pretty set in their ways [Newcomer, Escalante].

They’re all broke [Local rancher, Boulder].

They’re afraid of change [Newcomer, Escalante].
7.5 The Stereotypical Conflict

From the above informant responses it is obvious that local residents possess definite perceptions about and stereotypes of both environmentalists and ranchers. But as Daggett (1998:49) explains, "there is no such thing as a typical rancher, any more than there is a typical writer, or a typical African American, or a typical environmentalist...it's a truth we forget all too easily. The types of gross generalizations we readily condemn when they're used to refer to ethnic, sexual, or cultural groups are still pretty much business as usual among much of our society when the butt of the reference is people who share an occupation or lifestyle." In other words, stereotyping "environmentalists" and "ranchers" is still considered socially acceptable even though it is as erroneous as other socially unacceptable forms of stereotyping.

According to Stangor and Schaller (1996:6), "Stereotypes influence what information is sought out, attended to, and remembered about members of social groups as well as influence social behavior...stereotypes are learned and potentially changed, primarily through...direct contact with members of other social groups." The problem is that stereotypes generally keep individuals and social groups apart, preventing them from interacting and, thus, communicating with each other. With local residents' perceptions of "environmentalists" and "ranchers" in mind, I was not surprised by informants' responses to whether or not environmentalists and local ranchers have ever worked together. Of those asked, all informants (100%) stated that local ranchers and environmentalists either have never worked together or that they have not worked together since GSENM. Two informants, including a local and a newcomer, told me that the two groups have worked together in the past but that the creation of GSENM has stilted all collaboration.

Interestingly, though, informants seemed more optimistic when discussing the future of local rancher/environmentalist relations. Of those asked, 77% felt positive that environmentalists and local ranchers would work together more often in the future, although many agreed that it would take time to rebuild trust and that it would take the more moderate individuals on each side of the fence to come together.
Executive director of the Malpai Borderlands Group\(^1\), Bill McDonald, refers to this more moderate group of individuals (representative of the majority of Americans) as the "radical center." McDonald states that political and social remedies for the erosion of landscapes will be decided by the mainstream and not by the fringes. He says (Wilkinson 2000:24), "It’s easy to be idealistic and uncompromising when there is no hope of winning everything you want in court battles. But it’s radical to get conservation actually accomplished on the ground." McDonald believes that accomplishing conservation on the ground is radical in nature because of it’s challenging nature. Boulder and Escalante residents seemed to agree:

I think if we can keep those [ranchers and environmentalists] that are kinda towards the middle and have similar goals to improve the land, I think we could work things out. I think we could do that. When we get the far left and the far right we’re not gonna convince either one of ‘em that they’re right or wrong, or let alone let ‘em see any middle ground. But you know, it’s gonna take a little bit to build the trust level back up but I think it’ll happen [Local, BLM Employee, Escalante].

I see a radical group of people on both ends of the [rancher/environmentalist] scale. Well, somewhere there’s some folks that, I believe, could really sit down and pretty much solve disagreements, but we have these people over here that just love a fight. And so they just stand and yell and scream and doin’ everything they can to...and I think the average person would like to say, ‘Hey look you guys, why don’t we just...’ I think they’re finally going to have to collaborate. I think there’s some folks from both sides, there are environmentalists working with cattlemen. Hey, instead of fighting about what you’re doing to the range—and maybe we really don’t even know much about it—why don’t we work together. If we think the cows are messing up this riparian area, why don’t we do something about it? Why don’t we go help you do some fencing, why don’t we help you create some stock watering areas, why don’t we help you do this...and we’ll alleviate this problem. And so they come and they work together and the ranchers says, ‘I’ll be damned, these guys are people just like me.’ And then some environmentalist says, ‘You know, this old guy, he’s not all that bad.’ And people aren’t [Newcomer, Bldr.].

\(^1\)The Malpai Borderlands Group is a creative and collaborative partnership among a number of ranches in Arizona, New Mexico and Mexico working to protect an area of about 1 million acres (Wilkinson 2000:24).
Twenty-three percent (23%) of informants I spoke with saw no future improvements in local rancher/environmentalist relations because, as one local informant put it, “maybe feelings go too deep.” Of the 23% of informants (all locals) who felt less optimistic about the future of local rancher/environmentalist relationships, it was believed, in addition to having the more moderate individuals on each end come together, that it is equally important for environmentalists to show more respect for the ways of the local culture and to stop trying to exert control over the local people. In other words, some informants felt that before common ground can be reached, environmentalists must reconsider their whole approach to environmental protection.

We’d [locals] kind of like them [environmentalists] to go along with us and all of us work together instead of [environmentalists] just coming in and telling us we’re going to do this and we’re going to do that...I would like to see more cooperation between the environmentalists and the townspeople, but the townspeople feel like...and I feel like...we’ve given enough, we’ve taken care of this land, now they need to come in here and say, ‘we would like to do this...how could we do this?’ but they move in and say, ‘This is the way it’s going to be and if you don’t like it, lump it, ‘cause we’re going to save the land’. Well, hell, we’ve been saving it for a hundred years [Local, ex-rancher, Escalante].

7.6 Toward Resolution

Writer and environmental advocate Dan Daggett spent years traveling around the vast rangelands of the western United States in search of circumstances wherein ranchers and environmentalists have worked together successfully. As a result of his wanderings and discoveries, Daggett wrote Beyond the Rangeland Conflict: Toward a West that Works, a book which highlights ten examples of western ranchers and environmentalists who have collaborated in order to attain similar goals. Daggett believes that one way to get unlikely groups to come to the table requires a particular ‘common ground’ approach. Daggett (1998:6) states that he initiates collaboration “by having people of diverse, even opposite points of view identify the goals each of them wants to achieve on the land. Then I encourage those apparent adversaries to work together to reach whatever of those goals they hold in common.” Daggett (1998:8) explains that conflict and polarization
result because people concentrate too much on the negative aspects of their adversaries, rather than the positive aspects. He states that environmentalists and ranchers focus “too much on how one side or the other can win the fight and too little on how [they] can all make things better; too much on issues and too little on the land.” West and Brechin (1991:25) agree that “in order for [negotiation] to work, environmentalists and local people must seek out areas where their interests converge on a range of issues.”

Informants agreed that local ranchers’ and environmentalists’ interests do converge on some issues. Of the residents I spoke with, 88% felt like ranchers and environmentalists, despite their conservationist/preservationist leanings, share similar goals in regards to preserving the land and open space for future generations. As May (1998:50) states, “it is a mistake to imagine that these [local GSENM] people have no regard for the majesty of the place and would despoil it if the government did not stop them. It is true [they]...have a more practical perspective on its beauties [than environmentalists].” Most informants believed that preserving open space, promoting environmental health and employing “sustainable” practices are important to both groups despite their different perspectives.

I look at the ranchers around here and they would like the people to leave this country alone. I think the environmentalists think pretty much the same way, just leave it alone. In that respect, they’re really a whole lot closer if they would just sit down and talk...They’re only about that far apart [shows an inch with forefinger and thumb] [Newcomer, Environmentalist, Boulder].

Environmentalists want places to recreate, wild places to recreate and accessible places to recreate. Ranchers want access to those same areas to do some of the things they do to maintain their living. They don’t want to express it [similarities], because it ties ‘em in with the environmentalists [Newcomer, Escalante].

I see [ranchers] who are just bustin’ their butts and tryin’ to make it happen and have a really good appreciation for the fact that my needs and his needs are pretty much the same in terms of what we want to see out of the country. His is a bit more extractive, but sure is self-sustaining [Newcomer, Environmentalist, Boulder].
I think that they [environmentalists] love the land, but they've not been on it enough to understand it, so their love for it is different than ours. I think theirs in some way is kinda like a religion, you know, none of us have seen God, but we all know he's there. You know what I mean? And they know that this land is there and they appreciate it from that aspect, but we [locals] appreciate it and love it from being on it and working with it and taking care of it and seeing it mature and feeling for it when things go bad [begins to cry] when we don’t have any storm. [Local, ex-rancher, Escalante].

Even though the majority of informants acknowledged that local ranchers and environmentalists share common values in regards to the environment, they also acknowledged that communication problems have kept these groups polarized.

I think that if they sat down and actually talked, face-to-face, without confronting each other, I think they would probably find out that they had more similarities than they thought they did [Newcomer, Escalante].

I think they have a lot of the same values, you know, not all of 'em by any means, but same values, same things, the biggest problem is sittin’ down and talkin’ those out and bein’ able to mutually agree [Local, Escalante].

In spite of their ideological differences, it is fair to say that local ranchers and environmentalists, as well as Boulder and Escalante locals and newcomers, value their environment and believe that it should be used in a sustainable manner. Open space, clean air, and time spent in the outdoors, whether horse riding or hiking, are things that are valued by the residents of Boulder and Escalante. Unfortunately, polarization has occurred because of different ways of approaching environmental situations. Local residents tend to feel that environmentalists are insensitive and have been too aggressive in their approach to environmental protection, which has caused a local backlash of resistance. Locals’ distaste for environmentalists’ approach to environmental protection is seen in the lack of local rancher/environmentalist collaboration since the creation of GSENM. On the other hand, communication between environmentalists and locals is made more difficult by local pride, independence, and a resistance to new ideas which they feel threaten their traditional way of life. Nonetheless, those informants asked agreed that there is a wide
continuum of extremes from far left environmentalism to far right conservatism and that the more moderate individuals from each side need to take a stand and act as leaders. In other words, moderate leaders from both sides are needed to initiate work toward common ground by focusing on the goals they share: open space and a healthy, sustainable environment.
CHAPTER 8
TOURISM

As the number of traditional natural resource-based industries of the Old West declines due to economic and political pressures, the retail- and service-based industries of the New West are sprouting up in their place. Rural economies of the American West, with their relatively small populations and large natural resource bases, have always relied on urban interests and desires (FCAG 1999:9). As national and international urban centers continue to grow in size and wealth, urbanites' interest in, and desire for, open spaces, scenic vistas, and natural wildness also continues to grow. In his essay, "Rural Recreation and Tourism," Richard Butler (1998:217) attributes the growing popularity of rural areas as recreation destinations to increases in global population and disposable income, changes in taste and fashion, the increased interest in nature and things 'green,' an increasing dissatisfaction with urban environments and easier access via cars. Therefore, as the consumption of the nature experience replaces the consumption of natural resources, "it is to the rural counties that the urban market looks for satisfaction" (FCAG 1999:9).

Tourism, particularly nature-based tourism, has always been a significant source of income for the State of Utah. It was quoted in a 1996 Salt Lake Tribune article (Redford 1996) that since 1981, rural economic growth in Utah has been due "primarily to an increase in tourism." According to a 1995 Utah state government study, tourism contributed more to Utah's economy than agriculture and mining combined, with $4 billion and more than $200 million in taxes pumped into the state by tourists (Redford 1996). Southern Utah, in particular, is world-renowned for its unique physical and cultural characteristics, two things that have attracted domestic and foreign visitors since the 1950s. Five national parks, including Zion, Bryce, Capitol Reef, Canyonlands and Arches, decorate the southernmost portion of Utah from west to east, respectively (see Figure 1.2). The towns of Boulder and Escalante have always been just far enough from these national parks to attract many of their own visitors. In fact, Boulder and Escalante
are located about halfway between Bryce Canyon National Park to the west and Capitol Reef National Park to the northeast and have always been just tiny “islands” on a “sea” of BLM and Forest Service land—that is until Clinton designated GSENM, turning Boulder and Escalante into new “gateway towns.”

8.1 ‘Woo-Hoo! A New Monument!’

Tourism is usually promoted by word of mouth or media exposure, both of which stimulate a person’s curiosity to see a particular area or visit a particular attraction. Prior to GSENM’s designation in 1996, visitors who traveled through Boulder and Escalante to explore the Escalante Canyons and surrounding country (now GSENM), consisted mainly of those with family in the area, those who had been to the area before, or those who had heard positive things about the area by word of mouth. Media coverage of the Boulder and Escalante area was limited prior to GSENM’s designation, and, therefore, visitors who actually traveled to the far reaches of Utah’s last frontier (Boulder and Escalante), did so because they wanted to be there. As one Escalante newcomer put it, “People always say there are two reasons why they’re in Escalante: either they want to be here, or they’re lost.”

After it’s controversial designation in 1996, however, GSENM received coverage by a variety of media sources, including television, radio and print. GSENM was not the only Clinton-created monument to receive such media exposure. In April, 2000, President Clinton and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt proposed four new national monuments in the western United States¹, each of which received local and national media coverage. To cite an editorial contributor to the Salt Lake Tribune (May 6, 2000), “That wasn’t applause you heard after Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt heralded each [proposed national monument] last month. It was the roar of a million SUVs racing down to the REI map department.” In newspaper articles following GSENM’s designation, Boulder and

¹ Oregon’s Soda Mountain, Idaho’s Owyhee Desert, Montana’s Missouri Breaks and land surrounding Colorado’s Mesa Verde.
Escalante residents commented that the media coverage of GSENM influenced the number and type of visitors coming through each town. During my research, one Boulder resident admitted to me that because of GSENM, "We're on the map now."

Maps are another efficient source for advertising legally protected natural areas. Shortly following its designation, GSENM appeared on Utah maps in bright, eye-catching color, located among other popular southern Utah parks and monuments. Therefore, Utah visitors who might have missed news of GSENM via word of mouth or media coverage needed only to look at an updated Utah map to see the large highlighted area in south central Utah labeled "Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument." In fact, many people actually plan their vacations by looking at maps and searching out nationally or locally designated parks, monuments, wildlife refuges, recreation areas, or other designated "points of interest." But did all of the media attention and fancy map placement contribute to an increase in tourism to GSENM and two of its gateway towns, Boulder and Escalante?

According to an Associated Press (AP 1997) article, tourism in GSENM doubled in the first six months of its creation with the number of visitors to GSENM expected to increase in future years. A recent tally (Roundy, 2000:341) shows the number of visitors stopping by the BLM/Forest Service Interagency Office in Escalante significantly increased between January, 1995 and November, 1999. When the Interagency's numbers are put in the form of a bar graph (see Figure 8.1), visitation shows a definite increase during the annual tourism months of March through November over the past five years. For instance, the Interagency's numbers indicate that there were 564 more visitors in the month of October, 1996, (post-GSENM) than during the previous October, 1995 (pre-GSENM). Whereas visitor numbers increased by only 242 from March, 1995, to March, 1996, (both times pre-GSENM), visitors numbers in March, 1997, (post-GSENM) were up 1,183 from the previous year (pre-GSENM). The same can be said for figures recorded in the month of May. There were only 351 more visitors in May, 1996, (pre-GSENM) than the previous year, however, Interagency Office visitor numbers in May 1997, increased by 1,286 people following GSENM designation. Aside from these large
jumps in visitor numbers from pre-GSENM to post-GSENM in March and May, other figures show a more linear increase in visitation indicating a more general trend in visitation from pre- to post-GSENM. All figures do show that since 1995, visitation has increased rather than decreased.

Because my field research took place exactly four years after GSENM's designation, I asked Boulder and Escalante residents if they believed GSENM has attracted more tourists to the area compared to pre-GSENM. Residents were also asked how important GSENM is to their town's economy. My intention was to better clarify residents' perceptions of GSENM's influence. Responses to both questions differed drastically. For instance, informants (33%--all newcomers) who owned and operated service- or retail-based business answered affirmatively that GSENM either does play, or will play, a significant role in stimulating increased tourism in the area and rejuvenating the economy. Particularly, newcomers owning or operating businesses catering to middle- and upper-class urbanites (art galleries, antique stores, bed and breakfasts, and fine dining restaurants) believed that GSENM has done wonders for bringing in more people and
increasing clientele. Other informants (66%), particularly those newcomers and locals who work outside of service- or retail-based businesses that cater to middle- and upper-class urbanites, expressed more neutrality about GSENM's role in attracting more visitors to the area. These informants tended to view increased tourism as part of a general trend that's been going on for 20 years. As one Boulder newcomer put it, "I can't say what's 'Monument' vs. 'Our Natural Growth.'" An Escalante newcomer told me that any increase in tourism since GSENM was merely a temporary phenomenon:

*Initially*, yes, GSENM brought in more people. After that, I don't think it's been so much. It's died down. It was the initial, 'Woo-hoo! A new Monument!' *as if* the land all of a sudden instantly appeared and heretofore wasn’t in existence, until they called it a Monument. Now all of a sudden it is a 'Monument.'

It should be noted that during my field research (September, 2000), Boulder and Escalante residents expressed concern over a relatively low tourist season.² Many residents were aware of and discussed how domestic and foreign economic fluctuations affect tourism in their area. A few informants attributed the low 2000 tourist season to high gasoline prices. Others suggested that the unusually chaotic wildfire season across the western United States during the summer of 2000 kept tourists at bay. As stated above, the low 2000 tourist season was also attributed to disappearing interest in the area now that the novelty has worn off and the media coverage died down. Overall, informants acknowledged that no matter what affect GSENM has had or has not had on tourism and the local economy, increased tourism has been the general trend over the past two decades.

Another topic that came up often with both Boulder and Escalante residents was the belief that GSENM will never become a destination point due to it's remoteness and lack of what some consider specific "points of interest," such as one or two distinct geographic formations or major cultural attractions. In addition, there was reference made to GSENM existing in the "shadows" (my word) of Capitol Reef National Park and Bryce

²According to a recent Deseret News article, tourism in GSENM during 2000 was down 25-30% from 1999 (Snyder and Wallace 2001).
Canyon National Park. Several Boulder and Escalante residents admitted that they viewed their town as merely a ‘drive-through’ town, part of a scenic loop, and not a final destination. This belief was held by a majority of locals, although a few newcomers made similar comments.

You go to Bryce Canyon now and what else is there to see...? Well, there’s the Grand Staircase-Escalante [National Monument], Capitol Reef [National Park]...we can make this loop and then we’ll do it. And they’ll pretty much stay along the highway [Scenic Biway 12] and go through [town]. So that use has increased a lot. A lot of what we get is overflow from Bryce [Canyon National Park]. When a room’s full there, where are you going to go? You’ll keep goin’ and stay in [GSENM]. So part of it’s due to the fact that there’s more availability now for people to stop. But it’s still not a major attraction. People are not comin’ here just to see the Monument. It’s not a destination point yet and I don’t assume that it ever will be. I hope it doesn’t because I don’t want to live in a place like that! [Local, Escalante].

They’re not stoppin’. They’re just as ready to get out of here. Have you been to Torrey? They’ll go that far. And Bryce Canyon. Between the two of ‘em you’ve got Capitol Reef here and Torrey, all the motels and Capitol Reef, Ruby’s [at Bryce Canyon] and the [Bryce Canyon National] Park. And we’re right in the middle, so it’s just a little day’s drive. [Local, Boulder].

Most of the vacationers now are like the three-dayers and this is way too far to come to not have a destination and come back. It’s like the hikers, they have to go 90 miles-an-hour to the destination, see the destination, and go 90 miles-an-hour back and that’s called ‘recreation and relaxing.’ When people come here they want to have a destination that says, ‘Ta-da! Here it is!’ and we don’t really have that, unless you just stop and look at the horizon [Newcomer, Escalante].

Escalante is so remote and so rugged that it will not be a huge destination for people [Local, Escalante].

Current survey data shows that approximately 11% of both Boulder and Escalante’s income is generated by tourism-related retail and service businesses (FCAG, 1999:11). When I asked residents about GSENM’s economic importance to each town,
there was, again, a wide variety of responses. Owners and operators of tourism-related businesses who had experienced business increases over the past couple of years claimed that GSENM has definitely influenced the local economy. On the other hand, owners and operators of tourism-related businesses who had experienced a decrease in their business disagreed. The overall, general feeling of locals was that GSENM has not been all that economically beneficial to Boulder and Escalante as of yet, but that economic potential does exist. Many informants raised the argument that expectations influence outcomes or, in other words, one must see opportunity in order to reap economic benefits.

In terms of businesses, for all the promise and everything that’s here, it just really hasn’t happened. I think here it’s going to be tourism, but [the locals] don’t know it yet, or they won’t admit it, or they don’t want to see it [Newcomer, Tourism-related Business Owner, Escalante].

These communities are not expecting a lot of benefit [from tourism]. So if they don’t expect a lot of benefit, they don’t work for it [Newcomer, Tourism-related Business Owner, Escalante].

One Boulder informant pointed to GSENM’s negative economic impacts based on it’s potential to limit grazing, which could put local ranchers, who currently contribute approximately 10% to Boulder’s economy, out of business.

[The Monument] can be pivotal to what happens in this town. The ink’s hardly dry on the Final [GSENM Management] Plan and who knows what that’s going to end up meaning. The final straw will be the grazing. So how important is it? I think it’s crucial. What great economic value is the Monument going to be to the rancher? I mean, if the rancher is reduced to the point where he can’t earn a living, then what? That’s not good at all. It’s not good economics for this community. Then we have subdivisions, then we have incredible taxes, and then we have all sorts of things we don’t want to deal with [Newcomer, Boulder].

8.2 Perspectives on Tourism

Informants were encouraged talk not only about tourism in their town specifically, but also about tourism in a general sense, including its perceived benefits and drawbacks.
Benefits of tourism, which were listed only by newcomers, were economic and social in nature. They ranged from money, to opportunities for residents to share something unique with outsiders, to residents gaining something unique from outsiders. Locals I spoke with, on the other hand, said tourism did not offer any benefits that they could think of or see in their community. Newcomers, particularly those individuals who own or operate tourism-related businesses, viewed tourism in a more positive light than locals involved in more traditional livelihoods.

Real or perceived drawbacks discussed by both newcomers and locals included increased traffic, pollution, the infringement on traditional livelihoods, conflict, environmental damage, financial burden, infrastructure burden, and private property damage. Overall, informants had an easier time listing the drawbacks than they did listing the benefits of tourism.

I have heard a lot of comments about many of the canyons that have been so-called designated as really fun places to go and they end up having more toilet paper and garbage left there from the tourists and the so-called environmentalist-type people. Tourists treat [GSEN] like a motel. They expect someone else will come and clean things up. So a lot of nice, wonderful areas are getting trashed by human waste [Newcomer, Escalante].

Recreationists, or outsiders, tend to ignore our private property rights. Sometimes ATV users and hunters from the city come out here--to the last frontier--and sometimes they cut fence, shoot holes in our water storage tanks, and vandalize the area. These particular people need to respect private property rights. If they have respect, I have no problem with them recreating down here because it is public land [Local rancher, Escalante].

8.3 Perspectives on Tourists

In general, tourists are easily discernible from local Boulder and Escalante residents. Clothing, language, vehicles, demeanor, accessories and a variety of other visual and audible clues helped me to distinguish tourists (aka "outsiders") from local townspeople. GSEN, like it's neighboring national parks, monuments and recreation areas, receives visitors from all over the world. Types of tourists that visit Boulder and Escalante are...
generally foreign and domestic urbanites touring the American Southwest in search of a unique nature experience. Tourists that frequent the GSENM area include, but are not limited to, college students on a desert backpacking trip, researchers from a variety of disciplines, hunters and fishers, art/antique collectors, photographers, artists, writers, and many other outdoor and cultural enthusiasts. I asked Boulder and Escalante residents to talk about the type of tourists they generally encounter.

[The type of tourist] is about the same as it's been for years [Local, Escalante].

Most [tourists] are domestic: California, Colorado, Nevada, Arizona, Washington, Oregon. The western part. We've had people from almost every state. We do get some foreigners. We get a lot of Europeans. And in New Zealand they find out about us on the internet [Newcomer, Tourism-related Business Owner, Escalante].

Germans, more Germans than anything, some French, Austrians, Swiss, a lot of Dutch—there are a lot of Dutch visitors—and then the regular few Spanish and East German, or Eastern Bloc are starting to come now, a few of ‘em, and Poland and Czechoslovakia, the Czech Republic, and, uh, some of those others. More from the west. Colorado, especially certain times of the year when schools are on breaks, we get a lot of Colorado college students who come in, and of course, Utah visitors [Newcomer, State Park Employee, Boulder].

Mostly Germans and French. Japanese not so much. They tend to come in on tours and individually not so much, so we get very few. Germans, Swiss, French, Italian, and occasionally Australian and a lot of Canadians [Newcomer, Tourism-related Business Owner, Escalante].

I have actually heard some of them who used to go to Moab [Utah] now come here [Newcomer, Tourism-related Business Owner, Escalante].

Although informants suggested that the tourist type has not changed a great deal since the creation of GSENM, informants agreed that there are a more tourists who are completely unfamiliar with the surrounding geographical, cultural and historical landscape.

We have tourists coming through town asking where the 'staircase' is so they can climb it [Newcomer, Escalante].
They want to see the Grand Staircase. ‘What is the Grand Staircase?’ You know, I haven’t really had anybody ask me where the steps are, but, ‘What is the Grand Staircase and where can I see it?’ [Newcomer, State Park Employee, Boulder].

One concern expressed by Boulder and Escalante residents was that the type of tourists that frequent GSENM and its surrounding gateway towns do not contribute to the local economy.

[Our tourists] are mostly backpackers and we don’t get their business. They come with their stuff and they don’t support our businesses. They don’t stay in our motels [Local, Escalante].

Tourists are here mostly to go camping and so not that much money comes into the community [Newcomer, Escalante].

Even if they do come, they don’t leave their money here. You may have heard this joke already: ‘You know what a hiker is? He is a guy who comes into town with $20 in his shorts and doesn’t change either one of them.’ [Newcomer, Tourism-related Business Owner, Escalante].

Despite the variety of tourists that come through both towns and stop at the parks and monuments along the way, very few informants felt like tourists had much influence on the longtime local residents. Informants attributed this lack of influence to a combination of things like the fact that tourists do not spend much time in these ‘drive-through’ towns as well as the belief that longtime local residents do not allow the tourists (‘outsiders’) to have any influence on them. Ignoring, avoiding, “tolerating,” or criticizing tourists seems to be common practice among many longtime local residents based both on my personal observations and input from residents. Locals’ apparent uselessness for tourists reveals their resistance to outsiders, in general, and outside ideas (ideological diseases), in particular. Of those asked, 83% of local and newcomer informants believed that outsiders had little influence on locals, mostly because locals did not allow outsiders to have any influence on them through ignorance, avoidance, or resistance. The other 16% of informants (newcomers) were “unsure” if outsiders had any influence on locals. Boulder and Escalante newcomers, on the other hand, were more open to interacting with
the tourists. Again, just as expectations influence outcomes, personal and social attitudes affect the level of influence permitted from ‘outside.’

In sum, nature-based tourism has been a growing trend among urbanites since the 1980s, even in the GSENM area. After the controversial creation of GSENM and its subsequent media frenzy, tourism in the GSENM area increased significantly (see Figure 8.1). It is hard to tell, at this point in time, whether tourism will continue to grow at a steady rate or whether the sudden tourism increase was due to the initial “Woo-hoo! A new Monument!” syndrome and will slowly begin to decrease or stabilize over the next few years. In any case, newcomers (college-educated urbanites) proved to be much more optimistic about tourism’s economic potential—especially those who owned and operated tourism-related businesses that cater to urbanites. Locals, on the other hand, were pessimistic about tourism’s economic benefits, stating that the GSENM area’s remoteness, lack of “destination points,” seasonality, unpredictability and outdoor recreationists’ failure to participate in the local economy were all drawbacks to a tourism-based local economy. Although locals did make some good points (for example, tourism to the GSENM area was down in 2000 due to many factors), it is also fair to argue that part of locals’ resistance to tourism and tourists rests with the fact that tourism threatens traditional livelihoods (e.g. hikers replacing cows) and tourists (outsiders) threaten traditional values, beliefs and ideas.
University of Utah history professor Dean May (1998:51) tells us that “the lives of the people [in the GSENM area] are changing no less than the pillars, pediments, and plateaus of Grand Staircase-Escalante.” He goes on to say that, “Change, even in this land that seems so timeless, has always been the one constant and will always be so. To try to stem that change is to fight against nature itself.” Although the Boulder and Escalante residents that I spoke with disagreed about certain aspects of change in their towns, all informants agreed with May’s statement that change has always happened, does happen, and will continue to do so in the future. How that change takes place, or to what degree residents resist that change to take place, is something different altogether. Depending on who I talked to (locals or newcomers) in Boulder and Escalante, change was either accepted or resisted and translated to mean different things.

Of the 17 informants interviewed, 14 (82%) predicted population growth in their community in the near future. But as Howe et al. (1997) warn, many communities are overwhelmed by rapid growth that fails to meet local needs and aspirations. Therefore, in order to identify residents’ values, needs and aspirations, I asked informants what they valued most about their community and what, if anything, they would like to see or not like to see in their community. Perceptions of change, perspectives on newcomers and the future of local ranching were also explored. Finally, informants were asked to specifically predict what their community would be like in ten years and were encouraged to talk about their perceptions of the American West in the 21st Century. Based on informants’ responses, identifying a community vision appears to be in close reach.

9.1 Community Values

Despite the differences between the towns of Boulder and Escalante, informants from both towns expressed similar values in regards to their community. Quality of life
themes brought up consistently by both local and newcomer informants included the
beauty of the surrounding environment and the clean air, quietness and peacefulness,
solitude, freedom, safety, relaxed atmosphere, diverse recreational opportunities, and
friendly people.

I think the beauty of it, the white rocks. And, but I love it. You’ve got
hiking, you’ve got horse riding, you’ve got fishing, you’ve got hunting,
you’ve got sightseeing, you’ve got about everything in one package here.
You’ve even got good weather. If it hits zero here we bawl like a bunch of
babies. It’s the climate [Local, Boulder].

I value the slower lifestyle, the ability to be a rancher, the clean air and the
country lifestyle [Local, Escalante].

The peace, the quietness, the kind of laid-back environment [Newcomer,
Boulder].

The quiet and the solitude...I love the rainbow of colors and the geography.
Moab is all redrock, but we have red, yellow, white, and black, and then
the blue skies and green vegetation and to me the whole place is just one
big rainbow [Newcomer, Escalante].

The people. The people and the quietness of the community [Local,
Escalante].

Boulder and Escalante residents also discussed the value of their town’s cultural
heritage. One Escalante newcomer believed that the local senior citizens possess wisdom
and local knowledge that is of great value to both locals and outsiders, referring to the
senior citizens as the town’s “greatest assets.” In a similar sense, another Escalante
newcomer thought that locals should share their historical and traditional perspectives
with outsiders as a way to not only to entertain outsiders, but more importantly, as a way
to educate outsiders about the town’s local culture and heritage. Many informants also
made reference to the 1991 American movie “City Slickers,” a comedy in which urbanites
spend their vacation at a western dude ranch participating in a traditional cattle drive. The
dude ranch concept was cited as a potential way for local ranchers to continue their
traditional livelihood, educate the public, and stimulate the local economy in the process.
The ranchers...could do like a City Slickers sort of thing. A perfect opportunity to do that if they wanted to do it [Newcomer, Escalante].

I can see opportunities for some of these guys that, you know, they could make a little money off of the tourists with their cattle business, you know, the City Slicker-type business. [Local, Escalante].

On the other hand, local ranchers who value the freedom, independence and solitude associated with ranching, did not express as much enthusiasm about the dude ranch idea.

Everybody thinks the dude ranch would be such a neat thing...But to wait every day on the public, I don’t think I would have liked it and I don’t think my husband would have [liked it either]. [Ranchers] don’t want it as a business, but they like to share [with the public] sometimes [Local, ex-rancher, Escalante].

I suggested that [dude ranch idea] years ago to _____ [rancher]. _____ said, ‘I don’t want any stinkin’ people around my place! I don’t like ‘em anyway and I’ve got enough to do.’ They [ranchers] do like their independence and I appreciate that [Newcomer, Boulder].

9.2 Community Needs and Aspirations

After identifying what Boulder and Escalante residents valued about their town, I was curious to find out what they would like and not like to see in their community. This involved asking them what community improvements, if any, were needed. Overall, residents of both Boulder and Escalante wanted to see more locally-owned businesses and job opportunities, but not too many. In other words, they would like to see more businesses come into town but not at the expense of their town’s existing rural character.

I would like to see local growth as needed to serve the tourists or to serve the local community. I don’t necessarily want to see chains or companies that develop and operate and plan outside of the city limits. I’d love to see business here in town, but how many ways can you slice the pie before nobody makes a living? I don’t think we’re there and I don’t think they need too many more [motel] rooms [Newcomer, Tourism-related Business Owner, Boulder].
We need more individuals investing in the community because this has somewhat been a drive-through community. We need reasons for people to stop longer. I still think that we will see entrepreneurs come in here and open businesses. I frankly hope so, but I also believe that that's going to happen. Somehow, Escalante is in people's consciousness in key places, Park City, Moab...It's like if you have a corner and you have one gas station you only get so much business. You put a gas station on every corner and you get a whole lot more business for everybody. It works for everybody. We call that 'critical mass' and Escalante still needs to achieve that critical mass of businesses [Newcomer, Tourism-related Business Owner, Escalante].

We'd like a little bit of growth so our people could have some jobs...I'd like to see somebody come up with something that our sawmill workers could do when they close the sawmill down in a couple of years 'cause they all have little fields, or a few horses, or a few cows or maybe they've got a donkey or two and then they work at the sawmill. And it isn't the biggest payin' job [Local, Escalante].

I would like to see Escalante become a mom-and-pop homegrown business place. In other words, where you have a 'Fred's' or 'Bob's' or 'Ma's' or whatever [Newcomer, Escalante].

Keep the rural character [Newcomer, tourism-related business owner, Escalante].

Keep it's traditional view [Newcomer, Escalante].

While some Boulder and Escalante newcomers expressed a need for more regulations, whether in regards to employment practices or new commercial/residential development, Boulder and Escalante locals argued that too many restrictions currently exist. One longtime local Escalante resident believed that there were enough regulations, however, they lacked proper enforcement.

I'd like to see a little more [historical preservation laws] here [Newcomer, Tourism-related Business Owner, Escalante].

I'd like to see restrictions on the amount of growth that is possible. I mean not to shut it all out but to proceed within a very reasonable, controlled fashion [Newcomer, Escalante].
Well, there's enough restrictions. I think that what should be is something that they [local Planning & Zoning Board] can make 'em [residents, business owners] do. If somebody come and tell ya that they're gonna do something and you approve it and they go right out and do the opposite. That's where I think that there should be some teeth put in there to make 'em [residents, business owners] do what they say they're gonna do [Local, Escalante].

A recent survey (FCAG 1999: 43-46, 52) questioned Boulder and Escalante residents about whether they thought their community should create ordinances and/or programs that help protect and/or preserve the following: 1) scenic areas (mesa tops, streams, arroyos); 2) farmland; 3) sensitive landscapes (flood plains, steep slopes); and 4) historical uses (homes, land uses). Of all Boulder respondents, 59% desired protection for scenic areas, 45% desired protection for farmland, 50% desired protection for sensitive landscapes, and 59% wanted protection for historical uses. Only about 20% of Boulder respondents did not desire protection for the above and about 20% answered "neutral." Of all Escalante residents, 43% desired (29% did not desire) protection for scenic areas, 67% desired protection for farmland, 64% desired protection for sensitive landscapes, and 61% wanted protection for historical uses. Ten percent (10%) to 20% of Escalante respondents answered "neutral" to the above questions. Overall, more Boulder respondents desired protection for scenic areas, whereas more Escalante residents preferred protection for farmland. About 60% of all respondents desired protection for historical uses and about 10% more Escalante respondents than Boulder respondents did not want to see ordinances and/or programs for preservation/protection.

In addition to physical improvements, many informants' needs and aspirations were social in nature. These needs and aspirations included improving inter-community relationships, such as more community cooperation, cohesion, consensus-building, vision, acceptance, diversity, leadership, respect and trust.

I would like to see the town have a better relationship with the business community. We've got a lot of people in this town who don't earn their living here and don't really see the value of business. But we're a resort community. So they can assess this 1% sales tax but they're generally
pretty anti-business and I think they should understand that of the budget — the budget’s about $70,000 — of that inflow, $36,000 of it comes from sales tax. And so half the town’s budget comes from sales tax. That’s a lot. $3,600 comes from property tax. So let’s have a deep appreciation for where your money is coming from [Newcomer, Tourism-related Business Owner, Boulder].

I’m hoping that the government can be honest with the people because these people here have absolutely no faith in the government [Newcomer, Escalante].

Cohesion, acceptance of diversity and—which they’re [residents] gonna have to do—and a more consensual vision of the future [Newcomer, Escalante].

I believe that communities have a right, if they can figure out a way, to be able to influence how they evolve and they can. It takes a willingness to do that and to get the willingness you’ve gotta have a vision and you’ve gotta have consensus and you’ve gotta have leaders [Newcomer, Escalante].

Of course, as expected, there were residents (locals) from both towns who preferred to see “no change” in their community:

Leave it how it was [Local, Boulder].

[I’d like to see] nothing, really. The fact is, in my opinion, there might be too much change already [Local, Escalante].

When informants were asked what they would not like to see in their towns, the overwhelming response from both locals and newcomers was “chains” (corporate franchise businesses) and commercialization.

Chains. I don’t want the place posted with billboards. I don’t want it to become a big, ugly community. I hope the town can come up with a good town plan, a good plan about how they want to see this community develop. These people are going to subdivide. It’s coming and the town can control the growth so that it’s a win-win. I think they need to come up with something that’s going to work and something that’s going to be visually pleasing. I think it’s possible [Newcomer, Boulder].
I wouldn’t like to see the franchise things [Local, Boulder].

I would hate to see some of the big chain motel type industry move into town. I would hate that. And I would really hate for us to become a destination point, too [Local, Escalante].

[No] McDonald’s, Wendy’s, the Hilton, all those chain motels and chain restaurants and all that stuff. [Newcomer, Escalante].

[No] Chains. We like individual-type businesses. People who are sensitive to the community [Newcomer, Escalante].

[No] Commercialization [Newcomer, Escalante].

Recent survey results (FCAG 1999:20, 52) also show that 77% of Boulder residents and 63% of Escalante residents agree that commercial growth permitted outside cities or towns should not be strip mall in appearance nor continuous along the highway. In addition, 77% of Boulder residents and 64% of Escalante residents agreed that most commercial growth should occur within existing town boundaries (FCAG 1999:18,52). Fifty-nine percent (59%) of Boulder residents and 75% of Escalante residents felt commercial growth should be located where adequate infrastructure already exists (FCAG 1999:19,52).

One Escalante newcomer pointed out that although the majority of Escalante residents do not want to see franchises and commercialization in their community, local resistance to building and zoning restrictions—which are crucial to keeping out unwanted businesses—permits into the community the very types of businesses that residents want to keep out:

I would like to see Escalante stay free of [chains]. But unless they [local residents] get off their butts they can be really challenged by [chain development]...If you look around and this is how you want Escalante to be in ten years, with maybe some increase in businesses and this, that and the other, you need more regulation today so that you can stay this way then you do. And they’re [locals] going, ‘Well we don’t want more regulation!’ Well, then you’re open to McDonald’s and Burger King, etc., because they’ll just come in here. They [the locals] may not even want [chains] but they don’t see the connection. They just don’t see the
connection. They don’t understand that you just can’t keep those people out, but it has to be through legitimate controls. But everybody has to be controlled, everybody that’s been here. You just can’t say, ‘Well, let’s see, how long have you been in town? Oh, you’ve been here five years, well here’s your rules. If you’ve been here for a lifetime then you have a whole different set of rules. And if you just arrived today, oh hell, you oughta see the hoops you gotta jump!’ You can’t do that, see, but they don’t understand that.

There was also a common hope among Boulder and Escalante residents that their towns do not become recreational “playgrounds” for wealthy urbanites, even though Boulder residents foresaw their town particularly heading in that direction. Residents also commented about the affluent ski town of Park City, Utah, and the southern recreation town of Moab, Utah. (In Moab, mountain bikers replaced uranium miners in the 1980s, thus leading to a population boom, traffic and pollution, and Moab’s current tourism-dependent economy.) Informants generally feared that if their town became “a Park City” or “another Moab” it’s rural character and quality of life would be sacrificed.

I would not like to see it come to the point where it [Escalante] becomes a Park City to affluent people who are going to make property values go up so high that nobody who starts out can have a place to live [Newcomer, Escalante].

It’s really interesting, if you talk to people here, they don’t want become like Moab and if you talk to people in Moab, they don’t want to be like Park City. It’s like going up the food chain almost [Newcomer, Escalante].

A lot of people have mentioned that they would not like to see this town turn into another Moab. I don’t believe it will. We already have had four years of opportunity and it hasn’t happened yet [Newcomer, Escalante].

Moab, I wouldn’t want to live there. No way. They’ve got too many problems [Local, Boulder].

Population growth was also mentioned as an undesirable, but very possible, change.

People. No more people. I’d like to see ‘em ranchin’ again, I’d like to see ‘em farm these farms again [Local, Boulder].
Sixty thousand people. Because 60,000 people could do a whole hell of a lot more damage. I wouldn’t want to see this country overrun by retiring, middle class, yuppies [Newcomer, Escalante].

When informants were asked if there were any “improvements” that they would like to see in their town, two local informants, one from Boulder and one from Escalante, responded with “yes, do not change anything.” Overall, Escalante informants were more specific in their responses. Desired improvements for the town of Escalante included renovating downtown and creating local entertainment to attract tourists, building a swimming pool/recreation center for local kids, improving telecommunication services, attracting a hardware store, a full-time medical clinic and a better grocery store, improving the airport and increasing the town’s supply of irrigation water.

During my field research in Escalante, increasing the supply of irrigation water was a topic on everyone’s mind. Local farmers who draw their irrigation water from the Wide Hollow Reservoir (on the Escalante River) have witnessed their reservoir slowly fill with silt over the years, which has prevented them from making it through the past few summers with adequate water (Israelsen 1999b). On top of this lack of water, Escalante experienced a drought during the summer of 2000, making reservoir conditions even worse. Prior to my arrival in Escalante, a proposal to build a New Wide Hollow Reservoir near the existing one, with a holding capacity five times greater than the old Wide Hollow Reservoir, was opposed by environmentalists who were concerned about drying up a section of one creek and disrupting the natural flow of the Escalante River (Woolf 1999). Local informants told me that environmentalists’ real concern was that an increased reservoir capacity creates a population growth potential. As of late September, 2000, plans for the New Wide Hollow Reservoir were still on hold in order for the BLM to conduct further environmental impact studies. News of postponing construction of the New Wide Hollow Reservoir greatly distressed many Escalante residents who believed this new reservoir was a crucial step in preserving traditional livelihoods. In fact, recent survey results (FCAG 1999:47) show that 84% of Escalante residents (86% of Boulder residents) believe that new irrigation water resources should be acquired and developed.
9.3 Perceptions of Change

When discussing informants’ perceptions of change, responses varied anywhere from “change is bad” to “change is good” to “change is neither bad nor good, but simply inevitable.” I found that responses differed according to one’s background. Newcomers to Boulder and Escalante generally saw change as inevitable, agreeing that change could be either positive or negative depending on how the community adapted to it or directed it. Boulder and Escalante locals, on the other hand, tended to see change as negative, rarely discussing the nature of change and its inevitability, and sometimes even outwardly expressing resistance to it. According to Bodley (1999:29), resistance to change is a positive value among self-reliant cultures because it acts as a cultural survival mechanism. Bodley (1999:29) states that “resistence to change...may thus be seen as a significant means of adaptation because it operates as a ‘cultural isolating mechanism’ to protect successfully established cultures from the disruptive effects of foreign cultural elements.” In other words, longtime locals of the relatively isolated and rural communities of Boulder and Escalante resist change in order to “protect” their local culture from foreign cultural elements, such as urban environmentalists, tourists, and newcomers (i.e. carriers of “ideological diseases”). For many locals, “change” was directly associated with becoming “city-like” and therefore was viewed as undesirable.

I grew up country, you know, and it’s a much better life than in the city. In a small community we have to help each other. And that doesn’t happen in the city [Local, Escalante].

I mean [the city] just drives me nuts after awhile, it’s just traffic and people and everybody hurrying to go someplace to stand in a line to wait for something. It just...and we don’t have that here [Local, Boulder].

One Escalante newcomer agreed that Boulder and Escalante locals, and rural people in general, believe in the urban myth that contends, among other things, “you can’t find community with your neighbors in a non-rural setting.” One Boulder local felt like newcomers had the tendency to “bring the city with them” in the name of “progress,” even though he viewed bringing the city along as the opposite of progress.
We have some folks [newcomers] that come [to Boulder] because it’s this neat little place and then immediately set about to change it into the place they came from. You know, ‘Why don’ you people have this and that?’ No, we don’t need a Walmart, we don’t need a McDonald’s, we don’t need a Wendy’s, we don’t need any of those things! But it’s just these kinds of changes and they say, ‘Well, you people are against progress.’ Well, define that word. I don’t really know what the definition is. Is it picking up everything that comes along? Is that ‘progress’? Does every town have to have a mall? Does every town have to have all these franchises? Is that ‘progress’? Do we have to have four-lane highways every places? Is that ‘progress’? I don’t know. I think sometimes I progress just by standing still.

In contrast, a Boulder newcomer believed that newcomers tend to be hypocrites who make strident efforts to prevent the very change they helped initiate by “inadvertently moving to paradise and spoiling it.”

Boulder has changed for hundreds of years and it didn’t get this way overnight. It’s been evolving before they [newcomers] ever saw it. And so it’s going to continue to evolve. So all you can do is direct that instead of stand in the way, which is what it seems a lot of [newcomers] are doing now, which is very anti-growth—very much, ‘I’m in, I got my place, pull up the drawbridge.’ But change happens. Just move over and make it as palatable as you can.

Another Escalante newcomer explained locals’ fear of change as a fear of the unknown, or the unfamiliar: “I can understand the people here who have been here for years. If you have been here for four, five, six generations, and things change, you don’t like that. Change is frightening.” Part of the reason that change is so frightening to many locals is because of what they have associated with the concept of change. Among the informants I spoke with, change was widely associated with population growth and what rural sociologist Richard Butler (1998:218) calls “urban acquisition.” Urban acquisition involves the infiltration of wealthy second home buyers/builders, urban retirees, hobby farmers and ranchers into rural areas. Population growth and urban acquisition, in the eyes of locals, leads to water and land shortages, higher taxes and a greater cost of living,
displacement of longtime locals by wealthy newcomers, the breakdown in cultural values and a simultaneous rise in crime, traffic, and pollution.

This community couldn’t support much more growth. Just the services available is a big factor. Property taxes would go up and prices would go up and water is just in too short a supply. Escalante’s infrastructure would need a major overhaul for growth [Local, Escalante].

[When I was growing up in Escalante] I could run up town and ride my bike and go across Main St. any time I wanted and didn’t have the fear of gettin’ run over by some tourist. It’s not like that anymore. I wouldn’t send my kid up to town now. You know, my mother used to send me to the grocery store all the time when I was a kid. I wouldn’t do that now-a-days [Local, Escalante].

Our taxes—city taxes—have doubled in the past three years and our water and sewer is better than doubled and all of these things. You see what that does to us? It affects us. And people just don’t even think about people comin’ in here. They [newcomers] put a burden on you [Local, Escalante].

[Displacement of locals] has not happened here [Escalante]. It’s happened in Boulder. It’s happened in Torrey. It has not happened here yet [Newcomer, Escalante].

I could never afford to buy into Boulder now. So, yeah, who’s gonna buy in? Not people like you and me. People, wealthy people, who are going to buy in next to you and then wonder why you have such a trashed-out yard [Newcomer, Boulder].

The “three R’s” as I call them—rules, regulations, and restrictions—were also brought up often in discussions with informants about change. Local residents, in particular, expressed concern about the amount of restrictions brought on by GSENM and newcomers, especially the rate at which these restrictions have come into effect. As one Escalante local put it, “it really is good to have restrictions in the long run, but to all of a sudden to come in with all these restrictions when for 100 years we’ve lived without ‘em, it’s a little hard to swallow.” Newcomers, on the other hand, tended to see a need for more rules, regulations and restrictions in order to protect their community from overwhelming change and to preserve its rural character. Howe et al. (1997:12) support
the point that, “a community is more likely to enjoy a robust local economy if it adopts policies or initiatives that preserve its scenic, ecological, or historic assets.” The following quotes illustrate local and newcomer differences in regards to the “three R’s”:

For years everybody built what they damn well pleased and if you didn’t like what your neighbor was buildin’ you’d go over and cuss the hell outta him and you’d come to some agreement and then you lived with it...They got together here I guess about five years ago and wrote these Planning and Zoning Rules and they are so goddamned restrictive that you can’t even change the doorknob on your front door without getting a permit. And they sent ‘em [the rules] to the State to have ‘em approved and the State sent ‘em back and said these are the most restrictive rules we’ve ever seen in our lives! I guess we’ve never had any rules, so they thought we oughta have a whole bunch [laughs]. You can’t even repair anything without a permit! Now isn’t that ridiculous? Repair and maintenance needs to be a go-along thing. But see, that’s what happens when you have outsiders come in. I don’t see it that way. They can afford to hire an inspector and be fair about it [Local, Escalante].

If Escalante wants to preserve it’s historical nature, historical and traditional uses and cultural customs, one of the things that they will have to do is have a growth policy that does not overwhelm [Newcomer, Escalante].

A few informants I spoke with, mostly newcomers, expressed that change can offer benefits to Boulder and Escalante, including economic and cultural diversity. Economic diversity was viewed positively by both locals and newcomers as long as traditional occupations like ranching, farming and logging continued. Those informants (newcomers) who saw increased cultural diversity as beneficial to homogenous and isolated towns like Boulder and Escalante also stressed “diversity in moderation.” In other words, informants generally agreed that the rural character of their town should not be completely paved over by a new identity. Instead, a couple of informants told me an ideal change would be toward greater cultural diversity where the rural character, minus it’s less popular aspects (bigotry, prejudice), remained.
If [new ideas] can successfully stay integrated [with old ones] and they
don't become too heavy on one side, the rural character would remain
[Newcomer, Escalante].

Diversity, cultural diversity, is important to human survival, just as
biological diversity is. And protecting heritage, even the short heritage as
the west is, is important because it offers different ways to look at things.
Those things are important, not only to be preserved in libraries, but in
living communities [Newcomer, Escalante].

9.4 “They’re Coming”

Even though rural towns like Boulder and Escalante often lack water,
infrastructure, entertainment, services, shopping malls, full time medical clinics, and state-
of-the-art technology, recent statistics show that newcomers continue to migrate to
western gateway towns. Between 1990 and 1999, the population of the West grew 25.4%
farther than any other part of the country with Nevada, Arizona, Idaho, Colorado and Utah
as the five fastest growing states in the nation (Crenson 2000). Howe et al. (1997:3) state
that, “baby boomers are expected to double the demand for recreational homes and resort
lodging in gateway communities.” In addition, Boulder and Escalante both possess the
three words that urbanites are increasingly seeking: quality of life.

In reference to newcomer in-migration in Boulder and Escalante, informants
discussed wealthy urbanites, “techies” (people who work from home via computers and
the internet), retirees, and entrepreneurs as those people attracted to Boulder and
Escalante for what the towns do have: scenic landscapes, open space, proximity to
national parks, monuments and wilderness, nature-based recreational opportunities,
relatively inexpensive land, unique historical and cultural character, untapped business
opportunities, quietness, peacefulness and a laid-back environment. As one Escalante
newcomer, originally from an urban area, told me, “We’ve liked this little town from the
time that we came here, even though it’s old and it’s run-down and there’s not much here.
There’s just something about this town that draws us.” Another Escalante newcomer
predicted a continuing and growing influx of newcomers.
They're coming. There are some [newcomers] and they are coming. It's a land-locked community and this is the ground floor. If you can buy land in here it's only going to appreciate in value. And some of the people who've got insights as to—or any foresight—or any sight at all can see that if you can buy a piece of land for a halfway decent price, it's worth buying.

To put the influx of newcomers into perspective, a recent survey (Roundy 2000:337) shows that 53% of all Escalante newcomers have arrived in town between 1990 and 2000. Of all 14 Escalante informants that I spoke with, nine (64%) had moved to Escalante within the last ten years. Boulder residents agreed that they, too, have witnessed increasing numbers of newcomers to their area during the last ten years. One Boulder newcomer told a story of recently attending a party at a local man’s home. This informant told me that about 95% of the people at the party had moved to Boulder in the last ten years and were unfamiliar faces:

Oh, there are tons of newcomers! Tons! I think when I moved here there were 90-120 people or something and now there's probably double that. The dynamics of the town have changed, drastically. And it's okay. It used to be quieter. I don't know, for the most part, for us, it's gotten better, easier, more financially stable, personally. But then...and now there's more input in town and there's more going on and that's interesting and kind of fun [Newcomer, Boulder].

While this particular Boulder newcomer viewed current changes as “interesting” and “kind of fun,” a longtime Boulder local described changing community dynamics in different terms:

People have changed. My type of people is not here anymore. But the people who’s comin’ are not that bad, don’t get me wrong. But they’re a different background, different culture, different customs, you know, and I can mingle with about anybody but, I miss...I used to go to Church here and the last [Church] class of the day you sit around with a bunch of cowboys and decide what you’re gonna do all week and who’s gonna help who. It was kind of like a big family. That’s it. That’s gone. I go there now and I’m the only one. I look around and go, ‘What the hell am I doin’ here?’ I miss that. But [in the past] if somebody broke their leg, somebody’d go out and do their work. Some woman had a baby and they
couldn’t support it, you’d chip in $25, $50, whatever you had. You knew what was goin’ on. I think now it’s just dog-eat-dog really.

Both Boulder and Escalante residents admitted that they have seen more new homes being built and more traditional ranching land being sold and subdivided, though not at an overwhelming pace yet. Informants, particularly Boulder residents, commented on the size of the new custom homes being built. One local Boulder resident told me, “That’s what you get. Right on the hill here they’re building $1 million dollar homes. Beaucoup development. Their second home is just outta this world!” A local Escalante resident told me similar information: “There are homes being built here that you wouldn’t have seen years ago. Some of ‘em are outsiders and some of ‘em are insiders, so there is a little of both. People are even building out of town, too.” New home construction indicates an increase of wealth in Boulder and Escalante, particularly by newcomers seeking a retreat from the city. In fact, one night in Escalante I stayed at an ultra-modern vacation home owned and rented out by a high-end kitchen designer from Colorado. Outsider-owned rentals, such as this one, are becoming more common in both towns.

Retirees are another group that have their sights on Boulder and Escalante due to available and relatively inexpensive land, remoteness, quietness, and mild climate. Some retirees are local residents who have returned to the community after a life of raising families and working in the city and other retirees are non-locals seeking quality of life. However, informants commented that there are drawbacks to retiring in Boulder or Escalante. For example, although there is a medical clinic in Escalante, the clinic is only staffed by a doctor on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. In case of medical emergencies or health-related problems requiring advanced care, Escalante residents must be driven or taken by ambulance to the nearest hospital in Panguitch, Utah, 62 miles away. Boulder residents must travel even further because it’s about 100 miles to the nearest hospital located in the city of Richfield, Utah. As one Escalante newcomer put it, “Unless something happens drastically and we get those flying cars, there isn’t any way of getting safely to an adequate medical facility in a decent time frame for anybody having heart attacks or other difficulties.”
“Techies,” a name used by Boulder and Escalante residents to describe those who work from home with a computer-based business, were also included as a type of newcomer. Richard Butler (1998:217) points out that modern telecommunications and computer facilities are making this arrangement easier. The general perception held by most informants I spoke with was that techies currently pose little threat to Boulder and Escalante due to both towns’ general remoteness and lack of sophisticated technological services. For instance, my cell phone rarely worked in Boulder or Escalante. When it did work, it was only in specific locations, like on top of a hill, facing a certain direction.

One longtime local Escalante resident told me he believed that techies are probably the type of people who prefer to be “next to the cities.” Another Escalante newcomer admitted that, “There’s more retirees than techies. [This area] has really not been discovered by techies yet.”

The fourth group of newcomers discussed were urban entrepreneurs. All of the local business owners I spoke with agreed that, right now, there exists untapped business opportunities in either town. One Escalante business owner (newcomer) enthusiastically told me that he sees limitless business opportunities in Escalante:

A lot of the people that are sayin’ they’re gonna come here are people who are entrepreneurs. They don’t have a million dollars in the bank who’s gonna build a house on the hill and live; they’re looking here to add a million dollars to their million dollars. You know, if you’ve got any entrepreneurship in yourself, you’re gonna see ‘ground floor.’ You can do anything you want. You can do anything you want in this town—anything! Nobody has a capture on anything in this town.

In contrast, one local Boulder resident was not as optimistic about business opportunities in Boulder and Escalante. This informant pointed out that starting a successful business in Boulder or Escalante takes foresight, skill and ingenuity due to the transportation dilemma created by both towns’ remoteness and ruggedness.

People have talked about industry here ‘We really need to have some industry.’ Well, transportation just would kill an industry here, I would think. You know, getting the materials and shipping the materials out.
Someone wanted, years ago, to start a catalog company here and build a warehouse and stuff. And I said, 'It won’t go. It just costs you more to get stuff in here and to send stuff out. You need to be close to a railhead or a trucking center or something like that.’ We have good ideas but you have to sit down with people who are marketers, you have to sit down with a whole bunch of people…Where’s the market? Where’s it [the product] to go to? You have to say, ‘How’s it going to work? Is it going to work?’ You have these ideas, but boy a lot of them take a lot of work and...like a lot of businesses, before you’re successful you have to have a lot of lumps along the way.

9.5 Where Have All the Cowboys Gone?

As newcomers continue to filter into Boulder and Escalante, local ranchers continue to filter out. One local Boulder rancher admitted to me that, “There’s no good ranchers left. I’m one of the last of ‘em. There’s three ranches left in this whole country, without takin’ Escalante. There’s three of us that’s got anything.” Informants told me stories of local ranchers in Boulder and Escalante selling their grazing permits and their property and moving away, or dying and not being replaced. During my research I noted a ranch (“Red Wing Ranch”) for sale in Boulder and noted other large acreages for sale in Escalante. Reasons cited for the fading away of the ranching livelihood and disappearance of local ranchers included poor cattle industry economics, increased property prices, greater environmental regulations and pressure from environmental groups.

Roundy (2000:303), referring to Escalante, states, “While the livestock business is not the major economic factor it was in the early half of the 20th century, it still affects the community.” Recent statistics show that ranching still contributes about 10% to the local economies of Boulder and Escalante. According to one BLM employee, due to the purchase of grazing permits by conservancy and recreational groups, the number of range cattle on BLM land has decreased 25% (from 12,000 to 9,000 head of cattle) in the last 20 years (Roundy 2000:304). One Escalante newcomer summed up the current scenario involving local ranchers as follows:

Eventually ranching will change. I mean the economics have been arguing against it for years and now there’s the added argument of [GSENM] and
all the hassle they have to deal with about that. It’s very frustrating and I’m sure there a lot of people who are gettin’ out of it.

Locals discussed the recent hard times brought on by economics and GSENM, expressing sadness for what they believe is the displacement of local ranchers and the disappearance of a traditional way of life:

Where do you go? What do you do at my age and where do ya go?....When I was a young guy growin’ up in the late ‘50s and ‘60s, you could buy a ranch. You can’t do it anymore. This land is $10,000-15,000 an acre. What bothers me is that I’m gonna die and [my kids] are gonna sell the damn thing [ranch] because there’s no future in it whatsoever [Local, Boulder rancher].

My son has said, ‘Ma, I’m putting the ranch on the market.’ And I about had to come apart [begins to cry] because it has been in my family since 1906. I said, ‘You just can’t!’ And he said, ‘Ma, I’ve gotta sell it while I can get something out of it.’...Well, he has taken it off the market. But, you know, it is only 160 acres and at one time we had 153 head of cattle permit down on the desert and up on the mountain. Now it’s down to 77 head, because, you know, they cut it in half down on the desert, down on [GSENM]...they’re [the government] just givin’ ‘em [ranchers] so much heck, you know [Local, ex-rancher, Escalante].

As ranchers sell out and move away land and water rights are opened up to commercial and residential development. Many informants that I spoke with feared that disappearing ranchers meant disappearing open space and more houses and subdivisions. According to Bruce Runnels (Wilkinson 2000:22), director of the Nature Conservancy’s Rocky Mountain Division, “In the West, where ranchers control more land than any other group of landowners, intact landscapes are best represented in ranchlands. And unless we save them [ranchlands] now, they’ll be gone forever.” One Boulder newcomer admitted that, unfortunately, ranchland intactness in the GSENM area is disappearing and being converted into residential development: “Some of the [local] ranchers just packed up and sold their ranch and moved. Other ranches here are being sold, cut up into pieces.” A couple of locals I spoke with even blamed environmentalists for creating a larger potential for population and residential growth:
It's their own damn fault, it's the environmentalists' fault. These ranchers all had a permit, right? They had bought the lease years ago, the old granddaddy's did. They run on that lease and farmed 160 acres and the enviro community comes along and says, 'Huh uh, you can't run cattle on this range anymore, we want you off.' So they [environmentalists] kicked their [ranchers'] ass off the range, okay? So what happens? The only alternative they [ranchers] had left was to sell their land or starve to death. If you've worked all your life, you're not gonna leave a little piece of ground and go on welfare. So they sold their land. If the enviro community had been smart, they'd a left them out there...They [environmentalists] brought this on theirself [Local rancher, Boulder].

Daggett (1998:60) agrees that subdivisions threaten the ecosystem much more than healthy ranchlands. Daggett (1998:59) believes that the “garbage-spewing, habitat-gobbling, air-polluting collections of dusty roads, incongruous yapping dogs and off-road-vehicle-crazy kids, that we call subdivisions threaten a final solution to the question of what to do with all those wildlands and the charismatic creatures that haunt them.” Therefore, Daggett (1998:60) states that environmentalists need to find a way to keep the ranchers on the land and the rangelands healthy at the same time, a goal he says is definitely attainable.

A government-funded city planner is currently assisting the towns of Boulder and Escalante with creating land use plans and establishing growth policies. The city planner told me that one potential solution that would promote agriculture and prevent sprawl is to cluster new home construction on one small area of the property, leaving the majority of the land open for continued agricultural use. Another way to help promote the continuation of traditional uses is to support low density zoning, right to farm ordinances, estate planning and conservation easements. Selling ideas like clustering and conservation easements to local Boulder and Escalante residents has not been an easy task according to Boulder and Escalante's city planner. Growth policies, and regulations in

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1 Conservation easements involve the purchase or donation of a property’s development rights. An easement permanently extinguishes these rights so that a property can never be developed. The land remains on the tax rolls, in private ownership, and can be sold to others or passed on to heirs. Easements are tailored to each particular property and to the needs of each individual landowner, and they typically create permanent restrictions (Howe et al. 1997:79).
general, run counter to locals’ values of freedom and independence. In other words, locals tend to associate growth policies with “control” and fear that instruments such as conservation easements may limit their freedom to turn the most profit from their land. As one local Boulder rancher put it, “We’re tryin’ to build 40 acres per house here. And I’m sayin’, ‘Baloney! When you guys start makin’ my land payments, then you tell me what to do with my land.’” However, the city planner informed me that, comparatively, Boulder residents are much more open to creative land use planning than Escalante residents. According to him, the reason for this is Boulder’s relative cultural diversity (greater ratio of newcomers/total population) compared to Escalante’s less diverse (smaller ratio of newcomers/total population) population.

Experts believe that ranchers will have to diversify their ranches in the future in order to survive. What I realized during my research was that some local ranchers in Boulder and Escalante have already diversified their ranches (maintaining orchards or creating other marketable items) to supplement their income or have taken on other part-time jobs.

We planted 400 apple trees to try to make more money off the ranch. And we used to raise tomatoes to help when the boys were just little to make more money. You know, so that we could have the things that other people have [Local, ex-rancher, Escalante].

We have...permittees that have a part-time job. Theirs is basically a two job situation. They have a job in town and a job runnin’ a ranch. It’s no different from somebody in Salt Lake who would work a day job one place and an evening job somewhere else just to make ends meet [Local, BLM Employee, Escalante].

When I asked a few informants whether or not they believed that ranchers would have to diversify their ranch in the future in order to survive, all (100%) informants agreed that they would. However, one local Escalante rancher pointed out that this is probably only true for the smaller ranch operations, not the larger ones.
9.6 The Not-So-Distant Future

In order to compare informants' perceptions of the future of their towns, I asked residents how they envisioned their community in ten years. Boulder residents (and a few Escalante residents) all agreed that Boulder would be another southwestern resort town like Sedona, Arizona, catering to wealthy urbanites with an increase in new homes in the area. Part of this perception is based in reality. At the time of my field research, large custom homes were already being built in Boulder, a housing development called "Black Ledge" was in the works, and developers were scoping out future home construction sites. According to one Boulder local:

Oh boy. It [Boulder] is gonna be different. I think there will be more people. They're developing on that ledge over here, the Black Ledge, with high cost, fancy places. People are building their individual homes. It isn't like they're gonna build a bunch of houses and then sell them, but they've sold properties and the people will build custom homes... The town is trying to control that, restricting the size of lots, you know, you can't break it up into a jillion half-acre lots. I think the lots have to be 5 acres and they would like to have kind of a cluster arrangement, like if you had a hundred acres and you broke it up, you wouldn't have willy-nilly, you'd have a cluster and then a lot of green space around this. It seems to make more sense then just houses all over the place. House upon house. I honestly couldn't live that way. I could not. I thought at one time it'd be water, but people drill wells and are proving there are water sources. We also thought that the water company could restrict the number of memberships that they gave out. We find out that they can't do that. If they have enough water then they have to give memberships to people who want it... They're adding something to their policy where a person couldn't just come and buy 6 or 8 or 10 memberships and speculate on them, just hold them. He has to have property and a building permit before they'll sell him a water membership. There's a piece of State land out here south and west of town that some developers are looking at. Some little mesa that goes out, some little ridge that goes out. I suspect they'll have houses on it in ten years. There will be more people. I think it's gonna be kind of a retirement community or place for seasonal yuppies to come. The 'beautiful people,' if you will.
Escalante residents, unlike Boulder residents who shared a similar vision of the future of their town, gave me a variety of perceptions of what their community will be like in the next ten years. Some residents (mostly newcomers, some locals) believed that Escalante is going to see, or could see, a great deal of change, including increased population and economic growth and perhaps even a cultural shift (locals-to-outsiders).

[In ten years, Escalante will] not [be] like it is now! Escalante’s almost like a Jackson Hole. Or it will be...It’s wide open [Newcomer, Escalante].

Right now there about 1,000 population. In ten years, I see that, unless they do some things, I see the potential for it to half again in size, at least. When that kind of flood starts it won’t be long before it’s all out and the baby boomers are getting near retirement and there’s a lot of them who would come to places like this, they will come to places like this. People will come here because it’s cheap or they’re coming back to places where they probably grew up or they just come here because it’s safer, it’s more relaxed [Newcomer, Escalante].

This is an agricultural town, but those times might have come and gone. [In ten years] it could become an environmentalist and government community [Local, Escalante].

Others (particularly locals) foresaw Escalante staying pretty much the same if not completely “drying up and dying” once ranching and logging disappear. Informants who predicted little change in Escalante in the next ten years believed that Escalante’s remoteness, lack of services and lack of high-paying jobs are detriments to future growth.

I don’t see a lot of change. You know, maybe a few more small businesses, a little more...what do you call it? The Jackson Hole or Moab, Park City type businesses in town but hopefully not a lot. No, no, I don’t see that. Something will have to change to make this a destination. As long as Bryce Canyon is fillin’ that role. You just look at Escalante and there’s no way that if you took those 70 [sawmill] jobs out Escalante can’t, even in the next 20 years, provide 70 jobs in the tourism-based industry. I see Boulder, I see the community of Boulder over there, changing more than Escalante. Boulder’s the Sedona, Moab type of country [Local, Escalante].
Well, I don’t know. If it changes in the next 10 years like it has done in the past four or five, it will be a big change. The biggest part of the people that have survived here now today will be gone. I wouldn’t be a bit surprised if Escalante would go down in size. There’s been a lot of people moving here on account of the sawmill down here. And if that closes down, there’s about 90 families—I don’t know what they’re gonna do. And if the sawmill closes, I don’t have the slightest idea of any kind of work they can do that’s here. Now, if you keep the sawmill and the phone office...that’s furnished an awful lot of work for the people...If one of them closes, or if both of ‘em happen to close, we’d have a ghost town. Because the sheep is all gone. At one time we had about 40,000 head of sheep in Escalante. But they’re all gone now. They just got too expensive to...wool, it costs so cheap. So, it will be nothing but a retired community [Local, Escalante].

I don’t think it will ever be like Moab or those places that are close to a main thoroughfare because it’s hard to get here [Newcomer, Escalante].

I really don’t foresee large growth [Local, Escalante].

One Escalante newcomer told me that Escalante could change in many different ways, but he pointed out that it is up to the local residents to choose and direct the kind of change they desire. In other words, Escalante residents—both locals and newcomers—have the power to decide what their community will be like in ten years, it’s just a matter of reaching a consensus and taking action.

Escalante is the place where you go on vacation and you get there and you look at it and you go, ‘Wow, this is great. What the hell do these people do for a living?’ You know, ‘How can anybody exist?’ That is essentially it. And, the place literally has to reinvent itself and at the same time try and hold on to its culture and I think that’s the struggle with people here. It’s either gonna change or it’s gonna die. Escalante, I think, is just one of those pivotal places that if people that are living here now, the old-timers that are living here, do not recognize that [GSEN] has been here for four years already and they haven’t recognized the advantages that are here, then it’s gonna just become so overcome by people that do see the advantages, that come in and make it, you know, and make it happen. So, you know, if Escalante was left to it’s own volition, I believe it would dry up and die [Newcomer, Escalante].
9.4 The New West

I ended most of my interviews with a question designed to assess informants’ perception of the “big picture.” Informants were asked how they saw the American West in the 21st century and how it would be different from the American West of the 20th century. All informants (90%) that I asked this question, except for one local rancher, believed that the American West, or the “Old West” as it was once known, is “in trouble” and will make a “wonderful myth” as it is transformed into the “New West.” The New West was described by informants as a “playground” for the world with a few working ranches that are “almost little show places where people can and see how things work.” One informant summed up this shift from Old West to New West as follows:

If there’s anything that’s changed since we got here it’s been the American West. It’s the area of biggest change in the whole country. Always has been, probably always will. I see it becomin’ more of a playground of the rich and wealthy than it is for the...sustainin’ small town communities and type of things like that. I see the small town communities that rely upon natural resources getting smaller. And more people moving to urban areas. But, yeah, like, for instance, Escalante. If you take out the sawmill, it depends on the timber industry, 70 people are employed there. They can’t all get a job in the tourist industry somewhere. And...where are they gonna go? They’re gonna end up goin’ to Salt Lake or Cedar City or somewhere else where they can get a job and then, you know, there’s gonna be more of that goin’ on throughout the west as time goes on because I really do think the majority of the American people want the west as a playground. Some place that they can come and visit, whether it be once in their lifetime or maybe not even come and visit, but know they can and have an area that they can see. I went back to Texas this summer and there’s no public land where you can go and do anything that’s basically free or unrestricted. And I think there’s more people that want that and they want to be able to come here and do that. I see less and less so-called ‘consumptive’ use of the west and more service industry, tourist-based things. I see that happening. Jackson Hole was originally a ranching/farming community and what is it now? Golf courses and condos from one end to the other. And, what does that do? What does that do to the wildlife that used to rely on the...well, the federal government spends a lot of money feedin’ elk right there. It impacts the traditional lifestyle and I think it impacts people’s perception of the western lifestyle, especially the foreign tourists, you know, they come to the west and they want to see a cowboy. What are
they going to see in 20 years? A bunch of yuppies in a coffee shop? So that’s what I see. I really do. You know, the mining industry pretty much went and I think the timber industry is probably next. Maybe not along the coast or like there, but in Utah, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, those areas. I see the timber industry goin’ under and it won’t be long after that until probably grazing goes and I hate to see that. I hate to see all these little farms turn into condos. You know, and places for people to come, you know, the microchip millionaires comin’ in for two weeks and then flyin’ somewhere else [Local, Escalante].
CHAPTER 10
RECAP & RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Cultural Survival

Based on my research findings, GSENM threatens Boulder and Escalante’s local culture by failing to meet at least three, if not all four, theoretical prerequisites for cultural survival (West and Brechin 1991:12), which are recognition of territorial rights, protection from “ideological” diseases, sufficient adaptation time and right to self-determination. A majority of locals and newcomers stated that GSENM’s designation, planning process, and Final Management Plan do not fully recognize locals’ territorial rights and locals’ right to self-determination; that GSENM does not protect locals from “ideological diseases” (as I have defined the term in Chapter 2.2); and, according to some residents, that locals have not been granted sufficient time to adapt to GSENM.

Informant responses revealed that Boulder and Escalante locals do possess a territorial connection—and perhaps even legal rights—to the GSENM area and that the federal government, through GSENM designation and new federal land policies, has infringed on locals’ territorial rights. Locals’ connection to the land comes from over 100 years of “scratching a living” out of this formidable territory. Over the last century, survival in the GSENM area has depended on human ingenuity and persistence, two things which have given longtime locals an intimate knowledge—or “local knowledge”—of the rugged land surrounding them. This local knowledge, which has been passed from generation to generation, has reinforced locals’ territoriality and sense of ownership of the GSENM area. In other words, because descendants of Boulder and Escalante’s first settlers continue to live and work the land in the GSENM area, they have formed an intimate relationship with and knowledge of this federally-owned, or “public,” land.

Local ranchers also revealed a sense of territoriality and ownership when discussing their grazing permits, or grazing “rights,” within GSENM. These grazing permits, which give local ranchers (or “permittees”) the right to graze their cattle on GSENM land, are complex in nature. Grazing permits have monetary value, but ranchers
cannot legally own grazing permits because they are legally owned by the federal
government. At the same time, however, grazing permits can be sold by the permittee to
another rancher (or environmental group, etc.) for profit and grazing permits are
considered personal assets by lending institutions. Thus, Boulder and Escalante locals
who graze on GSENM land tend to regard their grazing rights as actual products, or
personal assets, of which they are the owners. Any grazing permit changes that have
occurred after GSENM designation have impacted permittees in obvious ways. The
complex nature of grazing permits contributes to locals’ territoriality and sense of public
land ownership.

Locals also complained (to me and to the courts) that they possess legal rights to
GSENM territory in the form of roads. Locals argued that their labor and tax dollars
built and maintained many of the GSENM roads that the BLM has proposed to close in
order to satisfy the President’s Proclamation and the BLM’s Final Management Plan.
Whether the courts will find in favor of the local people or in favor of the federal
government has yet to be determined. In any case, road closures within GSENM have
infringed on locals’ territorial rights by preventing traditional local access. When, and if,
all road closures within GSENM are enforced, this will affect or restrict local ranchers’
ability to properly manage their livestock, locals’ ability to access traditionally used areas
(for hunting, fishing, reunions, picnics, etc.), locals’ ability to gather firewood, and other
traditional practices. Thus, according to locals, certain road closures within GSENM have
failed to recognize these particular territorial rights.

In regard to the second prerequisite for cultural survival, the protection from
“ideological diseases,” locals’ expressed that GSENM actually promotes the infiltration of
outsiders and outside ideas. Based on informant responses and personal observation, it
appears that locals feel their traditional values, beliefs and ideas are threatened by
outsider’s values, beliefs and ideas. In fact, locals’ view GSENM as a symbol of
environmentalism—a movement they regard as one of the most threatening ideological
diseases to their local culture. GSENM also put Boulder and Escalante “on the map,”
which has further promoted tourism in the area. To locals, tourism promotes the
infiltration of foreign and domestic urbanites who are known carriers of ideological diseases. Because GSENM made Boulder and Escalante new "gateway communities," and because gateway communities are currently attractive to urbanites in search of "quality of life," Boulder and Escalante locals' fear GSENM promotes the influx of urban newcomers into their community. Most urban newcomers are, according to locals, individuals who "bring the city with them" and seek to institute community change. Thus, locals expressed that GSENM offers no protection from ideological diseases, but rather encourages the transmission of such.

Although the BLM, at the bequest of President Clinton and Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, made attempts to increase local adaptation time to GSENM by offering a three year window for management planning, it was still after-the-fact. Informant responses were mixed on whether this three year window was a sufficient amount of time for locals to adapt to GSENM. As one Escalante newcomer put it, "if you don't want GSENM to begin with, there's never going to be a 'sufficient' amount of [adaptation] time." Surprisingly, the ranchers I spoke with, all of whom had grazing permits within GSENM, agreed that they were given sufficient time to adapt to the new monument.\(^1\) Other local residents disagreed. Several residents told me that local people usually require more adaptation time than most people because they are so "set in their ways."

Finally, locals feel that many aspects of GSENM have violated their right to self-determination. The very designation of GSENM denied initial local input and, therefore, prevented locals' self-determination. The GSENM planning process, which was designed to offer locals a certain degree of self-determination, apparently failed, according to locals, at giving them a say in how GSENM is managed. Locals also complained that the new restrictions accompanying GSENM's management plan (road closures and environmental regulations) further prevent locals' self-determination by restricting traditional access and traditional practices. Again, although I believe that the BLM deserves credit for their

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\(^1\) It should be noted, however, that local ranchers with permits to graze in GSENM still have not had to abide by the BLM's proposed road closures in GSENM's Transportation Plan due to pending lawsuits. When, and if, they are required to do so, I anticipate these attitudes may change.
efforts at collaborative planning, the planning process took place after locals' self-
determination was already squelched by Clinton's designation. In addition, locals walked
away from the planning efforts feeling like their voice was unfairly silenced by the more
politically powerful voice of environmentalists and environmental groups.

**Recommendations:** Because GSENM threatens Boulder and Escalante's local
culture based on cultural survival theory's four prerequisites (West & Brechin 1991:12),
any group (governmental, environmental, etc.) proposing similar environmental protection
for an area using a similar process may want to, based on my research findings, reconsider
the entire process and it's potential impacts on resident peoples and local cultures. Based
on cultural survival theory, in order to help preserve a cultural heritage while at the same
time creating a protected area, a “bottom-up” model should be utilized in conjunction with
top-down funding and support (Brechin et al. 1991:15-25).

It is important that any group seeking to establish a protected natural area try to
understand the local peoples' connection to that land in lieu of criticizing the local people
for poor land management. Put another way, things are usually more complex than they
seem at first glance. The following questions should be asked and explored prior to area
protection: What have local people traditionally used this land for and why? Why have the
local people employed certain land management practices and not others? What can be
learned from the traditional practices currently in place? Can the land be protected from
human impacts and at the same time allow the local people to continue their traditional
practices? How difficult is it to make a living on this land? Ideally, individuals from
groups proposing a protected area should spend time living on that land with the local
people (or hire an applied anthropologist to do the same) in order to understand the
existing ways of life of local residents and to explore questions relating to local
territoriality. It is important that actions like these take place before any protected area
designation—something that did not happen in the case of GSENM.

Something else that must happen before protected area designation is the
promotion of collaboration and consensus-building between environmental protectors and
local peoples. Effective and sustainable protection is dependent on a commitment to a
strong local involvement campaign early in the planning, not merely a public relations
campaign designed to persuade the local people (Hales 1991:249). As Howe et al.
(1997:xix) state, “The fate of protected areas is tied to the support, and hence the fate, of
local peoples.” Collaboration and consensus-building allow the local people to play an
active role in the conservation effort, which will, in the process, give them a sense of self-
determination and a greater commitment to the protected area. Successful collaboration
requires environmental protectors to employ local forms of communication and decision-
making, create roles of authority for locals, and put scientific information in a local
context so that it has value and relevance to the local people (Hales 1991:249).

In some cases, I believe that hiring a professional mediator is an effective way to
bring polarized groups to the table. However, professional mediators are usually
expensive. If a professional mediator is needed, environmental protectors should obtain
funding to pay for the mediator, whose job it will be to initiate the collaboration and
consensus-building process. Although collaboration and consensus-building between
environmental protectors and local peoples may seem counter-productive, or even
impossible, it is worth the effort and expense. As Brechin et al. (1991:23) state, “if
conservation is to become sustainable, approaches and methods must be developed that
more actively involve resident peoples in the planning and decision-making process.”
Offering local peoples more respect and understanding prior to the designation of a
protected area and allowing locals to play a role in the conservation effort—no matter
how challenging—will also help local peoples adapt to the change.

Once a protected area has been established using the “bottom-up” approach, it will
need “top-down” political funding and support (Brechin et al. 1991:16). Environmental
protectors need to understand that sufficient funds must be available for designated land
managers to carry out proper management of the protected area. For example, even if the
BLM, with the help of stakeholders, created what they considered the best possible
management plan for the GSENM area, if the federal government failed to allocate proper
funding to the local BLM, it would be impossible for them to sufficiently manage the area.
Without sufficient funding, the local BLM staff might go down in size, leaving fewer
employees to monitor visitor and local usage of GSENМ. Or, perhaps a lack of federal funding would prevent the construction of a visitor center that might attract and educate potential visitors to the new monument. Lack of top-down funding has the potential to create many obstacles for the managers of protected natural areas like GSENМ. Because GSENМ is relatively large in size (1.9 million acres) with high-management areas ("primitive zones" at 65%) and a relatively small BLM staff, the potential for management problems is already relatively high, making sufficient federal funding crucial. In a similar sense, it is also important that management programs offer ongoing monitoring and resource-based evaluations, which provide helpful and accurate feedback to land managers (Hales 1991:248). However, ongoing evaluations also need sufficient top-down funding and support.

Because a protected area generally draws outsiders, whether tourists or newcomers, protecting local people from outsiders and outside ideas is unrealistic. At the same time, environmental protectors and/or land managers could increase their support for the local culture by issuing to them special permits or access passes to be used within the protected area—passes which would not be available to outsiders. Although this might seem like a form of favoritism, especially when dealing with "public" land, it is not unheard of. When I lived in Moab, Utah, for example, the National Park Service (NPS) issued discounted NPS passes to local Moab residents. In order to qualify for these discounted passes, one was required to show proof of a local Moab address. Although the GSENМ situation is quite a bit different and the issuance of special passes or privileges for the local people may create a management nightmare for the BLM, perhaps it is something to at least consider. I know that the BLM in Escalante is already in the process of reviewing special permit applications for local outfitting services and GSENМ permittees. In any case, it is important that the environmental protectors, local people, and designated land managers collaboratively establish and agree upon the requirements for the issuance of any special permits or passes to the protected area.
10.2 Building Trust

As discussed above, research findings show that GSENM threatens Boulder and Escalante's local culture by infringing on the territorality of the local people, encouraging the infiltration of outsiders and outside ideas, imposing change quickly on a traditional people and by denying locals' self-determination. Because of the threat that GSENM poses to Boulder and Escalante's local culture, President Clinton's designation of GSENM only worsened already poor relations between the federal government and the local people (see Chapters 5.6-5.10 and Chapter 6.2).

As my research findings indicate, Boulder and Escalante locals are patriotic people who value their government-granted independence, freedom and right to self-determination. On the other hand, my research also shows that past federal actions have severed the local peoples' trust in the federal government, which has resulted in local anger toward the federal government. I believe, as do the Boulder and Escalante residents I spoke with, that it is in the best interest of the federal government to regain the trust of the local people.

GSENM could be viewed as the "torpedo" (Howe et al. 1997:142) that has the potential to ruin the federal government's (and environmentalists') environmental protection effort. In other words, if the true goal of GSENM was environmental protection, breaking the trust of the local people was foolish because it is the local people who have access to the protected area. Anger caused by deception and distrust commonly leads to dysfunction as has been the case in Boulder and Escalante since the designation of GSENM (see Chapter 1.3).

Recommendations: The federal government needs to work on re-building trust with the local people who reside near and within protected areas. Rebuilding trust with the local people involves: 1) being up front with them about future government plans before any change, such as GSENM designation, is imposed; 2) following through with promises made to the local people, even if these promises are no longer in the government's best interest (such as the unfulfilled promises made to the local people by the federal government regarding the allocation of funds for the construction of a marina.
on Lake Powell); 3) refraining from making promises to the local people, particularly if there is any uncertainty whether promises actually can or will be fulfilled (such as promises made to the local people that ‘nothing would change’ in regards to grazing on GSENM land); 4) refraining from covering up past erroneous actions and/or outwardly lying to the local people (such as Nevada nuclear tests in the 1950s and their resultant health hazards), especially since history has proved that the truth is always revealed; and 5) mitigating unavoidable social impacts (see below).

As mentioned in Chapter 10.1, it is crucial that the federal government involve local people in the planning for a protected area before the designation of a protected area. The federal government should also work with the local people to come up with innovative solutions to impacts caused by protected areas. For example, if too many federally-imposed environmental regulations place too great a financial burden on a rancher, thus forcing her or him out of the cattle business, the federal government should actively investigate the situation and offer the displaced rancher a hand by either a) helping the rancher develop a viable, alternative occupation in the local area; or b) in the situation where no other alternative occupation is possible in the area, offer the rancher a large enough financial award that allows for the rancher’s relocation or retirement. It is the federal government’s duty to mitigate social impacts caused by externally imposed change.

In addition, it is important for the communication lines between the federal government and the local people to remain open and for both sides to remain flexible. For instance, in the case of GSENM, it is important for the Monument Manager (currently Kate Cannon) to act as a liaison between the local ranchers and the federal government (e.g. the Department of the Interior and/or the appropriate committee/subcommittee that makes decisions regarding GSENM) who encourages two-way communication. Flexibility on both sides is also important. A specific example that can be used is the drought situation experienced in the GSENM area during the summer of 2000. Let’s say the federal government issued a mandate (communicated to the local ranchers via the Monument Manager) stating that permittees must remove their cattle from the monument within 30 days due to existing drought conditions. However, let’s say that local ranchers
knew, based on past experience, that removing their cattle from the GSENM area would realistically take at least 60 days. It is not only important for the local ranchers to be flexible in their efforts to remove their cattle from the monument, but it is also important for the federal government to be flexible in allowing an extra 30+ days for the ranchers to comply with the federal government’s wishes. Thus, encouraging two-way communication between the federal government and the local people is essential, as is the flexibility of all involved parties.

10.3 A New Approach

While the federal government needs to work on rebuilding trust with the local people, environmentalists need to work on their approach to environmental protection. My research findings revealed that local perceptions of and feelings toward environmentalists are negative. Although Boulder and Escalante residents cited many reasons for this, what I interpreted is that locals’ feel environmentalists’ approach to environmental protection is not culturally sensitive. Some informants told me that environmentalists tended to compare themselves to the local people by qualifying their nature experiences against the locals’ experiences. In doing so, environmentalists reveal a slight superiority complex in relation to the local people. I found that environmentalists whom the local people feel are insensitive to their culture tend to be urban and college-educated individuals, commonly—though not always—possessing a degree in a scientific field.

For example, environmentalists that I have known personally have told me that, based on “scientific findings,” grazing cattle in the GSENM area harms the environment and, therefore, should be stopped. Possessing a college degree(s) is also a personal attribute commonly used by environmentalists to compare against the “uneducated” and “uninformed” local people who do not understand the complexity of the ecosystem and the “scientific facts.” On the other hand, locals tended to believe that urbanites, in their human-constructed enclaves and highly specialized occupations, have lost their connection to the environment and therefore want to preserve wilderness as their own personal
“playground.” In other words, locals’ tended to believe that urbanites, who do not share locals’ “practical” perception of the “wilderness” because they do not work and live on it daily, have the luxury of using wilderness as a recreational playground and can therefore justify imposing restrictions on its use.

In addition to locals’ perceptions about elite environmentalists’ urban backgrounds and college educations, locals also found environmentalists to feel superior because of their numbers, money and ability to effectively organize. Locals realize there is power in numbers—political and financial power. They also acknowledge that financial power can be an asset when fighting legal battles. During my research, I sensed that locals’ viewed environmental groups the way small-scale cultures might view international corporations—financially and politically powerful organizations that always seem to prevail despite local protests or social impacts. Environmental groups were also perceived by the locals as fraudulent and dishonest, with leaders who will say whatever it takes to keep the groups membership up and the “checks rolling in.”

**Recommendations:** First of all, when dealing with towns like Boulder and Escalante, Utah, it is important for environmentalists to understand some things about the local culture. Here is what I learned from Boulder and Escalante residents during my research period: 1) a strong work ethic has much more value than a college education; 2) hands-on or “local knowledge” is more respected by the local people than scientific knowledge; 3) independence and freedom are greatly valued by local residents; 4) self-sufficiency on the land is highly regarded; 5) character and integrity are more important to locals than the size of a person’s checking account; 6) honesty, trustworthiness, and giving “your word” is expected from the local people; 7) practicality is key.

Based on these findings, environmentalists might have a better chance with the local people and therefore might greatly increase their conservation efforts by applying the above findings to their own approach. If a strong work ethic is important to the local people, it might serve environmentalists well to exhibit that they, too, have a strong work ethic. This would require environmentalists to get out on the land to prove themselves. For example, a local Boulder resident told me about a successful environmental endeavor
that involved a local rancher and some environmentalists. The environmentalists were concerned about a stream in which this rancher watered his cattle. Instead of telling the rancher that he should remove his cattle from the stream, the environmentalists told the rancher that they would personally come to his property and construct an alternate watering hole for his cows in order to protect the stream’s riparian zones. Thus, these particular environmentalists used their own money for supplies, went to the rancher’s property and, with their own hands, helped the rancher create an alternate watering hole for his cattle. This collaborative rancher/environmentalist effort was greatly appreciated by the rancher and was well-respected in the community because the environmentalists used their money, time, and hard work to achieve an environmental goal. Most of all, they showed respect for the rancher rather than trying to tell him what to do and how to do it. In the end, everyone involved was satisfied with the results. This sets a good example of an approach to environmental protection that environmentalists may want to try more often.

In addition, environmentalists need to respect local knowledge, learn from it, and see if it can be incorporated into scientific knowledge. Scientific knowledge should also be communicated in a culturally sensitive way to the local people—in a way that has meaning, relevance and value to the locals. An effort should be made by environmentalists to avoid using abstract scientific terms, irrelevant scientific findings, impractical methods, and other such confusing information, which only threatens to enhance the appearance of environmentalists’ elitism and “outsiderism” to the local people. If, for example, economics has more value and meaning to local ranchers who are in “survival mode,” environmentalists may want to frame their pro-environmental information in economic terms rather than in scientific or abstract terms such as sustainability and ecosystem management.

In a similar sense, it is counterproductive for urban environmentalists to tell the local people, who are generally independent, what they have done wrong in the past, how they should fix it, and how they should do things in the future. Independent people need to make choices for themselves after being presented with options, and not told what to
do by outsiders. Again, options must be presented by environmentalists to the local people in culturally relevant terms.

Environmentalists must also be sensitive to the level of self-sufficiency required by the local people and question how an environmental change might impact the locals' existing way of life. For instance, encouraging more stringent environmental regulations on federal land may translate into greater management costs for the local ranchers who graze their cattle on federal land. Greater management costs for local ranchers could eventually drive them out of the cattle industry and, in the process, eliminate their self-sufficiency. Some environmentalists may argue that ranchers should replace their cattle ranching livelihoods with less extractive occupations, or that the government should simply “pay them off” in order to eliminate grazing on federal land. But as one Boulder rancher put it, you can’t force a self-sufficient, hard-working rancher out of his or her way of life and expect this person to suddenly go on welfare and accept “hand-outs.” Being able to remain self-sufficient is extremely important to the local people and must be taken into consideration by environmentalists proposing environmental change.

Because a person’s character and integrity are more important to the local people than a person’s annual income, environmentalists should make efforts to develop healthy personal relationships with the locals and avoid threatening them with costly lawsuits. Residents in Escalante complained that several newcomer environmentalists did not make efforts to “assimilate” into the community, but rather did just the opposite. In addition to certain actions taken by these newcomer environmentalists, which served to further ostracize them from the local community (such as supporting the complete elimination of grazing within GSENM), these same environmentalists threatened to, and actually did, use the law against the local people to further their own causes. Environmentalists should remember that power plays only further polarize, but trust brings people together. Therefore, I believe that more environmentalists need to make an effort to establish healthy relationship with the local people, which means being more culturally sensitive.

Finally, remembering that practicality is key to the local people can go a long way. When I asked a local rancher what it would take for him to change his mind on an
environmental issue, he said, "My mind can be changed as long as it [the opposing view] is practical and makes sense to me." For example, a couple of ranchers told me that oftentimes the non-local BLM employees and environmentalists expect the local ranchers to do things that are not practical, or feasible. In one case, local ranchers were told by a non-local BLM employee to move their cattle from a certain area by a specific date. According to a local rancher that I spoke with, the timeline given was just not possible and was, therefore, impractical. An environmentalist might make similar impractical demands, like telling a rancher not to water his or her cattle in the nearby stream, without realizing the actual logistics and high cost of building alternate watering holes. Thus, it would help for environmentalists to learn what the locals consider "practical," whether it be economic or social in nature, and work within that framework when pursuing environmental goals.

10.4 Acceptable Change

Change is currently taking place in Boulder and Escalante as more newcomers arrive in search of a vacation get-away, a tourism-related business opportunity, a better quality of life or a peaceful environment in which to retire. Therefore, as discussed in Chapter 9, it is important for local residents to consolidate their values, needs and aspirations in order to direct the type of change that is acceptable to them. Even though research findings indicate that locals' values, needs and aspirations are similar to those of newcomers, locals' resistance to change (which is a cultural survival mechanism), in general, and their resistance to restrictions, in particular, hampers the community's ability to direct acceptable change.

How does one get locals to understand that they have the power to prevent overwhelming growth, preserve the rural character of their town, and prevent chain development through the use of restrictions? The easy and oversimplified answer is to "educate them." However, it is not that easy or simple. The real question should be how does one educate the local people, who value their freedom and independence, as to the importance of restrictions used in growth management when the very act of "restricting" goes against their core values and, therefore, they refuse to listen?
This very question was posed to me by Boulder and Escalante’s city planner and I had no quick answer for him. I did offer suggestions, however, to specific issues. For instance, local residents agreed that preserving their local heritage is important to them and that subdivisions and corporate chain businesses are undesirable. One way to help preserve the local heritage and prevent subdivisions is to have large land owners (such as ranchers or farmers) sign conservation easements (Howe et al. 1997; Burr 2000), which would insure that their land remains intact for traditional uses in the future. Although it seems that conservation easements would be preferable to local landowners who are concerned about preserving the cultural heritage of their town, the opposite is true in Boulder and Escalante. Why? Because local residents are constantly in “survival mode,” a condition brought on by life in a remote and formidable desert environment. Due to the unpredictability of their environment, Boulder and Escalante locals like to keep their future options open. By signing a conservation easement, local landowners fear they would be forever sacrificing their freedom to utilize their land as they see appropriate, including subdividing and selling their land if need be. Therefore, conservation easements are viewed by Boulder and Escalante locals as controlling devices designed by the urban and elite to further restrict locals’ freedom and rights as private property owners.

**Recommendations:** One idea I presented to Boulder and Escalante’s city planner was to have rural landowners (ranchers, farmers) from other areas or states where conservation easements are more widely accepted and utilized (Colorado, Arizona) come talk to Boulder and Escalante locals about why they chose conservation easements for their land and the results of their decision. Having rural landowners (rather than college-educated urbanites) talk to Boulder and Escalante locals about conservation easements might be more effective. It is possible that local landowners would identify better with other rural landowners who share a similar heritage and who have actual hands-on experience with conservation easements. Locals may feel threatened by college-educated urbanites—particularly environmentalists—who have never participated in the rural lifestyle, never owned large areas of land, and therefore have no personal experience with
conservation easements. Whether or not Boulder and Escalante locals would be swayed by rural landowners, it is hard to say, but this peer-to-peer communication is something to consider.

Another important step involved in promoting conservation easements and other forms of growth management involves local leadership. If one or two local Boulder and Escalante landowners chose conservation easements in order to help preserve open space and their cultural heritage for future generations, it might make other locals feel more comfortable about making a similar decision. Boulder and Escalante have always been homogenous, tight-knit communities where small town politics make it difficult for even the most nonconforming residents to speak their mind or "go against the grain." Fear of social ostracism has therefore kept many residents silent and has discouraged local leadership on many levels. My hope is that a few courageous and well-respected locals take the first step, leap, bound—no matter how socially dangerous it might seem—and opt in favor of their community's future. For example, if Boulder's Mayor, who is also the town's LDS Bishop, were to promote certain growth management alternatives, it would be fair to argue that he would have a greater impact on the local people of Boulder than a non-Mormon, non-local from Salt Lake City. Again, I feel that local leadership will be an extremely crucial step in directing acceptable change in Boulder and Escalante.

Preserving cultural heritage, however, is not as simple as merely prohibiting residential and commercial development. Instead it involves finding innovative ways for locals and newcomers to continue traditional livelihoods if they so choose. It is about options. As expressed by a majority of Boulder and Escalante locals, a tourism-dependent economy is undesirable and unpredictable. Tourism's unpredictability lies in many things, like its seasonality, global economic fluctuations, natural disasters, as well as GSENK's location between two major destination points, Bryce Canyon and Capitol Reef National

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2Howe et al. (1997:48) list nine tools that successful gateway towns have used to preserve their cultural heritage, enhance their environment and stimulate their economy, including: 1) developing a widely shared vision; 2) creating an inventory of local resources; 3) building on local resources; 4) minimizing the need for regulations (offering incentives); 5) meeting the needs of both landowner and community; 6) teaming up with public land managers; 7) recognizing the role of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); 8) providing opportunities for leaders to step forward; and 9) paying attention to aesthetics.
Park, the type of tourism that is popular and/or marketed, and the type of tourists it attracts. As Howe et al. (1997:24) state, "Before looking for new economic opportunities, a community needs to keep the jobs it has. Tourism should never...replace the economic benefits of the sawmill, a community fishery, a small manufacturing firm or a vital agricultural community." Therefore, creativity and innovation are needed by Boulder and Escalante residents in order to come up with non-seasonal, community-based jobs that offer locals a sense of fulfillment and pride.

One idea that occurred to me was the marketing of Boulder and Escalante products. For example, I mentioned earlier that I interviewed residents who milked their own goats, made their own apple juice, and canned their own salsa. Perhaps these products—fresh goat milk/goat cheese, old-fashioned apple juice, and "Escalante salsa"—could be prepared by local residents as they have always been prepared, but in addition, local residents could also package some of their products to be sold to the public. Tourists generally love homemade or handmade products from areas they visit, and local Boulder and Escalante products such as these would most likely be a popular item for Boulder and Escalante locals and outsiders. The same could be done with local handicrafts and arts. For instance, one Escalante man produces ink drawings of the historic buildings in town and displays them for sale at the local antique store.

A related idea would be for local residents to start a community cooperative ("co-op") as a place in which to market and sell local goods. In fact, several Escalante residents complained about their existing grocery stores, so a co-op would actually offer them another alternative. The idea for a community-based co-op could be promoted at the local LDS Church where a large percent of both communities congregate each Sunday. The co-op could be started with small investments from individual community members, for example, $10 per person per year. Co-op sale items could include fresh produce from local growers, specialty items such as the goat cheese, old fashioned apple juice and "Escalante salsa" mentioned above, local arts and crafts, and other unique items produced locally, such as handmade furniture or native drums. All sale items could carry two prices: one for locals (i.e. members) and one for non-locals. Therefore, the co-op could generate
profit by charging more money per item to outsiders and tourists. For local co-op members, items could be sold at a discounted price. The community-based co-op also creates potential jobs or volunteer opportunities for the community’s young and old. Volunteering or part-time wage paying jobs at the co-op might provide a nice distraction to retirees or local teenagers, and would offer opportunities for old and young residents to work together and learn from each other. With enough community support, the co-op could possibly stay open long hours to appeal to outsiders who arrive in town late, or locals who have work schedules that conflict with normal local store hours. It is essential that the co-op be established in a location that is convenient and eye-catching to both locals and newcomers, such as in the center of either town along Scenic Biway 12. Most importantly, the co-op would have to be truly community-based. By this I mean that co-op members all must be allowed input and must reach consensus on how their co-op is run, managed and supported.

The idea suggested by one Escalante newcomer about creating a story-telling in town involving the local senior citizens is also a good idea on the surface, but it is not a feasible one unless the local senior citizens choose to do it. The same goes for the “dude ranch” idea, brought up by several informants. As we all know, people cannot be forced into doing something they do not want to do, especially Boulder and Escalante locals. It is up to the people to decide what they want to do, how they want to do it, and whether or not it is, or can be, realistically do-able, environmentally sustainable and economically feasible. I also think that it would be a good idea to have local residents from other western rural towns—towns that have been successful at preserving their cultural heritage (see Howe et al. 1997) or not so successful at preserving their cultural heritage (e.g. Moab, Utah)—come and speak to Boulder and Escalante locals and offer them experience-based advice and ideas. Again, locals may be more receptive to fellow rural residents than to urban representatives from governmentally- or environmentally-tied organizations.
CHAPTER 11
CONCLUSION

11.1 What Was Learned

One of the most difficult aspects of the research process for me was selecting an appropriate theory that would seek to answer my thesis question and inform my methodology. I was particularly concerned that choosing, slightly modifying and applying "cultural survival theory" to my target communities would be a stretch because I was unsure whether the communities of Boulder and Escalante qualified as specific "cultures" or "cultural groups." In my readings that discussed cultural survival theory as it relates to resident peoples impacted by protected areas (i.e. externally imposed change), cultural groups discussed tended to be isolated indigenous groups outside of the United States. However, Brechin et al. (1991:12) point out that even though the four prerequisites for cultural survival are particularly relevant for isolated tribal cultures, they are also relevant for other cultural groups in varying degrees. Therefore, I found it appropriate to modify the four prerequisites (changing "biological diseases" to "ideological diseases") and the cultural group.

My initial plan was to use cultural survival theory as it related to local Boulder and Escalante ranchers (cultural group) impacted by GSENM (externally imposed change). Although I believe this would have been a viable research project, I personally felt that using local ranchers with grazing permits on GSENM as my cultural group might be too limiting (relatively small number of ranchers who actually have permits on GSENM), too difficult (many ranchers work long, hard days in remote areas) and perhaps inappropriate (many ranchers work as ranchers only on a part-time basis and work a second occupation in town). Therefore, I decided to apply cultural survival theory to the isolated rural cultures of Utah’s last frontier, using Boulder and Escalante—two of the most isolated towns in Utah—as my target communities. However, using two communities as opposed to "local ranchers" brought to light many new questions and different perspectives that needed attention.
As a result of looking at the issues faced by the local communities of Boulder and Escalante, my theoretical background began to grow to include other related ideas, such as perspectives involving environmentalism, tourism, and growth management. Rather than just sticking to cultural survival theory, I decided to incorporate perspectives on environmentalism, tourism and growth management because Boulder and Escalante residents are impacted and/or threatened by environmentalism, tourism, and future growth. Thus, I ended up using cultural survival theory to explore impacts of GSENM (externally imposed change) on the local people as well as perspectives on environmentalism, tourism, and growth management to inform related questions and to help interpret my data.

Looking back, I believe that it would have been very possible to create at least four separate theses, each using a particular perspective. Other possible theses could have included: 1) a thesis that utilizes cultural survival theory to look only at local ranchers impacted by GSENM; 2) a thesis that uses environmental perspectives to explore the characteristics and strategies of environmentalists living in and around GSENM; 3) a thesis that uses an ecotourism perspective to look at nature-based tourism in Boulder and Escalante and its real and perceived impacts; and 4) a thesis that uses growth management ideologies to inform research relating to community growth and change post-GSENM. In other words, I believe my use of one main theory (cultural survival theory) and three other related perspectives was a little ambitious and if I were to do my research again, I would simplify my focus. On the other hand, I did not want to overlook all of the forces at work in the GSENM controversy and risk sacrificing holism for simplicity. Overall, my entire theoretical background helped me to create and organize my qualitative interview questions, which further helped me to organize my qualitative data into categories.

As far as methodology is concerned, I believe that the face-to-face, open ended, qualitative interviews were the most effective aspect. Another aspect of my methodology that worked well was conducting sufficient background research to learn about related issues and conflicts before entering the field. What could have served me and my research better is more time in the field and the distribution of a related survey. I felt fortunate to
locate FCAG’s 1999 “Attitudinal Survey,” which included responses from Boulder and Escalante residents relating to future growth, but I would have preferred to create and randomly distribute my own quantitative survey relating more directly to my research. Basically, I feel that more specific quantitative data would have nicely complemented all aspects of my qualitative research. Finally, although I am a “native” Utahn of Mormon pioneer stock with 13 months of experience living in a rural, southern Utah town (Moab, Utah), I still believe that living and working in Boulder or Escalante for six months to a year would have been ideal in that it would have only enhanced my understanding of the local culture and given me a more “emic” perspective.

In sum, I feel like the whole thesis research process went well. I was able to use past school-related research projects on GSENM, as well as the entire summer of 2000, to conduct background research. This gave me almost two years to prepare for my field research, make initial contacts, create interview questions, mail introduction letters to informants, schedule lodging for my field stay, and save money for research activities. I also found that graduate classes offered by Oregon State University’s Anthropology Department, especially those classes required for a master’s degree in applied anthropology, were very effective in preparing me for the realities and the sometimes unexpected aspects of field research. Through classes such as ethnographic methods, uses of anthropology and anthropological research design, I learned the importance of taking down the details as soon as possible when conducting participant observation; how to transcribe and thematically code interviews, and how to organize themes into a coherent report; the importance of theory in designing a research project; various data collection methods and their strengths/weaknesses; and the many ways in which anthropological research can be applied.

11.2 Applying Research

From the beginning, the purpose of my research has been to explore issues involving a federal land policy (GSENM) which has had obvious impacts on surrounding
rural communities (e.g. Boulder and Escalante). However, my research can be useful on many levels:

- **Land Managers**—my research can be used to inform 1) the current land managers of GSENFM (BLM) about local impacts of and attitudes toward current land management policies, what has worked, what has not worked, and what might be changed, if possible; 2) the United States’ Department of the Interior, about local impacts of and attitudes toward designation of national monuments via Presidential Proclamation, the effectiveness of the BLM as monument manager, the three-year planning process, including local perceptions about the “interactive public comment period” and other issues relating to federal land management; 3) all other land managers who deal with rural and/or isolated cultural groups.

- **Environmentalists**—my research can be used to inform 1) environmentalists who played a role in promoting the designation of GSENFM for environmental protection (e.g. Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance and other environmental groups affiliated with Utah Wilderness Coalition); 2) environmentalists who have played a role in promoting the designation of other national monuments designated by Presidential Proclamation, or other “top-down” methods, with the goal of environmental protection; 3) environmentalists, in general, who want federal (or government) protection of land that has been traditionally used by rural and/or isolated cultural groups.

- **Local People**—my research can be used to inform 1) residents of Boulder and Escalante about shared values of locals and newcomers, particularly local ranchers and environmentalists; perspectives on tourism in the community; community needs, aspirations and future goals; and ways to achieve local empowerment; 2) the local City Councils about same; 3) the Garfield County Commission about same; 4) the State of Utah about same; 5) other rural communities of the western United States faced with a similar Old West to New West transition.

### 11.3 Future Research

I hope that my research not only inspires land managers, environmentalists, and local people toward better communication and collaboration, but that it also inspires complimentary research.
I believe that it would be very interesting to conduct comparative research in the towns of Boulder and Escalante, Utah, in ten years. This research could explore whether the traditional heritage of either town still has a strong presence; examine the status of GSENM and GSENM management (BLM) and the status of relationships between land managers, environmentalists, newcomers and the local people; whether tourism to the GSENM area has continued to rise in popularity, leveled off, or declined and why; whether the population of either town has increased, remained the same, or decreased and why; and whether newcomers or outside influences have “paved over” the local culture with corporate chain businesses, commercialization and upscale amenities. I think results of such research would be fascinating.

Because Clinton created, during his Presidency and after GSENM, 12 additional national monuments by Presidential Proclamation, and many with conflicts and impacts similar to those caused by GSENM, comparative research conducted in the rural communities (or “gateway towns”) surrounding these new monuments would also be interesting.

Finally, I believe that it would also be worthwhile to compare my research to ethnographic research conducted in the rural, isolated communities surrounding Steens Mountain in southeast Oregon. Steens Mountain is similar to GSENM in that it represents a unique and relatively isolated geographical and geological area that has been traditionally used by 19th century settlers for grazing. Steens Mountain is also similar to GSENM in that it was considered by Clinton and Babbitt (at the urging of environmental groups) for National Monument status in 2000 because it, too, has been threatened by mining, trophy homes, resorts and community development (Barnett 2000a).

However, Steens Mountain is different from GSENM because collaboration and consensus-building between the local people, environmentalists, and government officials took place in lieu of Presidential Proclamation. What resulted from the laborious efforts Oregon politicians, environmentalists, local ranchers and residents of the Steens area was progressive land management legislation—which includes the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Area (SMCMPA)—that was signed by President
Clinton on October 30, 2000. This community-created and locally-produced legislation protects 1 million acres of Steens Mountain land from mining and geo-thermal development, one half of which (500,000) has been set aside as SMCMPA. SMCMPA includes 143,000 acres of congressionally-designated wilderness, most of which is no-grazing wilderness (for details on SMCMPA, see Cole 2000). Local ranchers and residents surrounding Steens Mountain opted for collaboration and consensus-building because they feared—and rightly so—that monument designation would restrict grazing, access and other traditional activities. Collaboration also granted the local people a voice in the determination of the land that they have lived and worked on for over 100 years. As a result of their efforts, SMCMPA has been touted as “a great victory for Steens Mountain and a model for solving other contentious issues facing Oregon and the West” (Barnett 2000). Therefore, I believe comparative research on SMCMPA would be very interesting as it represents a bottom-up approach to environmental protection.

11.4 Final Words

In closing, I believe it is imperative that the local culture of Boulder and Escalante, Utah, (or any local culture, for that matter) be recognized and respected before any environmental protection effort can be considered a “success.” The federal government and environmentalists need to understand that trust and cultural sensitivity can go a long way in maintaining functional relationships and preventing polarization. Acknowledging a local people’s territorality, understanding their resistance to new ideas and change, and giving the local people a voice in determining their own future, are crucial steps in preserving cultural diversity, which it can be argued is as important as preserving ecological and economic diversity. At the same time, the local people of Boulder and Escalante need to understand that although they may not be able to change the past, they have the power to direct the future. Therefore, local leadership is needed to bring the community together in a future vision before the community and local culture is overwhelmed by rapid growth.
It is not too late for the communities of Boulder or Escalante to determine what constitutes "acceptable change" and to make choices that help direct it. Because the people of Utah's last frontier are generally self-sufficient and innovative, I feel confident that they have what it takes to preserve their cultural heritage. I only hope that anger and hostility do not get in the way of communication, collaboration, leadership and effective action.
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APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS - Ranchers

"Cultural Survival"

1. On how many acres of land within GSEN M do you graze livestock?

2. How do you feel about the way in which GSEN M was designated? Why?

3. At the time of its designation, President Clinton gave the BLM three years to come up with a management plan, including public input.
   --Did you provide any input? Why or why not?
   --How successful was the BLM’s process for creating its management plan? Explain.
   --Was three years a long enough time for longtime residents, including yourself, to adapt to the new Monument? Why or why not?

4. GSEN M is the first National Monument managed by the BLM. How do you think the local BLM has handled its new role as outdoor recreation and land conservation managers?

5. Describe your relationship with the BLM. Has it changed since GSEN M?

6. Do you believe that you have territorial rights to any land within GSEN M? If so, describe these rights?

7. Do you feel like the federal government has acknowledged your territorial rights? Why or why not?

8. What affect do you think outsiders (recreationists) that visit GSEN M have had, or will have, on you and your livelihood?

9. What influence do you think outsiders (recreationists) have on longtime residents?

10. What about newcomers that have moved here or are planning to do so--how will they affect you and your livelihood? Longtime residents?

11. Finally, do you feel that any of your rights as an American citizen were violated by the GSEN M designation? If so, what rights and how were they violated?
"Environmental Values"

12. Why do you think GSENK was created?

13. Some people believe that nature is more valuable when untouched by human hand. Would you like to comment on this?

14. Some people believe that humans are obligated to protect the natural environment from human impacts. How do you feel about this?

15. What comes to your mind when I say “environmentalist”?

16. What are some similar goals, if any, shared by environmentalists and ranchers?

17. As far as you know, have ranchers and environmentalists ever worked together successfully? Why or why not? Is it possible?

18. Are you aware of any local groups or facilitators that aid polarized groups, such as environmentalists and ranchers, with conflict resolution?

19. Do you believe environmental protection is important? In what capacity and why, or why not?

20. This quote was taken from a recent study in which 42 ranchers in southern Oregon and northern California were interviewed. This researcher concluded that, “While environmentalists value freedom and wildness from a preservationist viewpoint, ranchers term themselves conservationists with similar ideals.” Would you agree with this statement? Explain.

"Social Values"

21. What do you value most about your community and why?

22. What kind of improvements would you like to see in your community?

23. What can your community offer outsiders, or non-residents?

24. Although this may seem like an obvious question, how do you think your rural community is different from an urban community?

25. Why do you live in a rural setting?
“Tourism”

26. How do you perceive tourism in your community?

27. What have been some noticeable benefits of tourism? Drawbacks?

28. How important is GSEN M, economically speaking, to Boulder/Escalante?

29. To what extent can you attribute changes in your community to GSEN M?

30. What types of development and businesses would you like to see in your community?

31. What types of development and businesses would you NOT like to see?

“Perceptions of Change”

32. What do you think this community will be like in 10 years? In 20 years? How do you feel about that change?

33. What do you think the ranching livelihood of the 21st century will be like? How will it differ from ranching in the 20th century?

34. Several books I have read that address issues facing the American West have stated that if ranchers want to ‘make it’ in the future they must diversify their ranch. What do you think of this idea?

35. Are you familiar with the concept of ‘agri-tourism’? If so, how do you feel about it?

36. In general, how do you perceive the future of the American West?

37. Do you have any other comments or thoughts that you would like to add?
Dear Respondent:

My name is Jennifer Leaver and I am a graduate student in applied anthropology at Oregon State University. I will be conducting thesis research in your area during the months of September and October, 2000. Because of your (ex. knowledge of Escalante/Boulder community issues), I have selected you as a key informant.

It has been nearly four years since President Clinton used the Antiquities Act to create the controversial 1.9 million acre Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument ("GSENM") and I am very interested in talking to longtime Escalante/Boulder residents about the federal process by which GSENM was created and the changes that have occurred since GSENM’s designation. In short, my research seeks to do the following: 1) assess the impacts of GSENM on local residents; 2) search for common ground between polarized groups; and 3) identify local needs and aspirations in the face of externally imposed change. Therefore, over the course of two months, I would like to interview longtime local residents about the impacts of GSENM, as well as their social and environmental values, perspectives on tourism, and perceptions of change.

This letter is to let you know that I will be in Escalante/Boulder from ______ to ______, and that I will telephone you upon my arrival in your community. I would greatly appreciate your willingness to set aside an hour or two for me to interview you about the above issues. I strongly feel that your knowledge is essential in creating a body of information that can aid your community, inform other communities facing similar change, and potentially influence future policy making.

Please expect a phone call from me within the next ten (10) days. I very much look forward to meeting and talking with you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Leaver
Graduate Student
APPENDIX C

**INFORMED CONSENT**

**MAJOR PROFESSOR:** Dr. Courtland Smith; (541)737-3858  
Department of Anthropology  
Oregon State University

**THESIS:** Where Old West Meets New West: Confronting Conservation, Conflict and Change on Utah’s Last Frontier

**RESEARCH DESCRIPTION:** This research project seeks to examine the impacts of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument ("GSENM") on local residents. This research also seeks to explore community members' social and environmental values, perspectives on tourism and perceptions of change. The purpose of this research is to test "cultural survival theory", give community members a voice in local matters, and identify local needs and aspirations in the face of externally imposed change.

**SUBJECT PARTICIPATION:** Subjects for this research will be over 18 years of age and will include ranchers affected by GSENM designation, public land managers, local environmentalists, business owners, as well as other community members. Tape recorded interviews will be conducted in response to a set of oral questions regarding GSENM, social and environmental values, perspectives on tourism and perceptions of change. Information collected will be used to augment or disprove "cultural survival theory" as it relates to the local ranching community, and seeks to identify common values of polarized community members. This thesis will become part of the published record at Oregon State University.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Confidentiality will be maintained. Your name will not be attributed to particular comments or information and only the researcher will know your name. Participation is voluntary and the subject has the right to refuse to participate at any time. Compensation is not provided as a result of participation. Questions may be directed to Dr. Courtland Smith at (541)737-3858 or the IRB Coordinator, OSU Research Office, (541)737-8008.

Research results and researcher recommendations will be available and accessible to all interested parties and a copy of this thesis will be submitted to both local and federal groups. Future publications related to this topic will serve as resources for local, national, and international rural communities facing similar issues.

I have read an understand the procedures described above and give my voluntary consent to participate in this study. A signed copy of this consent form will be provided to me.

____________________________________ /  _______________________________ /  ________________________  
SIGNATURE  PRINTED NAME  DATE
APPENDIX D

DOCUMENTATION SHEET

Date of Interview: ______________________

Place of Interview: ______________________

Duration of Interview: ______________________

******

Informant: ______________________________

Gender: __________________________

Age: __________________________

Occupation: __________________________

Time in Occ.: __________________________

Place of Birth: __________________________

Duration of Residency: __________________________

Marital Status: __________________________

Children, Ages: __________________________

______________________________________

______________________________________

______________________________________

______________________________________