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DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

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Abstract

"Becoming America's Ski City" explores how skiers remolded the political, economic, cultural, and environmental landscape of Utah's Wasatch Front, transforming the region's valley cities and mountain forests into a more unified yet contested space over the course of the twentieth century. This process of incorporation centered on Salt Lake City. In particular, the exigencies and experiences of skiing pushed Salt Lake Citians not only to recognize the ecological ties between slope and city but also to build new connections. These links included watershed regulations, land purchases, avalanche management, investment, federal boosterism, marketing campaigns, urban planning, wilderness legislation, and the Olympic movement. Skiing also represented a larger attempt to Americanize Utah and its predominantly Mormon population. By shifting attention away from popular images of the state as an insular desert, boosters attempted to build a stronger economy rooted in tourism that placed Utah more firmly within mainstream American culture. Their partial success points to the ways in which skiing eroded boundaries between city and periphery as well as state and nation. This process sheds light on the blurred dichotomies that defined modern American life within and beyond Utah—work and leisure, city and wilderness, region and nation—and the material and social changes that they molded.

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Introduction

On a classic cold spring day, storm clouds creep across the arid Great Basin, reaching the Great Salt Lake by the early morning hours. There, the warmer lake water, cold northwesterly winds, and storm intersect, causing the storm to pick up more moisture and to cool overall. The clouds continue to rise as they travel across the valleys of the Wasatch Front, an urban corridor sandwiched between the lake and Wasatch Range. Utahns throughout the densely populated region leave their homes in Salt Lake City, Ogden, and Provo. They strap their skis on their cars, pack a quick lunch, and pick up friends to carpool. Streams of cars travel toward the canyons on the east end of the Wasatch Front. The steep, narrow canyons are the arteries of the Wasatch, connecting the arid valleys with water, timber, and minerals. As the skiers fan out from their neighborhoods, they select which canyon road they will tackle. Ogdenites will most likely travel up Ogden Canyon to Snowbasin while people living eighty miles south of Ogden in Utah Valley typically choose their local favorite, Sundance. Residents of Salt Lake City's Sugarhouse neighborhood make the trek up Emigration Canyon to Park City's slopes. To the south, suburbanites wait for avalanche blasting to end so they can join the slow train of cars winding up Big and Little Cottonwood Canyons. Within thirty minutes, they are headed for the lifts at Snowbird, Alta, Solitude, and Brighton.

Across the Wasatch, skiers race to reach the deep, powdery caches of snow first. Clouds drift to the east, paralleling the chairlift's path. As the skiers glide off the lift, the sun begins to shine across the mountains and promises a perfect bluebird day of powder skiing. The view from the high ridges is remarkable. These ridges form the Wasatch's spine, stitching together the canyons and valleys to the east and west. Snowbasin skiers look back to the west, seeing the

carefully planned grid of Ogden disappear into the Great Salt Lake. At Brighton, skiers at the top of the Snake Creek Express peer over the cliff's eastern edge to see Heber Valley and the Wasatch Back—the home of Park City's resorts—unfold before them. Snowbird skiers look in the opposite direction and take in the view of the Salt Lake Valley, which sits 6,000 feet below them. The homes of one million Utahns seem miniscule. Finally, at Alta, powderhounds enjoy a 360-view of the Wasatch from the end of the Supreme Lift. To the east, they scan the Wasatch Back. To the north, they trace the upper reaches of Solitude and Brighton in Big Cottonwood Canyon. To the west, they see the bowls of Little Cottonwood and the steady flow of cars from the valley. Suddenly, places that are hours apart by car appear incredibly close.

Figure 1. Looking at Ogden and the Great Salt Lake from Snowbasin (1941). Courtesy of U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Cache National Forest Photo Collection.

Figure 2. Looking at the Wasatch Back from the top of Brighton's Snake Creek Express (2017). Author photo.

To the skier, the ties between the city and ski slope are apparent. These ties extend beyond the simple proximity of urban centers and mountain runs and underlie a long history of economic, political, cultural, and environmental incorporation. In other words, the view from the top of a Wasatch run encapsulates a deep history. Many associate skiing with leisure and luxury, a frivolous sport for people who can afford the time and money to play. The history of the Wasatch Front, however, shows that skiing impacted more than the select few. The sport advanced the creation of a new Wasatch Front, transforming the region's neighborhoods and wild spaces into a singular city. In the interest of urban health, it provided an impetus for restoring degraded landscapes stripped by mining and grazing. These changes breathed new life into nearly abandoned mining communities. The drive for more ski terrain pushed urbanites to recognize the ecological ties between their communities and mountain watersheds. Consequently, they implemented comprehensive management plans to protect Utah's limited

water sources. Urbanites' desire to expand and to constrain ski development led them to craft new urban plans that reimagined city spaces more expansively. Moreover, skiing formed the foundation of a new tourism industry that reinvigorated networks of capital that had once connected city and mountain in the nineteenth century. The sport formed a central platform of Utah's image-making campaign. By refashioning their state as a cosmopolitan, snowy place, Utahns hoped to counter popular images of their home as a rural, backward desert. Their efforts contributed to a broader effort to Americanize Mormons and their home state, situating Utah more firmly within mainstream culture. This process not only muddied the boundaries between state and nation but also between local and federal power. Amidst the tangle of ski areas' jurisdictional lines, the public and private sphere became less distinctive, too. Thus, this is the story of how one sport transformed a forest, how a forest transformed a city, how a city transformed a region, and how a region transformed a state.

The history of skiing on the Wasatch Front has relevance beyond the specifics of state and local history. It highlights the central role of leisure in key twentieth-century narratives of urbanization, federal power, health, and religion. Moreover, it sheds light on the blurred dichotomies that defined modern American life—public and private, city and wilderness, region and nation—and the material and social changes that they molded. Ski areas reveal the private nature of public lands, and conversely, the public's role in subsidizing private enterprise. By welcoming federal management, skiers went against a long tradition of resisting and resenting federal influence in the American West, especially in Utah. Skiing also reorients our understanding of recreation and wild spaces. Scholars often analyze recreation and tourism as a singular phenomenon in the American West, a story of outsiders' capital, corporate consolidation, and community displacement. The ski industry seemed to epitomize these

patterns. On the Wasatch Front, however, ski tourism did not supplant local recreation. Thus, the region's history pushes scholars to rediscover the multilayered intersections of business and play. It illuminates the persistence of local autonomy in terms of who was working, playing, owning, and investing in ski slopes.

Map 1. Ski areas of the Wasatch Front. Courtesy of Canyons resort records, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah.

The Wasatch Front also complicates the relationship between urban and wild spaces. As ski boosters, environmentalists, and urban planners argued, the Wasatch was not an exploited hinterland, a timeless wilderness, or even a separate urban system; by the end of the twentieth

century, Utahns had integrated the region's mountains and valleys completely. This process calls historians to revisit the ways in which they conceptualize the border between urban and wild. The region's transformation was not passive, despite the fact that few people lived in the Wasatch. Rather, the nonhuman world thwarted urbanization at each turn and demonstrated the extent to which the environment shapes and is shaped by human action.

Finally, the Wasatch Front's ski history offers a different perspective on regionalism. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) has had a pervasive influence on Utah's evolution. Consequently, the church often plays an important role in histories of the state. Some historians describe Utah as a "doughnut hole," or an exceptional place within the American West because of the church's influence on Utah's environment, culture and politics.[1] The LDS Church impacted skiing in Utah but not in the comprehensive way that it shaped other aspects of the state's evolution. In other words, Mormonism is peripheral in the larger story of skiing on the Wasatch Front, despite the fact that Utahns were skiing only a few miles from LDS headquarters in Salt Lake City. For this reason, Utah's ski story destabilizes the ways in which scholars pigeonhole Utah and define the state in broad strokes. Region, not state, proves more significant in understanding and explaining aspects of the Wasatch Front. At the same time, region and state did not develop separately nor did Mormonism disappear on Wasatch slopes. Skiing sheds light on a different Utah that seemed familiar and appealing to many Americans. Including skiing in Mormons' Americanization narrative shifts historians' interpretations of this change in two ways. First, it extends the process through the twentieth century and connects the 2002 Winter Olympics with a longer history of integration and image making through sport. It shows that Americanization was place-based, just as Mormonism is a place-based religion. Americans saw

[1] Jan Shipps, *Sojourner in the Promised Land: Forty Years Among the Mormons* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 21.

Mormons on television, neighborhood streets, and political ads, but when Americans experienced skiing in the heart of Mormonism—whether in person or through media—they saw the nature of Zion firsthand.

This dissertation builds on the work of other scholars of Mormonism, urbanization, recreation, federal power, and the environment in the American West. As historian Jan Shipps notes, many scholars skip over Utah in their research because its Mormon legacy makes it an exceptional places in the American West and in the United States. For this reason, early scholarship on Utah often focused on what made the state unique. Leonard Arrington's *Great Basin Kingdom* represents one of the first efforts to make sense of Utah's place in the nation. Arrington set the tone for later scholarship by focusing on Utah's political economy, arguing Mormons advanced their assimilation by giving up communitarianism. Other scholars, such as Thomas O'Dea, Armand Mauss, and Kathleen Flake, emphasize the political and economic nature of Americanization, but they also stressed the process's cultural elements. Together, their works point to the idea that Americanization was not a linear process. Both Mormons and non-Mormons resisted church members' complete assimilation into American society. At the same time, they point to key turning points in Americanization: the end of polygamy, embrace of capitalism, and the rise of Mormon politicians.[2]

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[2] Shipps, *Sojourner in the Promised Land*, 21; Leonard Arrington, *Great Basin Kingdom: An Economic History of the Latter-day Saints, 1830-1900* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), 380-409. For analysis of Mormon Americanization, see Thomas F. O'Dea, *The Mormons* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957); Armand L. Mauss, *The Angel and the Beehive: The Mormon Struggle with Assimilation* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Kathleen Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity: The Seating of Senator Reed Smoot, Mormon Apostle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Ethan R. Yorgason, *Transformation of the Mormon Culture Region* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003). Jared Farmer provides an overview of how historians have challenged the "doughnut hole theory" and taken Mormon historiography in new directions. See Farmer, "Crossroads of the West," *Journal of Mormon History* 41, no. 1 (2015): 156-173.

Figure 3. Americanization at work: Ski jumpers dedicate Engen Hill at Snowbasin (1951). Courtesy of U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Cache National Forest Collection.

More recently, scholars, such as J.B. Haws, stress the fact that Americanization continued throughout the twentieth century, long after these thresholds. Charles Peterson comments on this long evolution in his 1977 history of the state. Peterson argues that "other Utahs," including ethnic minorities, rural communities, and the Colorado Plateau, created a "countervailing force" against the influence of the urban and Mormon majority.[3] These outsiders drove Utah toward mainstream America. Peterson touches on the importance of these peripheral areas to tourism; Susan Sessions Rugh expands on this idea, detailing the role of tourism and marketing in creating a new Utah identity. Ski history complicates this historiography. Peterson defines

[3] J.B. Haws, *The Mormon Image in the American Mind: Fifty Years of Public Perception* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1-12, 193-206; Charles S. Peterson, *Utah: A Bicentennial History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1977), 133-143; Charles S. Peterson, "Beyond the Problems of Exceptionalist History," in *Great Basin Kingdom Revisited*, Thomas G. Alexander, ed. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1991), 133-139; Susan Sessions Rugh, "Branding Utah: Industrial Tourism in the Postwar American West," *Western Historical Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (2006): 454-455. For a historiography of Utah's exceptionalism, see Brian Q. Cannon and Jessie Embry, eds., *Utah in the Twentieth Century* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2009), 4-8.

dichotomies on the state level—city and country, Mormon and Gentile, white and nonwhite—but in doing so, he conceals the complexities of space, community, and identity that shaped Americanization at the regional and local levels. The story of skiing on the Wasatch Front highlights these tensions and reinforces the idea that Americanization continued through the twenty-first century. Recreation mattered not only as a way of attracting tourists to Utah but also as a way for Utahns to reimagine their own sense of place. In short, ski history directs scholars' attention to the environment, highlighting its entanglement in and equal importance to political, cultural, and economic strands of assimilation.

Ski history also offers a new perspective on urban history. Several environmental historians explore the relationship between city and region, core and periphery, and urban and wild. In *Nature's Metropolis*, William Cronon builds on the framework of central place theory, or the idea that capitalist trade tightly bound city and countryside, making it impossible to understand one without the other. Cronon historicizes this theory by showing how Chicago and the West underwent a process of mutual transformation through commodity production and sales. Since the publication of *Nature's Metropolis*, historians have paid greater attention to the relationship between city and country. Those who study this dynamic in the twentieth century, including Kenneth T. Jackson and Adam Rome, often analyze the rise of suburbs and decentralized metropolitan spaces. Raymond Mohl urges historians to integrate rural spaces into their analysis of urban change. More recently, historians have begun to look beyond the city-suburb dichotomy and revisit the regional concept that Mohl and Cronon highlighted. For example, Andrew Needham's *Power Lines* critiques older narratives of the Sunbelt metropolis, which rely on a Turnerian interpretation of the urban frontier. Instead, Needham shows how the Southwestern periphery experienced new forms of inequality in postwar America not because of

rural alienation from metropolitan development but because rural areas fed metropolitan growth. In short, Needham demonstrates the importance of thinking about urban history on a regional level.[4]

Recreation and water—two themes central to the story of skiing—provide a tool for following Needham's approach and defining urban space more expansively. In *Emerald City*, Matthew Klingle focuses on urban ecology, but he argues that Seattleites' interest in the outdoors and understanding of water pollution reflected a larger regional awareness. Richard Walker's study of the Bay Area, *The Country in the City,* tackled the core-periphery relationship directly. Walker illustrates the entanglement of city and country, but he breaks down the dichotomy between the two by showing the industrial nature of the countryside and wild nature of urban agriculture and recreation. Lincoln Bramwell illustrates the messy lines between urban and rural in his study of wilderburbs, low density communities built on the metropolitan periphery that appealed to people seeking closeness with nature. David Stradling and David Soll combine analysis of water politics, recreation, and urban power in *Making Mountains* and *Empire of Water*, their respective studies of the relationship between New York City and the Catskills. Both

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[4] William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991), 46-55; Raymond A. Mohl, "City and Region: The Missing Dimension in U.S. Urban History," *Journal of Urban History* 25 (November 1998): 3-7; Andrew Needham, *Power Lines: Phoenix and the Making of the Modern Southwest* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 1-21. For analysis of urbanization and region, see Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973); Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, eds., *The New Suburban History*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006); Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Adam Rome, *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Kathleen A. Brosnan and Amy L. Scott, eds., *City Dreams, Country Schemes: Community and Identity in the American West* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2011); Andrew Needham and Allen Dietrich-Ward, "Beyond the Metropolis: Metropolitan Growth and Regional Transformation in Postwar America," *Journal of Urban History* 35, 7 (2009): 943-969. For a framework for analyzing space, see Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974).

illuminate the ways in which the environmental ties between city and country influenced the creation of new political, economic, and social connections between the two areas, forging a new region in the process. [5]

This dissertation takes a similar approach to regional history, tracing how the environment defied municipal boundaries and pushed Utahns to redraw them. As in the case of other places, concerns over water and recreation fueled their efforts. Yet, on the Wasatch Front, Utahns redrew their city as part of a larger process of incorporation with implications at the state, regional, and local level. The dichotomy between wild and urban remained important, particularly in terms of wilderness protection and backcountry recreation, but Utahns also recognized that ski slopes formed one part of a larger ecological system that included the state's urban core. In other words, Utah's ski history challenges historians to see how these different models of understanding the urban-rural relationship could exist simultaneously in one space.

Scholars of tourism in the American West explore spatial relationships, too. In particular, they often grapple with questions of Western exceptionalism, examining how tourism has impacted and been impacted by the region's relationship with the rest of the nation. Earl Pomeroy's *In Search of the Golden West* relates the importance of tourism in building a postwar Western economy. He argues that tourism transformed tourist and resident alike. Pomeroy claimed, "the tourist becomes a Westerner, if he is not one already, and the Westerner becomes a

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[5] Matthew Klingle, *Emerald City: An Environmental History of Seattle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 267-268, 135-136, 167-168; Richard Walker, *The Country in the City: The Greening of the San Francisco Bay Area* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 5; Lincoln Bramwell, *Wilderburbs: Communities on Nature's Edge* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014), 3-4; David Stradling, *Making Mountains: New York City and the Catskills* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), 15, 174-175; David Soll, *Empire of Water: An Environmental and Political History of the New York City Water Supply* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 4-10, 184-186.

tourist."[6] By studying tourism, historians could learn not only what the West was, but what it hoped and pretended to be. Hal Rothman agrees that mythmaking, identity formation, and environmental change defined tourism in the West. In *Devil's Bargains*, however, he asserts that postwar tourism created a new form of colonialism that propagated greater inequality between tourists and locals. Commercial recreation, including skiing and dude ranching, formed a key pillar of this new West. Historian David M. Wrobel argues that scholars must seek a more nuanced approach to the study of tourism in the region. Two dichotomies that shaped older scholarship—authentic versus artificial and local versus tourist—are as problematic as they are helpful. This dissertation builds on several existing strands of thought, including the ideas that region and nation became less distinctive through tourism; commercial recreation transformed environment and identity; and that the tourist/local binary conceals a broad range of experiences. It adds a new angle to this historiography by looking beneath the Western label to contemplate national incorporation on a smaller regional scale. Moreover, Utah's ski story undermines the assumption that commercial recreation spaces were inherently tourist-dominated and that recreationists fit into neat categories of native, neonative, and tourist.[7]

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[6] Earl Pomeroy, *In Search of the Golden West: The Tourist in Western America*, 2nd ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), vii.

[7] Pomeroy, *In Search of the Golden West*, vi-vii; Hal Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 17-24, 113-142, 202-286; David M. Wrobel, "Introduction: Tourists, Tourism, and the Toured Upon," in *Seeing & Being Seen: Tourism in the American West*, eds. David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 21-23; For analysis of recreation and tourism in the West, Lawrence Culver, *The Frontier of Leisure: Southern California and the Shaping of Modern America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Marguerite S. Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 2001); Liza Nicholas, Elaine M. Bapis and Thomas J. Harvey, eds. *Imagining the Big Open: Nature, Identity, and Play in the New West* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2003); Bonnie Christensen, *Red Lodge and the Mythic West: Coal Miners to Cowboys* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002); Jen Corinne Brown, *Trout Culture: How Fly Fishing Forever Changed the Rocky Mountain West* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015).

Like other historians of tourism, those studying skiing engage with the themes of belonging, inequality, and regionalism. Writing in the midst of the ski boom, Pomeroy noted that the sport transformed the very wilderness that skiers sought into a mechanized urban environment. Others have expanded on this theme of urban wilderness. Primarily focused on Colorado, historians, such as Annie Gilbert Coleman, Michael Childers, and William Philpott, study skiing in the context of postwar patterns of suburbanization, consumerism, and environmentalism. They emphasize ski resorts' urban nature, but they do not conceptualize city and slope as a singular urban space. The particularities of Colorado's ski scene and geography meant that Denver impacted ski development, but communities in the state maintained more autonomy than those in Utah. In short, the differences between skiing in Utah and Colorado highlight the importance of place-based studies in finding and describing the larger picture of tourism in the West.[8]

In defining the broader themes that shaped the American West, historians have stressed the importance of the federal government. Patricia Limerick notes that regardless of Westerners' mythical independence, the federal government subsidized Euro-American settlement. It set the

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[8] Earl Pomeroy, *The Pacific Slope: A History of California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Utah, and Nevada* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), 367-370; Annie Gilbert Coleman, *Ski Style: Sport and Culture in the Rockies* (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 2004), 4-6; Michael Childers, *Colorado Powder Keg: Ski Resorts and the Environmental Movement* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012), 96-126; William Philpott, *Vacationland: Tourism and Environment in the Colorado High Country* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), 130-131. For other analysis of ski history, see Andrew Denning, *Skiing into Modernity: A Cultural and Environmental History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014); Robert Huntford, *Two Passions and a Plank: The Dramatic History of Skiing* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2008); John Fry, *The Story of Modern Skiing* (Lebanon: University Press of New England, 2010); E. John Allen, *The Culture and Sport of Skiing: From Antiquity to World War II* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007); E. Duke Richey, "The Aspenization of Telluride: Coming of Age and Mythologizing Change in Ski Country, 1945-1985." *Pacific Historical Review 79*, no. 2 (May 2010): 231-264; Jerry Frank, *Making Rocky Mountain National Park: The Environmental History of an American Treasure* (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 2013).

groundwork for urban growth through investment during the New Deal and World War II. Historians of the postwar era often focus on federal power in urban and suburban environments, or on public lands and in rural areas. For instance, Gerald Nash's numerous works on federal power show the importance of federal agencies in transforming the West from a colony of Eastern capital into a diverse economy grounded in cities and federal funding. Carl Abbott reinforces Nash's argument, showing the ties between federal power and urban ascendancy after World War II. In his view, the metropolitan shadow eclipsed Western hinterlands during this period; urbanites remade these places into cities' playgrounds. Agencies associated with these hinterlands, such as the Forest Service, play a tangential role in these studies.[9]

On the other hand, historians who analyze federal power in the hinterland often focus exclusively on public lands agencies. They track federal agencies' struggle to balance access—whether by recreationists, corporations, or community stakeholders—with preservation. Scholars of the Forest Service, such as Harold Steen, Samuel Hays, and Paul Hirt trace how this struggle played out in policymaking and environmental change. Those who focus on specific places, including Nancy Langston, Jedediah Rogers, and Kevin Marsh, demonstrate the power of local actors in shaping—rather than consistently rejecting or resisting— federal management of public lands. Marsh considers the parallels between narratives of wilderness protection and urbanization, suggesting that the process of drawing boundaries for wilderness areas mirrored that of urban zoning. Yet, a gap remains between histories of federal power in urban and wild

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[9] Patricia Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken History of the American West* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 88-90; Gerald D. Nash, *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 2-9; Nash, *The Federal Landscape: An Economic History of the Twentieth-Century West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999), 55-77; Carl Abbott, *How Cities Won the West: Four Centuries of Change in Urban North America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), 179-185, 264-267; Abbott, *The Metropolitan Frontier: Cities in the Modern American West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993), 123-173.

spaces. Utah's ski history reveals the connections between these two narratives and shows the ways in which different federal agencies worked in tandem and with local stakeholders to fuse city and slope.[10]

By tracing the intersections of these four distinctive historiographical fields, this dissertation explores new directions in the history of the American West. It divides Utah's ski history into three periods: 1915-1945, 1945-1970, and 1970-1990. Although skiing existed on a smaller scale in central and northern Utah, this work focuses on the Wasatch Front, where ski areas had greater longevity, more financial stability, and a larger market. It addresses backcountry and cross-country skiing but alpine skiing (also known as downhill skiing) is the primary focus. Chapter 1 traces the early years of commercial skiing from the first organized competition in 1915 to the eve of alpine skiing's postwar surge in popularity. Ski slopes became an exclusive space dominated by a culture of youth, whiteness, fitness, Mormonism, and masculinity. Skiers simultaneously reinforced and reconsidered these boundaries as more people worked and played on local slopes during World War II. Skiing also offered a refuge from the city for those seeking spiritual rejuvenation. Utahns used the sport to challenge and conform to

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[10] For an overview of national forest policy, see Harold K. Steen, *The U.S. Forest Service: A Centennial History* (1976; repr. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004); Samuel Hays, *The American People & The National Forests: The First Century of the U.S. Forest Service* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009); Paul Hirt, *A Conspiracy of Optimism: Management of the National Forests since World War Two* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994); William G. Robbins, *American Forestry: A History of National, State, & Private Cooperation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985). For analysis of local actors and public lands management, see Nancy Langston, *Forest Dreams, Forest Nightmares: The Paradox of Old Growth in the Inland West* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995); Jedediah S. Rogers, *Roads in the Wilderness: Conflict in Canyon Country* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013); Kevin R. Marsh, *Drawing Lines in the Forest: Creating Wilderness Areas in the Pacific Northwest* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007) 12-13, 81-94.

Mormon social norms; in the process, they negotiated Mormonism's place in mainstream American culture.

Chapter 2 details how stakeholders' urban ties shaped how they claimed authority within Wasatch canyons. Ski boosters used a patchwork of local, federal, and outsider capital to build lifts on the remnants of extractive industries. In doing so, they blended the private and public nature of management and investment. The environment, especially avalanches, eroded soils, and streams, complicated the already messy lines of control in the Wasatch. Utahns' attempts to harness the environment were highly localized. They required cross-jurisdictional cooperation but also illustrated the limits of human control over the nonhuman world.

The dissertation's second section discusses the creation of a ski industry in Utah. From 1945-1970, boosters increasingly focused on building resorts, attracting out-of-state tourists, and making the ski business profitable. Chapter 3 explains the role of marketing in this effort. To compete with ski areas closer to home, operators developed individual brands for their slopes. They worked together to break into the American ski market, coordinating with state and business organizations to create a "Ski Utah" brand. Chapter 3 relies heavily on visual sources. When selecting images to include and analyze, I sought maps and photographs that were representative of the larger array of materials that I viewed in the archive. I also chose images that reflected the themes outlined in written sources. For instance, I considered state officials' correspondence on tourism campaigns when determining which maps best portrayed their goals for ski branding. This strategy offered a way to trace the intentionality of the images' creators. Shifting away from visual analysis, Chapter 4 returns to the themes of avalanche management, watershed protection, and investment. It details the importance of federal boosters in shaping each of these narratives. Recognizing the limits of federal expertise, capital, and power, federal

boosters' involvement transitioned from eager promotion to cautious support. This created an opening for greater collaboration with state, local, and private leaders.

The final section focuses on urban planning, wilderness legislation, and the anti-Olympics movement between 1970-1990. Many Utahns worried that their state's population growth and skiing's popularity would lead to a shrinking supply of culinary water, powdery snow, and recreation space. As Chapter 5 details, urbanites tackled these issues of scarcity with master plans that would govern development at the municipal, watershed, forest, and county level. The planning process allowed more stakeholders to mold the future of Utah's ski areas. It also embodied the comprehensive, concrete ways that Utahns were acknowledging the ties between city and slope. Chapter 6 emphasizes the fact that locals understood the close ties between wild spaces and cities. They disagreed, however, on whether the urban and wild could exist in such close proximity or if that proximity was even desirable. The stories of the Lone Peak Wilderness and anti-Olympics movement show how Utahns compromised on questions of wildness and urbanization. They realized that regardless of how pristine Wasatch slopes might appear, they remained thoroughly entangled in the city's web.

Together, the various phases of Utah's ski history illustrate a story of incorporation and convergence. Utahns recognized the environmental links between mountain watersheds and urban valleys long before commercial skiing. The sport placed intense pressure on the region's resources, however, and pushed Utahns to manage the Wasatch Front as a unified ecosystem. Skiing also inspired new political, cultural, and economic connections that merged city and region as well as state and nation. As more skiers schussed down Wasatch slopes, they blurred the boundaries between Mormon and American, urban and wild, public and private, and outsider and local. Their experiences complicate the dichotomies that often define interpretations of state,

regional, and national history. They reveal the essential role of leisure in narratives of religion, federal power, urbanization, regionalism, and the environment in the twentieth-century United States. Just as skiers forged a new city through sport, their stories now provide a tool for historians to connect distinctive fields of inquiry in retelling the history of power and place in modern America.

Chapter 1

Skiing within Bounds: Community, Religion, and Labor on the Wasatch Front, 1915-1945

After a heavy snowfall in Salt Lake City, Marthinius Strand trudged down South Temple Street. He daydreamed, reveling in the beauty of snow-laced trees until a cursing man interrupted his thoughts. The man was struggling to shovel snow, so Strand offered his help. As a newcomer to the United States and the city, Strand quizzed the man on the winter activities in the area. When the man surprisingly responded that the only local sports were "carrying ashes and shoveling snow," Strand used the little English that he knew to describe the thrill and exhilaration that skiing brought.[11] He thought the region was the perfect place for skiing. All of Utah's major cities—Ogden, Salt Lake City, and Provo—were located in an urban corridor called the Wasatch Front; each city was between ten to thirty miles from the snowy canyons and peaks of the Wasatch Range. This meant that a significant number of Utahns lived close to the region's potential ski areas. Realizing this geographic pattern and reflecting on his fateful meeting on Salt Lake's streets, Strand made it his mission to introduce recreational skiing to local residents. In December of 1914, he and other Norwegian immigrants founded the Norwegian American Athletic Club and staged the first ski jumping event at Dry Canyon in 1915.[12]

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[11] M.A. Strand, "Winter Sports," National Ski Tournament Championship Meet Souvenir Program, 1937, Edgar Bering Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

[12] Jack Fairclough, "M.A. Strand, from Norway, Opened up Utah Skiing," *Deseret News*, January 24, 1948, Marthinius Strand Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City; Norryle English, "Utah's Salesman of Skiing," *Deseret News Magazine*, January 14, 1951, Marthinius Strand Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City; "Norwegian American Club Ready for Tourney," February 22, 1929, Frank Rasmussen Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City; "Urban and Rural Population: 1900 to 1990," US

In many ways, Strand's story paralleled that of other Swedish and Norwegian immigrants who moved to Utah in the early twentieth century. He came from a Mormon family and grew up ski jumping. Strand felt a deep affection for Norway, but because of misunderstandings related to his religious beliefs as well as his family's desire to be near the center of Mormonism, Strand and his wife, Selma, immigrated to the United States in 1910. The promotion of skiing remained Strand's constant focus. After the first jumping event in 1915, he volunteered as a ski jumping judge and led civilian mountain patrols during World War II. Outside Utah, he served as Vice President of the National Ski Association and as a member of the U.S. Olympic Committee. Perhaps one of Strand's greatest legacies, however, was his imprint on the culture and image of skiing in Utah. He once remarked that the sport "makes the blood surge through the veins with renewed strength and happiness."[13] Strand often spoke of the sport with rhetoric of whiteness, health, purity, and religious vigor. This mindset was not unique to Strand and defined the sport's appeal for decades. Thus, Strand's experiences and ideas provide a useful starting point for understanding the sport's early years in Utah. During this period, skiing became more popular and more contested. More Utahns participated in the sport, but the exclusive ski brand that Strand promoted—bound to Christianity, whiteness, masculinity and youth—persisted. At the same time, the gap between those who worked and those who played in ski areas widened. These changes mirrored shifting concepts of community, religion, and labor within and beyond the

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Census Bureau, 1995, https://www.census.gov/population/censusdata/urpop0090.txt, (accessed October 17, 2017).

[13] Fairclough, "M.A. Strand," Strand Papers; "Ski and Mountain Corps," *The Rambler*, Wasatch Mountain Club, 1945, Hack Miller Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Strand, "Winter Sports," Bering Papers.

Wasatch Front. Ski areas provided a space for urbanites, especially Salt Lake Citians, to make sense of these transformations.[14]

"The Fraternity of Skiers"[15]

During the 1930s, skiing expanded beyond the Scandinavian community, yet it remained an exclusive sport, circumscribed by boundaries of race and gender. Prior to this time, the majority of skiers were Norwegian and Swedish jumpers who dominated development and competitions. The roster of competitors and judges at the 1929 state ski jumping competition read like a who's who of local Scandinavian Americans, including future ski instructor Alf Engen and U.S. champion Lars Haugen. Most competed on Ecker Hill. The family who owned the hill, the Rasmussens, shared a similar past with many of the jumpers. Marie Rasmussen had skied in her native Norway. Her husband Christian, a Danish immigrant, had learned about jumping during his mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS, or Mormon) in Norway. For his two-year mission, Christian lived in villages with long traditions of jumping and interacted with locals through his evangelization efforts. Decades later, he helped his son, Frank, develop Ecker Hill with Alf Engen in 1927. Few skiers, however, jumped at the

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[14] On Utah's ski history, see Joseph Arave, "The Forest Service Takes to the Slopes: The Birth of Utah's Ski Industry and the Role of the Forest Service," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (2002): 341-355; Alan Engen and Gregory Thompson, *First Tracks: A Century of Skiing in Utah* (Layton: Gibbs Smith, 2001); Alexis Kelner, *Skiing in Utah: A History,* (Salt Lake City: Alexis Kelner, 1980); Kristen Smart Rogers, "'We Didn't Think He Was Gonna Build It;' Skiing Hits a Mining Town," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (Fall 2001): 310-325. On Mormonism and the environment, see Thomas Alexander, "Stewardship and Enterprise: The LDS Church and the Wasatch Environment, 1847-1930," *Western Historical Quarterly* 25 (Fall 1994): 340-364; John B. Wright, *Rocky Mountain Divide: Selling and Saving the West* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993); Dan Flores, "Zion in Eden: Phases of Environmental History in Utah," *Environmental Review* 7 (Winter 1983): 325-344; Jared Farmer, *On Zion's Mount: Mormons, Indians, and the American Landscape* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008); George Handley, Terry Ball, and Steven Peck, eds. *Stewardship and the Creation: LDS Perspectives on the Environment* (Provo: Religious Studies Center, 2006).

[15] "Skiing with the Wasatch Mountain Club," December 1939, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, UT.

hill. This type of skiing remained mostly a spectator sport because of the technical knowledge required and the danger involved. Utahns hesitated to invest in jumping because fickle winds so often forced the cancellation of expensive events. These winds also led to injury or death for jumpers and spectators alike. As a result, ski jumping declined once communities discovered and invested in safer and more accessible downhill skiing venues. The Norwegian American Athletic Club, which had spearheaded jumping, made a conscious decision to support this shift. In 1930, members rechristened the group the Utah Ski Club. Axel Andreasen suggested that the name change would not only convince more native-born Americans to ski but also draw attention to Utah as a skiing destination. In fact, their goals came to fruition within a decade. While people still enjoyed jumping sites, three new downhill ski areas dominated the nascent industry: Alta, Brighton, and Snowbasin. Scandinavian Americans continued to shape the sport but tourists and native-born locals outnumbered them on the slopes.[16]

Figure 4. Alf Engen, Jack Reddish, and Sverre Engen complete a triple jump at the dedication of Bjorngaard Hill (1941). Courtesy of U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Region Office, Cache National Forest Photo Collection.

[16] "Norwegian American Club Ready for Tourney," 1929, Rasmussen Papers; Selma Rasmussen Kilby, interview by Jay M. Haymond, Park City, UT, June 18, 1974, transcript, Park City Museum; Selma Kilby, interview, April 1986, transcript, Larry Warren Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City; "History of the Utah Ski Club," National Ski Tournament Championship Meet Souvenir Program, 1937, Edgar Bering Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

Scandinavian Americans remained engaged by joining local outdoor clubs in generating interest in skiing among urbanites. A few Salt Lake Citians who came of age during the rise of downhill skiing became familiar with the sport through family connections to the mining past. For example, Harold Goodro described skiing as a "family tradition."[17] He earned his first turns under the tutelage of his father, who skied to open the mines for the Louise Mining Company each spring. For many, however, this labor-oriented form of skiing was a distant memory. Instead, they often learned about the sport by attending jumping events or meeting community members involved in the sport. Interest in skiing incubated in the small hills of Salt Lake's eastern bench more often than in the canyons so often associated with the sport today. Jack Walker's experience reflected this exposure. Jumper Halvor Hvalstad approached him on a city streetcar after noticing that Walker was holding a pair of jumping skis, which he had purchased as a novelty. Hvalstad invited him to events in Parley's Canyon, and soon, Walker was competing as part of the Utah Ski Club. Lou Lorenz, another Salt Lake resident, remembered first seeing skis in the lower elevation hills near Emigration Canyon. His father's business happened to be next to Strand's downtown electrical shop; through this personal connection, Lorenz also learned to ski. Mel Fletcher recounted a similar pattern in Park City. From his grandmother's porch, Fletcher watched Swedes and Norwegians jump on the Creole Mine dump. He and other local kids mimicked them and later learned alpine skiing. These stories point to several themes in the development of skiing. First, skiing was a personal sport. People learned

[17] Harold and Helen Goodro, interview by Joseph Arave, August 21 and September 21, 1989, transcript, Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

about it from family members and neighbors, particularly Scandinavian immigrants. Moreover, these interactions were inextricably tied to the communities and geography of cities.[18]

Outdoor groups, especially the Wasatch Mountain Club (WMC), also impacted the popularization of skiing. Their influence fit within the paradigm of a social, urban sport. For WMC members, the appeal of skiing rested just as much in the sport itself as it did in the socializing that accompanied multi-day traverses. A 1939 promotional article explained this phenomenon: "No matter who you are in private life, whether a messenger boy or bank president, at the [WMC] Lodge, you are one of the gang; all are equals in that great fraternity of skiers."[19] The sport had relatively low overhead costs during this period; thus, the author's perception of the sport as a cross-class activity held some weight. The gendered experience of skiing—embodied in the term "fraternity"—remained more complex. Historian Annie Gilbert Coleman describes how gender shaped how people skied on the mountain and interacted with each other in the American West. She explains that skiing could be "at once liberating and subversive." For instance, "in its manifestations as sexual conquest, sensual romance, physical freedom, and social scene, skiing could define men as commanding athletes or outdoorsmen and women skiers as independent athletes, romantic objects, or social beings."[20] Although skiing

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[18] Goodro and Goodro, interview; Jack Walker, interview by Joseph Arave, May 14 and August 7, 1991, transcript, Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City; Lou Lorenz, interview by Joseph Arave, March 14-21, 1990, transcript, Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City; Mel Fletcher, interview by Joseph Arave, October 18, 1989, transcript, Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

[19] "Skiing with the Wasatch Mountain Club," December 1939, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, UT; Annie Gilbert Coleman, "From Snow Bunnies to Shred Betties: Gender, Consumption, and the Skiing Landscape," in *Seeing Nature Through Gender*, ed. Virginia Scharff, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003): 199-200.

[20] Annie Gilbert Coleman, *Ski Style: Sport and Culture in the Rockies* (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 2004), 199-201. On the complexities of gender and skiing in Europe, see

presented a range of opportunities to break gender norms, especially for women, it also centered on the affirmation of gender expectations.

Narratives of skiing, either in promotional literature, film, or newsletters, emphasized gender conformity, especially concerning the social side of skiing. One WMC publication detailed how women gained membership in the group. By using "feminine tactics" of feeding members and "other stratagems," "the girls wormed their way into the members' good graces."[21] The author's condescending tone imparted a view of women as both nurturing and wily, manipulating men into allowing them to participate. The "girls" offered cooking skills and charm, which the men thought added something distinctively feminine to the organization. Other works also highlighted women's value in traditional roles. In contrast to the athletic images of men skiing in *The Utah* magazine, women appeared as objects of beauty and consumption. Rather than schussing down the slopes, these women were "schuss-pusses" who modeled the latest fashions and posed in front of lodges.[22] As Coleman states, women remained "objects of beauty rather than instruments of mobility" in many depictions of skiing.[23]

The 1940s promotional film, *Margie of the Wasatch*, expressed a similar interpretation. Margie first appears on the scene at Alta Ski Lodge with a plethora of luggage; the male narrator comments that surely all of the luggage must belong to many guests. As she parades by the ski instructors, the narrator remarks that the "boys find her most attractive" and that she did not miss

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Andrew Denning, *Skiing into Modernity: A Cultural and Environmental History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 43-46, 103-104.

[21] Letter, Wasatch Mountain Club, October 9, 1946, Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

[22] "Guess Who?" *The Utah*, State Road Commission of Utah, December 1940, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, UT.

[23] Coleman, "From Snow Bunnies," 195.

a beat in seeing the handsome instructors.[24] One, Sverre Engen, quickly purchases a charm to give to Margie. He rescues Margie after she ventures into an expert ski area. In many ways, this film related the same patterns that Coleman identifies in the national ski scene. Margie's suitcases and Sverre's purchase represented the prominent place of consumerism within ski culture. Moreover, the portrayal of Engen's power skiing and Margie's weak skills reiterated a narrative of skiing as a process of masculine conquest, both of the daunting landscape and the beautiful woman. The film promoted Margie and Alta as objects of desire for the potential consumer viewing the film. *Margie of the Wasatch* relied on the appeal of gender norms to capture the attention of a "fraternity of skiers" who valued the masculinity of conquest that it depicted.[25]

Event agendas and print media also articulated ideas of gender conformity. For instance, the WMC newsletter announced in 1933 that for the first time, an equal number of men and women had embarked on the club's Peterson Canyon ski excursion. The author quickly pointed out that with the Morals Committee present, the men and women abided by the social mores of the day. Club publications typically noted the separation of men and women during these events, including the presence of male and female leaders for each outing. In other words, these excursions provided an outlet for men and women to socialize; they were, however, socializing as men and women first, and as club members secondarily. The Life Line Telegraphy section of *The Utah* illustrated a similar take on the gendered nature of slope socials. Written by Bunty Fabian Keyser, it often highlighted marriages, births, and new couples among the local ski crowd. At the same time, the column flipped the objectification of *Margie of the Wasatch.*

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[24] "Margie of the Wasatch," J. Willard Marriott Library YouTube Channel, 0:30-1:23, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oe5EUV3N32k (accessed September 1, 2017).
[25] Ibid.

Keyser offered commentary on the bachelors on the slopes. One snippet reads: "Johnny Erickson-Holy Kaduckas! Did you ever see a better-looking model. He also skis as well as looks."[26] In each case, Keyser described skiers' attractiveness and skill, affirming the stereotypes that Coleman details but also placing men on display in a way more commonly experienced by women during this period. While her column detailed stereotypically feminine topics, such as fashion and childrearing, it was also a space for talking about women who rarely appeared elsewhere in ski media. For instance, Keyser described Ginny Guernsey's technical talent, Margy O'Brien's ski clinics, and Miggs Durrance's construction work. Keyser's profiles showed how women's experiences on the slopes defied the simple ski bunny image.[27]

Figure 5. Ginny Guernsey and Mary Major near Albion Hut (Late 1940s). Courtesy of Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Ted Major photo collection.

In fact, other accounts related how women, both in the jumping and alpine eras, challenged the image of inexperienced skiers more interested in fashionable jackets and fireside chats than powder skiing. As Coleman explains, the reality of skiing differed to some extent from media depictions. Borghild Bergstedt's experience illustrated this pattern. A Mormon

[26] "Peterson's Canyon," 1933, Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City; Bunty Fabian Keyser, "Lift Line Telegraphy," *The Utah*, State Road Commission of Utah, December 1940, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, UT.
[27] Keyser, "Life Line Telegraphy," Utah State Historical Society.

immigrant from Norway, Bergstedt brought her interest in jumping to Utah. Decades later, she proudly recalled an encounter with Mormon leader John Widtsoe who encouraged her and other "hardy Norwegians" to continue skiing.[28] Bergstedt participated in the first competition in Dry Canyon. The other female entrants dropped out of the competition, but once the official events had ended, Bergstedt flew down the course and completed a forty-foot jump.[29]

By the 1920s, women like Bergstedt were more common. Within the WMC, women took on leadership roles. The club's publication touted the fact that the WMC elected a woman, Edith Green, to serve as president in 1934. Likewise, it publicized women's ability to qualify for club membership through skiing events in 1939. The Civilian Mountain Corps also claimed women in its ranks. This organization formed in 1942 to support the war effort by providing a volunteer ski patrol on the Wasatch Front. While official publications mentioned that women might serve the patrol as cooks and nurses, in reality, several women skied as part of the mountain patrol. These women's experiences reinforced the idea that ski slopes functioned as places for affirming and challenging gender norms. In most cases, women appeared in photos as jumpers, skiers, and leaders, but their names and stories—which often undermined the image of a supportive cook or objectified snow bunny—often remained hidden. When they did appear in contemporary narratives, they were typically described and identified primarily by their gender. Thus, gender remained a primary indicator of how people should understand and relate to a particular skier.[30]

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[28] Coleman, "From Snow Bunnies," 195, 201-202; "Mor Reminisces: Borghild Marie Bergstedt Paulsen Relates a Few of Her Life Experiences," 26, Borghild Marie Bergstedt Paulsen autobiography, 1895-1970, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[29] "Mor Reminisces," Paulsen autobiography, 26.

[30] "Mor Reminisces," Paulsen autobiography, 26; Letter, October 9, 1946, Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Vern Haugland, "First Official Ski Qualifying Trip," Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Ray and

Gendered athleticism also intersected with concepts of health, urbanization, race, and skiing. In the minds of many skiers, the sport served as a tonic to the ills of the city. By schussing down local mountains, Utahns could perfect the white, masculine body. This ideal was closely tied to Utahns' idealization of Nordic culture. Dean Green's tribute to jumper Calmar Andreasen, who died during a 1934 competition, illustrated this trend. Like other locals, Green valorized Andreasen. He explained that "courageous sports will ever be the ken of courageous men./ Work-a-day recreations pale in comparison with this bird-like gliding on manmade wings."[31] Green related Andreasen's death to the Viking myths of Valhalla, saying: "This well-loved son of the North country passed on in the true warrior's manner/Buckled in his armor and fighting for victory in his favorite conflict." Unlike most, who died "nestled in the couch of Mother Earth," he "was snatched by the Gods in eagle-like flight/ And wafted on flashing wings to his waiting place in the Warriors' Valhalla."[32] At first glance, this poem reflected the author's admiration for the Viking past. Skiers embodied what made this period so alluring to Green: courage, valor, and otherworldliness. He romanticized Andresen's death, just as he romanticized the Viking era. Moreover, Green imparted the idea that the vigor of skiing enabled two types of transcendence; jumpers took on non-human abilities when they flew over the earth and overcame mortality through their courage. Green's references to Valhalla were not coincidental. Andreasen's Norwegian heritage fit within this Viking narrative, but Green's cultural references also made sense within the anxieties of the period. Skiing allowed Andreasen to tap into a form

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Ava Stewart and JoAnn Lewis, interview by Joseph Arave, August 8, 1989, transcript, Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[31] Frank Baker, "Message from Valhalla," 1934, Edgar Bering Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Dean Green, "Tribute to a Norseman," 1934, Edgar Bering Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT

[32] Green, "Tribute to a Norseman," Bering Papers.

of primitive masculinity—challenged during the stress and struggle of the Great Depression—but within the confines of Nordic culture. Thus, he could engage in a foreign, physical activity, but without undermining his own identity as a white man.[33]

This diction of masculinity, whiteness, and physicality appeared again in the writing of Marthinius Strand. As a key ski promoter and athlete, Strand's perspective provides insight into ideas about the sport during the 1920s and 1930s. Throughout his writing, Strand described skiing as the perfect escape from "the humdrum city" in a "world gone mad." He stated, "These men have perfect bodies. Why? Because in connection with these winter sports they lead clean lives."[34] In his mind, Scandinavians lived longer and healthier lives than Americans because they participated in rigorous winter sports as children. He argued that Americans should pay more attention to the most significant factor in sports, "the building of a sturdy race of people." In doing so, American skiers could achieve "life's greatest aim," "a clean mind in a healthy and strong body."[35]

Strand's argument points to several connections between race, masculinity, sport, and the body. First, his references to the weakening influence of the city echoed Green's tribute to Andreasen. Both authors thought cities threatened Americans' fragile masculinity; wilderness, not urban leisure, offered a solution.[36] Strand also reiterated a Nordic ideal bound to the belief

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[33] Neil Maher, *Nature's New Deal: The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Roots of the American Environmental Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 38, 75, 103; Progressive G. Stanley Hall argued that primitiveness was a temporary development stage for young white men but a permanent stage for nonwhites. During this phase, whites gained the strength to withstand anxiety and feminization as they aged. See Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880-1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 88-120.
[34] Strand, "Winter Sports," 1937, Bering Papers.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Clifford Putney, *Muscular Christianity: Manhood and Sports in Protestant America, 1880-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 45. The author's contemporaries were

that Americans should emulate Scandinavian sport. Again, skiing offered a "safe" way for white men to reassert masculine power. Strand, however, added another facet to this discussion by explicitly tying healthy bodies to clean living. This type of language was common throughout Mormon communities during this period and often referred to adherence to Mormon social mores, including temperance. In Strand's mind, white, male, and Mormon bodies were the norm. Amidst the loss of certain cultural elements of Mormonism, including a church-controlled political party and polygamy, Mormons increasingly focused on new ways to entrench their insularity as a social and religious group. Skiing supported this effort. At the same time, the sport addressed broader American concerns about masculinity, health, and urbanization. Skiing allowed Mormons to straddle the worlds of mainstream and Mormon culture.[37]

Others expanded on the connections between physical health and the city. For instance, Dean Green promoted the accessibility of downhill skiing. It offered an escape from the urban "smokes of civilization" and a chance to tap into the energy and rigor of jumping, but with less risk.[38] A U.S. Forest Service official echoed Utahns' perceived need for moderate engagement with wild spaces in 1927. Responding to the growth of American cities and advocating for recreation development in national forests, the official argued that Americans' "birthright" included access "to the environment which endowed him with what health he still possesses."[39] Recreating in untamed places represented an alternative to older forms of laboring in the

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concerned with the "perceived moral defects of urbanization, cultural pluralism, and white-collar work." Rigorous sports were the solution to these problems.

[37] Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 11-15; Denning, *Skiing into Modernity*, 87-89.

[38] Dean Green, "Pleasure and Adventure is Found in Canyons and Over Mountain Trails at City's Very Doors, with Brighton as the Center," Edgar Bering Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[39] "Recreation Resources," in "Renewable Natural Resources of Utah," 1927; Publications, Production; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives and Records Administration, Denver.

outdoors. Through leisure, Americans could gain the same physical and mental benefits that they had gained through working.[40]

WMC member Norma Whitehead made a similar observation about the relationship between urban and rural life. She detailed all of the spills and falls that skiers experienced as they struggled across the Wasatch on a club trip. Besides skiing, the men and women played poker, sang, and dined in the evenings. Whitehead made a point of saying that only the "sissies" slept inside the lodge.[41] In comparison to the classic snow bunny image, Whitehead and her fellow female skiers participated in a trek defined around the same version of rigorous masculinity that other writers associated with skiing. Whitehead implied that city life—the domain of "sissies"—was not merely a threat to men's identify and power; rather, it challenged the ways in which masculine and feminine bodies intersected with nature.[42] Although these observers recognized that skiing was not always risky, they also demonstrated the extent to which people's method of skiing mattered. Being outdoors did not suffice. To counteract the ails of urban life, individuals had to tap into an independent, difficult type of recreation that exposed them to the elements and required speed and precision. These attributes differentiated skiing from other forms of leisure.

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[40] Cindy Aron, *Working at Play: A History of Vacations in the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 228-236. For further analysis of the relationship between work and leisure, see Richard White "'Are You an Environmentalist or Do You Work for a Living?': Work and Nature," in *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature,* ed. William Cronon (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995), 171-185; Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight Against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002); Thomas Andrews, "'Made by Toil'? Tourism, Labor, and the Construction of the Colorado Landscape, 1858-1917," *Journal of American History* 92 (December 2005): 837-863.

[41] Norma Whitehead, "Alpine Ski Trip," *The Rambler*, Wasatch Mountain Club, 1945, Hack Miller Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[42] Concerns about the debilitating influence of the city were not unique to Utah or to men. New organizations, such as Camp Fire Girls, saw the "strenuous life" as a way to counter the vanity of city life and to develop a wholesome, strong white race. See Putney, *Muscular Christianity*, 157-161.

White Spaces

In the context of shifting meanings of gender, sport, and city life, Mormonism played an important role in skiing's rising popularity. During the early twentieth century, many Progressive reformers thought sports could rollback the negative impact that they felt cities had on young Americans. Mormon Progressives fit this mold. At the same time, athletic events organized by the church's Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Association (MIA) placed a Mormon twist on this Progressive trend. As historian Richard Ian Kimball explained, "Where the previous generation had found salvation on their knees by learning to pray, young Mormons in the early twentieth century were taught to find God on their feet while learning to play."[43] Church-sanctioned ski events and local commentary reflected this perspective. While the slopes provided a rural retreat, the isolation of ski areas also offered a degree of autonomy and freedom from Mormon social mores. This made ski slopes places of religious conformity and contestation. In short, winter playgrounds presented advantages and challenges to Mormons seeking solutions to the perceived problems of an urbanizing faith.

By promoting winter recreation, local leaders pushed the platforms of "Muscular Mormonism," or the idea that "flabby muscles and flabby morals" were one in the same.[44] This masculine ideal was not unique to Mormons.[45] Like other Progressives, ski-minded Mormons

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[43] Richard Ian Kimball, *Sport in Zion: Mormon Recreation, 1890-1940* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 3-4, 89.
[44] Ibid., 4, 94.
[45] On muscular Christianity, see Putney, *Muscular Christianity;* Dylan Esson, "Selling the Alpine Frontier: The Development of Winter Resorts, Sports, and Tourism in Europe and America, 1865-1941" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2011); Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 1988); Michael Kimmel, *Manhood in America: A Cultural History* (New York: Free Press, 1999). For analysis of the intersection of gender and recreation during this period, see Susan Schrepfer, *Nature's Altars: Mountains,*

feared that the next generation was missing a formative frontier experience, which had inculcated independence, hard work, and self-reliance in older Americans. Mormons found this particularly alarming because the frontier narrative remained an essential part of their cultural identity. No longer practicing polygamy or moving west, they sought new ways to reinforce their community's insularity. The elevation and institutionalization of the Word of Wisdom served this purpose. This text outlined Mormon social mores, including abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, and coffee. The growth of church-sponsored sports supported the spirit of clean leaving that the Word of Wisdom called Mormons to follow. Thus, athletic programs reflected the Progressive belief that "external conditioning could change the child's inner world."[46] They offered a solution to the "boy problem," which, according to Mormon and non-Mormon Progressives alike, plagued an increasingly degenerate population of young American men.[47]

Utah Governor George Dern, a Progressive and non-Mormon, and church leader Bryant Hinckley both commented on the relationship between body and mind. During the 1920s, Dern lauded the positive impact of skiing, which was "unexcelled as an exhilarating exercise." He explained that "as the ozone of the mountains paints the cheeks a rosy hue and gives to the eyes the sparkle of youth," skiers form healthy bodies and "clean, wholesome minds."[48] Dern's description echoed Strand's references to the clean living of body and mind associated with

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Gender, and American Environmentalism (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 2005) and Joseph E. Taylor, *Pilgrims of the Vertical: Yosemite Rock Climbers and Nature at Risk* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

[46] Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition*, 258-262; Kimball, *Sport in Zion*, 8-9, 127, 108-109, 27; Putney, *Muscular Christianity*, 112-114. This Progressive concern with the frontier experience also manifested in new organizations, including the Boy Scouts of America.

[47] Kimball, *Sport in Zion*, 3-4; Putney, *Muscular Christianity*, 203-207. While the Progressive interest in muscular Christianity faded in many places after World War I, it persisted in churches outside mainline, Eastern circles.

[48] "A Message on Outdoor Sports from the State's Chief Executive," Robert Ecker Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

skiing. Mormon Elder Bryant S. Hinckley articulated a similar view in 1931, observing that leisure could destroy or build up young men. In this respect, the "spontaneous life" of recreation offered a window onto the "genuine expressions of inner life."[49] Hinckley's address affirmed the connection that Mormons made between physicality and mentality. This perception was not exclusive to Mormons, but members used Progressive ideas to advance church goals.

MIA handbooks from the 1920s expressed Mormon ideas about winter recreation, church socialization, and spiritual health. These guides reflected Hinckley's commentary in that they reiterated the extent to which play reflected individuals' true character. It not only prevented the body from aging too quickly but also offered a social venue for courtship within the LDS Church. In the end, the ultimate goal of outdoor recreation remained keeping men "clean and fit for service in the Church and state."[50] Recommended plans for winter recreation illustrated these concepts. MIA leaders promoted winter carnivals, which included skiing, dancing, and snowball fights. Planners used carnivals to teach appropriate relationships between men and women. For instance, they thought that winter carnivals would teach young Mormons proper daytime and evening social activities under church supervision. As a whole, these instructions imparted the perceived entanglement of spiritual and physical wellbeing. Women participated in winter recreation, but ultimately, church leaders tailored events for young men. In the eyes of the patriarchal church, these future leaders were in the most need of a new arena to act out the

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[49] Bryant S. Hinckley, "Mormonism and Recreation," KSL, February 15, 1931, transcript, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, UT.
[50] *Handbook of the Young Men's and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations: Official Guide for the Leisure-Time and Recreational Program of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (General Boards of M.I.A., 1928), 689-693, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City, UT.

activities of the romanticized pioneer life so essential to Mormon cultural and religious formation. The individuality, exhilaration, and outdoor setting of skiing met this need.[51]

In many ways, ski slopes provided the ideal venue for acting out muscular Mormonism. They were close to the city, yet far enough away to feel like wilderness. Amidst the harsh winter climate and physical demands of skiing, young men could engage with an environment steeped in gendered, religious undertones. These same characteristics also meant that winter playgrounds functioned as a place set apart from Mormon supervision. In particular, alcohol consumption became commonplace in ski areas. The response of urban temperance advocates to this growing trend illustrates how slopes became contested ground. In 1938, Dean Green voiced his concern over the growing presence of "wets" at Brighton. He questioned whether the ski community was the appropriate place for "midnight revels," which led to low attendance at ski events and potential drunk driving.[52] George Unseld echoed this sentiment in a letter to the WMC one year later. He took issue with the conspicuousness of alcohol consumption at the club; drinkers tarnished the "original high ideals" of the WMC by running the lodge as a wintertime drinking club.[53] Citing anecdotal evidence from Arctic explorers, he denied claims that alcohol warmed winter athletes. In response, the club agreed that alcohol was out of control and considered tightening its rules. Green and Unseld both expressed concern over the social and physical consequences of alcohol consumption.[54] Their letters suggested that the expansion of ski areas, including overnight lodging, diversified the ski community. Meanwhile, as more skiers went to

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[51] *Handbook of the Young Men's and Young Ladies' Mutual Improvement Associations*, 211-216, 340, Church History Library.
[52] Dean Green to Directors of Wasatch Mountain Club, August 2, 1938, Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[53] George Unseld to Directors of Wasatch Mountain Club, October 31, 1939, Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[54] Unseld to Directors, Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, Marriott Library Special Collections.

the slopes with informal groups and outside the purview of official organizations or events, a new social dynamic evolved. At times, this contradicted the more hegemonic vision of early twentieth-century skiers. Thus, ski areas provided a space for simultaneously reinforcing and challenging the Word of Wisdom.

In a similar vein, ski areas offered an environment for exploring spiritual paths outside the well-defined boundaries of Mormonism. LDS leaders lamented young members' declining attendance at Sunday services during the early twentieth century. They thought this portended broader moral weakness. MIA events did not take place on Sunday, but secular groups' weekend long ski treks often conflicted with Sunday observances. E.W. Lambert, chairman of the WMC Morals Committee, responded to complaints about this in 1922. He said the club would continue to hold nondenominational services during Sunday outings. Lambert explained: "…one cannot stand on some rocky prominence—Nature's pulpit—and look out over God's assemblage…and doubt the existence of a Supreme Being." He contended, "the great outdoors are truly God's cathedral, and is a most worthy place of worship."[55] In Lambert's mind, skiing complemented the moral and spiritual initiatives of organized religion in that interacting with wintry landscapes could cultivate a belief in God. Lambert implied, though, that these landscapes also provided an alternative worship space, perhaps more befitting than valley churches. This suggestion challenged the broader movement within the LDS Church to advance particular, structured means of worship. Ski patroller Harold Goodro detailed his own interactions with church authorities who thought skiing interfered with Sunday services. Goodro believed that ski patrolling was a "noble calling." He explained, "I'm too busy on Saturday and Sunday helping

[55] Kimball, *Sport in Zion*, 32; E.W. Lambert, "A Word from the Members and Morals Committee," *The Wasatch Rambler*, Wasatch Mountain Club, 1922, Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

my fellow man" to be active in his LDS ward.[56] Again, Goodro saw the ski slopes as an alternative to traditional LDS worship spaces but not necessarily a contradiction to the principles of his faith, namely, helping neighbors in need. Skiers brought a mix of religious attitudes to the slopes, whether they participated in the MIA, an informal social group, or a different spiritual path. Their experiences point to the ways in which ski slopes functioned as places for negotiating the meaning of a dominant religion in an increasingly diverse region. In this way, encounters on the slopes reflected shifting dynamics in Utah's urban valleys.

Laboring for Leisure

The diversification of Utah's workforce represented one facet of social change on the Wasatch Front during the 1930s and 1940s. The region's winter playgrounds were at the forefront of this transition. Before they became recreation centers, mountain spaces diverged from the typical pattern of Mormon development in nineteenth-century Utah. Non-Mormons often outnumbered church members in the mining communities that dotted local mountains and canyons. As a result, many of these towns, including Park City and Alta, existed outside Mormon hegemony. In some ways, the recreation-driven revitalization of these areas in the twentieth century signaled a limited return to the social and cultural patterns of the mining era. New workers filtered into the region's canyons and slopes from within and beyond the United States. Like the older generation of miners, they often lived in the area temporarily and had little connection with Mormon society. Despite this diversification, ski areas were not socially fluid places. Youthfulness and whiteness remained markers of acceptance within these burgeoning communities and largely determined whether individuals identified slopes as places of labor or of leisure. As social boundaries sharpened, so too did the division between work and play. The

[56] Goodro and Goodro, interview.

experiences of ski jumpers, New Deal labor, Japanese American internees, and African American GIs illustrated this pattern.[57]

During the ski jumping era, hardly anyone worked within the ski economy. Some families, such as the Rasmussens, depended on vending sales at ski events for income, but few Utahns earned their primary income from the sport. Volunteers ran jumping events and often competed in them, only hours after prepping the hill. They spent up to a week walking down jumping hills with locked arms during the 1930s; without grooming equipment, this was the only way to pack the snow for safe jumping. The conditions of jumping—the demand for packed snow, the limited income potential, and the small ski demographic—meant that labor and leisure were inseparable. In contrast, downhill skiing, which grew in popularity in the 1930s and 1940s, made slopes more accessible and also more divisive. This type of skiing allowed for varied snow conditions, promised more profits, and appealed to a broader population. As a result, local and federal agencies invested in ski development, especially during the Great Depression. New projects included ski lifts, parking areas, warming huts, and lodges to accommodate skiers. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) and Civilian Conservation Corps sponsored some of these construction projects; with permanent structures, new ski areas could gain financial footing and hire staff. Thus, ski areas began to operate more like businesses and less like volunteer endeavors. New workers were often not the same people enjoying the slopes, and consequently, labor became more distinct from leisure. Due to the exigencies of the Great Depression and World War II, these workers often came from places outside Utah and worked temporarily in the new industry. Local reactions to WPA workers indicated this shift in labor. In particular,

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[57] Colleen Whitley, *From the Ground Up: A History of Mining in Utah* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2006), 273-287; Jeanne Kay, "Mormons and Mountains," in *The Mountainous West: Explorations in Historical Geography*, ed. William Wyckoff and Larry Dilsaver (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995), 381-383.

investors and WPA managers complained that the agency employed older men who could not keep up with the demands of working at high altitude and in cold temperatures. Such comments conveyed the idea that the work of skiing, not simply the sport, remained the domain of young, acclimated, and healthy individuals.[58]

A more permanent workforce followed federally funded ski infrastructure. Ski areas sought workers who fit a youthful, white profile. In fact, they often reached out to family and friends within valley communities to help with local operations. A few of Utah's early ski instructors came from Europe, including Alf Engen. This mirrored a larger pattern within American skiing; new resorts sought European instructors who brought glamour and authority to their slopes. These Europeans had a smaller influence, however, in Utah. Dick Durrance, a famed instructor at Alta, explained his hiring philosophy in 1940, saying, "we will only encourage young American boys to join up with us" to found an "All-American ski school."[59] Durrance reiterated the boundaries of a masculine, youthful industry in his call for new employees. Whereas WPA workers seemed out of place, these young men were bound for the slopes. The U.S. Forest Service echoed a similar perspective in its instructions for snow rangers, who patrolled ski areas on federal lands to promote safe recreation. Supervisor W.E. Tangren encouraged rangers to cultivate personal contacts on the job. By wearing official uniforms, these

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[58] Ike Hall, interview, April 1986, transcript, Larry Warren Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Ray Forsberg, "Ski Epidemic Invades Rockies," *The Utah*, Utah State Road Commission, December 1936, 15-17, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, UT; Memorandum for Engineering by George L. Nichols, September 25, 1940; Historical Records 1905-53, Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives and Records Administration, Denver; Memorandum for Engineering by George L. Nichols, September 14, 1940; E-Improvements Buildings, Alta Shelter, 1940-1941, Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives and Records Administration, Denver.

[59] Annie Gilbert Coleman, "The Unbearable Whiteness of Skiing" *Pacific Historical Review* 65 (November 1996): 590-597; Dick Durrance, "America's Ski School," *The Utah*, Utah State Road Commission, December 1940, 6-7, 21, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, UT.

rangers were supposed to act as respected administrators, not "chore boys."[60] The Forest Service's directives related a particular masculine ideal rooted in professionalism, respect, and maturity. Rangers were on the slopes to work, and their supervisors encouraged them to distinguish between labor and boyish playfulness. Together, these descriptions of ski labor suggest that a fine line existed between a desirable youthfulness and authoritative masculinity.

The contrast between WPA, ski school, and Forest Service labor articulated a vision of young, male American labor. The exigencies of World War II challenged this ideal. The United States still lacked a sizeable population of skilled skiers, and as a result, many expert skiers left Utah to train others for the war effort at Camp Hale in Colorado. In their absence, some ski areas served as training grounds for the inexperienced. Several remained open but relied on new workers to operate, including Japanese American internees. As a whole, the stories of these internees, along with those of African American GIs, illuminate understandings of belonging on the Wasatch Front during the 1940s. Acceptance on the slopes centered on whiteness, masculinity, and youthfulness, as well as a familiarity with the local landscape and climate. For those who did not fit these markers, a sharp division between labor and leisure remained.[61]

Japanese Americans from Topaz Internment Camp made up part of the new winter recreation workforce. Located about 150 miles southwest of Salt Lake City, Topaz opened in September 1942 and primarily housed internees from California's Bay Area. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, many white Americans living on the West Coast had pushed for

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[60] F.C. Koziol to Division of Lands, December 10, 1941; O-Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch to 1941, Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives and Records Administration, Denver; W.E. Tangren to Stehman, McConkie, and Freece, November 28, 1941; O-Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch to 1941, Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives and Records Administration, Denver.

[61] "Reminiscences: Speyer Runs Lifts," *Alta Powder News*, Jean Pickett Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

the forced displacement and internment of all people of Japanese descent living in the region, regardless of their citizenship. Their arguments for internment centered on fears of the "yellow peril," particularly the idea that people of Japanese descent had an unfair advantage in the fishing and farming industries.[62] With vocal support from the West Coast delegation, President Roosevelt ordered mass internment in February 1942. The Topaz Camp represented one of the many isolated and arid inland camps where the federal government interned Japanese Americans during the war. Internees with sponsors could begin working and living outside the camp in 1943. Alta Ski Area was one of those sponsors. Short on labor because of the war, Alta offered higher wages to internees who would work the full ski season. Almost all of these workers were California natives: Mary Kimura, Emily Kimura, and their son William Takeji Kimura from San Francisco; Tatsumi Ralph Tajima, who later enlisted; Chiyeku Katsu, Sakaye Katayama, and Harry Katayama from Berkeley; fifty-year old Tami Hakai; San Franciscans Frank Masashire Iga and Tokutaro Hata; and Masaji Clark Kabasawa from Honolulu. Many had never seen snow or skied so they worked primarily in the lodge, kitchen, and base area.[63]

Carol Speyer, who ran Alta with her husband Fred, recalled tensions on the slopes: "Because of the war situation, the skiers treated the Japanese on the lift and in the lodge very badly and Fred had to continually remind them that without the Japanese Alta would be closed down."[64] After such mistreatment, the Japanese American workers called the Speyers one

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[62] Connie Chiang, *Nature Behind Barbed Wire: An Environmental History of the Japanese American Internment* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 13-16.
[63] "Topaz Camp," Topaz Museum, http://www.topazmuseum.org/topaz-camp (accessed October 1, 2017); "Leaves," *Topaz Times,* in Utah Digital Newspapers, https://newspapers.lib.utah.edu/ search?facet paper =%22Topaz+Times%22 (accessed September 20, 2017); "Central Utah Final Accountability Report," War Relocation Authority, 1945, in USU Digital Collections Online, http://digital.lib.usu.edu, /cdm/compoundobject/collection/Topaz/id/7913/rec/1, (accessed September 21, 2017); "Reminiscences," Pickett Papers.
[64] "Reminiscences," Pickett Papers.

evening "and said they had taken all the guff they could stand and they were ALL quitting. Fred hurried up the canyon and in a 4 hour session managed to settle all of their grievances and skiing at Alta survived."[65] Speyer's account points to the struggles that these new workers faced. Living and laboring in an unfamiliar environment, they not only faced violations of their civil liberties but also state-sponsored racism. Specifically, federal agents legitimized racist attitudes when they argued for the legality of internment. These patterns of exclusion and segregation existed long before internment, particularly in the form of restrictive housing covenants on the West Coast. In other words, the ski landscape at Alta replicated the racialized landscape of communities and workplaces on the West Coast. Utah was part of a federal project of discrimination, not an exceptional place in the politics of American race. By excluding Japanese Americans and enhancing federal power, white Utahns asserted their place within American society. The near dichotomy between white recreationists and non-white labor—described by historian Annie Gilbert Coleman as the "unbearable whiteness of skiing"—embodied this process.[66] At the same time, Japanese Americans were not passive. Alta's wartime workers realized the necessity of their labor and used this as a bargaining chip to secure better conditions. Thus, Alta was not immune to broader racial tensions, but the particularities of the wartime ski industry and operators' overriding economic concerns provided an opportunity to challenge these inequalities.[67]

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[65] "Reminiscences," Pickett Papers.
[66] Chiang, *Nature Behind Barbed Wire*, 9-10; Coleman, "The Unbearable Whiteness of Skiing," 590-592.
[67] Connie Chiang details the importance of outdoor recreation at Topaz and other internment camps. By recreating within and beyond camp boundaries, internees developed a new relationship with their captive environment. Camp authorities struggled to find a balance between encouraging internees to interact with nature and maintaining a racial boundary between local whites and Japanese-American internees. See Chiang, *Nature Behind Barbed Wire*, 147-159.

The local reaction to GIs who trained at Alta illustrated another facet of wartime race relations. The majority of GIs were African-American paratroopers based in Georgia. Like Japanese-American employees, these soldiers associated skiing with labor, not leisure. They also came from a region with little snow or skiing. Comments by white skiers and instructors conveyed the idea that these soldiers did not gain acceptance within the community. They traveled to Alta and Brighton from nearby Camp Kearns. Lift operator Zane Doyle recalled the contrast between the 500 African-American soldiers and their white uniforms and white skis. Skier Otto Carpenter described the scene as "quite a circus to watch."[68] Both Doyle and Carpenter implied that the soldiers seemed out of place; they lacked the markers of belonging—whiteness and familiarity with the local climate and landscape. As was the case with inexperienced white skiers at Camp Hale, these soldiers' training as paratroopers only worsened their experience on the slopes. When trying to regain control on a steep face, they would revert to their training, leaning forward and grabbing their knees instead of falling on their side. The experiences of African-American GIs contrasted that of local white skiers, who typically viewed mountain landscapes as places of leisure, health, and home. In short, as individuals repopulated Wasatch canyons, they reintroduced a deeply entangled relationship between race and labor that entrenched seemingly remote ski slopes in national and global events.[69]

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[68] Zane Doyle, interview by Joseph Arave, transcript, p. 7, July 11, 1989, Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Otto Carpenter, interview by Joseph Arave, transcript, August 7, 1989, p. 8-9, Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[69] Larry Davenport, interview, April 1986, transcript, Larry James Warren Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Allan Kent Powell, *Utah Remembers World War II* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 1991), 60-61; John Jerome and Dick Durrance, *The Man on the Medal: The Life and Times of America's First Great Ski Racer* (Snowmass Village, CO: Durrance Enterprises, 1995), 81; James Laughlin, "Ski Parachute Troops," *The American Ski Annual and Skiing Journal*, January 1943, 94-96.

From the jumping years to the rise of downhill skiing, the same paradigm of whiteness, youthfulness, Mormonism, and masculinity continued to dominate and shape the sport. Yet, skiing witnessed tremendous change during this period. Ski slopes reflected what was happening within and beyond the region's valleys: a cultural response to immigration and urbanization; new directions in Mormonism and Progressivism; evolving gender roles; a growing recreation industry; and shifting political and economic realities on a global stage. In a sense, ski areas emerged both in tandem with and in opposition to these changes. Utah's slopes did not simply mirror regional and national trends; rather, they were places of contradiction, belonging, exclusion, and negotiation shaped by local realities. By playing and working on the slopes, Utahns made sense of life in nearby urban valleys. In the decades to come, transformations in Utah's cities would continue to impact the boundaries of acceptance, the influence of Mormonism, and the divide between labor and leisure in ski spaces.

Chapter 2

The Liquid Wasatch, 1915-1945

Seeking a mining fortune, George Watson came to Utah a few decades too late. The Michigan native moved west in 1902 and began working at the mines around Alta in Little Cottonwood Canyon. The town had once reveled in mineral wealth; in the 1880s, it counted up to 5,000 residents. Although only thirty miles from Salt Lake City, Alta stood out from the Mormon communities of the Wasatch Front. Its economy centered almost entirely on silver mining, and its population was overwhelmingly Gentile, or non-Mormon. General Patrick Connor, charged with keeping an eye on Utah's Mormons, encouraged prospectors to come to the state and reduce Mormons' stronghold there. Above Salt Lake City, miners eagerly consumed and exploited the canyon's resources, denuding slopes for fuel and shaft supports. Toxins from mining production flowed into Little Cottonwood Creek and down to the Salt Lake Valley. Yet a series of avalanches, coupled with the declining price of silver during the 1890s, pummeled the town. By the time nineteen-year-old Watson arrived, Alta was undergoing a revival but was nonetheless a shadow of its former self.[70]

Watson never lost hope in Alta's economic potential. He slowly purchased most of the mining claims in the upper reaches of the canyon. As he grew older, the town dwindled in population and resources. No one bothered to rebuild the structures that avalanches destroyed, and most locals gave up on Alta's mining prospects. Watson retreated to a mineshaft, living

[70] Leonard J. Arrington, "Abundance from the Earth: The Beginnings of Commercial Mining in Utah," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (1963): 194-199; Laurence P. James and James E. Fell Jr., "Alta, the Cottonwoods, and American Fork," in *From the Ground Up: A History of Mining in Utah,* ed. Colleen Whittley (Boulder: Utah State University Press, 2006), 272-291.

underground. He believed that Alta had a new future, built on the remnants of the mining past. The city would be "reborn on skis."[71]

As the self-proclaimed Mayor of Alta, Watson became a shameless promoter of the ghost town's ski prospects. He donated his mining claims to the federal government (in exchange for tax relief) and encouraged local investment. Once the Winter Sports Association founded Alta Ski Area in 1937, Watson remained in his shaft, donning a miner's helmet and greeting skiers. Watson reprimanded anyone who did not refer to the rejuvenated town as "romantic Alta." He invited skiers to climb down the ladder to his home and enjoy a Pine Ball, a particularly potent cocktail with a pine sprig stir. The lucky few—identifiable by the password "There's no Alta-tude like Alta"—were part of the prospectors' association that Watson founded.[72] He penned their motto: "The Prospector's vision lies within his soul…He is the Blazer of the way…He is the eternal conqueror."[73]

Watson's personality and passion for Alta persisted long after his death in 1952. As shown by his own slogans, clothing, and lifestyle, Watson clung to the idea that the romanticized values he associated with the mining past, including innovation, adventure, and conquest, had not faded with Alta's mining economy. Rather, skiing offered a new means of acting out these perceived ideals. He correctly predicted that skiing would flush new forms of capital into the canyon and that the once abandoned Alta would come back to life. At the same time, the message of conquest that Watson gleefully promoted was not as simple as he implied. The same

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[71] Jackson Hogen, "The Lodge Where Old Meets New," *Skiing Heritage Journal*, March 2010, 19.
[72] Mike Korologos, "'Mayor' Watson Dug Prospecting," *Alta Powder News* (Spring 1994), box 8, folder 2, Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[73] Ibid.

issues that had daunted the mining town of Alta—fluctuating capital, unpredictable avalanches, and compromised water—remained unresolved.[74]

More specifically, as commercial skiing developed during the 1930s and 1940s, more people identified themselves as stakeholders in Utah's canyons. Whether as recreationists, business owners, investors, public officials, or water consumers, they wanted a say in appropriate ways to expand or restrict ski infrastructure. Each latched onto different markers of legitimacy and ownership, rooted in knowledge, investment, health, and the law. Above all, these stakeholders approached financial and environmental challenges from their perspective as urbanites; they claimed shared authority in managing the confluence of capital, water, and snow. In the case of Snow Basin, many urbanites agreed that ski development could help the region's economic and environmental health, whereas at Alta, fewer people believed that this was possible. These trends point to the messy terrain that emerged at the intersection of capital and nature in the early years of commercial skiing. In theory, different stakeholders controlled certain aspects of development. Private individuals and associations pursued capital, cities protected watersheds, and federal agencies managed avalanches. In reality, however, these lines of influence and control were as blurred and as complex as the environments they aimed to harness. Alta and its northern counterpart, Snow Basin, shed light on how these complexities evolved during the 1930s and 1940s.

Streams of Capital

Alta Ski Area emerged in the shadow of Sun Valley. Located approximately 300 miles north of Alta, the Idaho resort was founded by the chairman of the Union Pacific Railroad, Averell Harriman, in 1936. Harriman chose to develop Sun Valley after considering other

[74] Korologos, "'Mayor' Watson Dug Prospecting," Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers.

Western destinations, including Alta, because he felt Sun Valley would attract more customers to ride the Union Pacific lines. Sun Valley catered to high society, and even had the first chairlift in the world. Alta's boosters resented the fact that their town missed the opportunity to become a destination resort. They still hoped that they would find an alternative means of attracting capital and skiers to the area.[75]

Alf Engen first identified Alta's potential as a ski area in 1935. People had been traversing the abandoned town's slopes for generations, but no commercial operations existed there. Around the time that Harriman selected Sun Valley, boosters in Salt Lake City had begun promoting local alpine skiing. For example, the Junior Chamber of Commerce organized the first snow train to Snow Park (now Deer Valley) in the Park City area west of Salt Lake City in 1936. 500 Salt Lake Citians and 200 Parkites rode the train up the canyon to the new ski hill as part of that excursion. Backcountry skiers continued to traverse the slopes connecting Park City, Brighton, and Alta either independently or with the Wasatch Mountain Club. Noting Sun Valley's development and the growing national interest in downhill skiing, however, boosters and Forest Service officials wanted to act on Engen's recommendation. When Watson donated 740 acres of surface rights to the federal government, they had the opportunity to do so.[76]

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[75] Coleman, *Ski Style*, 74-76; Roy Forsberg, "What is All This Winter Sports Propaganda?" *The Utah*, December 1937, 4, Ralph Johnson Papers, box 1, folder 19, Weber State University Special Collections, Ogden, UT.

[76] John R. Talmage, "First Snow Train to Ski Fields Attracts Hundreds of Salt Lake Fans," *Deseret News*, February 17, 1936, Edgar Bering Papers, box 1, folder 2, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Forsberg, "What is All This Winter Sports Propaganda?" Ralph Johnson Papers; "Winter Sports Area Assured," *Salt Lake Tribune*, September 10, 1937, 17. Downhill skiing grew in popularity during the 1930s both nationally and internationally. Alex Foster opened the first rope tow at the Big Hill in Montreal in 1931; a few years later, Americans built the first rope tow in the United States near Woodstock, Vermont at Suicide Six. Throughout the country, small towns saw ski competitions and winter carnivals as a means of revitalizing their economies. In Colorado, New Deal agencies worked with the Forest

Thus, Alta started anew as the result of a collaborative partnership between local business groups and federal, state, and municipal officials. The Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce Winter Sports Committee, founded in 1936, was one of the first private entities to back Alta's development. The chamber initially organized the committee to partner with railroad companies and ski organizations, such as the Utah Ski Club, to promote competitive events. Its objectives soon expanded, and within a year, the committee was pushing for a downhill ski facility that would boost local tourism, and consequently, general economic growth. The committee even sponsored a railroad trip for 100 businessmen to visit Sun Valley and convince them of winter recreation's financial promise.[77] By 1938, the Winter Sports Association had taken the lead in building Alta Ski Area. The committee created the association to generate investment; in later years, the association became Alta Ski Lifts, the corporation that still manages the ski area. Its first priority was constructing and opening a ski lift comparable to the new chairlift at Sun Valley. The association accomplished this in February 1938 when it opened Collins Lift. Many of the men who had led the committee were also involved in the association. They represented the upper echelon of local business leadership. The association's initial board of directors included Percy Kittle, president of Ohio Copper Company; W.J. O'Connor, manager of American Smelting and Refining Company; Bartlett Wicks, president of real estate company E.B. Wicks; Stewart Cosgriff, Vice President of the First National Bank of Salt Lake City; and S. J. Quinney, attorney. Quinney had a lasting influence on Alta's development, serving as

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Service and local boosters to cut new runs and trails. See John Fry, *The Story of Modern Skiing* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2006), 14-18; Coleman, *Ski Style*, 79-91.

[77] "Alta Developed by Wasatch Forest as New Mecca for Winter Recreation Addicts." *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 4, 1937, box 1, Frank Rasmussen Scrapbook, University of Utah Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; "Senior Chamber Groups Aids Winter Sports." *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 12, 1937, box 1, Frank Rasmussen Scrapbook, University of Utah Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

secretary-treasurer (1938-1958) and president (1958-1980) of the company. He used his knowledge of land laws, gained as a Utah legislator in the early 1920s, to navigate the web of federal agencies and policies involved in Alta's development. [78]

Quinney reiterated the idea that winter recreation was not a "provincial matter," and that in fact, it had the potential to transform the regional economy.[79] He and other board members wanted to create an affordable, local ski experience—reflected in the 25 cents lift fare—but they also wanted tourists to visit and pump money into the Depression-era economy. The Alta Lodge was the cornerstone of this goal. To fund the lodge, the board turned to a company long entangled in American tourism, the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad.[80] The company donated $25,000 of the $30,000 needed to build the lodge, which opened in 1940. It had the capacity to host fifty-eight overnight guests in rooms and dormitories. The lodge was owned by Alta Winter Sports, Inc., a nonprofit organization run by past and former leaders of the Salt Lake Junior and Senior Chambers of Commerce. The Winter Sports Association, which ran lift operations, handled the lodge's daily management. These types of collaborative partnerships

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[78] Letter, Stewart Cosgriff to Stockholders, June 5, 1939; Box 32, folder 2720; Special Use Permits (SUP) 1927-1955; Wasatch Cache National Forest (WCNF); Records of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Record Group (RG) 95; National Archives at Denver (NAD); "Honor is Due PH Kittle," *Murray Eagle*, January 13, 1938; "One President Candidate Named by Alta Board," *Salt Lake Telegram*, January 16, 1943; "Pioneer Realtors Move," *Salt Lake Telegram*, June 4, 1932; "Quinney Got Alta Going with the Ski Lifts," *Alta Powder News*, Fall 1988, box 1, folder 3, Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[79] Mack Corbett, "Alta Looks Ahead," *The Utah,* October 1940, 13, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, UT.

[80] Marguerite Shaffer argues that modern American tourism grew in tandem with an emerging network of national railroads connecting the hinterland and industrializing cities during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The tourist experience was essential in making sense of American identity. Railroads engaged in a See America First campaign, encouraging Americans to visit new national parks in the West. For instance, the Great Northern Railway was a primary promoter and developer of Glacier National Park. See Marguerite S. Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian, 2001).

defined the early years of Alta skiing and set the tone for later policies and growth patterns. Local boosters with deep roots in the Salt Lake business community cobbled together regional and national capital to pay for basic infrastructure. They relied on federal agencies to provide both land and promotional support for their operations. Lastly, these early investors often profited from a crisis—whether ecological or financial—that created the perfect opportunity for pitching ski development. In the case of Alta, Watson's delinquent taxes and the broader economic problems of the Depression created this opening. [81]

Snow Basin exemplifies the intersection of environmental and economic concerns that shaped ski development. Located approximately fifty miles north of Salt Lake City and thirty miles east of Ogden, Snow Basin (formerly known as Wheeler Basin and now known as Snowbasin) also began with a transfer of private land to the federal government. During the 1930s, Ogdenites became concerned over the denuded land in Wheeler Basin, a secondary watershed for the city's water supply. In response, city leaders, business boosters, and Forest Service officials worked together to acquire basin lands, which were privately held, and begin restoration projects. Their efforts reflect the complex nexus of federal, local, and private dollars in building ski infrastructure.[82]

Skiing was not new to Ogden in the 1930s, but at that point, it was still limited to a smaller group of Scandinavian Americans and clubs. Like Alta's developers, early boosters took

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[81] "Quinney Got Alta Going," Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers; Corbett, "Alta Looks Ahead," 13, 31, Utah State Historical Society.

[82] For an overview of this transfer, see Joseph Arave, "The Forest Service Takes to the Slopes: The Birth of Utah's Ski Industry and the Role of the Forest Service," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (2002), 343-348. Winter Park, a ski area in Colorado, had a similar trajectory in the 1930s. The manager of Denver's parks, George Cranmer, worked with local boosters, urban businesses, and New Deal agencies to fund the ski area's construction. Cranmer integrated Winter Park into Denver's Mountain Parks System, which gave the project legitimacy in the eyes of potential investors. See Coleman, *Ski Style*, 92-93.

advantage of railroad support and organized a small ski operation on Union Pacific land in Taylor Canyon. They also used $6,000, donated by the Ogden Chamber of Commerce to open a jumping area, Becker Hill, in Ogden Canyon in 1929. By 1936, however, boosters were looking for a new area that would support large-scale, commercial, downhill skiing. Each interested party brought a different asset to the table. First, business and civic organizations had the capital to purchase private land in Wheeler Basin. These groups, including the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary International, and Lions, created and managed an account for banking land purchases. This coalition initially leased one of the primary swathes of basin land, owned by Utah Power & Light, for $1 per year for 25 years. The power company later sold the land to the city. In most cases, the business coalition purchased land and then turned it over to the City of Ogden. When the purchase process was difficult, the city used its legal expertise and power of eminent domain to condemn land that owners were hesitant to sell or that the city felt was priced too highly.[83]

[83] "Snow Basin, Atop the World, is Winter Wonderland," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, November 30, 1941; "City Witnesses Pare Land Estimates," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, July 27, 1938. Before the city purchased land from Utah Power & Light for $2.50 per acre, the Forest Service leased the land and banned grazing on it. This led to conflict between ranchers and Forest Service officials in 1937 when ranchers with land bordering UP&L holdings grazed cattle on the leased land. By the time condemnation proceedings began, many grazing sheep and cattle in the basin resisted the land transfer, including Ostler Land & Livestock Co., which opposed the city's valuation of its condemned land in Wheeler Basin. The company was seeking reimbursement for 914.35 acres in the area and challenged the land's valuation in court. The City of Ogden called on two witnesses to value the land: an Ogden real estate agent, Ernest Canady, who claimed it was worth $3.50 an acre and George A. Fuller, who farmed and raised cattle in the valley and believed that land was worth $4 or $5 per acre. Both witnesses had a vested interest in protecting valley water and land from erosion. H.H. Price, a Forest Service ranger, challenged the company's claim that the condemnation would cut off water for sheep. Defense witnesses claimed that this was not the case, and furthermore, that the land was worth between $10 and $16 per acre. After a jury ruled that the city owed the company damages and $7.50 per acre, the city entered negotiations with the company, arguing that the price was too high. Ultimately, the city acquiesced and paid the livestock company $13,509.44 in April 1939. The city also purchased land from individuals with smaller tracts. For instance, after the city condemned their land, Harry and Arthur Fowers sought $12.50 per acre in restitution; a jury granted them $8 per acre. Scholar Stephen Trimble later interviewed individuals impacted by the

By January 1939, the city controlled all but three parcels in Wheeler Basin. Yet it lacked the resources to restore and improve the eroding land, just as it had lacked the financial wherewithal to purchase the basin singlehandedly. When the city did use its own funds for purchases, the money often came from the waterworks budget. For these reasons, the city had worked with the Forest Service to coordinate plans for terracing, revegetation, and recreational development from the start. Through a patchwork process, the city transferred its new land to the Forest Service, but federal agencies began improving the land before all of the transfers were complete. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) based in Ogden Canyon completed the majority of the work, which included planting 100,000 trees, installing fencing to deter livestock, and constructing a road into the canyon valued at $250,000. New legislation on the national and state level enabled this process of purchase, transfer, and development. For instance, the Clarke-McNary Act (1924) built on the legacy of the Weeks Act (1911) by allowing the federal government to acquire denuded watershed lands for the purpose of protecting navigable streams or timber production. It encouraged federal agencies and states to collaborate on watershed and reforestation efforts.[84] In 1935, Congress authorized the Forest Service to use receipts from the

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land sales and condemnation, including Wiley Fowers and Mark Johansen. They resented the process and questioned the city's claim that their cattle polluted Wheeler Creek. See Stephen Trimble, *Bargaining for Eden: The Fight for the Last Open Spaces in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 43-45; "Efforts Made for Peace in Stock Dispute," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, July 24 1937; "Land Suit May Go Into Jury Hands Friday," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, July 28, 1938; "City Will Try Parley Way of Getting Tract," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, August 11, 1938; "City Now Holds Major Portion of Basin Lands," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, February 12, 1939; "City Purchases Tract in Wheeler Area from Livestock Corporation," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, April 13, 1939; Stan Andersen, "Back from the Dead," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, October 8, 1950.

[84] "Group Sifts Hundreds of Ideas Offered," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, March 26, 1940; "Snow Basin, Atop the World, is Winter Wonderland," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, November 30, 1941; The Weeks Act allowed Congress to spend $200,000 each year on protecting the watersheds of navigable streams located on private or state lands. It also enabled Congress to allocate up to $11 million every five years for purchasing land within those

Uinta and Wasatch National Forests to acquire private holdings within forest boundaries. Utah also passed legislation that year that allowed the Forest Service to purchase land within the state. Aware of the poor condition of overgrazed land, Utah politicians expressed an interest in federal intervention throughout the Depression. In fact, when Congress considered transferring part of the unreserved public domain (excluding mineral rights) to Western states during the early 1930s, Utah politicians rejected the proposal. Governor Dern remarked, "Why should they [states] want more of this precious heritage of desert?" Thus, the transfer of Wheeler Basin occurred at a time when Utahns were eager to expand federal influence and investment.[85]

Within this political climate, the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce's committee on conservation, scenic, and recreational developments, Styles Wherry, urged the city to transfer more holdings to the Cache National Forest in 1940. He reiterated the fact that federal agencies had expended funds on Wheeler Basin with the understanding that they would eventually obtain

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watersheds. The law represented an attempt to create more efficient forest management and to prevent forest fires. The Clarke-McNary Act demonstrated a new focus on private forestry. It promised federal assistance for tree farms and planting. See William G. Robbins, *American Forestry: A History of National, State, & Private Cooperation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), 53-59, 98-99.

[85] Samuel Trask Dana and Sally K. Fairfax, *Forest and Range Policy: Its Development in the United States* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980), 128-129, 137-139; Thomas G. Alexander, *The Rise of Multiple-Use Management in the Intermountain West: A History of Region 4 of the Forest Service* (Washington D.C.: Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, 1988), 103. The research arm of the Forest Service published the Copeland Report in 1932. It recommended that the federal government purchase and manage 225 million acres of private forests with the goal of protecting wildlife, watersheds, and recreation. Congress believed that the report's proposals were too controversial and did not follow through with supportive legislation. This was not always the case. Following the passage of the Taylor Grazing Act in 1934, Congressional delegations from the Intermountain West (which comprised Region 4 of the Forest Service) generally had a positive view of federal land management and even sought out further intervention. At the hearings of the Joint Congressional Committee on Forestry in 1939, Western delegations urged the federal government to takeover eroded lands and invest more in watershed restoration. See Michael Williams, *Americans and Their Forests: A Historical Geography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 463; Alexander, *The Rise of Multiple-Use Management*, 121-122.

the land. He also drew attention to the need for timely action. To begin profitable operations, boosters needed to start ski lift construction before the first snowfall. They also wanted to take advantage of CCC labor before the camp closed in the near future. The city heeded Wherry's request and transferred approximately 2,000 acres. It did the same in 1943, transferring 1,500 acres to the Cache National Forest. Edward Saunders, a member of Ogden's Board of Commissioners, explained the logic behind this decision, saying the transfer was "for the good of the community as a whole" and would appeal to all recreational groups. [86] He said the city lacked the resources at that time to develop Snow Basin, although the Forest Service had those resources and expressed interest. In the end, the change in title enabled Snow Basin to open to skiers in late 1940, with an official dedication in February 1941.[87]

Despite turning over the majority of its new holdings, the city maintained a vested interest in Snow Basin. First, it retained some land and rights in the basin, including 100 feet wide tracts near proposed ski lifts; the rights of way for pipelines and highways; and water development rights. The city also paid for Snow Basin's first chairlift, Wildcat. It contracted with Mine and Smelter Supply of Denver to build the lift in 1941, but due to weather and World War II, the lift was not installed until January 1946. When the city included the lift in its 1941 budget, it sparked both support and criticism among Ogdenites. One commissioner, William Rackham, disagreed with the decision because he thought the city should spend the allotted $35,000 on an airport or water infrastructure. Mayor Abbott, who made the deciding vote,

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[86] Clubs Request City to Transfer Lands in Snow Basin to Forest Service," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, July 3, 1940; "Rapid Progress Being Made in $250,000 Work," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, November 29, 1939; "City Purchases Tract in Wheeler Area from Livestock Corporation," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, April 13, 1939; "City Urged to Transfer Snow Basin Holdings," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, July 16, 1940; Arthur Roth, letter to the editor, *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, September 8, 1941.

[87] "City Dads Will Transfer Part of Snow Basin Area to U.S. for Improvement," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, March 16, 1943.

thought that the lift was appropriate simply because it expressed appreciation for the Forest Service's intervention in culinary water contamination in Snow Basin. Abbott and Rackham both wanted to secure Public Works Administration funds for the lift, but when their efforts failed, they acquiesced to pressure from business boosters and Commissioner Saunders.[88]

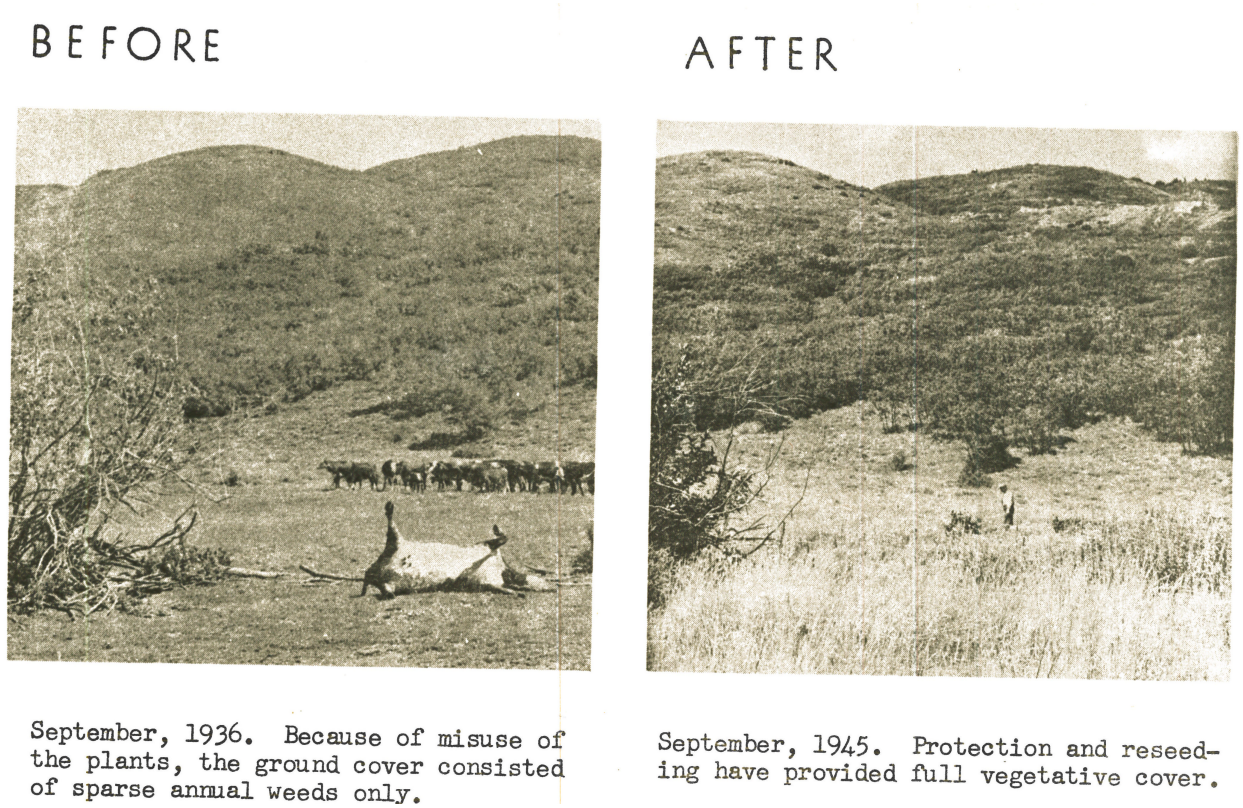

Figure 6. Photos in a U.S. Forest Service tourist brochure for Ogden Canyon and Snow Basin showing the impact of restoration (1954). Courtesy of U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Region Office.

[88] "City Dads Will Transfer Part of Snow Basin Area to U.S. for Improvement," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, March 16, 1943; Ralph W. Johnson, "The History of the Snow Basin Ski Patrol," 1977, box 4, folder 4, Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; "City Decides to Install Ski Lift in Snow Basin; Plans to Buy Materials," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, July 15, 1941.

Community members voiced their opinions on the decision in the *Ogden Standard-Examiner*. Arthur Roth argued that the lift was a worthy investment because it would increase tourism, serve the growing city, and keep Ogden "vigorous and progressive."[89] The lift would not only pay for itself within a few years but also open backcountry areas that were previously only accessible to "a hardy few individuals."[90] In his view, Snow Basin as a whole represented a "common community enterprise."[91] Charles Stephens disagreed. He criticized the city for spending so much money on an amenity that would serve a small number of Ogdenites and expressed frustration with officials' general spending patterns. In response to comments that the government was covering costs, Stephens asked, "But who is the government if not the taxpayer, and who is the taxpayer?"[92] The disagreement among commissioners and citizens over ski development funding brings to light several questions that reemerged in later years. It demonstrates concern over who truly benefited from public spending on new ski hills, especially as this spending increasingly benefited private operators. It also reveals debates over whether ski hills were worthy investments; would they be financially sound businesses that would fuel the economy, or would they be publicly subsidized playgrounds for a few? These questions of benefit and risk remained unresolved.[93]

By 1945, however, Utahns who argued for the robust benefits and low risks of ski investment had the dominant hand. The collaborative patterns of investment that they established

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[89] Roth, September 8, 1941.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid.
[92] Charles A. Stephens, letter to the editor, *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, August 24, 1941.
[93] World War II transformed the military's presence in Utah. The federal government built six flying fields in the state, making Utah the center of military aviation in the West. This led to 40,000 new jobs in the state; more than half of these were at Hill Field in Ogden. See Roger D. Launius and Jessie L. Embry, "Military Aviation and Utah in World War II," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (1995): 224-225.

set the tone for the infusion of capital that continued to shape the burgeoning ski industry. At Alta and Snow Basin, outside capital played an important role, but its influence was not as significant as it had been in other Western tourist destinations.[94] Instead, the primary shapers of early commercial skiing were local investors who used their own capital to back federal and municipal projects. Thus, the boundaries between federal, municipal, civic, and business developers became increasingly blurred as time progressed. Boosterism pervaded the public and private sectors. This period also witnessed a tremendous transfer of land from the hands of individuals and corporations to the federal government.[95] Landowners' decision (although sometimes forced) to donate or sell their land speaks to the exigencies of the Great Depression and the decline of extractive industries, such as mining and ranching, on the urbanizing Wasatch Front. It also points to the expanding influence of the federal government on western landscapes during the Depression and World War II.[96] For Utah's ski areas, this meant the intervention of

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[94] Hal Rothman argues that outside capital invested in the tourism industry transformed the American West into a colony. William G. Robbins makes a similar argument about the nineteenth century. See Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); Robbins, *Colony and Empire: The Capitalist Transformation of the American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994).

[95] Thomas G. Alexander argues that Ogden became a "federal colony." He points to the tremendous economic weight of the U.S. Forest Service (the Intermountain Office is in Ogden), Hill Air Force Base, Ogden Arsenal, and Clearfield Naval Supply Depot as proof. As in the case of Snow Basin, a greater federal presence was not forced on Ogdenites. Led by business boosters, they courted federal expansion. Alexander, "Ogden, A Federal Colony in Utah," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (1979): 291-310.

[96] For more on the impact of the federal government on Utah during World War II, see Jessie L. Embry, "Fighting the Good Fight: The Utah Home Front During World War II," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 63, no. 3 (1995): 241-267; Antoinette Chambers Noble, "Utah's Defense Industries and Workers in World War II," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 59, no. 4 (1991): 365-379; "Food, Comfort, and a Bit of Home: Maude Porter and the Ogden Canteen, 1942-1946," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 84, no. 1 (2016): 71-85; Thomas G. Alexander, "Utah War Industry During World War II: A Human Impact Analysis," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 51, no. 1 (1983): 72-92; Allan Kent Powell, "Utah and World War II," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 73, no. 2 (2005): 108-131; Leonard J. Arrington and George Jensen, *The Defense Industry of Utah* (Logan: Utah State University, 1965); For an overview of the war's impact on the West, see Gerald D. Nash, *The*

the CCC on eroding lands, the contribution of Works Progress Administration labor to shelters, and the pressure for recreation areas for Ogden's booming population of defense workers. Utahns did not always accept federal influence unequivocally, however, and as issues of watershed health and avalanche safety gained urgency, the coalition of capital—tying together the interests of private and public entities—faltered.

The Confluence of Money, Water, and Law

Both Snow Basin and Alta are on top of regional watersheds; cities on the Wasatch Front hold the rights to their water. Like many of the region's ski areas, they are located in canyons that bisect the Wasatch Front. Steams flow from their eastern basins in a westerly direction, spilling into urban areas on the border of mountain and valley. Snow Basin sits below Mount Ogden and is part of the Wheeler Creek Watershed. The creek flows through the basin and runs in a northeasterly direction until it joins the Ogden River, which flows southwest to Ogden. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, Wheeler Creek served as a supplementary water source for Ogden, especially in the summer months. By contrast, Big Cottonwood Creek and Little Cottonwood Creek were and still are primary sources of culinary water for Salt Lake City and its suburbs. For instance, on the eve of the ski boom in 1928, Big Cottonwood Canyon provided 65 percent of Salt Lake City's water supply. Public officials kept this in mind as they tracked and restricted the growth of Brighton in Big Cottonwood and Alta in Little Cottonwood. Their interest in water quality was not new. In fact, the contrasting patterns of development and

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American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985).

constraint in Wheeler Basin and the Cottonwood canyons reflected the unique legislative, economic, and environmental contexts that historically shaped these places.[97]

In particular, the simultaneous boom of Ogden's economy and the erosion crisis in northern Utah influenced locals' perspective on proposals for Snow Basin. Ogdenites saw Snow Basin, for the most part, as a way to protect local property and business growth. In other words, the urban economy was the driving factor behind their general support for the ski area. During the 1920s and 1930s, erosion threatened not only the local economy but also residents' safety in northern counties along the Wasatch Front.[98] For decades, lumber and grazing operations had denuded the slopes above the region's urbanized and agricultural valleys. Heavy rains unleashed boulders and stripped away soil, leading to devastating floods in Willard in 1936 and in Bountiful in 1923 and 1930. In response, residents of Willard spearheaded the donation of private mountain lands to the federal government for restoration. In this way, their efforts paralleled those of nearby Ogdenites. The Forest Service took a proactive stance in the areas above Bountiful, opening a branch of the Forest and Range Experiment Station there. It partnered with the CCC to terrace slopes and plant trees in the eroded watershed. Across the

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[97] "Wasatch Watersheds and Their Relation to Salt Lake Valley," April 25, 1928, Box 13, RH 1680-92-0031-14-06, U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Ogden, UT.

[98] Although damaging floods escalated in the early twentieth century, it was not until the late 1920s and early 1930s that more Utahns recognized the connection between grazing and watershed health. They first tried to end flooding by building underground conduits and diversion dams. A study by a University of Utah professor, J.H. Paul, and F.S. Baker of the Forest Service argued that Utahns should turn land over to county government and implement revegetation. A commission organized by Governor Dern reiterated this plan in 1930. For more on early flood prevention, see Andrew M. Honker, "'Been Grazed Almost to Extinction': The Environment, Human Action, and Utah Flooding, 1900-1940," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (1999): 23-47. Marcus Hall places the Davis County Experimental Watershed in a transnational context, arguing that terracing and revegetation projects in Utah reflected the American idea that humans, not nature, were the driving force behind environmental degradation. See Marcus Hall, *Earth Repair: A Transatlantic History of Environmental Restoration* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2005), 93-127.

region, the Forest Service's strategy consisted of consolidating holdings, constructing dams, terracing slopes, and replanting forests. Watershed restoration in the Ogden area fit this pattern in that it included the construction of Pineview Dam, reforestation, and private land transfers.[99]

In tackling erosion issues, the Forest Service focused on protecting valley assets and industries, rather than securing the viability of logging and grazing. Regional Forester R.H. Rutledge elaborated on this strategy in 1937, saying "The job of the Forest Service here, then, is not to try to raise volumes of timber for commercial purposes, but to handle, improve and protect these areas so that farm and city life may be best served by the mountains."[100] Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace reiterated this logic in his correspondence with the Secretary of

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[99] James L. Sundquist, "Erosion—The Farmer's Longtime Enemy," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, September 12, 1937; Johnson, "The History of the Snow Basin Ski Patrol," Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers. New Deal programs targeted erosion and flooding outside Utah. As Donald Worster illustrates, the Southern Plains were a focal point of anti-erosion policy during the Dust Bowl. Paul Sutter describes how New Dealers were eager to condemn Georgia farmers for eroding local land to such an extent that new gullies formed Providence Canyon. He argues, however, that local soils were so prone to erosion than any level of disturbance, whether caused by intensive farming or not, would have been transformational. Richard Lowitt explains how the New Deal response in the West varied according to local contingencies; in the Great Basin, officials encouraged farmers and ranchers to recognize the limits of aridity. Sarah Phillips argues that the New Deal led to mixed results. Adherents to New Conservation saw eroded land and impoverished families as interrelated; to counter this, they pursued a contradictory plan to preserve family farms through modernization and bolster production through conservation. Neil Maher makes a similar argument, showing how the Civilian Conservation Corps sought to restore American masculinity and soil, both of which were eroded by the Depression. In her study of anti-erosion programs on Navajo lands, Marsha Weisiger demonstrates how New Dealers' inability to grasp the cultural and gendered meaning of sheep grazing undermined conservation efforts. See Donald Worster, *Dust Bowl: The Southern Plains in the 1930s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979); Paul S. Sutter, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Gullies: Providence Canyon and the Soils of the South* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2015); Richard Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993); Sarah T. Phillips, *This Land, This Nation: Conservation, Rural America, and the New Deal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Neil Maher, *Nature's New Deal: The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Roots of the Modern American Environmental Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Marsha Weisiger, *Dreaming of Sheep in Navajo Country* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011).

[100] Sundquist, "Erosion—The Farmer's Longtime Enemy," September 12, 1937.

Interior, Harold Ickes, in 1938. Arguing for the expansion of the Cache National Forest, Wallace pointed out the extent to which watershed erosion threatened valleys' water supply as well as the property and lives of people living on the Wasatch Front. Wallace claimed that agriculture was the cornerstone of the Great Basin economy. In his view, "it is essential to national as well as local welfare that the public resources within the area be managed on a permanent basis in order that the State of Utah may furnish employment to the greatest number of people and contribute the most to the national economy."[101] Besides promoting the interests of the Department of Agriculture, Wallace's letter frames the watershed crisis as another issue holding back the nation's recovering economy. Erosion was an ecological problem insomuch as it was an economic problem.[102]

Rutledge and Wallace were not alone in critiquing the negative impact of watershed erosion. Local residents also pleaded their case to the federal government, requesting intervention in Wheeler Basin. Ora Bundy, President of the Ogden River Water Users' Association, wanted the basin to become part of the Cache National Forest so that Ogden would have better culinary water and opportunities for recreation development. The Weber County Fish and Game Protective Association echoed similar concerns. Members urged Utah's Senate

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[101] Ibid.; Letter, Henry Wallace to Harold Ickes, May 19, 1938, Box 84, 1680-2009-0048-001, U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Ogden, UT.

[102] The Department of Interior initially opposed the transfer of portions of the Ogden watershed, which would enlarge the Cache National Forest. Interior officials argued that the Taylor Grazing Act (1934) already provided sufficient land protection. The Taylor Grazing Act closed the public domain to homesteading and instituted a permit and fee system for grazing. The debate over expanding the forest was part of a larger tension between the Department of the Interior and Department of Agriculture during the 1930s. Harold Ickes, Secretary of Interior, wanted his department to take over the Forest Service. See "F.D.R. Transfers Ogden Watershed to Cache National Forest," *The Ogden-Standard Examiner*, May 27, 1936; William D. Rowley, *U.S. Forest Service Grazing and Rangelands: A History* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1985), 170-171.

delegation to support protection for the remainder of Ogden's watershed. They noted that restoration in other areas had led to fewer fires and less flooding that threatened both game and property. In its statement of support, Ogden's Rotary Club focused less on the ways that erosion damaged valley property and health and more on the potential for recreation development. Lagging behind other places in this market, Ogden could benefit from Forest Service investment, which would make the city a "real recreational and outdoor playground" and bring Ogden closer to being a "vacational center."[103] For these Ogdenites, eroded watersheds were both a problem and an opportunity. Water contamination was a pressing concern, but perhaps more importantly, the possibility of building a new economy—rooted firmly in valley industries and mountain recreation—appealed to Ogdenites. Their success in securing the Wheeler Basin land transfer demonstrates the new ways in which Utah's dominant urban population extended control over mountain hinterlands. It also highlights Utah's further integration into the national landscape, not only as a ski destination but also as a place where the federal government increasingly drove economic growth and environmental management.

In Little Cottonwood Canyon, urbanites had a longer tradition of controlling watershed use. To be sure, economic concerns influenced Salt Lake Citians' interest in watershed protection, but because the canyons served as a primary culinary water source, human health factored into management decisions more strongly than it did in Ogden. City and Forest Service officials in Ogden approached watershed restoration more as a one-time process, culminating in ski development. In contrast, Salt Lake Citians treated watershed management less as a process

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[103] Ora Bundy to William H. King, letter, February 25, 1939, Box 84, 1680-2009-0048-001, U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Ogden, UT; Weber County Fish and Game Protective Association to E.D. Thomas, letter, February 15, 1937, Box 84, 1680-2009-0048-001, U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Ogden, UT; "Rotary Hears Description of U.S. Blessings," *The Ogden Standard-Examiner*, February 3, 1937.

of restoration and more as a process of regulation; ski development was something to constrain, not an ideal end-result. This process of regulation had its origins in earlier legislation restricting development in the Cottonwood canyons. In 1904, Theodore Roosevelt created the Salt Lake Forest Reserve (later the Wasatch National Forest) to protect water quality in the Salt Lake Valley. At that point, the Cottonwood canyons had some timbered areas but were also plagued by significant deforestation, leading to erosion and poor water quality. Albert Potter, Chief Grazing Officer of the Department of Interior's Division of Forestry (later the U.S. Forest Service), visited the area in 1902 and recorded what he saw at Alta. "The stumps show it has been well forested originally but every tree (and seedling) has been cut. It certainly is a picture of destruction and I do not wonder that the town was once destroyed by a snowslides coming down the denuded mountain side…it would be hard to find a seedling big enough to make a club to kill a snake."[104] The new Chief of the Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot, made similar observations during his visit to the canyons in 1905. During a meeting with city council members, engineers, and Senator Reed Smoot, Pinchot drew attention to the negative impact of grazing on water

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[104] "The Salt Lake Forest Reserve," *Deseret Evening News*, June 8, 1904; Albert F. Potter, *Diary of Albert F. Potter*, July 27, 1902, Utah State University Forestry Extension, accessed December 19, 2017, https://forestry.usu.edu/files-ou/PotterDiaries.pdf. For an overview of Potter's travels in Utah, see David A. Prevedel and Curtis M. Johnson, *Beginnings of Range Management: Albert F. Potter, First Chief of Grazing, U.S. Forest Service, and a Photographic Comparison of His 1902 Forest Reserve Study in Utah with Conditions 100 Years Later* (Ogden: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, 2005). In addition to fire and timber, water resources were an essential factor that legislators considered when they discussed and defined the purpose of forest reserves in the 1890s. Congress believed that reserves should not only protect the water supply but also protect Americans from flooding. That did not mean, however, that consensus existed on implementing these policies. As Nancy Langston shows in her study of forest management in the Blues, communities debated the best way to measure water levels and forest health in the early twentieth century. See Harold K. Steen, *The Beginning of the National Forest System* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1991), 27-29; Harold K. Steen, *The U.S. Forest Service: A Centennial History*, (1976; repr., Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004), 35-37; Nancy Langston, *Forest Dreams, Forest Nightmares: The Paradox of Old Growth in the Inland West* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1995), 141-144.

quality. He urged city officials to restrict stream pollution, saying the government would support restrictive ordinances by limiting livestock and starting a tree nursery. By 1909, Pinchot had followed through with his promises.[105]

The city also took a more active role in regulating Salt Lake City's watershed. State and federal legislation was the cornerstone of this initiative. First, the state granted cities extraterritorial jurisdiction of their water sources in 1898; this included the area ten miles above the point where cities took their water. With this power, cities could construct waterworks and enact ordinances to regulate pollution. In 1923, the state revised this statute, giving cities jurisdiction over the fifteen miles above the point where they took water as well as 300 feet on each side of the watercourse. The revised statute addressed public health issues explicitly, stating that cities could regulate construction or require sanitation facilities. First class cities with a population of at least 100,000 residents (only Salt Lake City at that time) could exert control over their entire watershed, with the exception of grazing occurring 1,000 feet from the water source. As a whole, this legislation, and the lawsuits it provoked, demonstrated Utahns' struggle to find the right balance between a healthy environment in valley cities and a healthy economy for mountain ranches.[106]

The federal government reinforced Salt Lake City's authority over canyon watersheds with several laws. In 1914, Congress charged the Forest Service with supporting the city's anti-

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[105] "Source of Water to be Protected," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, September 10, 1905; "Contract for the City of Salt Lake," 1909, box 94, 1680-2009-0249-001, U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Ogden, UT; John S. Bransford to E.H. Clarke, letter, April 8, 1909, box 94, 1680-2009-0249-001, U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Ogden, UT. Salt Lake City's municipal government supported the enlargement of the reserve, now called the Wasatch National Forest, because it supported the city's efforts to consolidate holdings in the region's canyons, making watershed protection easier. The forest's expansion complemented the city's purchase of canyon lands in the 1890s.

[106] The Revised Statutes of the State of Utah §10-4-15 (1898); Laws of the State of Utah §11-1 (1923).

pollution efforts and removed some federal lands from surface disposal. By 1915, the city and Forest Service had crafted an agreement for joint patrols of watershed areas; federal authorities had the power to enforce city watershed ordinances. Utah legislators enhanced regulation in 1934 by restricting surface rights to the federal government for any mineral patents in local canyons. As a whole, their efforts demonstrate a pattern of collaboration between municipal, state, and federal officials akin to the partnerships that shaped Snow Basin. There were points of contention, especially related to road access, but at this point, individuals who criticized watershed regulations were in the minority. Legislators' early interest in Salt Lake City's watershed speaks to the political weight that the city wielded at a state and national level. The city was not unique in this respect. The Oregon Alpine Club successfully campaigned for the creation of two forest reserves, Bull Run and Ashland, to protect urban water supplies. Likewise, Los Angeles leaders backed the creation of new reserves on watershed lands. In each case, the city used its influence to remold the legal and environmental landscape of the canyons surrounding it, creating a new urban space. The fact that Salt Lake City's watershed restoration began outside the context of recreation and rested on a broader, comprehensive legal foundation impacted the direction of ski development in the 1930s and 1940s. [107]

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[107] 51 Cong. Rec. 8870-8872 (1914). The 1914 legislation set aside Red Butte, Parleys, City Creek, and Emigration Canyons "from all forms of location entry, or appropriation whether under the mineral or non-mineral laws of the United States" to protect the city's water and timber. During discussion of proposed legislation in Congress, D.F. Houston noted that a primary purpose of national forests is the protection of urban watersheds; he cited recent success stories in Manitou, CO and Tacoma, WA. See "Would Cooperate in Watershed Control," *The Salt Lake Tribune,* April 27, 1915; For the protection of the municipal water supply of the city of Salt Lake City, see State of Utah, 48 Stat. §2442 (1934). For analysis of watershed restrictions outside Utah, see Robbins, *American Forestry*, 118-119. Lawrence Rakestraw studied forest reserves created to protect urban watersheds during the 1890s. He estimated that at least 1,483,360 acres became federal reserves for this purpose. Urban recreation groups were a driving force behind the creation of reserves more generally, pushing for between 8,588,800 and 11,808,000 acres of new reserve lands. Although Rakestraw argues that the influence of these

In particular, municipal authorities were skeptical of more than the traditional extractive industries of mining and ranching; they also were concerned about how new ski infrastructure would impact culinary water quality. The struggle to build the Alta Lodge exemplifies the ways in which law, in combination with financial and environmental constraints, limited development in the canyons. Shortly after opening the Alta Lodge, members of the Winter Sports Association (WSA) wanted to install indoor water closets. Patrons were using chemical toilets at that time, and boosters felt that indoor plumbing would create a more appealing vacation experience. Lodge operators and Forest Service officials initially pitched a combined septic and disposal field system to city officials.[108]

The proposal met quick resistance, however, from Salt Lake City's Commissioner of Water Supply and Waterworks, F.S. Keyser, as well as Lynn Thatcher, the State of Utah's sanitary engineer. When builders sought scientific proof that their plan could work or support from high-level bureaucrats, they were disappointed. A.L. Dopmeyer of the U.S. Public Health

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urban recreational groups waned after the 1890s, Utah's story suggests otherwise. Samuel Hays made a similar argument about the importance of water resources in early conservation legislation. Irrigators and municipal water managers were a driving force behind the creation of forest reserves. Donn Headley places Hays's argument in a local context in his study of the early years of California's San Gabriel Reserve. In many ways, the federal-private partnerships that shaped Utah's forests were similar to those in California. By backing fire and watershed protection, urbanites gained a seat at the table, receiving longer land use permits and more influence in Forest Service decisions. Headley argues that Progressives, such as Pinchot, merely institutionalized the system of favors and elite control that already existed. See Lawrence Rakestraw, "Urban Influences on Forest Conservation," *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 46, no. 4 (1955): 108-113; Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 22-26; Donn E. Headley, "The Cooperation Imperative: Relationships between Early Forest Administration and the Southern California Metropolis, 1892-1908," in *Origins of the National Forests: A Centennial Symposium*, ed. Harold K. Steen (Durham: Forest History Society, 1992), 217-228.

[108] George Nichols, "Memorandum for Engineering," July 17, 1941; box 31, folder E-Improvements, Buildings, Alta Shelter, 1940-1941; Historical Records 1905-1953; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver.

Service (USPHS) worried that there were too many unknown factors. The city's reliance on a chlorination system in Little Cottonwood Canyon made it vulnerable to potentially heavy sewage loads in the watershed. Moreover, approving water closets at the lodge would set an untenable precedent. H.B. Homman of the USPHS pointed out errors in the lodge's renderings, saying planners did not take into account year-round sewage nor did they consider the city's reticence to pay for septic tank pumping. Homman questioned the practicality of sewage treatment ponds in Alta during winter. Would supervisors be able to see when sewage was flowing under walls of snow into Little Cottonwood Creek? Would ponds get enough disinfecting sunlight when there was so much snow covering the canyon? The leader of the WSA's efforts, Stewart Cosgriff, expressed frustration at every turn when he was unable to get a satisfactory stamp of approval. Ultimately, Homman and Thatcher supported installation of a 1,200-gallon septic tank, but Keyser rejected this proposal, saying the city was not willing to service the pump. A few years later, Alta was still relying on chemical toilets.[109]

The debate over watershed protection in Alta provides a sharp contrast with Snow Basin, where federal, state, municipal, and business leaders supported development with relative unanimity. However, the Alta case is not simply a story of experts and officials rejecting

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[109] A.L. Dopmeyer to A.L. Anderson, letter, November 15, 1940; box 31, folder E-Improvements, Buildings, Alta Shelter, 1940-1941; Historical Records 1905-1953; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver; H.B. Hommon to William McKay, letter, March 13, 1941; box 31, folder E-Improvements, Buildings, Alta Shelter, 1940-1941; Historical Records 1905-1953; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver.; Stewart Cosgriff to A.L. Anderson, letter, August 10, 1940; box 31, folder E-Improvements, Buildings, Alta Shelter, 1940-1941; Historical Records 1905-1953; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver; Nichols, "Memorandum for Engineering,"; box 31, Alta Shelter; HR 1905-1953; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; "The Alta Brighton Recreational Area and Factors Involved in Its Development," box 19, folder Sewage Disposal Alta-Brighton, Section 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

business growth. It is, rather, an example of the ways in which an older body of legislation encouraged these leaders to pause before proceeding. Their hesitation resulted not from skepticism of economic growth but from recognition of several factors, including the limits of local water infrastructure, the constraints of Alta's winter snows, and the tightness of city coffers. Underlying this hesitation was an understanding that Alta had tremendous potential as a winter recreation area, even the potential to surpass its mining days. This time, however, Salt Lake City had more explicit ties to Alta, grounded in the legal and scientific foundation of watershed management. Officials wanted to make certain that the city did not pay financially or environmentally for the rebirth of *its* canyon playground. Their decisions—blending together federal, state, and local authority—reinforced the growing power of the urban Wasatch Front.[110]

Avalanches of Abundance

The flow of money and water through Utah's canyons highlights the factors that supported and constrained the expansion of skiing. In both cases, the process of ski development involved limiting human interaction with and movement through nature in some way, whether ending grazing in watershed areas or restricting sanitation infrastructure. The story of avalanches in Little Cottonwood Canyon illustrates another facet of the intersection of human and nonhuman movement. As more skiers flocked to the canyon, federal and local officials tackled what was arguably the strongest force in the canyon, avalanches. They still focused on restricting human movement—where skiers could traverse, when cars could drive up the canyon, whether builders could develop certain sites—but they also attempted to change, or at least predict, the

[110] Kathleen A. Brosnan provides an overview of urban primogeniture during the nineteenth century on Colorado's Front Range. Like Denver, Salt Lake City dominated regional politics, business, and resource extraction because of is concentration of people and capital during the territory's early years. See Brosnan, *Uniting Mountain & Plain: Cities, Law, and Environmental Change along the Front Range* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2002).

movement of snow. Their efforts forged closer ties between municipal and federal authorities; business and government; and science and recreation. At times, this new dynamic was as unstable as the snow skiers sought to control.[111]

Alta sits in the middle of prime avalanche territory. As part of the canyon's alpine zone, it is located close to timberline, experiences heavy snowfall, and is surrounded by steep, exposed slopes. Deforestation during the mining era only intensified the area's proneness to avalanches; in fact, during the nineteenth century, torrents of snow had wiped out the town and killed residents repeatedly. Snow is such a powerful force because it is visco-plastic, meaning it can act as a solid and liquid simultaneously. It can flow down a mountainside and change its shape without transforming its underlying structure. Three factors influence snow's dynamism: wind, temperature, and gravity. Wind shapes snow into cornices and drifts, leading to compaction. Meanwhile, heating and cooling alternatively quickens and slows the movement of snow. Gravity continuously pulls snow downward. These factors alone do not trigger avalanches. Shifts in temperature and the overloading of snow on a certain area can make snow unstable enough to slide. Vibration—whether the movement of a ski, the volume of a shout, or the buzz of a snowmobile—can also cause slabs to move. Shearing, such as the slicing movement of a ski, can also unleash and avalanche. One of the least predictable triggers is constructive metamorphism. This occurs when a depth hoar develops. Instead of snow becoming more compact and cohesive as time progresses and more snow accumulates, the snow underneath the surface cover becomes larger and looser. Former Alta Snow Ranger Montgomery Atwater compared this to "ball bearings under a snow cover." As depth hoar shrinks away from the surface, it "rots out the

[111] For a history of avalanches during an earlier period, see Diana DiStefano, *Encounters in Avalanche Country: A History of Survival in the Mountain West, 1820-1920* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013).

underside of a snowpack and leaves it hanging there, supported only around the edges, like a roof" waiting to collapse.[112] When the avalanche eventually occurs, it can either be a loose-snow slide in which the avalanche expands from one point to a broader surface area (similar to a cone shape) as it roars downhill, or it can be a slab avalanche, which is wide from the start.[113]

Figure 7. A photo of Albion Basin at Alta documents avalanche paths. #1 indicates major paths and #2 indicates minor paths. (ca. 1950). Courtesy of U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office.

When Alta opened in the 1930s, officials had a basic understanding of these factors and patterns, but their methods of prediction and protection were highly experimental. The Forest Service assumed a form of "public guardianship" over skiers in the area.[114] It hired Snow Rangers who patrolled the slopes, tracking snowfall, temperatures, and wind in the hope of closing slopes before an avalanche occurred. Rangers generally expected avalanches might occur within seventy-two hours of a snowfall, especially if there were windy days. In some instances, the rangers' simple tools—signs warning danger or closure—were ineffective. New skiers often trusted the rangers blindly, assuming they had taken care of any risk involved. On the other hand,

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[112] Montgomery Atwater, *The Avalanche Hunters* (Philadelphia, Macrae Smith Company, 1968), 25.
[113] Ibid., 25-31.
[114] John Kinney, "Memorandum for Regional Law Officers," January 13, 1941; box 233, folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver.

some locals questioned the rangers' expertise. One forester noted that locals were well aware of the avalanche threat but insisted on bringing their families into the canyon; while the forester was skeptical of their wisdom, he acknowledged that these families knew as much, if not more, about the canyon as the rangers did. Throughout the early years at Alta, the Forest Service struggled to find the right balance between pushing cautious regulation and accepting individual risk.[115]

The death of Kenneth Wright, the first avalanche casualty at the ski area, illustrates the uncertainty of this period. Like many experienced skiers, Wright skied out of bounds because his ski group did not have money to pay for a lift ticket. Ranger Beal had not issued an avalanche warning for the area where Wright skied because it was less popular. Wright's companions noticed that the snow was unsettled under their feet and hustled, but without climbers on his skis, Wright fell behind them. Unfortunately, an avalanche buried Wright. It took two hundred people several days to recover his body. The Forest Service responded to the accident with a flurry of internal evaluations to determine how it had failed. Officials decided that the best way to combat future casualties was to change the tone and scope of avalanche warnings. To reach venturesome skiers, rangers would spread warnings through loudspeakers (not exactly a safe method) as well as signage at parking areas and along roads. They would present more realistic avalanche

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[115] Kinney, "Memorandum for Regional Law Officers;" Box 233, Folder O; HR 1905-1959; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; W.E. Tangren to Stahman, McConkie, and Freece, letter, November 28, 1941; John Kinney, "Memorandum for Regional Law Officers," January 13, 1941; Box 233, Folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver; C.N. Woods, "Memorandum for Lands," September 13, 1939; Box 233, Folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver.

forecasts on the radio, hesitating to blast the words "safe" and "no danger."[116] Rangers would also pay closer attention to weather forecasts. At the same time, officials recognized the limits of avalanche safety. The investigating official believed that Wright's death was not a case of the Forest Service giving into commercial interests to keep the ski area open; rather, risk was inherent in the sport, especially without consistent forecasting tools. For these reasons, early avalanche safety centered on restricting the movement of people, not changing the flow of snow. Several questions remained unanswered. Where did rangers' responsibility end and individual risk begin? Did the Forest Service have a responsibility to protect skiers within Alta's boundaries or within the broader federally controlled basin? These unsettled issues point to the messy borders between private and public or risk and control. Avalanches did not heed these boundaries.[117]

The story of the Alta Shelter provides another example of the ways in which avalanches complicated the tangled web of federal and municipal power in the canyon. The Forest Service decided to build a public shelter in Alta to serve the new ski area. Some oldtimers warned about the avalanche danger of the proposed location, including engineer Vern Despain whose family owned a store in the same location during the mining days. He recalled that avalanches repeatedly ran through the store, trapping and killing people on multiple occasions. The Forest Service, however, proceeded with construction in the slide's path and before clearing title to the

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[116] John Kinney, "Memorandum for Files," January 4, 1941; Box 233, Folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records (HR) 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest (WCNF); Records of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Record Group (RG) 95; National Archives at Denver (NAD); "Snow Avalanche Claims Victim," *Daily News—Intermountain Region*, January 3, 1941; Box 233, Folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver.

[117] Kinney, "Memorandum for Files;" Box 233, Folder O; HR 1905-1959; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD.

land. Construction commenced in July 1938, but sometime in December 1938 or January 1939, an avalanche wiped out the partially completed building. Eager to open the shelter, the Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce agreed to cover any expenses that the Forest Service incurred for resuming construction before it had a clear title. In their opinion, the lack of facilities at Alta threatened the "lives, health, and property" of Salt Lake Citians.[118] Without a shelter, skiers were exposed to avalanches. A shelter would also provide sanitation facilities; their absence exposed the city's water supply to contamination, despite the fact that the city had already invested two million dollars in waterworks for Little Cottonwood Canyon. Local foresters were amenable to their plan, arguing that it was important for Alta to have a public shelter. Otherwise, facilities would be restricted to a "better class of people."[119]

This decision caught the attention of Forest Service officials outside Utah. E.W. Loveridge, Acting Chief of the agency, questioned whether there was an emergency in the canyon that justified proceeding without clear title. He noted that avalanches had occurred in the canyon for decades. In his mind, the city should purchase land in its watershed because urban needs did not justify breaking federal statutes. Regional Forester C.N. Woods offered an explanatory retort. He acknowledged that avalanches had occurred for decades, but until recently, had plagued a relatively abandoned canyon. Emergencies only existed when people—

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[118] "Memorandum for Forest Supervisor," August 12, 1938; box 233, folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver; C.N. Woods to Forest Service Chief, letter, February 21, 1941; box 233, folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver.

[119] Ibid.; C.N. Woods to E.W. Loveridge, letter, April 12, 1940; box 233, folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver.

particularly ski aficionados—flooded the canyon. Moreover, he argued that the Forest Service historically sought to consolidate patches of private land in national forests; transferring land to the city would undermine this policy. In the end, reconstruction continued. This debate reflects several patterns emerging around ski development. First, it points to the primacy of the city in shaping federal land management. It also suggests that Utahns had accepted two inevitabilities in the canyon: the growth of skiing and the damage of avalanches. Officials' decision-making rested on the assumption that they had limited influence over either phenomenon. At the same time, they selectively applied knowledge about avalanches and watersheds when it best fit the interests of recreation development. Sanitation could be both a factor for supporting or constraining construction. Avalanches could necessitate the same projects that they destroyed. Local memory was something to overlook when expedient but also something to leverage authoritatively in the face of Washington bureaucrats.[120]

Road closure policies in the canyon demonstrated similar patterns of flexibility and debate. The pressure for predictable business clashed with the threat of unpredictable avalanches, causing locals to argue about closing the sole road into Little Cottonwood Canyon. Again, they accepted the inevitability of both skiing and avalanches in the canyon. To the majority, the only solution was to improve avalanche forecasting and pump more money into canyon roads. Their mixed success shows the limits of capital and technology in controlling human and nonhuman nature. It also illustrates the importance of collaboration—on a federal, state, and local level—in expanding urban control in the canyon. In the early years of Alta Ski Area, snow laden roads,

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[120] E.W. Loveridge to C.N. Woods, letter, March 15, 1941; box 233, folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver; C.N. Woods to E.W. Loveridge, letter, April 3, 1941; box 233, folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver.

often blocked by avalanches, were a primary obstacle to development. Neither funds for plowing nor avalanche movement were predictable. These issues were not a surprise. Although Mayor Watson had downplayed the avalanche threat, another longtime resident, prospector and skier Walter Hoppe, questioned the wisdom of opening Alta. Hoppe mentioned that Alta had sufficient snow for skiing from October until June but did not think the county would be able to keep the road open from January to June. In some instances, his prediction proved true. The county promised the chamber's Winter Sports Committee that it would keep the roads in Little and Big Cottonwood Canyons open during the 1938-1939 season. Shortly after opening the new lift at Alta, however, the road in Little Cottonwood was closed for six weeks. Even with the support of the Forest Service, the county struggled to secure the funds and equipment to fight back drifts of snow blocking the canyon's road. The state legislature approved the transfer of the canyon roads to the state in 1941; this solved some of the funding issues limiting road clearance.[121]

At the same time, no amount of money could hold back or predict avalanches during the 1930s and 1940s. The committee that determined road closures still shutdown canyon access during prime ski times; the same fresh powder that lured skiers to the mountains also increased the instability of slide areas. One Forest Service official conveyed the frustration of local boosters in 1942, noting that the road was closed on 17.5 days during the season as opposed to 11 during the previous winter. Most of these closures were on weekends or holidays, particularly impacting the out-of-state ski demographic that the WSA wanted to increase. Some boosters found that the closures were too drastic since avalanches only occurred on seven of the closure

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[121] "Memorandum for Lands," May 8, 1937; box 233, folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver; Cosgriff to Stockholders; box 32, folder 2720; SUP 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; Harold Fabian, "Excellent Road Conditions," *The Utah*, January 1942, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, UT.

days; they argued, "some risks had to be taken from snowslide areas in any high quality ski area."[122] Yet the closure committee—with representatives of the Forest Service, State Road Commission, and WSA—acted unanimously and pointed to its success in preventing causalities. Supervisor James Gurr argued that the Weather Bureau and Forest Service simply did not have enough "technical background" to develop more precise avalanche forecasting in the canyon.[123] The representative of the State Road Commission reminded critics that the state already spent more money on the Big and Little Cottonwood Canyon roads than all other Salt Lake County roads combined. Ultimately, the committee and its critics reached consensus, agreeing to continue the cautious and collaborative closure system. Their discussion illustrates the limits that government budgets, scientific knowledge, and avalanches placed on business growth. For the most part, boosters and officials thought these obstacles were temporary. They believed that larger coffers and new knowledge would eventually enable them to restrict, change, and predict the movement of snow. Until then, they settled for constraining human movement through the canyon.[124]

The early years of commercial skiing were a time of convergence, negotiation, and uncertainty. At its core, this period signified a reimagination of resource extraction in the American West as tourism and recreation eclipsed mining and ranching in the urban periphery. This transition did not represent an outright replacement of older ways of knowing and

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[122] A.G. Nord to Regional Forester, letter, February 27, 1942; box 233, folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver.
[123] Nord to Regional Forester, box 233, folder O; HR 1905-1959; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD.
[124] A.G. Nord to Regional Forester, letter, February 27, 1942; Box 233, Folder O—Improvements—Alta Shelter—Wasatch—to 1941; Historical Records 1905-1959; Wasatch Cache National Forest; Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Record Group 95; National Archives at Denver.

interacting with nature. Rather, the ski industry emerged in a moment of crisis—both financial and ecological—spurred on by the failures of mining and grazing. The legal precedents of these weakening industries shaped ski development in profound ways and created space for more stakeholders, whether local, state, or federal, to influence the sport's direction. Their collaboration blurred the boundaries between government and business; scientist and booster; and federal and local control. Like older industries, the ski business was defined by risk. Some took a financial risk in investing in ski infrastructure while others placed life and limb at risk skiing on unstable snow. Critics wondered whether new ski areas were even worth the risk. Together, they started a conversation over whether instances occurred in which financial reward mitigated environmental risk, and conversely, when health risks should override business concerns. Their debate highlights the competing sources of authority in the canyon; oldtimers, boosters, scientific experts, and government officials all claimed to have the best plan of action. For the most part, urban business, health, and leisure were at the forefront of their decision-making. Different environmental, legal, and economic contexts led to different interpretations of what constituted cities' best interests. As the pressure for ski access increased, Utahns still struggled to find the right balance between growth and restraint at the increasingly unstable confluence of capital, water, and snow.

Chapter 3

Champagne Powder in a Sober State, 1945-1970

For decades, ski advertisements exuded youthfulness: teenagers schussing down slopes, movie stars sporting the latest fashions, and spry athletes leaping into the sky. They commented on the romance of skiing and the thrill of athletic vigor. In 1967, a new model splashed across the pages of America's ski magazines. Blanche Fletcher wore trendy ski pants and vogue goggles. In one photo, she winked at readers, sharing gossip about a ski instructor. The ad told readers that the sunshine, friendly atmosphere, and great skiing put everyone in a good mood. The gregarious model encouraged readers to live a little; after all, Park City offered "wild night life" and "snow conditions that put you in a champagne mood."[125]

"Mrs. Park City," as some called Fletcher, was not a typical model. She laughed about squeezing into those "darned stretched pants" and living in Park City long before any tourists had heard of it.[126] Born in 1883, Fletcher witnessed tremendous economic change in the region. Her father was the first barber in Park City, a silver mining town east of Salt Lake City in an area known as the Wasatch Back. During her career as a piano player, Fletcher was part of the city's life cycle, playing at the funerals and weddings of nineteenth-century miners and twentieth-century skiers. Fletcher's son, Mel, was influential in Park City's ski scene. He was an instructor at Snow Park Ski Area, the forerunner of the city's resorts, and later directed the ski patrol at Park City Ski Area. He put marketing agents in touch with Blanche, who was eager to promote her hometown. She insisted that Park City had never been a low-class mining camp, or in recent

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[125] "You Know, I Met the Nicest Instructor," advertisement, *Ski Magazine*, Fall 1967, Park City Museum, Park City, UT; "Don't Tell Me About it, Sonny," advertisement, *Western Ski Time*, December 1967, Park City Museum, Park City, UT; "Why Limit Yourself, Honey," advertisement, December 1967, Park City Museum, Park City, UT.

[126] "Skinotables," *Snow Country*, December 23, 1968, Park City Museum, Park City, UT.

years, an abandoned ghost town. In some ways, Fletcher felt that she and the city shared the same history and vibrancy. She remarked, "I admit I am no cheesecake, but I hope to show the spirit of the town. Some people may call me old, same as they do Park [City], but the spirit is young."[127]

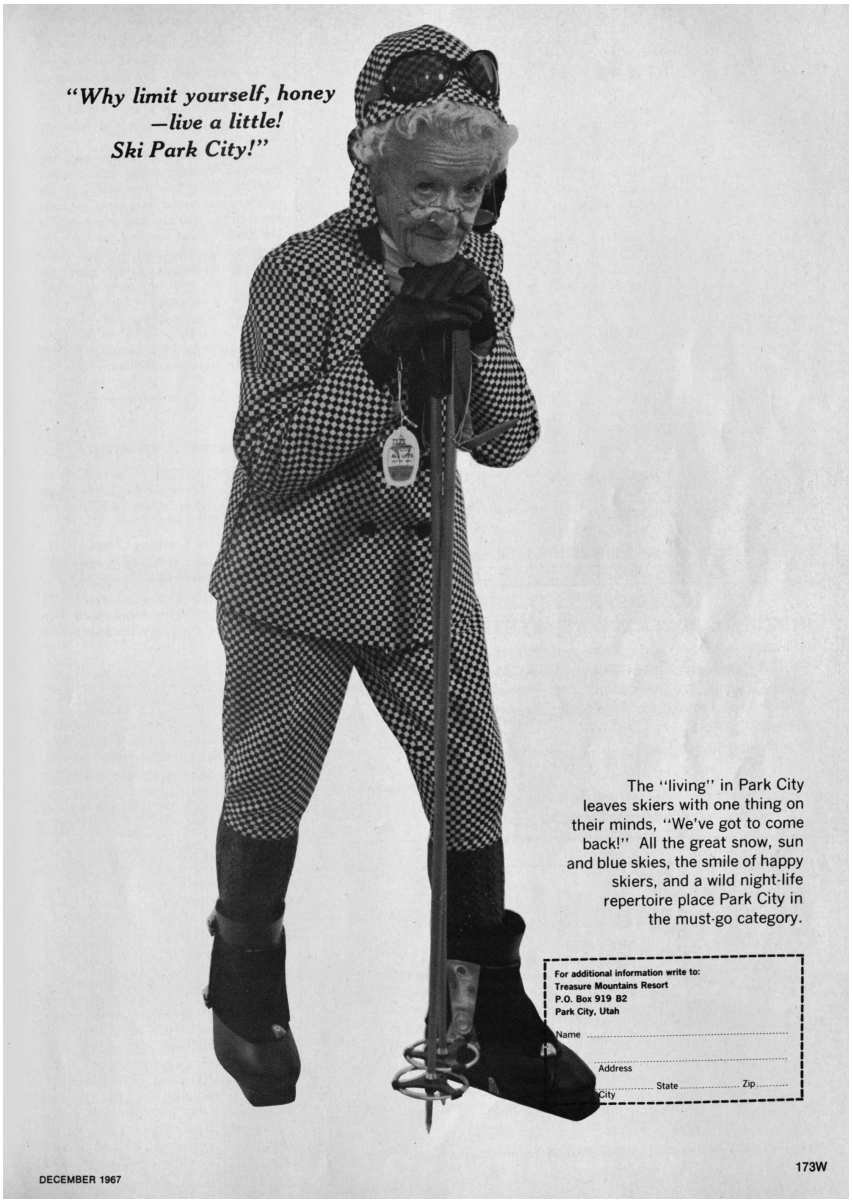

Figure 8. Blanche Fletcher in a *Ski Magazine* advertisement (December 1967).

[127] "Skinotables," *Snow Country*, December 23, 1968, Park City Museum; "Park City, Big New Dimension, after 100 Years of Changing," *Springville Herald*, December 25, 1969.

Just as Mayor Watson predicted that Alta would be "reborn on skis," Fletcher was correct in suggesting that Park City was undergoing a youthful resurgence.[128] Park City, however, had a different trajectory than earlier ski areas. When the first major commercial ski operation, Treasure Mountain, opened, there were still Parkites living in the town and working its mines. Even though Park City was near Salt Lake City, it remained a separate municipality, divided by geography, politics, and economy from the burgeoning metropolis. Park City's ski areas represented the shifting ground of winter recreation on the Wasatch Front. At its core, this latest evolution involved all-inclusive, year-round, resort-style skiing. The après experience—nightlife, entertainment, and fine dining enjoyed after a day on the slopes—mattered as much, if not more, than deep powder skiing did. Not all of the region's ski areas embraced this change as much as Park City's resorts did. The terms "resort" and "ski area" took on new significance in distinguishing between ski venues that offered an all-inclusive experience and those that focused solely on the sport. At the same time, resorts and ski areas alike participated in a new marketing push that attempted to revolutionize Utah's ski brand.

As the ski industry of neighboring states boomed in the postwar years, Utah lost its lead. Boosters regrouped in the 1960s and launched a marketing effort that united private and public entities seeking economic growth for their struggling state. This collaboration reshaped the ways in which Utahns and non-Utahns imagined and experienced the state's slopes. First, individual areas and resorts created well-defined brands that set them apart from neighboring competitors. Even so, a coalition emerged that centered on private booster groups, especially Ski Utah Associates, and the newly minted Utah Tourist Council funded by the legislature. They created and disseminated a Ski Utah brand that highlighted long seasons, dry powder, accessibility, and

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[128] "Meet the Mayor," *The Utah*, January 1946, 37, box 19, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

affordability. They faced significant obstacles since Utah had a reputation as a backward, boring, desert-like place occupied by insular Mormons. To counter this stereotype, Utahns sought out national events, particularly the Winter Olympics, which would supplant older ideas about the state. They had mixed success in changing this reputation, but the brand they produced had lasting power.

Ski Scene, 1946-1970

The rise of coordinated, statewide marketing paralleled the growth of Utah's ski industry. Ski areas founded before and during World War II—Alta, Brighton, and Snow Basin—continued to take a significant share of the market, but new competitors also emerged. For example, Ray and Ava Stewart jumpstarted commercial skiing in Provo Canyon in 1946. Located southeast of Salt Lake City and northeast of Provo (the home of Brigham Young University), this canyon had long been a site of summer and winter recreation for Provo residents, especially those hiking Mount Timpanogos. During the war, Ray had been involved in the Civilian Defense Ski Patrol and had frequented the area with fellow patrol members. They purchased a rope tow, powered by the engine of an old Chevrolet truck, and brought it to the canyon in 1944. The ski area's location, however, was too remote. With this in mind, the Stewarts moved the tow to another location in the canyon where their family grazed sheep, Stewart's Flat, and opened Timp Haven in 1946. The Stewarts relied on a local base of skiers; Jessie Schofield, Provo City Recreation Supervisor, and Dr. Leona Holbrook, Women's Athletic Director at BYU, both sponsored beginner ski classes there.[129]

[129] Raymond R. Stewart, *Before Sundance: Ray Stewart and Timp Haven*, ed. Barbara Stewart Anderson (Raymond R. Stewart, 2001), 58, 64, 70, 82. For more on Mt. Timpanogos and recreation in the Provo area, see Jared Farmer, *On Zion's Mount: Mormons, Indians, and the American Landscape* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008).

In the same year, Parkites on the other side of Wasatch set up an old truck engine to pull skiers up the mountain. Deer Valley had been an informal site of winter carnivals and casual skiing years before Bob Burns and Otto Carpenter decided to build a commercial rope tow in 1946. Their ski area, Snow Park, remained a relatively small operation, run by Carpenter until his lease on the mountain expired in 1968. A new resort, Treasure Mountain, ushered in a new era of Park City skiing just as Snow Park began to fade. Suffering from declining profits, United Park City Mines Company (UPCMC)—the primary economic engine of the town—secured a loan from the Area Redevelopment Agency (ARA) in 1963. This federal loan was meant to convert some of the company's holdings from mining to tourism. The initial plans for Treasure Mountain emphasized skiing but also included ideas to make the resort multi-purpose and year-round with golfing and horseback riding. The mining company hoped not only to revitalize its own profits but also bring new life to a community that was essentially a company town. During the 1966-1967 season, Treasure Mountain became Park City Ski Area (now known as Park City Mountain Resort).[130]

Meanwhile, a new ski area opened in Big Cottonwood Canyon near Brighton. Robert Barrett began purchasing mining claims in the area during the 1950s, and in 1957, formally petitioned the U.S. Forest Service to grant a permit for developing Solitude Ski Resort on a combination of private and public land. Barrett made his fortune in uranium mining and took an interest in skiing after visiting the Wasatch Front. Solitude faced repeated challenges from municipal and federal authorities, who found the resort to be in violation of watershed regulations. Since the majority of Solitude was located on private land, Barrett believed that he

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[130] Alan K. Engen and Gregory C. Thompson, *First Tracks: A Century of Skiing in Utah* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 2001), 19, 99; *New Bonanza at Park City*, Recreation and Land Development Division of United Park City Mines Co., folder 3, Box 1, Karen Korfanta Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

should not have to follow so many onerous requirements. His frustration with these regulations led him to close Solitude in 1961; it would later reopen in 1969.[131]

The late 1960s were a turning point for Utah skiing beyond the controversies of Solitude. Park City West (later Wolf Mountain and The Canyons) opened near Park City in 1968. In Provo Canyon, movie star Robert Redford purchased the family-run Timp Haven in 1969. He rechristened it Sundance Resort, capitalizing on the popularity of his film released in the same year, *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*. Near Alta, rumblings about a new year-round recreation spot, Snowbird Ski & Summer Resort, began. By the early 1970s, plans for this resort materialized. This construction boom was not limited to the Wasatch Front. Brian Head, a resort located in southern Utah near Cedar City, opened in 1966. In Snow Basin territory, Nordic Valley welcomed skiers in 1968; meanwhile, Alvin Cobabe began consolidating land for Powder Mountain, which opened in 1972. Closer to Salt Lake City, Cal McPhie ran Little Mountain Ski Area until 1968, when he moved his equipment from Emigration Canyon to Parley's Canyon. His new ski spot, Gorgoza, lasted four years and was convenient for Utahns traveling between Park City and Salt Lake City.[132]

This ski boom was not exclusive to Utah. It coincided with a larger postwar surge in skiing, particularly in Colorado. Members of the Tenth Mountain Division, a unit of ski troops who trained near Leadville, became enamored with skiing during wartime training in Colorado and several returned to build the ski industry there. Boosters, Forest Service officials, and mountain towns developed marketing campaigns that targeted middle-class suburbanites. As historian William Philpott explains, their ads appealed to potential skiers because they convinced

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[131] Alexis Kelner, *Skiing in Utah: A History* (Salt Lake City, Alexis Kelner, 1980), 175-182; Tom Korologos, "Solitude Owner Agrees to Arbitration Parley," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 15, 1961.

[132] Engen and Thompson, *First Tracks*, 95-101.

them "that you could achieve self-fulfillment and social definition by consuming *this product*..."[133] Tourism promoters capitalized on the growing popularity of après ski. For example, a 1957 survey noted that at least half of Colorado's skiers enjoyed dancing after a day on the slopes. This trend created an opportunity to make money off more than lift tickets and warming hut snacks. It also promised to attract non-skiers to ski towns and resorts, expanding the tourist demographic in the winter. Long lifts, combined with groomed, wide runs, also made skiing more accessible to more consumers. New infrastructure projects heightened this accessibility in another way. Interstate 70, which followed the path of U.S. 6, became a tourist thoroughfare that opened up ski areas that had been more difficult to visit. Following the road's construction, new resorts, such as Vail, tended to be larger and located on the interstate. Colorado quickly outpaced Utah in the size and number of its ski areas. By the mid-1960s, it had embraced its new brand and identity: Ski Country USA.[134]

Colorado's ski boom left Utahns scrambling. Before the expansion of statewide, government funded promotion, individual ski areas focused on branding themselves and appearing unique on the Utah market. As the oldest ski area, Alta set the tone for early marketing. Its brochures focused on the idea that Alta was a skier's ski area, or in other words, a more stripped down experience that focused on quality terrain and snow rather than après nightlife. A 1946 article in the promotional arm of the State Road Commission, *The Utah*, summarized this view: Alta "isn't like making a tour through a canyon that has been completely civilized, ending in a big mountain resort, with city hotel service. It is a 'back to Nature'—bit of

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[133] William Philpott, *Vacationland: Tourism and Environment in the Colorado High Country* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), 19-21.
[134] Philpott, *Vacationland*, 150, 108, 122-123.

the old untamed West."[135] This was a consequence, in part, of the limits that Salt Lake City placed on development in its watershed. To make up for these limited amenities, Alta's boosters highlighted the ski area's friendly environment; ads throughout the period emphasized the laid back feel that distinguished the ski area from new resorts. They also played up the allure of the area's natural features, especially its sunny weather, spring skiing, and deep powder runs. For example, a brochure produced by the Alta's Ruslter Lodge in 1961 noted that skiers rarely dealt with ice and instead enjoyed deep powder runs. In contrast to the icy slopes of New England, Utah's slopes offered dry, powdery champagne snow molded by the arid climate of the Great Basin. The Lake Effect, caused by the Great Salt Lake, meant that local ski areas received significant snowfall despite regional aridity. Champagne snow allows skiers to move quickly down the mountain, almost floating through the powder, but it also requires a different skill set than the groomed corduroy snow associated with eastern resorts. [136]

Above all, Alta's marketing stressed accessibility. This motif appeared in promotional materials from the Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad, the private booster agency Ski Utah, local hotels, and the ski area itself. They repeatedly described Alta as the most accessible ski area in the West. These boosters often used maps to draw tourists' attention to how close Alta was to regional highways, railroad lines, and the Salt Lake City Airport. Although a relatively short distance from downtown Salt Lake City (roughly thirty miles), these maps made Alta appear to

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[135] "Top-of-the-World Ski Thrills," *The Utah*, January 1946, 10, Box 19, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

[136] *Rustler Lodge* (1961-1962), box 3, folder 15, Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT. Skiing was a driving force behind the creation of more detailed terms for "snow" in the American lexicon. Ski clubs wanted to provide accurate descriptions of snow quality for skiers because people with different ski levels preferred different types of snow. *Ski Bulletin* published a list of snow terms in 1938 that included "powder," "slush," and "fluffy." Bernard Mergen, *Snow in America* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997), 166-169.

be only a stone's throw from the city. Instead, the city fades into the background, along with the stop signs, traffic, and steep grades that slowed down skiers' trekking toward Alta. By the 1960s, Alta had consolidated its brand, rooted in accessibility, great runs, and a relaxed culture. Its promotional techniques and message, however, would become less exceptional as time progressed.[137]

Whereas Alta targeted a national market with its emphasis on transportation, both Brighton and Snow Basin focused on the local market. During the 1940s, Brighton's operators attempted to spin the area as a Swiss mountain village akin to St. Moritz. Hans Launer was a Swiss immigrant who owned the Alpine Rose Lodge when Brighton was still a summer recreation spot, but the area's Swiss connection was otherwise tangential. One 1947 advertisement exclaimed that visitors could not only enjoy summer horseback riding and fishing but also yodel and "sing in the streets" as they skied.[138] During its early years, Alta outshined Brighton it its reputation among serious skiers. One observer said that Brighton was "always a paradise for the lang-laufers" and "had never enjoyed the hel-bent-for-leather schussers."[139] In other words, Brighton's marketing—produced by the State Road Commission, Alpine Rose, and the ski area—centered on putting forth an image of a year-round recreation that catered to beginners. The Swiss motif, which dominated ski marketing outside Utah, faded in the following decades. As Brighton expanded its terrain and lengthened its lifts, it began to tap into a broader

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[137] "Utah's Ski Paradise," advertisement, *The Utah*, December 1946, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; "Ski Romantic Alta," advertisement, *The Utah*, December 1946, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; *Alta Lodge* (1964-1965), box 1, folder 8, Alta Ski Resort records, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; *Rustler Lodge* (1965-1966), box 3, folder 3, Ray Grass Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[138] Mat Masidore, "Brighton Bonanza," *The Utah*, November 1947, 46, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

[139] Masidore, "Brighton Bonanza," Utah State Archive.

local demographic. By 1967, Brighton had locked in its reputation as "Utah's finest family ski area," complete with a ski school and slopes for all skill levels.[140]

Brighton was not alone in making that claim. Snow Basin also branded itself as Utah's "NUMBER ONE Family Ski Area" in the mid-1960s.[141] A 1969 advertisement encouraged skiers to start the day with a friendly hello from employees Marilyn and Gale; this personable, approachable touch reinforced Snow Basin's attempt to differentiate itself from large-scale, tourist-oriented resorts. In a similar vein, the brochure promised fewer stumps and groomed corduroy, the ideal terrain for casual skiers. With an affordable $5 day pass, Snow Basin assured skiers that it was "fighting inflation" and reaching out to Utah's families.[142] In short, Brighton and Snow Basin used indicators of affordability and variety to appeal to Utah's growing demographic of skiing families. Within the context of Mormon culture, in which family-centered recreation played a central role, this marketing scheme was strategic. Beyond the specifics of Mormonism, it also fit within a surging interest in family vacations in postwar America. As historian Susan Sessions Rugh argues, middle-class families used vacations to reinforce their social status and to discover American heritage. Paid vacations, new interstates (two bisected Utah), and higher car ownership rates enabled more Americans to spend time exploring the country. As more Americans watched television, they sought out the Western locales and characters that they saw on the screen; new dude ranches and theme parks, such as Disneyland, appealed to Americans' interest in the Old West.[143]

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[140] "Brighton Ski Bowl," advertisement, *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 10, 1967.
[141] "Snow Basin…a Skier's Paradise," advertisement, *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, December 3, 1965.
[142] Ibid.
[143] "Ski-Season's Greetings from Snow Basin," advertisement, *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, November 7, 1969; Susan Sessions Rugh, *Are We There Yet? The Golden Age of American Family Vacations* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 12-13, 17-19, 92-93. Other

Western themes were particularly influential in Park City. Whereas older ski areas initially targeted a local audience and then expanded to the national stage, Treasure Mountain attempted to attract out-of-state tourists from the start. Early promotional materials painted Park City and Treasure Mountain as one package, offering a complete resort experience to tourists. For example, the initial round of marketing placed as much emphasis on golfing as it did on skiing. Brochures intended for investors and visitors implied that Treasure Mountain was trying to compete with Colorado resorts, especially Aspen, more than local ski areas. One booklet, "New Bonanza," produced by UPCMC prior to Treasure Mountain's opening claimed that the resort would "round out" the current ski scene and become the "hub of a wonderful Wasatch ski resort complex."[144] Accompanying maps reinforced this point. They depicted Park City at the epicenter of skiing, with concentric circles emanating from the town. Roads, especially highways to Park City, are visible on the map but other cities and ski areas fade into the background. These maps targeted a new ski demographic, the jetsetter so often associated with luxury ski resorts. Rather than outlining road access beyond the immediacy of Salt Lake City, as older brochures had, Park City's guides simply listed the travel time by plane from different cities. Boosters insisted that Park City offered amenities and allure missing at other Utah ski areas. Unlike Alta

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historians have engaged with the themes of consumption, travel, and postwar culture. Lizabeth Cohen argues that Americans increasingly connected ideals of citizenship, such as freedom and equality, with material consumption during the postwar period. See Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumer's Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: Knopf, 2003). For more analysis of consumerism and postwar families, see Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988); Andrew Hurley, *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 2001); Lynn Spigel, *Make Room for TV: Television and the Family Ideal in Postwar America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

[144] *Relax…Cool Off…Have Fun!* folder 6, box 28, Mike Korologos Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; *New Bonanza at Park City*, Korfanta Papers, Marriott Special Collections.

and Brighton, it was outside Salt Lake City's watershed, and thus, was immune to the regulations that limited development there. Avalanches posed less of a threat at Treasure Mountain and on the highway leading to Park City. Lastly, Park City was still a town, with residents, buildings, roads, and infrastructure, and therefore, was prepared to handle a larger wave of tourists. These facilities could accommodate overnight tourists and provide entertainment other than outdoor recreation.[145]

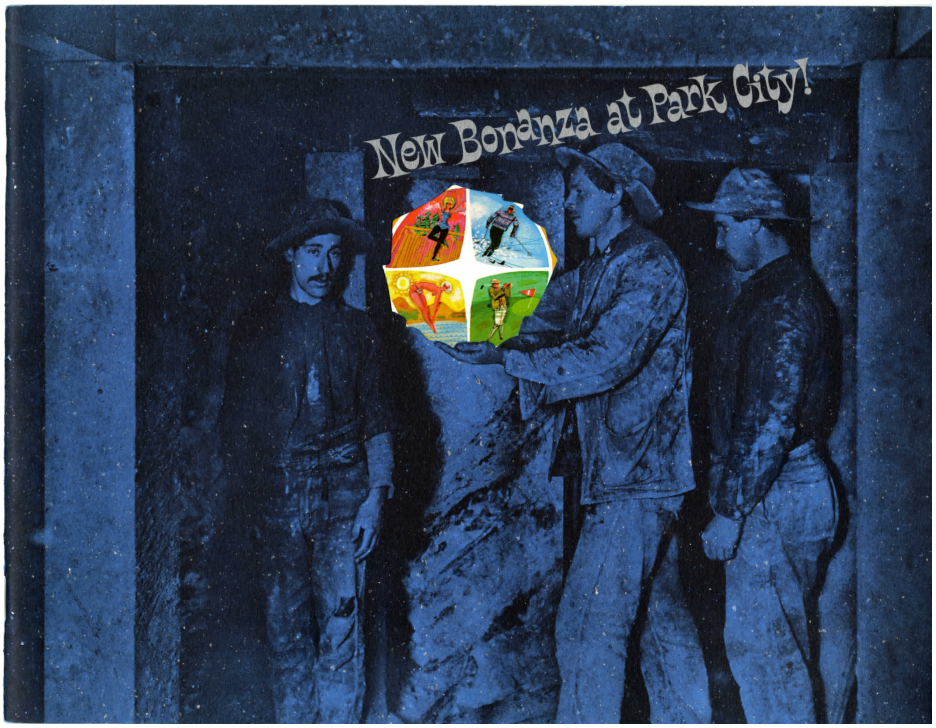

Figure 9. Cover of UPCMC advertisement for Treasure Mountain (ca. 1963). Courtesy of Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Karen Korfanta **papers.**

Boosters built Alta, Snow Basin, and Brighton on the remnants of older extractive industries, but those places' connection to mining and ranching had long receded. On the other hand, Park City offered a marketable past. Brochures depicted a playful miner swinging a golf club and riding a ski gondola with his burro. Photos showcased visitors riding the "Skier

[145] *Relax…Cool Off…Have Fun!* Korologos Papers, Marriott Special Collections.

Subway," an underground ski lift that repurposed old mining carts and elevators to take skiers up the mountain. In 1963, the new Silver Queen Dining Room promoted its "Gay Nineties" ambience, which included "plush red-patterned carpeting" and "waitresses in their modernized Victorian costumes."[146] Local promoters carefully crafted and disseminated this mining imagery. To be sure, Park City began as a nineteenth-century boomtown, and some of the families who settled the area continued to work in the mining industry. The "Old West" feel that defined Park City's marketing was not entirely manufactured. In fact, UPCMC insisted that the town's mining heritage was "not a stage set but the real thing."[147] Town officials and businesspeople recognized that this heritage was more than the community's identity. It was also a marketable commodity that boosters needed to package, preserve, and when necessary, amplify. The town's Planning Commission kicked off this effort in 1965, ordering a study of how other tourist towns had profited from their mining history. The Commission and City Council believed that maintaining Main Street's historic elements would make the town more unique and give resort patrons a reason to come into town.[148]

Park City's focus on mining heritage was not unique outside Utah. It represented part of a larger fascination with Western history and authenticity in postwar America. As Western movies and shows, such as *Gunsmoke*, grew in popularity, tourists sought authentic experiences in which they could relive the days of ranching and mining. Ironically, as William Philpott explains, this lifestyle was a thing of the past in the West; the mining operations still occurring in Park City were not the type of romantic, frontier experience that tourists imagined. Whereas Parkites

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[146] *Relax…Cool Off…Have Fun!* Korologos Papers, Marriott Special Collections; "It's gourmet...not grub," advertisement, *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 21, 1963, box 28, folder 6, Mike Korologos Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[147] *Relax…Cool Off…Have Fun!* Korologos Papers, Marriott Special Collections.
[148] "Old Mining Atmosphere Important to Park City," *Park Record*, March 11, 1965.

recoiled at the idea that their town was labeled a ghost town, tourists were drawn to the idea of visiting an abandoned city. Thus, as much as Park City's mining imagery was rooted in the city's history, it was also manufactured to meet tourist expectations. For example, in 1970, a member of the Chamber of Commerce's Main Street Committee, Gene Johnson, argued that Park City's only hope at generating more tourist dollars (in the absence of a strong bar and nightlife scene) was to "pursue the establishment of Park City's Main Street as an Old West Frontier Mining Town." [149] This meant adding boardwalks, overhanging porches, and gaslamps that would make Park City resemble a Western movie set. Thus, Parkites simultaneously tried to become unique by stressing the authenticity underlying their brand—claiming their town was not a movie set—while pursuing elements that looked familiar to people who watched *Bonanza* or visited Steamboat Springs.[150]

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[149] Philpott, *Vacationland*, 69-73; Marie Springer, "Park City, Called 'Ghost Town,' Wasn't," *Park Record*, July 27, 1967; "Chamber of Commerce Board Studies Westernizing of Main," *Park Record*, November 5, 1970.

[150] "Chamber of Commerce Board Studies Westernizing of Main," *Park Record*, November 5, 1970. Historians have debated whether this process of creating "authentic" culture and history negatively impacted communities dependent on tourism. Hal Rothman argues that this trend constitutes the newest evolution of colonization and exploitation in the West. When communities pursue tourism as a tool for revitalization, they ultimately conform to the tourist gaze and lose part of the very uniqueness, or authenticity, that they initially sought to preserve. David M. Wrobel questions Rothman's interpretation, pointing out that culture is dynamic, and therefore, changing dynamics in tourist towns do not necessarily suggest a narrative of homogenization and decline. See Hal Rothman, "Shedding Skin and Shifting Shape: Tourism in the Modern West," in *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West*, eds. David Wrobel and Patrick Long (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 114-118; David M. Wrobel, "Introduction: Tourists, Tourism, and the Toured Upon," in *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West*, eds. David Wrobel and Patrick Long (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 19-23; For analysis on authenticity and tourism in the American West, see Hal Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 1998); Lisa Nicholas, et. al, *Imagining the Big Open: Nature, Identity, and Play in the New West* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2003); Kristen Smart Rogers, "'We Didn't Think He Was Gonna Build It;' Skiing Hits a Mining Town," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (Fall 2001): 29-33, 43; Earl Pomeroy, *In Search of the Golden West: The Tourist in Western America* (New York: Knopf, 1957); Bonnie Christensen, *Red Lodge and the Mythic West: Coal*

Despite the fact that Park City appeared less distinctive on the national market, its strategic branding differed from other Utah destinations. The town promised an all-inclusive vacation experience that immersed tourists in the mining past, après nightlife, and year-round outdoor recreation. Park City lacked the environmental and regulatory constraints that had limited development in the Cottonwood canyons, allowing Parkites to pursue tourism more aggressively. There were economic reasons why Parkites sought this particular brand of skiing, too. Mining was not just an artifact of the distant past, put on display for tourists. Parkites still depended on the dwindling demand for lead and zinc to sustain their community up until the point that UPCMC transitioned some of its holdings for tourism. Although the company still employed four hundred people in mining, the economy was not thriving. Buildings sat empty on Main Street as the town's population and purchasing power declined. Yet unlike Alta, Park City was not abandoned nor had avalanches erased its built environment. Unemployed Parkites needed year-round jobs, not seasonal employment teaching ski lessons or running warming huts. For these reasons, the ARA, a federal poverty relief organization focused on unemployment, saw Treasure Mountain as a worthwhile investment. As mining operations continued underground, the ARA and UPCMC believed mining would continue. One advertisement summed up their business strategy best: "There's a new Bonanza in sight for PARK CITY!"[151] In short, even though the region's ski areas' shared similar origin stories—federal investment, mining lands,

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Miners to Cowboys (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002); Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken Books, 1989); Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).

[151] *New Bonanza at Park City*, Recreation and Land Development Division of United Park City Mines Co., box 1, folder 3, Karen Korfanta Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; "New Bonanza at Century-Old Park City!" advertisement, *Deseret News and Telegram*, September 18, 1963, box 26, folder 4, Mike Korologos Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

and depressed economies—their different approaches to marketing illuminate the fundamental ways in which Park City diverted from the typical pattern. Mining was more than Park City's brand. The industry shaped each aspect of the town's rebirth, whether job creation, heritage tourism, or municipal funding. In contrast, the concerns of the urban Wasatch Front were the driving influence undergirding development elsewhere.

Making the Greatest Snow on Earth

Despite Parkites' different approach to developing and branding local skiing, their attempt at carving a share in the national ski market soon became common in postwar Utah. In particular, a new coalition of private and public agencies coordinated attempts at creating and disseminating a Utah brand of skiing. Individual areas continued to push their own marketing, but they increasingly worked together to promote winter recreation in the region as a whole. Boosters' strategy consisted of creating a public agency focused on tourism, getting images of Utah skiing on television, creating a Utah ski brand, and attracting national and international ski events to the region. In the process, they presented a more unified region to the nation, bound together by a new network of investment and marketing.

Two entities, Ski Utah Associates and the Utah State Tourism and Publicity Council, were especially influential in forging a statewide marketing campaign. A group of Salt Lake City businessmen began the Olympic Ski Club, later renamed Ski Utah Associates (SUA), in 1962. The club initially focused on developing facilities and competitive events that would capture the attention of the U.S. Olympic Committee and secure an Olympic nomination for Salt Lake City. Members wanted to make the city worthy of the title "Ski Capital of the World."[152] More than

[152] "The Olympic Ski Club," 1962, box 1, folder 2, Ski Utah Associates Collection, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT. Each nation had an Olympic

anything else, they worked at convincing national and regional ski race organizers to plan their events in Utah. In addition to this priority, SUA's secondary goal was generating positive media attention in the tourist market. Members' wives played an influential role in this aspect of SUA's operation, especially as the group began reaching out to the average out-of-state skier. By 1965, twenty-eight women (primarily members' wives) volunteered as secretaries at the SUA office, aiding director Dev Jennings in managing visitor inquires and developing a daily ski report. Skiers in their own right, these women shared their expertise on snow conditions, equipment, and accommodations with visitors.[153]

In many ways, the membership and strategies of the club were reminiscent of the early booster groups who founded Alta. Women played a significant yet often overlooked role in making them function. Moreover, just as these organizations depended on the support of public agencies, SUA cultivated an equally important partnership with a new state agency, the Utah Tourist and Publicity Council (UTPC). Created by the state legislature in 1953, this agency developed several branding themes for Utah, including "Utah the Unique" in the 1950s and "The Different World of Utah" in the 1960s. Within ski marketing, the UTPC began peppering billboards and magazines with the slogans "Greatest Snow on Earth" and "Ski Utah" (both still on Utah license plates) in the 1960s. As historian Susan Sessions Rugh argues, the UTPC was part of a larger Western trend in which state governments played a pivotal role in coordinating tourism promotion. In her view, state agencies were "the lynchpin in the complicated machinery

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Committee that selected its candidate to host the Olympics. Then, the International Olympic Committee reviewed these candidates and selected the host city.

[153] "The Olympic Ski Club," Ski Utah Associates Collection, Marriott Special Collections; Ski Utah Board of Directors Meeting Minutes, February 18, 1964, box 1, folder 2, Ski Utah Associates Collection, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Barbi Fouch, "They're Secretaries for a Day," *Salt Lake Tribune*, March 6, 1965.

of industrial tourism in the West."[154] The State of Utah took a particular interest in investing in tourism in the immediate aftermath of World War II. The forerunner of the UTPC, the State Publicity Council, noted that ski tourism promised a "golden stream of tourist dollars" after local ski ticket sales increased by 25 percent during the 1946-1947 season.[155]

Nevertheless, the legislature funded tourism publicity inconsistently. By 1965, officials revisited the prospect of tourism promotion. Unemployment was on the rise in Utah, especially as the aerospace and defense industries stagnated. At the State Economic Development Conference that year, Governor Cal Rampton expressed concern that Colorado had taken the lead in tourism, especially skiing. UTPC Director Emanuel Floor reinforced this point, saying, "When Colorado had its first rope tow we had three chairlifts. Today they have 41 ski areas and we have nine."[156] This represented a turning point in the state's approach to pursuing tourist dollars. The ski market was particularly appealing since skiers tended to stay longer in Utah and spend more money than other recreational tourists. After 1965, the state committed more dollars to courting tourists, and even when the legislature cut UTPC dollars, the council maintained spending on ski promotion.[157]

A significant portion of this funding boost went to creating and broadcasting images of Utah skiing in film and on television. This strategy was not new, however. The state and its private partners had backed ski films and television specials since the late 1940s. For instance,

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[154] Susan Sessions Rugh, "Branding Utah: Industrial Tourism in the Postwar American West," *Western Historical Quarterly* 37, no. 4 (2006): 454-455, 459-562, 446.
[155] "Utah, Center of Scenic America," *Industrial Development News*, April 1947, Box 14, Series 1138.
[156] *Utah's Number One Industry Potential*, Utah Tourist and Publicity Council, 1965, Utah State Archive; "Utah Tourist Growth Pleases Rampton, Floor," *Provo Daily Herald*, August 26, 1965.
[157] "Park Businessmen Pledge $2830 to Aid Tri-Ski Area Promotion," *Park Record*, August 11, 1966; "Utah Seeks '76 Olympics," *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 10, 1967; "Utah to Make Pitch for '72 Olympics," *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 6, 1965.

the Department of Publicity & Industrial Development coordinated the filming of *Queen for a Day* at Alta in 1948. On this popular television show, women shared their hardships with the host, Jack Bailey, and the audience voted on which woman was most deserving of being "queen for a day" through an applause meter. After a contestant expressed interest in skiing in Utah, the department reached out to the show's producers, and later, organized a ski trip for winner Alice Walters. During her visit, the queen watched the Rustler Cup, received a ski lesson from Sverre Engen, and attended a reception for top skiers at Mayor Watson's home. Alta received publicity when the contestant won the trip during a regular television episode and in subsequent radio and newspaper coverage of her visit. This episode represented one of the earliest attempts at projecting images of Utah into American living rooms. Boosters wanted viewers to see more than the dusty, rural landscapes of Western film and also to associate snowy, mountainous, and urban scenes with Utah.[158]

The UTPC continued this effort during the 1950s. Since the agency had a low operating budget, it took advantage of television stations willing to play ski films for free, especially in markets with a significant number of skiers, such as Buffalo, Minneapolis, and Detroit. Spending on ski promotion, however, still only represented a small fraction of the council's budget. Greater state spending and private campaigns changed this pattern in the 1960s. SUA and the Wasatch National Forest worked with the UTPC to produce and distribute more ski clips. They continued to distribute ski films to clubs, tourist shows, and television stations, but they also attempted to capture the attention of a broader national audience through media stunts. For example, Park City made the national news when Lady Bird Johnson visited in 1965. Airlines'

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[158] Rulon S. Howells to J.C. Morgan March 31, 1948, box 26, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; David H. Mann to Jack Bailey, February 26, 1948, box 26, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

promotional packages supplemented this attention. Both United and Western Airlines funded films and advertisements that pushed ski packages in Utah. In short, television and film enabled boosters to project new images of Utah into American homes. This medium allowed them to capture the energy, sounds, and sights of Utah skiing in a way that brochures and newspaper articles could not convey.[159]

At the same time, print advertisements remained an important tool for crafting and spreading a new brand of Utah skiing. In particular, the maps, photos, and text of tourist brochures pushed the idea that Utah was an accessible, friendly destination with dry powder snow and sunny winters. This brand had appeared in the promotional materials of individual ski areas, but by 1970, these particular themes also defined Utah skiing as a whole. Older campaigns had emphasized the state's Mormon heritage, but during the 1950s, boosters realized that this focus made Utah less competitive in the growing market of Sunbelt tourism. In an effort to siphon off some of the tourists visiting neighboring states, Utah boosters began to emphasize their state's natural features and outdoor recreation. The emergence of a Ski Utah brand was an outgrowth of this effort.[160]

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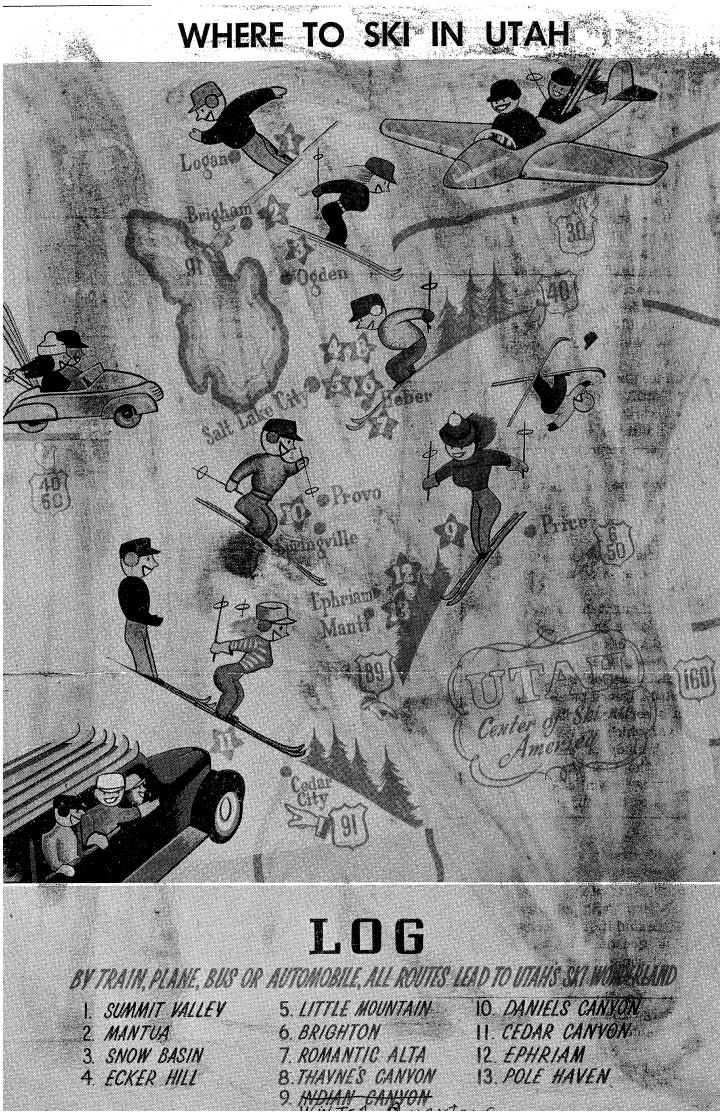
[159] *Biennial Report of the Utah Tourist and Publicity Council, 1954-1955, 1955-1956*, box 1, Series 2993, box 26, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; Dev Jennings to Ski Utah Associates Members and Contributors, September 2, 1964, Albert S. Hansen Papers, box 1, folder 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Robert H. Woody, "Added Stimulus for Ski Industry," *Park Record*, June 17, 1965; "United Air Lines Will Promote All Ski Facilities in Park City," *Park Record*, October, 21, 1965.

[160] For more on the rise of Sunbelt tourism, see Eugene P. Moehring, *Resort City in the Sunbelt: Las Vegas, 1930-2000* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 2000); Godefroy Desrosiers-Lauzon, *Florida's Snowbirds: Spectacle, Mobility, and Community since 1945* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011); Richard M. Bernard and Bradley R. Rice, eds. *Sunbelt Cities: Politics and Growth since World War II* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983); Lawrence Culver, *The Frontier of Leisure: Southern California and the Shaping of Modern America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).



Map 2. Map of Utah ski areas circulated by Utah Department of Publicity and Industrial Development (1947). Courtesy of Utah State Archive, Series 1138.

Boosters began building the Ski Utah brand during the 1940s. For instance, the Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce created an advertisement for "Ski-nic Utah" in 1946. This advertisement appeared in *The Utah Magazine*, which targeted auto tourists.[161] It highlighted the best features of skiing Utah, including accessibility, sunshine, and affordability. The same

[161] Sessions Rugh, "Branding Utah," 459; Philpott, *Vacationland,* 164-165; Chamber of Commerce, "Utah—Center of Ski-nic America Invites You!" advertisement, *The Utah*, January 1946, box 19, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

slogan—"center of ski-nic America"—appeared again in a 1947 advertisement printed in brochures and magazines.[162] This advertisement also emphasized the themes of accessibility, which it illustrated through a cartoon map. Impractical for navigation, the map identified ski areas along the Wasatch Front and the roads that skiers could use to reach them. It included a large bus, airplane, and car pointed toward ski areas. Together, these advertisements suggest that boosters saw easy access as they key factor that distinguished Utah from other ski centers. At this point, boosters were beginning to project this message, but the scope of state-oriented marketing campaigns remained limited to a relatively regional audience. Skiers were still more likely to learn about Utah skiing from individual ski areas' brochures.[163]

During the 1960s, boosters introduced the "Ski Utah" brand through broader and more intense marketing schemes. Forged by the Utah Travel Council (the latest rendition of the UTPC), "Ski Utah" and "The Greatest Snow on Earth" were new advertising slogans meant to promote statewide winter recreation in a concise and memorable way. As part of a larger process of refining Utah's ski brand, boosters repackaged older promotional themes. They still stressed accessibility in their campaigns, but they now placed greater emphasis on air travel, dry powder, and hospitality. A Ski Utah brochure, produced for the 1965-1966 season by SUA and the travel council, illustrates this pattern. It featured the state's new slogan, "The Greatest Snow on Earth." The cover image portrayed experienced skiers cutting through deep powder on a narrow tree-lined run. In contrast to the concepts that had dominated individual ski areas' marketing in the 1940s and 1950s—romance, family-oriented, and European—this slogan symbolized a singular focus on the physical experience of skiing. Now that the United States had a large demographic

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[162] "Utah—Center of Ski-nic America Invites You!" Series 1138, Utah State Archive; "Where to Ski in Utah," advertisement, *Utah Official Information*, State Publicity Department, Series 5275, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.
[163] "Where to Ski in Utah," Series 5275, Utah State Archive.

of skiers, promoters could afford to focus less on attracting newcomers to the sport and more on appealing to skiers of different skill levels. The advertisement explained, "There's deep powder to challenge the finest skier…fabulous hard pack for high speed maneuvering…wide open runs up to 2 ½ miles in length…great snow from Thanksgiving to Easter."[164] In this case, the variety and reliability of Utah's snow conditions were particularly appealing to tourists traveling from out-of-state and planning their trips in advance. Utah's boosters hoped to allay their concerns by showing that Utah's snow was exciting yet predictable; it was wild enough to give skiers a thrill on the slopes but it was not so untamed that a poor snow season or blizzard conditions would prevent tourists from enjoying their vacation.

Despite their emphasis on snow quality, boosters did not leave hospitality and the après experience out of this brochure. They promised skiers hoostpa, which they defined as a "mountain elixir brewed by pretty girls to the sound of soft guitars."[165] The brochure assured skiers that the state's resorts offered comfortable lodging, helpful staff, and good food. In this sense, the agencies' marketing mirrored the après focus of resorts in Colorado and California. Nevertheless, Utah's boosters still tried to set the state apart by highlighting easy access. More than any theme, this particular feature received the greatest attention. The brochure's map demonstrates the extent to which boosters wanted to push this concept. The map is a relatively blank canvas of the state, with the exception of major highways, ski areas, and cities adjacent to ski areas. The cartographer drew triangles around clusters of ski areas and cities. This artistic choice accentuated the idea that cities and ski areas were a package deal; ski tourism was

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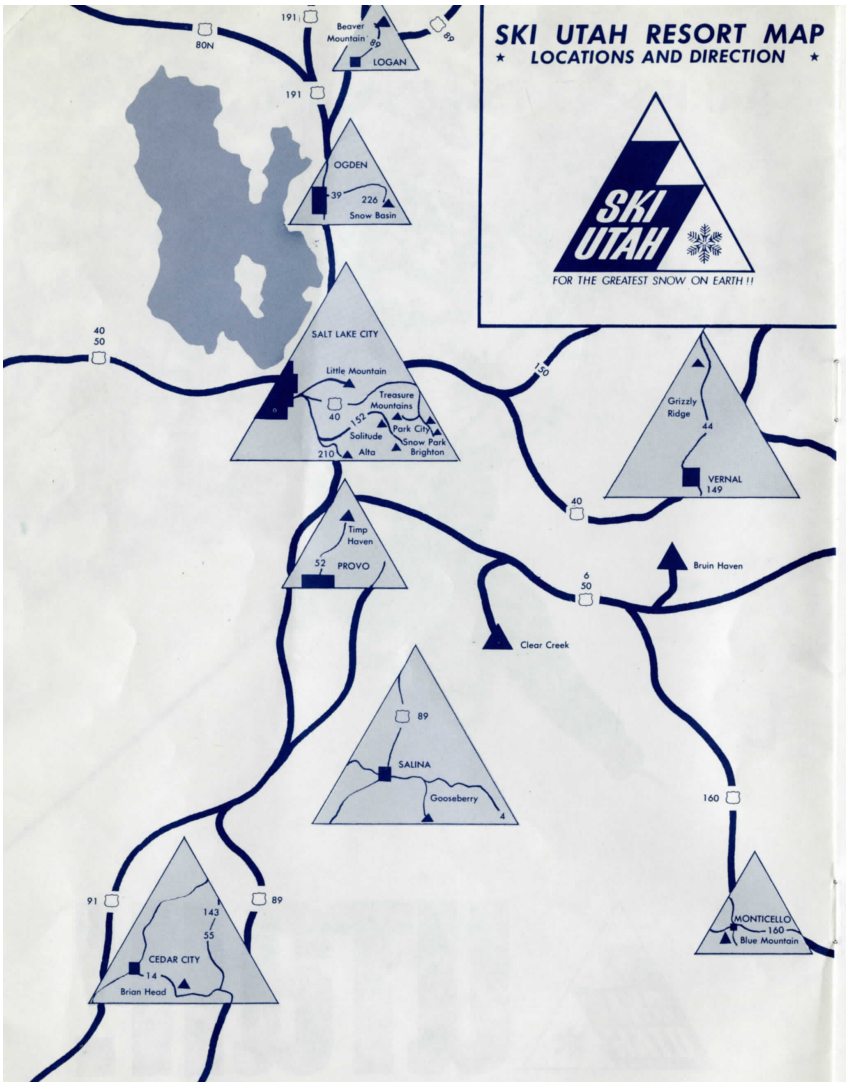
[164] Lois Barr, "Ski Program to Feature Utah Movies," *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 11, 1964; "Beehive Display Boosts Skiing at Coast Show," *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 14, 1964; *Utah! For the Greatest Snow on Earth!!* Ray Grass Papers, box 3, folder 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[165] *Utah! For the Greatest Snow on Earth!!* Grass Papers, Marriott Special Collections.

appealing in so much as tourists could access slopes easily from roadways and the airport, relying on cities' lodging and amenities during their stay. Accompanying text reinforces this point. It focuses on how Interstate-15 (expanded in the 1960s) and Salt Lake City's airport supplemented access by train and bus, making Utah accessible to Westerners. Large text announces "ARRIVE AT TEN…SKI BY ELEVEN."[166]



Map 3. Map produced by Ski Utah Associates (ca. 1960s). Courtesy of Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Ray Grass papers.

[166] *Utah! For the Greatest Snow on Earth!!* Grass papers, Marriott Special Collections; Glen M. Leonard, *A History of Davis County* (Salt Lake City: Davis County Commission and Utah State Historical Society, 1999), 367-369.

In each case, the boosters defined the accessibility of skiing around proximity to Salt Lake City. The map downplays areas off the beaten path and describes travel times in reference to the city. Described as the "jet-age crossroads of America," serviced by five major airlines, Salt Lake City is the launching point for any ski vacation. [167] This description points to the fact that "Ski Utah" primarily referred to skiing in Salt Lake City and its environs. Utah, the Wasatch Front, and Salt Lake City became interchangeable terms in the Utah ski scene. It also reflects the idea that Utah was trying to compete with Denver. The Colorado city also touted its jet access, even using images that exaggerated the proximity of Denver to the Rockies in its promotional materials. Whereas Salt Lake City's airport was closer to local ski areas, Utah's boosters still dramatized that proximity by implying that all skiing was an hour from the city.[168]

A UTPC brochure from the mid-1960s placed another twist on the relationship between cities and skiing. The brochure includes a map, but there are no cities on it. Instead, it illustrates ski areas and the highways that connect them. The brochure's text, however, suggests that the map excludes cities because the cartographer assumed that the skiers would be accessing ski areas from Salt Lake City. Several clues point to this conclusion. First, compared to earlier renditions of the same brochure, this copy includes fewer ski areas and excludes smaller operations located off the beaten track. It also claims, "Choose Your Area...Skiing's Less than an Hour Away.[169]" With the exception of a few locations, this timeframe refers to the distance between Salt Lake City and each ski area. The brochure repeatedly mentions this proximity, saying tourists can enjoy the city by night and slopes by day. One photo of flight attendants

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[167] *Utah! For the Greatest Snow on Earth!!* Grass Papers, Marriott Special Collections.
[168] Philpott, *Vacationland*, 271.
[169] *Ski Utah: Utah Winter Vacation Guide*, Utah Tourist and Publicity Council, box 1, Series 22908, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

dressed in their airline uniforms and waving next to a Solitude lift serves as a "…reminder that Utah is the only major ski area now served by jet air service."[170] Again, the UTPC painted the state of Utah as a singular ski area, but in doing so, uses markers that are specific to Salt Lake City, such as jet access. This relates the extent to which brand builders attempted to make "Utah," "ski area," and "Salt Lake City" synonymous. The brochure's message also imparts the idea that Utah's boosters were attempting to tap into a growing demographic of skiers traveling by plane from New York and California. Far from other major urban centers, but often treated as a pass-through state or stopover for car and jet travelers, ski promoters realized that people were visiting Utah but only on their way to somewhere else. Thus, the "jet-age crossroads" theme demonstrated an effort to spin this trend in Utah's favor.[171]

Utah's bids to host the 1968, 1972, and 1976 Winter Olympic represented another means of trying to transform from the state from being a flyover state to a ski center. Each nation was allowed to nominate a city to host the Olympics; then the International Olympic Committee selected the host city from those national nominees. Salt Lake City presented its bid to host the 1968 games in 1962, but came late to the process. Although USA Olympics acknowledged the advantages that the city offered, namely its transportation network, natural terrain, and proximity to recreation sites, Salt Lake City lost the bid. SUA and the UTPC made a second, more concerted attempt in 1968 when the committee was selecting its 1972 nominee. Governor Rampton was particularly interested in the bid because he believed tourism could be Utah's economic "salvation."[172] He believed that international attention from Olympics coverage would

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[170] *Ski Utah: Utah Winter Vacation Guide*, Series 22908, Utah State Archive.
[171] Stephen August Cronin, letter to the editor, *Park Record*, January 28, 1965.
[172] "Ski Group Hopes to Lure '68 Olympics to Utah," *Salt Lake Tribune*, June, 14, 1962; "Detroit, Lake Placid Win Olympic Bids," *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 17, 1962; "Utah to Make Pitch for '72 Olympics," *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 6, 1965.

be the ultimate way of attracting more skiers and winter recreationists to the state. With this in mind, he formed a committee to craft a bid. Since the city lacked the capital to fund a full public relations campaign, the state paid for a significant portion of Salt Lake City's bid. In this case, the best interest of Salt Lake City was also the best interest of Utah. To target a national audience, the UTPC and SUA funded a Warren Miller ski film and hoostpsa festival in Park City.[173]

Perhaps more memorably, boosters developed a float for Lyndon B. Johnson's inaugural parade in 1965. Americans saw the float in-person in Washington D.C. and on television. With the themes of "growing industry and growing sports" and "The Greatest Snow on Earth," the float featured Dev Jennings (a former pro skier and SUA employee) skiing on a treadmill while two women threw plastics snowballs from a chairlift.[174] Jennings and his fellow promoters were not the only Utahns to make an appearance that day. A nationally known group sponsored by the LDS Church, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, performed at Johnson's inauguration. The Ski Utah float and choir represented two images of Utah. On the one hand, the state offered world-class recreation, beautiful mountain landscapes, and economic promise tangential to Utah's Mormon legacy. Images of the choir reinforced the state's deep religious history and persistent Mormon culture but also stressed the extent to which this religious tradition fit within American Protestantism. Scholar Michael Hicks argued that the performance constituted "another breakthrough in the Church-via-Choir's pursuit of federal sanctity." [175] Thus, both the ski

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[173] "Utah to Make Pitch," *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 6, 1965; Robert H. Woody, "Olympic Bid Goes to Utah," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 16, 1966; "Olympic Bid to Boost State Monies," *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 26, 1965; "Utah Plans First 'Hootspa Festival,'" *Salt Lake Tribune*, October 28, 1965.

[174] "Utah Displays Ski Assets at Inauguration," *Park Record*, January 21, 1965.

[175] Ibid. The choir's popularity increased after its performance at Johnson's inauguration. Its record sales spiked following the event. LDS President David O. McKay called it "the greatest

industry and the choir exposed Americans to new images of Utah that situated the state more firmly within mainstream society in different but complementary ways. These twin images of the state continued to shape Utah's pursuit of an Olympic bid.

After generating favorable media coverage, ski boosters thought they had the advantage in securing an Olympic bid for 1972. Perhaps more importantly, the Olympic committee was impressed by the close proximity of facilities—bound together by a growing federal highway system—along the Wasatch Front. Unlike other American cities that had hosted the winter games, Salt Lake City had a larger population and established infrastructure. For these reasons, the American committee selected Salt Lake City as its candidate for the 1972 Winter Olympics. Sapporo, Japan ultimately hosted the games, but Salt Lake City persisted, submitting an unsuccessful bid to be the American nominee for the 1976 Olympics. Although Salt Lake City would not host the winter games until 2002, boosters were still relatively pleased with the bidding process because it brought positive media attention to the region. This coverage, along with the marketing campaigns of local, regional, and statewide ski organizations, led to an increase in out-of-state ski visits during the 1960s. By 1968, skiing generated four million dollars in revenue, in addition to the 1.8 million dollars that skiers spent on clothing and equipment sold by Utah companies.[176]

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single honor that has come to the Tabernacle Choir." When Utah eventually became the host of the Winter Olympics in 2002, the efforts of the choir and ski boosters coincided. The choir performed throughout the games' ceremonies. See Michael Hicks, *The Mormon Tabernacle Choir: A Biography* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 124-125, 164-165.

[176] "Winter Olympics in Utah? Yes, If Residents Want Enough," *Salt Lake Tribune Home Magazine*, November 28, 1965; "S.L. Loses Bid, Japan Wins Winter Games, *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 27, 1966; "Figures Reveal How Tourists Travel in Utah," *Park Record*, June 6, 1968; "Utah Skiing Big Business," *Park Record*, February 8, 1968.

Dry Powder, Dry State

Utah offered many advantages to skiers. It promised the consistently deep, dry powder that skiers craved. Beginners and experts alike could benefit from its varied terrain. With six ski areas and resorts within an hour's drive of Salt Lake City's airport, visitors could easily land in the morning and travel along the newly expanded Interstate 15 to their preferred slope. Why, then, did Utah lag behind Colorado in attracting ski tourists? With so many favorable features, why did Salt Lake City repeatedly fail to become an Olympic host city? It was unsuccessful, in part, because Salt Lake City's new nature-oriented brand competed with an older brand rooted in a long history of skepticism toward Utah and Mormons. In some ways, this older brand was an unintentional product of marketing that had focused on Utah heritage and Mormon sites. This emphasis reinforced many Americans' preconceived notions of Utah as a backward, insular desert dominated by theocratic rule.[177] In short, the exceptional nature of Utah's culture and

[177] Scholars have explored the relationship between Mormonism and mainstream society by tracing the place of Utah within American culture, politics, and society. Writing in the 1950s, Thomas O'Dea argued that Mormons' emphasis on their identity as a "peculiar people" set them apart as an ethnic group. In *The Angel and the Beehive*, Armand Mauss tracked the Mormon struggle for acceptance, even after the end of polygamy. He claimed that Mormons had assimilated on an institutional and individual level by the time O'Dea was writing. In response to assimilation, however, Mormons underwent a period of entrenchment. They asserted their uniqueness through a variety of means, whether by voting against the grain or attending high school seminaries. J.B. Haws advances this historiography of assimilation into the late twentieth century. He argues that the popular perception of Mormons rose and fell based on a number of factors, including pushback from the Evangelical Right, Mormon policies on race, Mitt Romney's presidential run, and more. For works on Mormonism and mainstream America, see J. Spencer Fluhman, *"A Peculiar People": Anti-Mormonism and the Making of Religion in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012); Terryl L. Givens, *The Viper on the Hearth: Mormons, Myths, and the Construction of Heresy*, rev ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Kathleen Flake, *The Politics of American Religious Identity: The Seating of Senator Reed Smoot, Mormon Apostle* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Jan Shipps, *Sojourner in the Promised Land: Forty Years Among the Mormons* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000); Gustave Larson, *The 'Americanization' of Utah for Statehood*, (San Marino: Huntington Library, 1971); Thomas F. O'Dea, *The Mormons* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957); *Out of Obscurity: Mormonism since 1945*, eds.

history had a stronger hold on the American imagination than the exceptionality of Utah's powdery snow and ski access during the postwar period. Utah's reputation, however, was not the only factor limiting the ski economy. Inconsistent business practices and construction restrictions also made Utah less competitive on the national ski market.[178]

As ski areas transitioned from serving local weekend skiers to catering to out-of-state vacationers, they experienced some growing pains that limited their appeal. These related to operating hours, road closures, and competitive recruiting. New Jersey resident Hugh Brooks, writing from the popular Hotel Jerome in Aspen, shed light on some of these issues in a letter to Utah's Department of Publicity in 1949. Brooks suggested that Utah's ski advertisements misled tourists. After reading that Brighton was open year-round and was only forty-five minutes from Salt Lake City, he was disappointed to find that the lift was closed during the workweek in the summer. He also noted that it took him 1.5 hours, not forty-five minutes, to reach Brighton from the capitol building. His criticism reiterated the idea that some of Utah's lift operators were not quite prepared for tourists during the early years of the postwar ski boom. Ski areas were truly winter businesses without the capacity to accommodate non-skiers, such as Brooks.[179]

Other critics argued that Utah tarnished its reputation among serious skiers by offering inconsistent access. An active member of SUA, Alton Melville, complained that road closures—triggered by heavy snowfalls—meant that skier missed out on competitions and casual ski days. He argued that Salt Lake City was fortunate to have abundant snow and urban access, yet that all was rendered meaningless when the state closed the Cottonwood canyons. He suggested, "snow

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Patrick Q. Mason and John G. Turner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016); J.B. Haws, *The Mormon Image in the American Mind: Fifty Years of Public Perception* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[178] Leonard, *A History of Davis County*, 367-369.

[179] Hugh Brooks to State of Utah Department of Publicity, October 10, 1949, Series 1138, box 1, Complaints, Controversial Items, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

removal should be geared to the changing weather conditions rather than to the clock." [180] In Melville's opinion, imposing the predictability of the workday on the unpredictability of snowfall backfired because it caused Utah to miss its own "peculiar opportunity" to draw media attention to the state through national competitions broadcast via television, radio, and print. [181] Moreover, Utah remained behind the curve throughout the 1960s in developing a national racing program. Without local funding, competitive skiers left the state and represented other locales. In other words, Utah was missing out on the publicity that competitive skiing generated; this constrained the state's ability to recruit the ultimate publicity event, the Winter Olympics.[182]

While issues of access and racing reputation influenced Utah's image, ski boosters believed that the state's liquor laws were the primary constraint on tourism. Janet Plott, owner of the Christopher Restaurant in Park City, stressed the urgency of making it easier for tourists to access liquor. She said that "the Greatest Snow on Earth" lost some its appeal when tourists had to walk long distances to state-owned liquor stores. She even posed the possibility that individuals might "turn to bootlegging" since the state had closed two local stores.[183] Parkite Stephen Cronin used equally colorful terms, saying "contrary to what many Utah residents think, going to the movies or hearing an organ recital in Utah is not an acceptable substitute for an enjoyable evening in the Aspen Lodge or the Hotel Jerome."[184] In other words, activities

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[180] Alton Melville to Robert Allen, March 12, 1962, box 1, folder 3, Ski Utah Associates records, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[181] Melville to Allen, Ski Utah Associates records, Marriott Special Collections. Ski competition organizers overcame other issues associated with heavy snowfall, namely the need to pack down snow for jumps and create base areas, by relying on the labor of volunteers, soldiers, and prisoners. Melville claimed that the hard labor of packing snow (done by climbing uphill while stomping) "elevated the spirits" of Utah's prisoners.
[182] Bill Ewer, "Help Keep Utah Skiers in Utah," *Deseret News*, July 3, 1970, box 2, folder 8, Jim Gaddis Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[183] Janet Plott, letter to the editor, *Park Record*, September 14, 1967.
[184] Stephen August Cronin, letter to the editor, *Park Record*, January 28, 1965.

typically associated with Mormon families, such as attending the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, did not compare to après nightlife. Businesspeople became particularly vociferous after a new law required restaurants to sell liquor in a mini bottle to customers. Private clubs were exempt from this 1969 rule. In a Utah Tourist Council survey, thirteen out of seventeen business owners dependent on the ski industry claimed that this law negatively impacted tourism. One business owner commented, "the law cramps entertainment and is embarrassing both for the hotel and the customer. People make fun of Utah and it hurts the state's image considerably."[185] Visitors were quick to point out the annoyance of Utah's liquor laws; one resident of Tacoma, Washington claimed that Utahns did not care about the inconvenience since they were all Mormon. A Parkite was equally eager to highlight the fact that locals, not tourists, kept the city's bars open year-round. This exchange suggests that Utah's image problem was not only a product of strict regulations on liquor sales but also of tourists' expectations and stereotypes of Utah. In addition, it emphasizes the extent to which the après experience, perfected in the Rockies and Alps, increasingly shaped ski tourists' desires.[186]

Throughout the 1960s, Utahns used Aspen, Colorado as a reference point for measuring their success in the ski world. They defined Utah's ski brand against and in relation to the particular brand of skiing that Aspen promoted. As William Philpott explains, "Much of the ski scene mystique [in Aspen] swirled not around the mountain but the village below, where après-

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[185] Axelsen Advertising Agency, "Utah Travel Council Report of September, 1970," box 1, Series 2515, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; Mike Korologos, "Liquor Laws Stifle Ski Growth in Utah," September 7, 1970, box 31, folder 8, Mike Korologos Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT. The new law required restaurants to sell liquor in splits ($1/10^{th}$ of a bottle). Patrons had to purchase wine and liquor at the bar and then carry it back to their table to pour.

[186] "Many National Stories about Park City, but You're Not Going to Like This'n," *Park Record*, June 25, 1970.

socializing, drinking, and dancing began as soon as the lifts stopped running for the day."[187] For many, entertainment and nightlife were inseparable from skiing. Parkites were especially keen on replicating some of the lure of Aspen in Park City. They hoped that an après culture would boost lift ticket sales and generate income for businesses with indirect ties to skiing. As one Parkite noted, "Free the liquor, and Park City will be another Aspen in less than five years."[188]

With this in mind, UPCMC sponsored a trip to Aspen in 1966. The mayor, City Council, and Planning Commission accompanied mine employees during a series of meetings and tours with city officials and industry experts. These leaders reinforced the idea that Aspen's après ventures undergirded the city's financial success. The owner of the popular Red Onion Restaurant, Warren Kuster, observed "people come to Aspen for relaxation and entertainment, as much as for skiing. For example, we have had the poorest snow season for many years, but we have had one of our most successful financial years."[189] Cultivating an après scene had the potential to provide a consistent revenue stream to Park City and correct some of the uncertainty that came with an industry depended on weather patterns. A county commissioner involved in the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, Thomas Sardy, reinforced this point. He claimed that Park City showed greater potential than Aspen, but to tap into that potential, legislators needed to make liquor regulations more tourist-friendly. Failing to do so would deter investment.[190]

Utah's ski boosters increasingly took on this language of profit and investment when they argued against brand damaging liquor laws. They argued that there was a direct correlation between the number of businesses selling liquor and a ski community's overall economic profit.

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[187] Philpott, *Vacationland*, 150.
[188] "California Paper Has New Slant on Fun and Frolic in Summit," *Park Record*, March 24, 1966.
[189] "Relaxed Liquor Laws, Promotion Urged for Park by Aspen Leaders," *Park Record*, April 22, 1965.
[190] Ibid.

For instance, a 1970 UTC report showed that Aspen experienced a 35 percent increase in profits during the 1969-1970 season; it had thirty-one businesses selling liquor. The Alta-Brighton-Park City complex saw a 16 percent increase in profits during the same season but only had nine businesses selling liquor.[191] To these boosters, a lack of liquor indicated an inability to benefit from the larger economic benefits of ski tourism, including jobs and income from lodges, restaurants, entertainment, and shops. Their efforts represented an attempt to make Utah more similar to other ski centers at the same time that they were highlighting the state's exceptional snow and accessibility.

Developers recognized that liquor laws—and perceptions of them—constrained Utah's success, but they also thought that there was a more complex set of factors at play. The UTC acknowledged that some boosters saw looser liquor laws as a catch-all solution to the state's tourism woes, but officials were hesitant to endorse this view. In other words, mimicking Aspen's après scene would not solve the state's marketing issues. As the 1960s progressed, the agency and its supporters highlighted issues related to lodging and racial discrimination. The problem of limited lodging was particularly salient in the Cottonwood canyons. In an effort to limit the contamination of Salt Lake City's watershed, officials restricted the construction of sewage infrastructure and new lodging. This led to criticism from tourists and locals alike that Cottonwood ski areas (Alta, Brighton, and Solitude) had an unpleasant odor caused by sewage. Moreover, Utah offered fewer ski-in and ski-out property rentals (which allowed tourists to ski directly from their lodging to a lift), let alone lodging in the base area of a resort. Although Salt Lake City was relatively close to Utah's slopes, there was limited lodging in the immediate vicinity of each ski area. This problem was not exclusive to ski communities. During 1969,

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[191] "Relaxed Liquor Laws," *Park Record*, April 22, 1965; Korologos, "Liquor Laws Stifle," Korologos Papers, Marriott Special Collections.

Utah's major tourist attractions could accommodate 4,000 lodgers. Just one resort at Aspen had the capacity to sleep 6,000 people. Even though Colorado had fewer out-of-state visitors in 1969, those who did visit the state spent more time (5.5 nights) and money ($367,500,000) there. In contrast, visitors to Utah spent an average of 1.2 nights in the state and added roughly $111,700,000 to Utah's economy. UTC director Lee Jorgenson explained that this made Utah, a "pass-through state" where visitors stayed overnight on their trips elsewhere.[192]

Utah's boosters still wanted the state to move beyond its stopover reputation and instead become a destination, especially for ski tourists, who spent more than the average traveler during their vacations. Promoters saw the Winter Olympics as the ultimate public relations boost. Yet, skepticism of Mormonism undercut their efforts. This uncertainty extended beyond the stereotypes and inconveniences associated with Utah's liquor laws and touched on deeper issues of race within the church and American society during the 1960s. Mainstream reactions to the LDS Church and its members were mixed during this period. Some historians have identified the 1950s and 1960s as a time of assimilation for Mormons. Indicators of this trend included the prominence of Ezra Taft Benson, an LDS leader who served on Dwight Eisenhower's Cabinet, the popularity of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, and the tendency for Protestants to classify Mormons as Christian. When the Mormon governor of Michigan, George Romney, sought the Republican nomination for president in 1968, he generated renewed interest in Mormonism. Mormon ideas about race, however, undercut the movement toward assimilation during the period. More specifically, many Americans disapproved of the fact that black Mormons could not partake in high temple rights and that black male members could not be ordained in the

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[192] *Utah's Number One Industry Potential*, Utah State Archive; John Jerome to Mike Korologos, January 9, 1970, box 31, folder 8, Mike Korologos Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; "Relaxed Liquor Laws," *Park Record*, April 22, 1965; Korologos, "Liquor Laws Stifle," Korologos Papers, Marriott Special Collections.

church's priesthood. This policy went against the tide of the Civil Rights Movement. As Salt Lake City put together a bid for the 1976 Winter Olympics in 1967, critics wondered if church's teachings and policies on race might undermine the spirit of the games. Their concerns became particularly urgent after black athletes began promoting a boycott the 1968 Summer Olympics. Shortly after this became public, the U.S. Olympic Committee chose Denver as its candidate. [193]

Olympic committee members confirmed that concerns over race and Mormonism thwarted the city's bid. In addition to lacking sufficient nightlife and a track record of hosting national and international competitions, Salt Lake City's racial politics were too conservative. One official elaborated on these drawbacks, explaining that the 1976 candidate, Denver, had more experience hosting large-scale events. The committee member said, "Utah still has the image of racial discrimination, perhaps going back many, many years. And like it or not, many people wonder what entertainment would be available in Utah for the public attending the games." He summarized the general attitude: "putting it simply, if two cities have equal facilities for staging the games it is foolish to take a chance of a racial hassle in one when the other city doesn't pose that problem." [194] Although committee members did not discuss these issues openly, they implied after the fact that they had weighed on their individuals votes.[195]

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[193] Matthew Bowman, "The Evangelical Countercult Movement and Mormon Conservatism," in *Out of Obscurity: Mormonism since 1945*, eds. Patrick Q. Mason and John G. Turner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 260-265; J.B. Haws, "The Romney Lens: A Bifocal Approach to Mormonism, American Religion, and Politics in the Past Half-Century," in *Out of Obscurity: Mormonism since 1945*, eds. Patrick Q. Mason and John G. Turner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 93-95; Douglas Hartmann, *Race, Culture, and the Revolt of the Black Athlete: The 1968 Olympic Protests and Their Aftermath* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 55-64.

[194] John Mooney, "Denver Wins in Bidding for Olympics," *Salt Lake Tribune*, December 18, 1967.

[195] N.L. Christensen, "Governor Feels Utah by Efforts to Secure Olympic Bid," *Provo Daily Herald*, December 19, 1967.

Throughout the postwar period, Utahns tried to find a balance between what made their state unique and what made it mainstream. They had mixed success in pursuing these two impulses. At first, regional marketing targeted local skiers and involved little collaboration between operators. This changed when Park City opened and tourist-oriented ski resorts came into vogue. Politicians and investors realized that skiing could make Utah competitive with neighboring tourist states, generating more revenue than other forms of recreation. To pursue this goal, Utahns created their own ski brand, which they spread through public funding, television, and national events. Salt Lake City's repeated Olympic bids represented the ultimate attempt at standing out from the increasingly homogenous ski scene while simultaneously seeming mainstream to appeal to tourists and professional skiers. Yet the perceptions and realities of Mormonism, especially related to alcohol and race, held back this effort. Ski marketing, however, was not a complete failure. In fact, boosters succeeded in forging a new ski brand that revolved around Salt Lake City. The boundaries between ski area and city, city and state, and even state and nation became less distinctive. This cultural transformation worked in tandem with a broader process of political, environmental, and economic erosion and consolidation. A new city emerged from the Wasatch slopes.

Chapter 4

Federal Boosters, 1945-1970

Dolores LaChapelle once remarked, "Everything I know I have learned from skiing powder."[196] In fact, LaChapelle's passion for deep powder skiing impacted each stage of her life. Unable to afford skis as a child, the Denver native finally purchased her first pair from an army surplus store after World War II and took a job in Aspen so that she could ski. A 10th Mountain Division veteran, Lefty Cornier, taught her the single dipsy technique (developed by Alta ski instructor Dick Durrance) that allowed her to cut through deep chutes of backcountry powder. This technique came in handy when she moved to Davos, Switzerland, where her husband, Ed LaChapelle, worked at the Federal Institute of Avalanche Research. Dolores caught the attention of many Swiss skiers who asked her to teach them the relatively new technique.[197]

In 1952, the couple moved to Alta, and Ed became a Forest Service snow ranger charged with overseeing avalanche management and ski safety. Dolores continued to ski and developed a "kiddie carrier" that allowed her to bring her son with her on the slopes. She wrote, "moving to a mountain cabin that can be reached only by rope tow with a two-week old infant may sound bizarre to most people. But for me, even though I was a nursing mother, I was still a powder snow skier."[198] At each turn, Dolores gained notoriety at Alta as an instructor and as the "Witch of the Wasatch" for her uncanny ability to predict when a storm would clear. Yet, her time on the slopes was not carefree.[199] She witnessed and survived multiple avalanches, including one slide

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[196] Dolores LaChapelle, *Deep Powder Snow: Forty Years of Ecstatic Skiing, Avalanches, and Earth Wisdom* (Kivaki Press, 1993), 1.
[197] Ibid., 8-9, 11, 13, 18.
[198] Ibid., 21-22, 28, 23.
[199] Ibid., 61.

that buried her in 1963 when she was skiing without her children. A search party of Forest Service officials and volunteers rescued her.[200]

LaChapelle's experiences clearly traced the evolution of powder skiing, but her experiences also captured a less obvious but perhaps more transformative process, the expansion of federal boosterism on American slopes. More specifically, key moments in LaChapelle's growth as a skier—buying a pair of skis, learning the single dipsy, moving to Alta, becoming an instructor, and even being rescued from an avalanche—were influenced by the federal government's investment in skiing. This investment of land, resources, knowledge, and capital undergirded the growing popularity and profitability of postwar skiing within and beyond Utah. Federal agencies engaged in boosterism in new ways, hiring avalanche experts, monitoring watershed contamination, and backing new ski projects with Area Redevelopment Administration funds. This was not a simple process of public investment and private profit. Just as federal, state, and local stakeholders had collaborated in managing avalanches, sanitation, and capital in earlier decades, they continued to negotiate authority, control, knowledge, and risk in Wasatch ski areas after World War II. They debated the extent to which the federal government should support a business that had begun to look less like a smalltime operation run by civic boosters and more like a tourist-oriented industry with fulltime employees. By the late 1960s, federal officials had rejected the enthusiastic boosterism of earlier years and had adopted a cautious approach. Their reticence created a new opening for state, municipal, and business stakeholders to influence ski management on private and public lands. In effect, the federal government reinforced the growing power of local and urban actors in the American West.

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[200] LaChapelle, *Deep Powder Snow*, 53.

Managing Risk

Postwar avalanche management illustrates the patterns of collaboration, federal power, and risk distribution. The Forest Service had limited means of protecting skiers from avalanches during commercial skiing's early years, and therefore, tended to rely on area closures, warnings, and a bit of luck in reducing the sport's risks. After a new generation of skiers gained technical experience in avalanche management abroad and the Forest Service committed greater resources to avalanche mitigation, the agency developed proactive strategies. Rather than waiting for an avalanche to occur, employees began triggering avalanches on empty slopes and developing tools for better forecasting. This approach demanded greater investment in training, equipment, and experimentation, which ultimately became the responsibility of state and local actors. The trajectory of avalanche management demonstrates broader shifts in federal involvement in ski development. First, non-federal actors gained more leverage within the model of shared authority of Utah's public forests. The federal government's hesitance to back the rising costs of avalanche management impacted this change. Realizing that they could not control the movement of every skier inside and outside ski area boundaries, stakeholders debated who should carry the ultimate responsibility for skier safety. Avalanche rangers and lift operators shared some of this risk, but they also shifted part of the burden of ski safety to individuals, emphasizing the need to educate skiers on precautionary measures. This decision reflected the fact that despite the increasingly standardized and transnational nature of avalanche knowledge, expertise remained sensory and place-based.[201]

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[201] Charles S. Peterson and Linda E. Speth, *A History of the Wasatch-Cache National Forest, 1903-1980* (1980), 270-271, RH 1680-95-0001-08, U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Ogden, UT.

World War II represented a turning point for avalanche management in Utah's ski areas, particularly Alta. Former members of the 10th Mountain Division, now employed by the Forest Service as snow rangers, used surplus military explosives to trigger avalanches during the 1946-1947 season. One of these veterans, Monty Atwater, replaced Sverre Engen as Alta's snow ranger that season. Atwater and his assistants traveled to risky cornices—crowns of snow typically at the top of avalanche chutes—and buried dynamite (and later tetrytol) in the hope of preemptively starting an avalanche. Ranger Gordon Van Buren commented that this treacherous activity stuck with him for decades, especially seeing how "the holes [dug in the snow] were dancing with blue static electricity."[202] Officials realized, however, that the process of burying charges was too laborious and risky for snow rangers. Consequently, the Forest Service obtained a World War I-era 75mm howitzer to release avalanches in the spring of 1949. Snow rangers knew Swiss techniques for releasing avalanches with artillery, but originally used hand charges because they lacked access to appropriate weapons and believed duds could endanger the public.[203] While the Utah National Guard initially fired the howitzer, rangers eventually took over the process. The weapon became a mainstay of avalanche management. Operators could fire shells at nearly every slope in the ski area from the highway. The initial disturbance of the

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[202] Montgomery M. Atwater, *The Avalanche Hunters*, (Philadelphia: Macrae Smith, 1968), 50; Marc Kalatowski, "The Avalanche History of Alta," *The Avalanche Review* 7, no. 3 (December 1988): 7, box 1, folder 10, Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Gordon Van Buren to Jean Pickett, August 18, box 2, folder 4, Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[203] Montgomery Atwater and Felix Koziol, *The Alta Avalanche Studies* (U.S. Forest Service, 1949), box 3, folder 2, 59, 69, Felix Koziol Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT. There are few reports of duds from avalanche control in the 1940s and 1950s, but by the 1960s, skiers and environmental groups drew attention to the duds found on the mountain each year after the snow melted. The Forest Service began mapping duds' locations in 1966 and retrieving them in the summer. See Peterson and Speth, *A History of the Wasatch-Cache National Forest,* 272, U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office.

snow by the shell and the ensuing vibration on the snow's surface triggered avalanches. Since snow can absorb and insulate tremendous shock, buried charges proved less effective than surface vibration, whether caused by a shell, wired charge, or errant ski.[204]

Figure 10. Photo taken by Ed LaChapelle of 75mm used in avalanche control at Alta (1956). Courtesy of U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Wasatch National Forest Photo Collection.

A skilled skier and glaciologist trained at the Swiss Avalanche Institute, Ed LaChapelle brought greater technical expertise to the Alta Avalanche Study Center in 1952. He used snow study plots to understand how different layers of snow impacted instability. Whereas his Swiss instructors focused on snow cover, LaChapelle believed that storms, tracked with wind vanes and anemometers, offered equally valuable insight for avalanche forecasting. Due to the growing expense of avalanche control and limited federal funds, the Forest Service scaled back its avalanche study centers in the West, and by 1961, only Alta continued to operate as a research center. In the late 1960s, the Forest Service finalized the division of avalanche management and

[204] Atwater and Koziol, *The Alta Avalanche Studies*, 78, Felix Koziol Papers.

research into separate administrative units, meaning Alta's rangers no longer focused on research. Alta Ski Area announced that it would take over avalanche management in 1970, and in the late 1970s, the Forest Service said avalanche responsibilities would shift to states.[205] In short, the postwar period witnessed the creation, development, and divestment of an avalanche bureaucracy within the Forest Service.

This transition originated in older discussions about expenditures and liability. From the start, some individuals within the Forest Service expressed reservations about the agency's role in avalanche management. In 1947, the head of the Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Center, Jack Major, argued that ski area operators should fund avalanche control. Major claimed that many slopes on public land (which were the majority) remained closed because the Forest Service did not have the proper funds to survey, manage, and patrol potential avalanche areas. He claimed that Forest Service personnel would be "fools" to assume this task because lift operators, not the agency, profited from the expansion of skiable terrain.[206] Clearly, the Forest Service did not follow Major's advice, but it still depended on partnerships to increase safety in hazardous areas. For example, during the 1950s, the Forest Service provided information on avalanche risk to the State Road Commission, which not only plowed parking lots and roads but also coordinated road closures. The Forest Service restricted traffic in Big Cottonwood and Little Cottonwood Canyons during closures while Winter Sport Association (WSA) volunteers monitored parking lots. In effect, this system echoed the older collaborations that defined early ski development.[207]

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[205] Atwater, *The Avalanche Hunters*, 62, 32-39, 114, 18, 21-27.
[206] Jack Major to Joe Hessel, September 28, 1947; Box 315; Folder I. Information, Special Articles 1947; Historical Records 1902-1961; Wasatch Cache National Forest (WCNF); Records of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Record Group (RG) 95; National Archives at Denver (NAD).
[207] Memorandum of Understanding, 1955, 26-29, Town of Alta, Alta, UT.

This approach, however, faltered by the mid-1960s. Forest Service officials at the regional and national level questioned the money required to manage avalanches in ski areas. Writing to attorney and Alta co-founder Seymour Joseph (S.J.) Quinney in 1964, Wasatch National Forest Supervisor Felix Koziol warned that operators might soon need to take over this "serious burden."[208] Local operators grew frustrated with the situation, too. With a maximum of four snow rangers at any time, it was difficult for rangers to complete avalanche control activities quickly across a wide array of locations after a heavy snowfall. As a result, ski areas in the canyons often could not open until the afternoon. Chic Morton, general manager at Alta, respected the rangers' closures but wanted the ski area to open earlier in the day. Binx Sandahl, a ranger during the 1960s, recalled a system that he developed for dealing with Morton's anger during closures. Before entering Morton's office, he would throw his hat inside the door; if Morton threw back that hat, he knew Morton was too mad to speak with him, but if he did not respond, Sandahl would cautiously enter. Sandahl said, "Chic felt it was the Forest Service's responsibility to provide avalanche forecasting and control because Alta was on National Forest; the Forest Service felt they could not afford to hire any more snow rangers just so Alta could open on time and make more money."[209] In 1965, Supervisor George Tourtillott offered a solution to Morton. He suggested that Alta Ski Area should use some of the income from the increased lift fee (that the Forest Service had just approved) to contribute more to avalanche management. He said, "With an ever increasing area to cover and hopefully more skiers on the hill, it is necessary…to operate on a scale that our snow rangers can no longer be expected to

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[208] F.C. Koziol to S.J. Quinney, April 21, 1964; Box 33; Folder Ski Lifts; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD.

[209] Doug Abromelt, "The Binx Sandahl Years," *The Avalanche Review* 7, no. 3 (December 1988): 7, box 1, folder 10, Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

handle. This avalanche control work is done primarily as a public safety measure and is direct benefit to our area operator." Therefore, Morton should hire professional ski patrolman to assist the two rangers that Tourtillott would hire.[210] In other words, ski terrain had expanded and lift ticket prices had increased, but Forest Service allocations had not grown, nor did officials think that the agency had a responsibility to subsidize business profits. This logic justified, in part, greater local and private control over ski slopes.

Regardless of who controlled slopes in theory, avalanches remained unpredictable. This, coupled with the growth of backcountry skiing, made it difficult for operators and rangers to eliminate risk entirely. They maintained ski patrols, rescue protocols, and forecasting, but they also asserted individual skiers' responsibility in securing their own safety. In official reports of avalanche incidents, Forest Service personnel often noted that skiers had placed themselves in danger by ignoring closures or skiing unfamiliar territory. Instead of traversing questionable areas one-by-one in a single file line, skiers often crossed in clusters, which placed more people at risk in the event of an avalanche. Yet, avalanches still killed and injured those who followed safety protocols or who were even engaged in mitigation efforts. Officials expressed surprise when avalanche cords, meant to help rescuers find buried skiers, failed or when an avalanche caught training personnel (who survived) in the midst of a mock avalanche rescue at Solitude. In one incident, a howitzer released an avalanche so powerful that it traveled up the other side of the canyon and took out the weapon and its mount. Another avalanche on West Rustler at Alta caught a skier despite the fact that patrolmen had shot the slope with the howitzer earlier that morning and others had subsequently skied it without incident. When the Wasatch supervisor visited Alta in 1967, patrolmen belayed on the Baldy Cornice to demonstrate avalanche blasting,

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[210] George W. Tourtillot to Chic Morton, June 14, 1965; Box 33; Folder 3; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD.

drilling holes into the snow for dynamite. Since the howitzer had not released an avalanche there earlier in the day, they had "misplaced confidence" in the fact that the cornice was stable enough to hold their weight.[211] Sure enough, they triggered an avalanche. 150 volunteers spent the day looking for potential victims who were skiing below the cornice during blasting. The slide caught seven individuals, but luckily, no one died. Each of these examples illustrates the struggle to create a simultaneously tame and wild space for urbanites.

Some skiers insisted that private operators and public employees had a responsibility to create this environment, but courts ultimately reinforced skiers' own liability. In 1965, Theodore Berg and his children, Bruce and Douglas, were skiing below an avalanche closure area at Treasure Mountain. The details remain uncertain, but two skiers above them in the closed area may have released an avalanche. Regardless, the slide killed the father, whose wife, Barbara, sued the resort for negligence. Located on private land, Treasure Mountain closed avalanche prone areas but did not engage in the extensive mitigation efforts characteristic of Alta, Solitude, or Brighton. The U.S. District Court ruled in favor of the resort's owner, United Park City Mines Company, stating that skiers took on the risk of death when they traversed Utah's slopes and that the avalanche was an act of God.[212] Yet, the avalanche was not simply a "natural" event. It became a deadly slide for numerous reasons, including snow conditions, the resort's location, protocol on private lands, Berg's decision, and above all, other skiers' risky movements above him. Thus, Berg's story reveals the continued debate over corporate liability in Utah's forests.

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[211] Atwater and Koziol, *Alta Avalanche Studies*, Felix Koziol Papers; Knox Williams, *The Snowy Torrents: Avalanche Accidents in the United States 1967-1971* (Ft. Collins: U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, 1975) 11-12, 96-98; Dale Gallagher, *The Snowy Torrents: Avalanche Accidents in the United States 1910-1966* (Alta: Alta Avalanche Study Center, 1967); Williams, *The Snowy Torrents*, 26-28.

[212] Gallagher, *The Snowy Torrents*, 130-132; John C. Green, "Park City Avalanche Kills Utah Skier, 47," *Salt Lake Tribune,* January 1, 1966.

Should operators be liable for the actions of skiers who may not be skiing within their boundaries, especially when avalanches did not heed these boundaries? Could they create a safe environment for skiers, and if not, what efforts should they make to do so? As Utahns struggled to answer these questions, they often came to the realization that ski areas might never resemble the typical orderly, predictable landscapes of Utah's urban valleys.

Nonetheless, experts and day skiers alike worked to develop a better understanding of avalanches so that they could make winter recreation safer and more accessible. Avalanche research and control represented a mix of professional and grassroots involvement. The Forest Service's training program and research publications reflected this approach. At Alta's Avalanche Trainee School, snow rangers, telephone company employees, National Ski Patrolmen, state road workers, and others with an interest in snow safety received training in avalanche monitoring, control, and rescues. The school opened in 1949 and served as a primary education center for avalanche safety in the United States. The Forest Service used publications to reach people who could not attend the school. These included *The Alta Avalanche Studies* (1949), *Avalanche Handbook* (1952), and *The Snowy Torrents* (1967). As the first publication of its kind in the United States, *Alta Avalanche Studies* targeted a professional audience but also reached out to skiers and general readers interested in snow safety. Subsequent publications followed this model.[213]

Officials recognized that seeing avalanches offered a more powerful means of raising awareness than reading about them. In their view, ignorance, not natural factors, made avalanches dangerous. A 1952 film produced by the Forest Service sought to correct this by

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[213] John Flannery, "Alta's Avalanche Academy," *Intermountain Skier*, March 1961, box 51, folder 5, Mike Korologos Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Atwater and Koziol, *Alta Avalanche Studies*, Felix Koziol Papers, 1.

showing the consequences of ignoring closures. Popular CBS broadcaster and Alta skier Lowell Thomas narrated the film, giving it an air of authority. He stated that snow rangers could not possibly protect everyone. Nonetheless, a girl's male companions ignore her warning after she spots a closure sign and "dare the mountain to do its worst."[214] The film then depicted an effective rescue operation headed by patrolmen and rangers. It illustrated technical aspects of rescuing and reporting, but it also appealed to non-experts in that it focused on safety precautions, avalanche triggers, and the victims' frightening experience. It reinforced officials' authority and expertise on the slopes—gained through professionalization—but also emphasized the importance of community cooperation and knowledge. Avalanche films and media coverage had a downside, too. Their powerful, and somewhat terrifying, imagery deterred some skiers from wanting to hit the slopes. Writing to Supervisor Koziol in 1950, ski star Alf Engen emphasized that more extensive education could improve the way that the public responded to avalanche coverage. He said, "Through such a program, the very publicity which has hurt us so much could be turned into a boomerang that would prove just what safe and unexcelled skiing terrain Alta really has."[215]

Firsthand experience with witnessing or participating in avalanche control brought some of the balance that Engen sought. As Atwater and Koziol noted, avalanche control had an unexpected benefit in that hundreds of skiers saw the Forest Service at work and learned the

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[214] "Tentative Script for Avalanche Rescue"; Box 313; Folder I, Inspection, Motion Pictures (General) 1951-1955; Historical Records, 1901-1962; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD. Lowell Thomas and his colleague Gene Nicks donated a German Shepherd from their New York kennel to Alta Ski Area in 1955. Named PIF after a snow-forecasting factor (precipitation intensity factor), she became the first avalanche rescue dog in the United States. See Felix Koziol, "PIF," Box 314; Folder I, Information, Special Articles, 1956; Historical Records, 1902-1961; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD.

[215] Alf Engen to F.C. Koziol, June 6, 1950, box 5, folder 8, Felix Koziol Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT.

seriousness of avalanche management. In the early days, skiers even took part in "blasting parties" intended to release avalanches preemptively. Forest Service personnel oversaw blasting in avalanche areas, but WSA members did much of the legwork, despite the fact that the agency banned the public from working with explosives. Atwater justified this deviation from Forest Service protocol, arguing that public relations and avalanche education also formed part of the agency's mission. WSA volunteers joined avalanche patrols that performed gendered tasks and treated blasting as a social event. The men worked as avalanche hunters, seeking trouble spots and planting dynamite, while "avalanche girls" carried lunches, managed belay ropes, and called for help if necessary.[216] This division reflects the extent to which postwar gender ideals for middle and upper-class white women shaped skiing. Although few women, such as Dolores LaChapelle, occupied professional positions within the industry, they played a key role in remolding the physical and intellectual landscape of Utah's snowy slopes. Thus, the synthesis of grassroots and expert-generated knowledge was gendered in nature.

Avalanche researchers realized the importance of placed-based, community-driven analysis. Their experience at Alta entrenched this philosophy. Before the Forest Service opened its research center there, Americans relied on Swiss avalanche studies. The Swiss system classified avalanches as either packed or loose, but Atwater and Koziol realized that these descriptions did not always describe the diverse snow and avalanche conditions shaped by Utah's terrain and arid climate. Thus, the rangers used different avalanche categories—dry snow, damp and wet snow, slab, and combination—and then further categorized them based on small, medium, or large risk. The Swiss often encountered what Utahns would describe as a dry snow avalanche, which consists of light snow culminating in a narrow chute that gains momentum as it

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[216] Atwater and Koziol, *Alta Avalanche Studies*, Felix Koziol Papers, 74-78; Atwater, *The Avalanche Hunters*, 54, 59.

rolls down an ever-widening, long path. Alta, however, lacked slopes of sufficient length to create powerful dry snow slides. Recognizing these differences, Alta rangers also attempted to define Utah's snow in more accurate terms, using familiar foods and items as reference points. For instance, they described dry snow as either crystalline, granular, or pellet. Within the category of crystalline, snow could be fine like whole-wheat flour, medium like bran, course like corn flakes, or flake like goose down. These comparisons allowed rangers to create a new language of snow.[217]

Figure 11. Ed LaChappelle photographed this large wet snow avalanche path. He asked viewers to note the grooving and channeling shown in the path and the snow boulders (1959). Courtesy of U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Wasatch National Forest Photo Collection.

In *The Avalanche Alta Studies*, Atwater and Koziol asserted that this system might prove useful for other avalanche areas, but they insisted that it might only apply to Alta because of the highly variable nature of terrain and weather. Local environments mattered despite the standardization of avalanche science. With this in mind, avalanche experts thought that

[217] Atwater and Koziol, *Alta Avalanche Studies*, Felix Koziol Papers, 17, 56-57.

reconstructing the conditions of past local avalanches, including those in the nineteenth century, would provide the best insight into future slides, especially climax avalanches, which occurred less frequently but more violently. After a climax avalanche ran in the Emma Mine slide path during the 1947-1948 season, personnel combed through records to trace weather patterns during past runs at the site. For example, they learned that it rained less than two inches before the climax avalanche of 1884. At other runs, such as Argenta in Big Cottonwood, data remained scarcer and was limited to eyewitness accounts of big slides happening but without recollection of particular locations or conditions. Yet, local contingency remained so important to the pursuit of predictable, universal avalanche science that experts gathered whatever historical accounts that they could find. Even as they sought a standard body of knowledge, they remained wary of using set variables and measurements. Koziol and Atwater remarked that "arbitrary standards" posed the greatest threat to forecasting. Instead, a deep understanding of snow and terrain— deployed to keep a "mental box score" of conditions— remained their most valuable tool.[218] The rapidly shifting nature of snow, heat, and wind thwarted many attempts at accurate measurement. It limited the ability of federal boosters and local actors to create a canyon environment that balanced urban and wild.[219]

Sanitized Slopes

Forest Service personnel, lift operators, and state employees generally agreed on the importance of creating a safer ski environment through avalanche management. Their efforts constituted a larger push to integrate Wasatch canyons more thoroughly into the urban sphere of

[218] Atwater and Koziol, *Alta Avalanche Studies*, Felix Koziol Papers, 17, 16, 89-94, 33-38.
[219] Atwater, *The Avalanche Hunters*, 54.

recreation.[220] While stakeholders debated who should fund and direct avalanche management, their discussions lacked the volatility of similar negotiations on sanitation. A broader array of players—United States Public Health Service (USPHS) employees, Forest Service officials, state health personnel, city sanitarians, ski businesses, and recreationists—argued about whether the interests of business and health complemented each other. Other Americans faced similar questions as they dealt with the pressure that postwar population growth placed on water infrastructure. New home construction, suburban sprawl, and intensified recreation on public lands overwhelmed many of the water systems built in the Progressive Era. Thus, ski sanitation in Salt Lake City represented one facet of a national issue. Residents asked whether the ski industry could continue to grow without jeopardizing water quality. Moreover, what role should federal agencies play in balancing these two priorities? Technological, environmental, and financial limitations only complicated these questions, just as they undermined any clear-cut

[220] Building on William Cronon's model in *Nature's Metropolis*, historians have articulated the importance of regional analysis in understanding urban expansion, especially in the twentieth-century American West. Carl Abbott describes Western cities as organisms, taking in resources and emitting waste into their hinterlands. Andrew Needham and Allen Dietrich-Ward argue that the history of water, along with broader patterns of cultural identity and infrastructure, challenge scholars to rethink the ways in which they delineate metropolitan boundaries. The suburban-urban dichotomy conceals as much as it reveals about regional power. The history of Salt Lake City's canyons, which do not clearly fit the definition of suburban or rural, support the scholars' argument. Lincoln Bramwell describes these in-between places as wilderburbs, or Western communities that have low-density housing, few fences, and natural vegetation and are located within commuting distance of cities. Water rights and control often remain unclear or contested in wilderburbs. While Park City's subdivisions (one of Bramwell's examples) fit this definition, other Utah ski communities have strict rules for construction and water. See Abbott, *How Cities Won the West: Four Centuries of Urban Change in Western North America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), 155; Needham and Dietrich-Ward, "Beyond the Metropolis: Metropolitan Growth and Regional Transformation in Postwar America," *Journal of Urban History* 35, 7 (2009): 957-959; Bramwell, *Wilderburbs: Communities on Nature's Edge* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2014), 3-4, 89.

model for avalanche management. In critical moments at Brighton, Solitude, and Alta, stakeholders ultimately prioritized water quality over business growth.[221]

The release of four USPHS reports on sanitation in Little and Big Cottonwood Canyons in 1941, 1944, 1945, and 1947 sparked a lively discussion about the importance of protecting health and promoting business. As an agency focused on water, disease, and sanitation, the USPHS was interested in the canyons because they provided the majority of Salt Lake City's water supply. In their 1945 report, agents recommended no further development in the vicinity of

[221] Other scholars have traced the role of water politics in shaping the relationship between cities and rural communities before and after World War II. Their narratives echo the story of Salt Lake City's political, environmental, and economic power in surrounding canyons. For instance, Patty Limerick recounts the story of Denver's Water Department to demonstrate the importance of cities in regional power structures and the parallels between water history in the East and the West. To her, Western water history is about more than irrigated agriculture. Michael Rawson and Carl Smith explain how Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago controlled the land and waterways that fed their cities' water supply. This control complicates historians' understanding of urban boundaries and the extent to which water projects served the best interest of the "public" within and beyond cities' political borders. David Stradling and David Soll make similar observations about New York City, which had a long legacy of controlling development and water resources in the Catskills. The State of New York granted the city control over the reservoirs and waterways that fed its water supply in 1905, meaning the city had de facto control of large swathes of land. Although an "imperial" dynamic existed between the city and mountains, it remained a complex relationship. Mountain communities still shaped water policy, and by the 1990s, the city recognized it could not keep people out of its watershed entirely and initiated a more pragmatic form of custodianship that allowed more recreation in the Catskills. Conversely, Salt Lake City's history reflects tighter restrictions over time. It also differs from the experience of suburban Seattleites, who, according to historian Matthew Klingle, resisted the creation of a "super utility" called the Metro in the 1950s. Whereas Salt Lake City limited recreation in ski areas to protect water for the city at large, Seattle shifted the burden of pollution to the Duwamish River to enable the cleanup of Lake Washington, a scenic recreation spot for affluent suburbanites. See Limerick, *A Ditch in Time: The City, the West, and Water* (Golden: Fulcrum Publishing, 2012), 4-10; Rawson, *Eden on the Charles: The Making of Boston* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 242-243; Smith, *City Water, City Life: Water and the Infrastructure of Ideas in Urbanizing Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 4-6; Stradling, *Making Mountains: New York City and the Catskills* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), 15, 174-175; Soll, *Empire of Water: An Environmental and Political History of the New York City Water Supply* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 4-10, 184-186; Klingle, *Emerald City: An Environmental History of Seattle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 211-222.

Brighton or Alta or construction of a sewage pipe that would transport waste to the canyons' mouths. They reiterated this point in 1947, stating that ski areas should halt expansion plans and that current operations should continue "with the understanding that they are an ever present hazard to the safety of the city's and county's water supply."[222] The report's authors, C.T. Carnahan and C.T. Wright, particularly objected to the sole use of chlorination and policing in preventing water contamination. Carnahan and Wright explained why boosters' proposed methods for treating sewage would not work. First, piping sewage down the canyons would backfire because as the sewage flowed down the canyons' steep grades, liquid would separate from solids, causing clogs. The pipes would be susceptible to avalanche damage. Onsite treatment would fail because treated water would never match the purity of stream water. People also disliked the idea of drinking treated water and might find the plants' smell displeasing. Pumping used water over the mountains and into the East Canyon Creek Watershed would require tremendous expenditures, including around-the-clock supervision at the plant at the mountains' crest. Finally, Utah's constitution banned Salt Lake City from dispensing its rights to Little Cottonwood Canyon. The city could not afford to lose this water source anyways, especially in drought years.[223]

Carnahan and Wright elaborated on the logic of their recommendations with the expectation that boosters would challenge their report. They acknowledged that an onsite treatment plant seemed feasible from an engineering standpoint, but they argued that it could still undermine public health. They cited a 1946 study in a South African journal that found that the Poliomyelitis virus (which caused polio) went undetected in standard tests of treated water. In

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[222] "The Alta Brighton Recreational Area and Factors Involved in Its Development" box 19, folder Sewage Disposal Alta-Brighton, Section 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.
[223] Elbert Thomas to Rulon S. Howells, November 21, 1947, box 19, folder Sewage Disposal Alta-Brighton, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

light of this finding, Carnahan and Wright said, "The mere providing for the convenience of the few is not sufficient justification for the jeopardizing of a water supply serving many."[224] Whereas critics of the Snow Basin project claimed that ski development forced the public at large to subsidize the playgrounds and profits of the elite, Carnahan and Wright pointed out the potential environmental costs of this process, too. They expanded on this point, saying, "While recreational facilities are certainly desirable and perhaps valuable assets, a clean, safe, and ample water supply is even a more desirable and more valuable asset to the community."[225] In their view, urban health carried greater importance, and perhaps more economic potential, than ski development did. Their evaluation recognized the limits of technology and scientific knowledge in predicting and mitigating contamination. Many postwar engineers reiterated a similar logic, realizing that scientific measurements could not ensure an entirely controllable environment. At the same time, Carnahan and Wright's report rested on the unrealistic premise that limiting ski area facilities would slow year-round recreation, and subsequently, contamination, within and beyond ski area boundaries.[226]

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[224] Arthur L. Crawford to C.T. Wright, November 25, 1947, Box 19, folder Sewage Disposal Alta-Brighton, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Joel Tarr and Martin Melosi contextualize shifting views of water contamination and public health during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Tarr argues that engineers concerned with water pollution focused almost entirely on sewage contamination until World War II when they began to track industrial pollution. Melosi reiterates this point, explaining how postwar urban expansion pushed engineers to reevaluate sanitation infrastructure built in the Progressive Era and to monitor a larger array of biological and chemical pollutants. As Adam Rome explains, local public health boards recognized the limits of water purification technology in the 1950s, noting that detergents had thrown off the tenuous balance of water purity in American suburbs. As in the case of Salt Lake City, the discovery of previously unknown contaminants complicated people's faith in technology. In his study of Los Angeles's water supply, Jared Orsi traces the long struggle on the part of engineers and citizens to realize the limits of engineering in controlling water. Daniel Schneider suggests that this struggle also shaped dialogue between sanitation operators and engineers about the potential fallacies of relying too much on sensory or laboratory-tested knowledge in protecting drinking water. See Tarr, *The Search for the Ultimate*

Many stakeholders pointed to perceived weaknesses in the USPHS reports. Among the public agencies co-managing local watersheds, Forest Service officials expressed more criticism of the reports.[227] Yet, their counterparts in city and county offices did not rule out ski expansion entirely and tried to find ways to balance development and sanitation. H.K. Burton, Salt Lake City Water Superintendent, acknowledged that the current sanitation system had reached its capacity; as more people moved to the Wasatch Front, Salt Lake City would need to develop a filtration system and tap into new water sources, such as Deer Creek. Members of the Department of Publicity and Industrial Development were receptive to this idea. They argued that further limits on skiing would provoke a "virtual revolution."[228] Investment in sanitation infrastructure would prove worthwhile because of the sport's economic promise. Boosters, such as Stewart Cosgriff and William O'Connor, clung to the idea that sewage plants or new water sources still offered the best solution because they would enable "unlimited development."[229]

Sink: Urban Pollution in Historical Context (Akron: University of Akron Press, 1996), 369-384; Melosi, *The Sanitary City: Environmental Services in Urban America from Colonial Times to Present*, abr. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2008), 6, 193-196, 247-249; Rome, *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of the Environmental Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 105-109; Orsi, *Hazardous Metropolis: Flooding and Urban Ecology in Los Angeles (*Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 90-98; Schneider, *Hybrid Nature: Sewage Treatment and the Contradictions of the Industrial Ecosystem* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011), 80-83, 110-112.

[227] The Forest Service's skepticism of water reports existed outside Utah and before World War II. Urbanites often voiced stronger support for watershed protection. For instance, residents of Port Angeles, Washington effectively lobbied for the creation of the Olympic National Park after they failed to limit logging on Forest Service lands. The Forest Service supported the Municipal Watershed Act of 1940, which made cities liable for lost revenue when they restricted logging in watersheds. See Samuel P. Hays, *The American People & The National Forests: The First Century of the U.S. Forest Service* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009), 80-83.

[228] Commission of the Department of Publicity and Industrial Development Meeting Minutes, September 11, 1945, Series 1189, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

[229] Meeting Minutes, September 11, 1945, Series 1189, Utah State Archive; Phil McLeese, "Alta Brighton Sewage Report Creates Gloomy Ski Outlook," *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 22, 1947, box 19, folder Sewage Disposal Alta-Brighton, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

They hoped that city and county officials would not follow USPHS recommendations entirely and maintained their belief in the power of engineering projects to overcome environmental obstacles.

Critics of the USPHS reports reiterated the importance of health, but they also hesitated to question the inevitability of ski development. In fact, several suggested that summer use, especially by dispersed recreationists, posed just as much of a threat, if not a greater one, to public health than skiers did. USPHS experts and their critics realized that the sanitation reports had implications that reached far beyond whether a few resorts could construct more restrooms. The reports drew attention to the fact that Western cities had not developed a systematic way to resolve two consequences of the booming postwar population: the demand for recreation spaces and the need for public health protections. They understood that Utah's canyons, like other recreation spaces located at the border of city and wilderness, were more than an escape from urban life. Rather, cities and wild spaces were as materially connected as they were culturally separate. Ski slopes may have seemed like they were a world apart from valley cities, but human action bound the environments, economies, and policies of the two regions more closely each year. [230]

Boosters believed that other cities must have similar relationships with regional recreation spaces, and therefore, in their pursuit of an engineering fix, they sought advice from other winter sports states. Rulon S. Howells, Commissioner of the Utah Department of Publicity and Industrial Development, reached out to agencies managing public health, tourism,

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[230] Alta Brighton Sewage Report Creates Gloomy Ski Outlook," Series 1138, Utah State Archive; Arthur L. Crawford, October 31, 1947, box 19, folder Sewage Disposal Alta-Brighton, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT. C.T. Wight realized that the USPHS report most likely set a precedent for the development of recreation in public watersheds and emphasized the importance of the findings in his report to USPHS leadership in Washington D.C.

development, and state lands in 1948. Referring to Utah's "peculiar problem," he asked how their states handled winter recreation in municipal watersheds.[231] Officials in Michigan, Wisconsin, Vermont, South Dakota, and Minnesota could not relate to Utah's challenges. They noted that winter recreation did not threaten the water supply because their states either relied primarily on groundwater or recreated far from cities. Faced with the rapid convergence of wild and urban spaces, Salt Lake City resembled Western cities of later decades more than it did mid-century Eastern and Midwestern ones. Nevertheless, some states offered advice. A sanitary engineer in North Dakota, Jerome H. Svore, said that pure mountain streams were ideal, but they simply were not possible in his state or in others because citizens must prioritize industrial and agricultural development. He emphasized that "you can drive industry out of your state by establishing unreasonable, arbitrary standards" so "each case must be determined by technical men well trained in that [sanitary] field" so that states can balance economic and environmental concerns effectively.[232] C.A. Holmquist of the State of New York Department of Health made a similar recommendation, saying each sanitation plan depended on the limits of local laws, finances, and technology, but that maintaining a pure water source (that did not require treatment) was unrealistic. In other words, both experts believed that legal and technological

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[231] Rulon S. Howells to State Commissioner of Health, March 20, 1948, box 19, folder Sewage Disposal Alta-Brighton, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; Interestingly, Howells did not reach out to officials in two states with situations most similar to that of Utah, Colorado and California.

[232] Jerome H. Svore to Rulon S. Howells, April 9, 1948, box 19, folder Sewage Disposal Alta-Brighton, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT. Svore's views reflected officials' reluctance to regulate agriculture, a significant source of water pollution. Svore later became a Regional Administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency. For more on water pollution and agriculture, see Hugh Prince, *Wetlands of the American Midwest: A Historical Geography of Changing Attitudes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 340-347.

tools made it possible for communities to pursue economic growth without undermining water quality.[233]

Officials in New Hampshire conveyed more skepticism. The Forest Service discouraged recreation development in municipal watersheds there, and at that point, had avoided any conflicts. The State Department of Health backed this policy. Acknowledging the limits of chlorination, it prohibited recreation in lakes or streams (besides hunting) that served as municipal water sources and banned ski areas in watersheds. Once a waterway became a recreation site, locals had to identify a new culinary water source. This policy forced communities to decide which use best served the common good. A state health officer, John Samuel Wheeler, explained that this policy not only conformed to standard public health policies but also served the state's economy. The responses that Howells received from New Hampshire and other states illustrated several themes that defined Salt Lake City's future watershed management. Local context mattered. Despite the apparent standardization that bureaucracy and science brought, geography, growth patterns, industries, agency cultures, historical precedents, and even different types of winter recreation impacted how communities negotiated the balance between expansion and constraint. The interface between watersheds and skiing remained collaborative; no single entity consistently guided planning. Sanitation experts hardly agreed on whether an inherent tension existed between expansion and constraint. Compared to urbanites elsewhere, Salt Lake Citians devised a new approach to this conflict in that they did not separate recreation and culinary use nor did they accept the inevitability of contamination tempered by

[233] C.A. Holmquist to Rulon S. Howells, March 23, 1948, box 19, folder Sewage Disposal Alta-Brighton, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

technological solutions. Rather, they tried to have it all, but more often than not, favored restraining the expansion of ski terrain, infrastructure, and accommodations.[234]

Responding to USPHS advice, federal and municipal officials continued to monitor sanitation and restricted building in the canyons in an effort to enable ski expansion without contaminating culinary water. Yet, they struggled to create a standardized, science-based system that remained collaborative, locally contingent, and place-based. The conflict between municipal officials and operators at Brighton's Alpine Rose Lodge illustrated this tension. It provides one example of the broader debate over construction, sanitation, and finance in Utah's canyons. During the late 1950s, the lodge's owners, Guy Wight and Ed Howell, grew frustrated with their inability to keep up with the demand for dining, lodging, and sanitary facilities in Big Cottonwood Canyon. The area hardly had enough public amenities for the skiers enjoying Brighton's slopes, and consequently, the Alpine Rose served both paying customers and the general public alike, much to the operators' dismay. Koziol realized that this posed a problem because private operators did not have an obligation to provide facilities to nonpaying customers enjoying public lands. Koziol insisted, however, that the Alpine Rose continue to fill this need since municipal authorities had not approved new public facilities, despite the surge in visitors. At that point, Koziol was in the midst of negotiating a larger sanitation dispute between the lodge and municipal authorities. In 1956, the superintendent of the Salt Lake City Department of Water Supply & Waterworks, Charlie Wilson, and Salt Lake City Health Commissioner Richard Nelson notified the operators that their twelve flush toilets violated the terms of their permit, which required city approval for any system other than chemical toilets. Citing geological

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[234] C.L. Graham to Edward Ellingwood, April 13, 1948, box 19, folder Sewage Disposal Alta-Brighton, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; John Samuel Wheeler to Rulon S. Howells, March 30, 1948, box 19, folder Sewage Disposal Alta-Brighton, Series 1138, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

studies, the officials claimed that a septic tank would not work in the canyon's terrain because it could leak into the city's water supply through groundwater contamination. They ordered Wight and his partners to remove the toilets, install a storage tank, and commence shipping sewage out of the canyon immediately. Wilson and Nelson stressed the fact that in exchange for enjoying the beauty and business of Wasatch canyons, operators had an obligation to protect public health. After significant resistance, the operators complied. [235]

Figure 12. Alpine Rose Lodge (1950). Courtesy of U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Wasatch National Forest Photo Collection.

[235] F.C. Koziol to Alpine Rose Lodge, May 10, 1957, box 19; Folder U Alpine Rose Lodge Inc Resort; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95, NAD; Guy S. Wight to F.C. Koziol, April 20, 1957, box 19; Folder U Alpine Rose Lodge Inc Resort; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; F.C. Koziol to Alpine Rose Lodge, November 20, 1956, box 19; Folder U Alpine Rose Lodge Inc Resort; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; Richard J. Nelson to C.J. Olsen, November 29, 1956; F.C. Koziol to Alpine Rose Lodge, May 10, 1957, box 19; Folder U Alpine Rose Lodge Inc Resort; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD.

Nevertheless, the conflict between city officials and Alpine Rose operators resurfaced. In 1958, officials received complaints about the odor around the lodge. They tested an older tank used for kitchen and shower waste and found human feces. Upon further inspection, they realized that the tank was still connected to toilets in the lodge; the effluent then flowed into a drainage field within the watershed. The operators fixed this problem, but USPHS and city officials later found that the coliform level (indicative of feces) remained high in the tank's overflow line. No one could understand why this was the case. When city officials required Wight and Howell to pay to pump the tank and transport the effluent outside the watershed, the operators refused, claiming the expense would push them into bankruptcy. In response, the city pleaded with the Forest Service to intervene since the lodge was located on public land. Communication between the operators and municipal officials devolved into incivility and required Forest Service mediation. Through this process, the operators and officials came to the conclusion that the contamination originated, in fact, from sinks and showers and probably occurred when guests washed diapers in sinks, emptied waste in showers, or similar practices. Thus, the Forest Service urged the city to rethink its ordinances to accommodate this broader range of contamination sources. Wight and Howell agreed to educate guests on this issue, transport sewage, and clean their tank and lines. The Forest Service promised to approve increased lodge rates so that the operators could make sufficient profits to cover the added costs of these measures.[236]

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[236] Julian R. Thomas to Forest Supervisor, February 12, 1958; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; F.C. Koziol to Alpine Rose Lodge, May 10, 1957; Richard J. Nelson to Grant M. Burbidge, March 4, 1958; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; F.C. Koziol to Alpine Rose Lodge, May 10, 1957; Julian R. Thomas to Forest Supervisor, March 10, 1958, Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; F.C. Koziol to Alpine Rose Lodge, May 10, 1957; Julian R. Thomas, Memorandum for File, April 1,

The disputes at the Alpine Rose illuminate larger debates about the relationship between public and private spaces. Although run by businessmen in a private building, the Alpine Rose was located on public land, depended on public lands recreation, and played a pivotal role in protecting public water. For these reasons, Howell and Wight believed that public agencies should provide greater financial support for watershed protection. They questioned whether it was their responsibility to provide public restrooms and to pay for sewage transport when these expenses had little immediate impact on their business. Conversely, federal and municipal officials argued that Howell and Wight benefited from public resources and therefore, should cover these expenses. As in the case of avalanche control, the Forest Service's eventual agreement to allow the operators to raise lodge rates reflected the idea that the agency realized that some balance had to exist between profit and public support. While skiing on public lands should remain affordable, they did not want operators to go out of business. They had to accommodate private power to maintain the public nature of Brighton. Municipal officials did not always share this view, and as a result, Forest Service personnel often facilitated greater understanding and cooperation between businesses and regulatory agencies. Their work in Utah undermined the idea that the Forest Service wholeheartedly supported private resource exploitation or, on the other hand, that it imposed a restrictions crafted by distant Washington D.C. bureaucrats.[237]

1958, Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; F.C. Koziol to Alpine Rose Lodge, May 10, 1957.

[237] Paul Hirt explains the public's contradictory perceptions of the Forest Service. He argues that during the 1950s, the agency increasingly realized that its two mandates—overseeing productive use of the forest and protecting public resources from exploitation—conflicted. Instead of moderately pursuing each objective, foresters believed they could have it all through intensive management. They thought, especially in the case of timber harvesting, that technology offered the solution to conservation challenges. See Hirt, *A Conspiracy of Optimism: Management of the*

This model of collaboration, however, remained flawed. In particular, communication about the relationship between regulation and business failed at Solitude. Robert Barrett built Solitude in the late 1950s with the money he made in southern Utah in Moab's uranium industry. Since Solitude would increase the sewage load in Big Cottonwood Canyon, municipal health officials expressed concerns about the project. They wanted Barrett to stall construction until the city finished building the Big Cottonwood Treatment Plant. Municipal officials could only regulate sanitation facilities once they were built, however, and therefore had no say in the construction process, so Barrett continued as planned. Barrett quickly grew frustrated with the requirements and limitations that the Forest Service, state, and city placed on Solitude once it opened. Specifically, the Forest Service required him to pay the agency 1% of his gross profits since his double T-bar was located on public land. Barrett opposed the burden of bookkeeping that this created and felt that he should be exempt from this fee since the majority of his resort was on private land. He criticized the state for using tax money (including his own) to plow parking lots at Alta and Brighton but not at Solitude. Finally, he wanted the city to allow him to use septic tanks and drain fields. To support this, he worked with the Chamber of Commerce to fund an independent study, which found this form of sewage treatment did not pose a health risk. Barrett argued that city ordinances remained out of touch, based on "antiquated codes written at a time when sanitation engineering was in its infancy."[238] Overall, Barrett believed that he had "been the target of a determined program of interference, obstruction and harassment on every

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National Forests since World War II (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), xviii-xxi, xxxiii.

[238] "Time to End Water Sanitation Stalemate," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 9, 1958; "Situation at Solitude," *Intermountain Skier,* January 1961, Vertical File: Skiing 1972, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

level of government."[239] He said, "My main objection to the whole thing is the red tape. I just want to be left alone."[240]

Koziol attempted to mediate between Barrett and various government agencies. Meanwhile, Solitude skiers expressed resentment toward the process. One called for an investigation into the allegedly illegal regulation of Solitude while another skier disliked the closure's political nature. A ski patroller even argued that Solitude served the public health because it reduced slope congestion. Koziol soon grew frustrated when Barrett closed Solitude since he had an obligation to run a ski facility under the terms of his Forest Service permit. In response, Barrett hired a former employee, Russ Downward, to take over his permit. Solitude would close and open over the course of the next decade until the Deseelhorst family purchased it. The conflict over Solitude represents the extent to which sanitation debates were about more than sanitation. They remained entangled in larger discussions about science-based policy, government oversight, and private profit. At times, sanitation science became a tool, rather than an obstacle, for individuals seeking canyon development. Skiers questioned how officials defined public health and whether legislation could keep pace with new methods. On the other hand, as in the case of avalanche control, municipal officials approached the very science that they espoused with skepticism, recognizing the persistent threat of unknown risks. Stakeholders disagreed once again about the profitability of private ventures on public land. They had different ideas about what made a place public and whether a threshold existed wherein public spaces became private through significant business investment. Conversely, did the federal government have an obligation to keep businesses on public lands alive? Koziol's reaction when Barrett abandoned his permit suggests that the Forest Service remained a business booster.

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[239] "Situation at Solitude," Vertical File: Skiing 1972.
[240] "Solitude Owner Agrees to Arbitration Parley," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 15, 1961.

Compared to earlier decades when the Forest Service actively funded and sought out leasees, however, personnel now took a step back, acting more often as mediators between different agencies and attempting to maintain the status quo. Their failure at Solitude illustrated a new reality in which compromise and collaboration became less common. As Brighton operator Zane Doyle said, the 1960s were when sanitation debates "got away from the personalities truly being involved."[241]

Public Investment, Private Ventures

Boosters believed that incorporating mountain communities, ski areas, and forests into the urban sphere—whether through roads, sanitation facilities, marketing, or businesses—would improve the overall economic health of the Wasatch Front. Federal agencies, particularly the Area Redevelopment Administration (ARA) and Forest Service, held mixed views on what role they should play in this process. When tasked with providing capital for ski development or evaluating the fiscal viability of proposals, officials wondered whether the government had an obligation to generate profits for private stakeholders. If the government did back projects financially, should it interfere to ensure that projects became profitable but no so profitable that other citizens paid an unfair burden in the form of higher taxes, lift tickets, or property values? In the case of ARA investment at Park City and Forest Service permit regulation at Alta, federal officials increasingly realized that private and public interests conflicted and attempted, with some success, to appease both sides.

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[241] "Situation at Solitude," Vertical File: Skiing 1972; "Solitude Controversy: C. of. C. to Serve as Moderator," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 14, 1961; "Solitude to Open Under New Boss," *Salt Lake Tribune*, February 7, 1961; Zane A. Doyle, interview by Greg Thompson and Joseph Arave, August 7, 1989, transcript, Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

When an ARA loan enabled the construction of Treasure Mountain Ski Area, Parkites and federal officials grappled with unexpected consequences. Park City's economy and population had fallen significantly by the time the ARA granted the loan in 1962. A Salt Lake City newspaperman, Bob Woody, noted that Park City's Main Street in 1957 resembled the Main Street in 1928. In other words, the town struggled to recover from falling silver, zinc, and lead prices. One of the town's key landowners and employers, United Park City Mines Company (UPCMC), pursued an ARA loan to counter this decline. It wanted skiing to complement, not replace, its mining enterprises. This objective fit within the ARA's mission. Established in 1961, the agency sought to address structural unemployment by offering development loans to depressed areas. Legislators questioned whether the ARA overstepped the boundaries of the federal government, insisting that if ventures had true potential, they would attract private capital. Compared to New Deal programs, however, the ARA lacked systematic or regional planning, so local businesses identified and directed projects. Recreation and tourism represented one of the largest sectors of ARA investment, even though many jobs tied to these industries were low-wage or seasonal. Although often associated with Appalachia, the ARA did invest in a few projects in the West, including six in Utah. At the time of its opening, Treasure Mountain was the largest ARA project west of the Mississippi River.[242]

ARA officials attached stipulations to its loan to ensure that profits remained local and to mitigate community upheaval. The loan required that Parkites pay for a portion of the ski area

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[242] Bob Woody, interview by Larry Warren, transcript, Park City Museum, Park City, UT; Frank Hewlett, "U.S." Okehs Big Loan on Park City Work," *Salt Lake Tribune*, August 31, 1962; Sara Levitan, *Federal Aid to Depressed Areas: An Evaluation of the Area Redevelopment Administration* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1964), 20-24, 114; Gregory S. Wilson, *Communities Left Behind: The Area Redevelopment Administration*, *1945-1965* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 2009), xv, 63, 69, 73; Sen. Moss, speaking on S. 1163, on June 26, 1963, 88th Cong., 1st sess., *Congressional Record* 109, pt. 9: 11675.

with business and civic funds. Since the town lacked money, UPCMC donated $200,000 to the Park City Recreation Committee, which the committee then invested in Treasure Mountain. Private contributions included $102,860 from UPCMC, $210,000 from Anaconda Co. (a copper mining company in Utah) and $150,000 from American Smelting and Refining. Finally, the ARA loaned 1.232 million dollars. The agency required that the ski area's owner, UPCMC, only use Utah-made products. For instance, Salt Lake City's Fibron Company more than doubled its number of employees to build Treasure Mountain's gondolas. This did not necessarily benefit Park City directly, but it provided a small boost to the regional economy.

Once the ski area opened, locals saw rising real estate prices, new businesses on Main Street, and greater prosperity overall. Yet, everyone did not experience these benefits equally. In some ways, this caught ARA officials by surprise. The Acting Administrator of the ARA reached out to Seth Droubay, who spearheaded Treasure Mountain development, in 1964, asking how the company planned to support small businesses and unemployed locals. The administrator, H.W. Williams, expressed concern that Phase II of development at Treasure Mountain would displace businesses on mine property. He also worried that rising tax rates and assessments could force elderly and disabled persons out of their homes. Williams hoped that UPCMC would ensure that all members of the community benefited from resort expansion. In response, Droubay argued that the company had not yet reached profitability. It would rely on private investors to accomplish Phase II while still dedicating resort income to paying taxes and its ARA loan. Droubay claimed that only one business would have to move, and others would have two years to conform to the company's vision. The company had no control over tax rates and potential displacement. He emphasized that the "competitive free enterprise system" formed the bedrock

of American prosperity. Finally, Droubay reminded Williams that UPCMC took on significant financial risk in investing its assets in the ski area with the hope of uplifting the community.[243]

The exchange between Droubay and Williams illustrates the difficulty in striking a balance between economic growth and community stability. This issue typified many Western tourist towns, such as Aspen and Telluride, which experienced an uptick in affluence and became unaffordable for longtime residents. In the case of Park City, however, the ski area's initial purpose as a federally supported poverty relief project problematized this inequality on a deeper level. This highlights flaws within the ARA's strategy. As historian Gregory Wilson argues, the ARA fell short of its goals since it placed too much control in the hands of business owners and lacked a social welfare component. At the same time, as ARA official G. Ott Romney explained, the ARA had no intention of supporting a competitive business at Park City and instead, wanted the ski area to complement existing businesses. Yet, the ARA put the onus of business strategy and development in the hands of UPCMC, which sought maximum profits. The ARA assumed that the growth of one business would benefit the community as a whole. Droubay stated, though, that UPCMC did not have an obligation to ensure that this happened; public investment did not mean that the ski area was a public project. Thus, even though a private business operated Park City on private land, the ski area still faced some of the same dilemmas that plagued winter playgrounds on federal land. The company's response embodied the idea that operators who benefited from public resources, whether land or money, expected government agencies to handle the negative fallout of ski expansion. This view reflected the unpredictable nature of ski profits—which left many operators cash-strapped—but it also demonstrates the

[243] H.K. Williams to Seth K. Droubay, September, 1964, box 1, folder 1, Mel Fletcher Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Seth K. Droubay to H.K. Williams, September 21, 1964, box 1, folder 1, Mel Fletcher Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

messy boundaries that emerged when the federal government and private businesses switched roles.[244]

The loan's repayment schedule intensified the debate over the effectiveness of federal investment because it rolled back some of the economic benefits of development. More specifically, the ARA required that UPCMC dedicate 75% of its profits to paying off its federal loan. This made it difficult for UPCMC to invest profits in resort development. Moreover, mining profits continued to decline after Treasure Mountain opened due to higher expenses and lower mineral prices. The company had planned on using mine profits to fund development at the resort. Between 1964-1968, Treasure Mountain generated less income and lower profits than predicted while expenses exceeded predicted levels in all but one year. "Other income," such as gift shops, constituted the greatest shortfall. Consequently, UPCMC sold the resort in 1971 to a company based in Newport Beach, California, Royal Street Development. Despite the ARA's effort to keep Treasure Mountain's profits in Utah, an out-of-state corporation ultimately owned the ski area. The sale demonstrated the extent to which ski profits depended on "extras," such as clothing and snacks, as well as year-round amenities. UPCMC lacked the capital that larger, out-of-state corporations had to develop these assets. Federal investment both supported and handicapped Treasure Mountain's potential, pushing longtime residents and ski profits elsewhere. By shaping Royal Street's takeover, federal boosterism advanced Utah's

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[244] Wilson, *Communities Left Behind*, xv, 152; "Park City Site 'Natural' Says U.S. Tour Adviser," *Salt Lake Tribune*, August 24, 1962; Historian Hal Rothman describes the displacement of locals following the ski boom in Colorado towns, such as Steamboat Springs, where native residents could not afford rising property prices. "Condoization" transformed the political and economic climate of these communities. See Rothman, *Devil's Bargains*, 261-267.

incorporation into the national recreation scene, but it did so at the expense of some of the very people who had held Park City together in the bleak mining years.[245]

The debate over lift permits at Alta offers another angle on the tension between private profit and public good. Whereas Park City operated on private land with public (and private) capital, Alta was located on public land and relied primarily on private capital. In both cases, however, federal officials wanted ski expansion to benefit businesses and the public, but they often found that these two goals conflicted. Since ski lifts occupied public land, operators had to obtain term permits from the Forest Service to construct and to run lifts. These term permits often granted a ten or twenty-year lease to lift operators. In addition, the Forest Service had the power to set rates for lift tickets on its land. These limits and requirements meant that the Forest Service directly impacted the viability of ski projects from the outset. When the WSA submitted an application to build the Germania Lift at Alta, the Forest Service had to define what this financial involvement meant for ski development.[246]

Following World War II, WSA members (who operated Alta) wanted to build the Germania Lift to accommodate the ski boom. The Forest Service offered a ten-year permit, but the WSA found this unacceptable because it made the project too risky for investors. What if the Forest Service terminated the permit after ten years of poor snow and low profits? In response, William O'Connor contacted the agency on behalf of the WSA in 1947, asking for a thirty-year

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[245] LaMar Osika, interview by Channel 2 News, April 1986, transcript, box 1, folder 4, Larry Warren Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; "Reconnaissance Study: Park City Resort Center, A Project of the United Park City Mines Company, Prepared for Royal Street Development Company," Los Angeles: Daniel, Mann, Johnson & Mendenhall, 1969, Rare Books Collection, The Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.

[246] There are two types of special use permits at ski areas on Forest Service lands. Term permits cover an area no larger than eighty acres and extend for no longer than thirty years. The Forest Service issues these permits for venues that require significant capital, such as lodges and ski lifts. Annual permits often cover ski trails. See Glen O. Robinson, *The Forest Service: A Study in Public Land Management* (New York: RFF Press, 2011), 127-128.

permit. He wanted the Forest Service to commit to a fee schedule based on the lift's actual profits and to base lift rates on those comparable to profitable ventures, such as Sun Valley. O'Connor noted that at that point, only Collins Lift generated returns for Alta's investors. In an internal exchange, Koziol argued that the Forest Service had an obligation to discourage large investments in lifts since it caused operators to push for higher lift rates. Any lift requiring a thirty-year permit for financial stability simply posed too much risk. Regional Supervisor Nord agreed with Koziol's assessment, saying that thirty-year permits created a monopolistic business climate that undermined public use. Instead, he approved a twenty-year permit. Citing Forest Service policy, Nord explained that the WSA would have to pay a standard portion of its gross profits to the agency, but some leeway existed if profits remained low. Operators, however, would have to pay for ski patrolmen and sanitation.[247]

The WSA opposed the Forest Service's conditions and continued to negotiate in the summer of 1947. O'Connor asserted that the agency's suggestions discriminated against Alta, since other operators did not have to cover the full cost of sanitation or ski patrols. He acknowledged that most ski areas struggled to turn a profit, but Sun Valley had the Union Pacific Railroad as its "angel," Aspen benefited from a wealthy investor (Walter Paepcke), and Snow Basin received city funds.[248] In other words, Alta lacked the deep pockets of other ski areas. Forest Service officials, however, insisted that the agency would not become Alta's "angel."

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[247] W.J. O'Connor to F.C. Koziol, January 20, 1947; Box 33; Folder 2; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; F.C. Koziol to A.G. Nord, January 29, 1947; Box 33; Folder 2; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; A.G. Nord to F.C. Koziol, February 11, 1947; Box 33; Folder 2; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; F.C. Koziol to William J. O'Connor, February 20, 1947; Box 33; Folder 2; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD.

[248] W.J. O'Connor to F.C. Koziol, June 2, 1947; Box 33; Folder 2; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD; Samuel P. Hays, *The American People & The National Forests*, 69.

Although the agency believed operators were entitled to earn a return on their investment, it also enacted policies to ensure skiers paid reasonable prices and to secure compensation for the use of public lands. This represented the agency's postwar effort to "make the national forests pay," or to generate income to fund operations at least partially.[249] As historian Michael Childers explains, these policy decisions aligned with the agency's approach in Colorado's White River National Forest. To balance public and private interests and to prevent new operations from undercutting existing lifts, officials limited new permits and carefully approved projects that appeared financially feasible. While officials there followed this policy loosely at times, the conversation at Alta ultimately ended in a stalemate that delayed the Germania's opening until 1954.[250]

The Germania Lift debate illuminates broader issues of standardization, boosterism, and privatization. The WSA and the Forest Service sought greater conformity within the ski industry and national forest lands; whereas operators wanted Alta to match the profits, fee schedules, and amenities of the West's top resorts, officials attempted to create more uniformity in how they administered public recreation spaces. The local environment and business climate complicated this process on both fronts. Like the ARA, the Forest Service judged the soundness of business proposals, determining their financial viability and social impact. Officials increasingly realized that they could not always look out for the best interests of all of the stakeholders: the public, investors, and the agency itself. Again, the priorities of community wellbeing and private profit clashed. Compared to the ARA, the Forest Service tended to prioritize public access and as a result, kept the cost of skiing lower at Alta. This reflected the greater hold that the agency had

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[249] Lyle F. Watts to Regional Foresters and Director, Tropical Forestry Unit, January 7, 1947; Box 33; Folder 2; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD;
[250] Childers, *Colorado Powder Keg*, 41-45.

over operations there, influencing much more than profit distribution. The ARA took a more decentralized approach to ski development. Although its loan requirements constrained expansion at Treasure Mountain, it did not dictate the cost of services. Yet, the Forest Service pursued further decentralization by pushing operators to take on the cost of sanitation, patrolling, and avalanche management. To keep Alta open to the public, the Forest Service pursued privatization.

In other words, federal boosters no longer maintained a consistently active role in ski development nor did they cede all forms of control. Their policy in each case depended on the particularities of federal funding, agency objectives, and local contingencies. Even when federal boosters took a more passive role, relinquishing responsibilities and oversight to private, state, and municipal actors, they maintained a vested interest in ski expansion in subtler ways. Their identity as federal boosters, straddling the boundary between public official and business promoter, mirrored the ways in which many ski areas remained private and public spaces, albeit tenuously. Through their efforts to maintain this balance, federal boosters shaped the incorporation of the Wasatch Front at the local and federal levels, forging stronger ties between ski areas and local capital and expanding the federal government's stakes in skiing's success.[251]

[251] The Forest Service continued to evaluate the economic feasibility of proposed ski lifts. For instance, Koziol hesitated to approve a new poma lift for a new operator at Alta in 1956. He pushed the WSA to operate the lift to minimize the stakeholders involved and worried the lift would become a "white elephant." This policy helped the WSA turn a profit, but as Nord suggested, it would later lead to more monopolistic control of ski pricing. See F.C. Koziol to Fred Speyer, April 11, 1956; Box 33; Folder 2; Special Use Permits 1927-1955; WCNF; USFS, RG 95; NAD.

Chapter 5

Planning to Scale: Redrawing City, County, and Forest, 1970-1990

As the population of Salt Lake County surged and recreationists flooded into Big Cottonwood Canyon, Jean Taylor worried that too many locals had simply accepted the status quo, relenting to the inevitable pressure of unregulated expansion. Taylor made this observation as a resident of a suburb of Salt Lake City, Holladay, and as a resident of the Silver Fork community in Big Cottonwood. She could relate to the millions of Utahns who made the quick drive from the Salt Lake Valley to ski, camp, and hike in Big Cottonwood. At the same time, Taylor believed that she had a special investment and appreciation for the canyon since she was part of the small group who owned property there. This sense of place inspired Taylor's political activism in the 1970s and 1980s. In addition to managing a shopping center in the valley and working as a real estate broker in the canyon, Taylor served as a founding member of the Salt Lake County Association of Community Councils. Members of the Big Cottonwood Canyon Association (BCCA) elected her as their president from 1979-1989. This association consisted of property owners in the canyon who wanted to ensure that city, county, and federal planners took their opinions into consideration. BCCA members expressed particular interest in long-term planning, environmental protection, and public services for Big Cottonwood.[252]

Taylor's views reflected those of many of her fellow residents. She pointed to her identity as a taxpayer and property owner in justifying the importance of her voice in the decision-making process. Taylor did not oppose development outright, but she also hesitated to advocate unequivocally for the expansion of Brighton, Solitude, and residential areas in the canyon. She

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[252] Big Cottonwood Canyon Association Newsletter, Spring 1984, Big Cottonwood Canyon Association (BCCA) Records, box 2, folder 4, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

outlined her take on the canyon's future in a 1984 address to the association's members, stating "Not only as taxpayers but as the people with the most caring concern for what happens to the beauty and resources of our canyon, it is vital that we be deeply involved in planning for its future."[253] In response to those who called for stepping back from canyon politics, Taylor claimed that inaction would not mean that the canyon would remain as it was indefinitely. Rather, as she explained, "Only by being involved ourselves in the planning for the future can we hope that our future in Big Cottonwood Canyon will be one that we can all enjoy."[254]

Taylor lacked the profile of the famous skiers who frequented local slopes, but she influenced the canyon in more enduring and pervasive ways. She represented the thousands of Utahns who vocalized their ideas and opinions during the new era of planning in the 1970s and 1980s. The defining moments of this period included the incorporation of the Town of Alta (1970) as well as the creation of the *Salt Lake City Watershed Plan* (1988), *Salt Lake County Wasatch Canyons Master Plan* (1989), *Salt Lake Planning Unit Management Plan* (1979), and the *Wasatch-Cache National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan* (1985). These plans emerged in the context of greater scarcity, both perceived and real—in terms of water, backcountry powder, and recreation spaces close to the city—and the growing demand for resources for urbanites. In this way, the urbanized valleys of the Wasatch Front remained central to the evolution of local canyons.[255]

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[253] BCCA Newsletter, BCCA Records, Marriott Special Collections.
[254] Ibid.
[255] "Alta Incorporates with Petition Approval," *Salt Lake Tribune*, August 21, 1970; *Salt Lake City Watershed Management Plan*, Bear West, 1988, Utah Wilderness Association Papers, III:9:A, box 7, folder 3, Utah State University Special Collections and Archives, Logan, UT; *Wasatch Canyons Master Plan*, Salt Lake City Public Works Department, 1989, P57, Salt Lake County Archives, West Valley City, UT; U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Record of Decision for USDA, Forest Service, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Wasatch-Cache National Forest*

Utahns wondered whether different forms of recreation, such as cross-country and downhill skiing, could coexist on the same slopes, especially when both sports boomed in popularity. They also debated the best way to protect the valley's water supply. Advocates and opponents of canyon development believed that their approach offered the best means of protecting Salt Lake City's watershed. Nearly everyone thought that planning offered the answers to these questions. By using science, community input, and cross-jurisdictional coordination, planning at the municipal, county, city, and forest level could provide a path forward that would accommodate myriad ways people used and appreciated Wasatch canyons. Utahns' faith in the planning process, however, led to some unequal outcomes. Planners focused on forms of recreation that they could measure, such as auto touring and downhill skiing, but at times, this inclination led them to underestimate the scale of dispersed recreation, which they could not trace with ticket sales or hotel bookings. Despite these shortcomings, the era of planning signified a new way of conceptualizing the relationship between canyon, city, and region that acknowledged the ecological ties that transcended political boundaries and integrated a wider range of stakeholders through formal and collaborative channels.

The era of planning both mirrored and defied national and regional trends in environmental politics and recreation. Utahns' rising concern with water pollution emerged in the context of the postwar environmental movement. Historian Samuel Hays pinpoints the movement's origins in Americans' desire for recreation spaces, concern over health, and interest in the ecological ties that bound human fates to the nonhuman world. The environmental movement had the strongest influences in cities near wild spaces. Salt Lake City fit this description. Moreover, the participatory nature of planning aligned with new patterns in

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Land and Resource Management Plan, 1985, BCCA Papers, box 5, folder 9, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

governance after the passage of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) in 1970. During a period of relative consensus in environmental politics, Americans provided direct feedback on project proposals through environmental impact statements.[256]

Not everyone embraced this new direction in management. In particular, groups and individuals throughout the Intermountain West resisted greater federal oversight during the post-NEPA Sagebrush Rebellion. Geographer William Graf argues that many Sagebrush Rebellions existed prior to the rebellion of the 1970s and 1980s. The themes of greed, individualism, East versus West, expert versus user, and rural versus urban dominated each phase of Western resistance to federal lands management. By the 1970s, many Westerners disagreed with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (1976), which gave the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) authority to govern the areas it administered "in perpetuity." Utah's senators, Orrin Hatch and Jake Garn, introduced the first Sagebrush Rebellion bill in 1979, making their state the epicenter of resistance. Scholar R. McGreggor Cawley pushes historians to recognize that the Sagebrush Rebellion influenced federal land policy as much as the conservation and environmental movements did.[257]

The story of the Wasatch Front complicates Graf's depiction of Utah and Cawley's take on the rebellion's revolutionary nature. Historian Leisl Carr Childers captures a more nuanced vision of the era, showing the power of local interests in shaping federal land management in the Great Basin. She explains what happened when the BLM and Forest Service tried to implement

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[256] John Morton Turner, *The Promise of Wilderness: American Environmental Politics since 1964* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012), 103-116; Samuel Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence, Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955-1985* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987), 2-10, 90-94.

[257] William Graf, *Wilderness Preservation and the Sagebrush Rebellions* (Savage: Rowman and Littlefield, 1990), xv, 107, 227-230; R. McGreggor Cawley, *Federal Land, Western Anger: The Sagebrush Rebellion and Environmental Politics* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 168.

multiple-use policies on lands used for grazing, nuclear testing, wild horses, and recreation. In a similar vein, local identity and politics remain essential to understanding environmental politics on the Wasatch Front. As the anti-regulatory Sagebrush Rebellion spread throughout the Great Basin, many Utahns lobbied the federal government to expand its control of the Wasatch Front. Once again, Utah's history confirmed that the state was both exceptional and mainstream.[258]

The Ski Landscape

During the 1970s and 1980s, planners responded to the increased pressure caused by a spike in the number of skiers and resorts in local canyons. For instance, during the 1965-1966 season, Little Cottonwood Canyon had approximately 94,000 skier visits (each individual visit per day to the canyon counted as one skier visit). That number increased steadily, reaching 462,000 visits during the 1972-1973 season. 26.5 percent of these skiers came from different states, meaning the majority continued to travel from within Utah to local slopes. In 1986, Big Cottonwood Canyon touted more summer and winter visitors (5.5 million) than Yellowstone National Park, which had 2.4 million annual visitors. This growth signified greater supply and demand. In addition to Alta, Solitude, Brighton, ParkWest, Park City, Sundance, and Snowbasin, skiers could not enjoy the slopes at Snowbird (1971) and Deer Valley (1980).[259]

Snowbird began as the dream of Ted Johnson, an accomplished powder skier from California who worked at the Alta Lodge. He envisioned a ski resort in an area frequented by backcountry skiers next to Alta Ski Area named Gad Valley. Johnson began acquiring mining

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[258] Leisl Carr Childers, *The Size of the Risk: Histories of Multiple Use in the Great Basin* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015), 7.

[259] "Alta/Little Cottonwood Canyon Study: Preliminary Report," Eckbo, Dean, Austin & Williams, 1973, 4-8, Alta Ski Area Papers, box 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; James Duffus III to Wayne Owens, June 12, 1987, BCCA Records, box 4, folder 5, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

parcels there in 1965 and accumulated enough to form a base area for the resort. After building a model condo and purchasing the land, he lacked the funds to continue independently. This situation changed in 1969 when Johnson met Dick Bass at a cocktail party in Vail. Bass later referred to Johnson as the "founder" and himself as the "funder."[260] Bass's family owned Goliad Oil and Gas Company in Dallas, which provided him with the means to invest in Snowbird. He and his brother had gained experience in the ski industry as members of the board of Vail Associates in Colorado. Bass visited the Snowbird site during a particularly bleak snow year for Colorado. To his astonishment, Gad Valley had an abundance of snow, and he was sold on the project. He later took hold of the reins of Snowbird, purchasing Johnson's interest in 1974. The resort differed from other local ski spots in that it offered year-round recreation opportunities from the start. Bass reiterated this point when he stated, "my vision has always been of a year-round destination mountain resort with the body, spirit, and mind involved."[261] Snowbird also incorporated ecological balance into its mission, which reflected the general public's growing interest in the environment during the early 1970s. Bass continued to push for more amenities, ski terrain, and condos at Snowbird. He hoped more income opportunities, especially through the Cliff Lodge, would allow him to achieve the resort's "manifest destiny."[262] This vision often put him at odds with local environmentalists.

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[260] Robert H. Woody, "Snowbird Plan Mapped by Forgotten Man," *Salt Lake Tribune*, January 5, 1986, Woody Anderson Papers, box 1, folder 10, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Junior Bounous, interview by Joseph Arave, October 30 and November 15, 1989, transcript, 66-70, Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project, University of Utah Special Collections, Salt Lake City.

[261] Raye C. Ringholz, "King of the Mountain," Winter 1990, Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers, box 2, folder 6, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Bounous interview, 70-74.

[262] Dick Bass, interview transcript, Larry James Warren Papers, box 1, folder 6, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

The founder of Deer Valley, Edgar Stern, shared much in common with Bass. He had made his money elsewhere as the head of Royal Street Corporation, a luxury hospitality company. Stern later invested in Aspen but became frustrated with the ski town's restrictions on development and began looking outside Colorado for new opportunities. Royal Street purchased Treasure Mountain from United Park City Mines Company through a complicated process, which allowed for a long-term lease on the Park City property that would become Deer Valley. This area had been a locals' favorite, Snow Park Ski Area, in the past. After a bad snow year, Royal Street sold Treasure Mountain (now Park City Mountain Resort) to a California company, Alpine Meadows, but maintained the chance to develop Deer Valley if the new owner did not do so in the next five years. After that time had passed, Stern began constructing Deer Valley, which opened in 1981. From the start, Deer Valley differed from its local competitors. Since it was located on private land, it lacked the exposure to public input and environmental review that shaped other ski slopes. Yet, stewardship, especially the restoration of former mining lands, remained central to Deer Valley's mission. Stern focused on developing five-star restaurants, lodging, groomed slopes, and ski amenities that would appeal to destination skiers. He dedicated significant resources to training employees and creating year-round jobs in the hope that a professional, permanent workforce, rather than temporary ski season labor, would improve skiers' experience, employees' quality of life, and the resort's profits. This strategy further consolidated Park City's reputation as a vacation destination.[263]

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[263] Ringholz, "King of the Mountain," Pickett Papers; Robert Wheaton, interview by Joseph Arave, November 6 and December 13,1995, transcript, 27-28, Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project, University of Utah Special Collections, Salt Lake City; "Deer Valley, A Brand New Ski Resort," *Park Record*, January 21, 1982; Robert Wheaton, telephone interview, Park City, UT, July 29, 2017.

Other ski areas changed hands during the 1970s and 1980s, leading to greater corporate consolidation within the American ski industry. After foreclosing on Park City West Ski Corporation, Harold Babcock sold his controlling interest to his attorney, Californian Jack Roberts. The new owner then tapped into his Los Angeles contacts list to recapitalize the struggling resort, which he rechristened ParkWest in 1975. California restaurateur Jerry Gilomen purchased the base facilities in the mid-1980s and attempted to reach out to local Mormon families to create a new generation of skiers. He offered one family night each week when kids skied for free and LDS wards operated resort kitchens. In 1987, Boyne USA, a Michigan-based company focused on vacation properties, particularly ski areas, gained control of 1/3 of Solitude's shares. Boyne USA had acquired nearby Brighton in the previous year. To the north, the founder of Colorado's Vail Ski Resort, Pete Seibert, purchased Snowbasin in 1978. Seibert ran into financial troubles when he tried to transform Snowbasin into a destination resort comparable to Vail, and therefore, sold the ski area to R. Earl Holding in 1985. Holding injected new capital, which he had amassed as owner of a luxury Idaho ski resort, Sun Valley, as well as Little America Hotels and Sinclair Oil. Together, these changes in ownership signified a new flush of outside capital, often stemming from extractive industry or California corporations. This made Utah's ski scene less distinctive from its out-of-state competitors.[264]

[264] "ParkWest Announces New Money," *Park Record,* October 21 1976; Jerry Gilomen, telephone interview, San Marino, CA, June 15, 2018; "Boyne USA Buys Interest in Solitude," *Salt Lake Tribune*, June 9, 1987, BCCA Records, box 12, folder 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Ray Grass, "Snowbasin is Finally Moving in the Right Direction," *Deseret News*, January 24, 1985.

Town in the Canyon[265]

While not all of Utah's ski areas changed hands during the 1970s and 1980s, each community felt the effects of the planning impulse. Early boosters built ski areas on the remnants of fading extractive industries, particularly ranching and mining. These industries continued to shape the evolution of skiing but in subtler ways as the twentieth century progressed. Detailed zoning regulations, expansive watershed protections, and long-term strategies eclipsed the informal and experimental processes that guided the first ski projects. They further concealed the footprint of nineteenth-century boom towns and rangelands. Utah's economy as a whole also transitioned away from these older industries. With the exception of a spike in manufacturing and mining in the 1970s, Utahns increasingly worked in government and service industry jobs. Ski tourism represented one facet of this transformation.[266]

Perhaps nothing illustrates this change more than the story of Alta. Ore carts had not run at Alta for decades when the town's sole resident, Mayor Watson, called for its rebirth as a ski town in the 1930s. In 1971, Watson's dream materialized when the newly incorporated Town of Alta held its first election. One writer hoped that "with wise mining, this new paydirt [the tourist dollar] need never give out" in Alta.[267] Residents believed that municipal planning would allow them to maximize this "paydirt" without sacrificing the natural resources that had drawn them to the area in the first place. In this way, they could avoid the environmental costs and economic

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[265] The "town in the canyon" places a twist on Raymond Williams's *The Country and the City*. Examining English literature, Williams argues that capitalism transformed the ways in which people saw the country and the city as distinctive places. Yet, he shows that the two places are inextricably bound in reality and in the imagination. Utahns saw Alta as a rural, idyllic place when in fact, the town itself was urban and tightly bound to both the economy of the Salt Lake Valley and the new capitalist transformation that the ski industry sparked. See Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 98, 302-304.

[266] Michael E. Christensen, "Service-Producing Industries in Utah," in *Utah History Encyclopedia*, ed. Allen Kent Powell (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1994), 491-493.

[267] "A Tale of Two Towns," *Salt Lake Tribune,* November 9, 1971.

pitfalls of the past. Planning, however, did not always offer a clear path for the future. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Alta locals recognized that their town served many purposes that often clashed; it formed part of Salt Lake City's watershed, offered year-round recreation, and provided income for locals. Residents believed that incorporating, and later leveraging zoning regulations and building moratoriums, would give them the power and time that they needed to develop the best strategy for balancing these purposes. Their struggle highlights the broader effort on the Wasatch Front to find the right equilibrium between development and preservation, local control and collaboration, and individual responsibility and community oversight.

Alta residents' decision to incorporate in 1970 stemmed from a desire to exert greater local control over development, particularly the construction of a sewer line. Many residents believed that methodical growth would support the preservation of natural resources and scenery in the long run for both Little Cottonwood Canyon and the Salt Lake Valley. The town's mayor, Bill Levitt, described Alta residents as the "guardians of the watershed;" as such, they had a special responsibility to protect the area.[268] A sewer line would create a more permanent solution to the growing levels of water pollution in the canyon. Salt Lake County planned to build one, but Alta turned down the proposal because the county would not commit to set sewer rates. By becoming its own municipality, Alta accessed federal funds that allowed the town to construct a sewer line, which it connected to the new line that the county built to Snowbird, just two miles down the canyon. At the same time, Alta had to develop its own municipal infrastructure. Yet, when the Salt Lake County Commission reminded future town council member Chic Morton, "if Alta were to become a municipality, they would have to give up the services." Morton retorted,

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[268] "Residents of Alta Petition to Incorporate as a Town," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 26, 1970; John Guldner, interview, Holladay, UT, July 26, 2017.

"What services?"[269] In other words, the community already struggled to provide timely police and fire response. The county monitored building permits closely, but without a local ear to the ground, individuals still built too close to waterways or in avalanche paths.[270]

The formation of the Town of Alta did not solve all of the community's planning problems. It did, however, force locals to address the uncertain relationship between development and water contamination. Did development, whether ski tourism, parking lots, or new construction, lead to higher coliform levels in Little Cottonwood Creek? On the other hand, did a lack of development contribute to unstructured forms of pollution, such as dispersed camping, and prevent the town from raising the funds necessary for completing a sewer line? Coliform levels continued to increase as Alta made slow progress in completing its sewer connection, forcing residents and officials to discuss the role that development might be playing in this pollution. The town council formed a Zoning Committee, which evolved into the Planning and Zoning Commission, to deal with the potential construction that the sewer line might enable once it opened. The committee worked with a group of advisors who represented state, county, federal, and private agencies involved in architecture, planning, and land management. The advisors determined that activity in high-density areas, such as lodges, contributed the most contaminants in 1972. In response, committee member Lee Bronson suggested that Alta should increase development. Higher tax revenues would enable expedient completion of the sewer, which would replace the aging sewage system and curtail pollution. Chic Morton wished that Salt Lake City would pipe its water directly from the source, including undeveloped areas in White Pine and Red Pine. Then, ski areas would no longer form part of the city's watershed. He

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[269] "Residents of Alta"; Connie Marshall, "Alta's Unsung Heroes: A Tribute to Past and Present Members of the Alta Town Council," Jean and Wilburn Pickett Papers, box 1, folder 8, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[270] "Residents of Alta"; Guldner, interview.

acknowledged that the city did not want to spend money on that project. In the end, the committee recommended that Alta impose a moratorium on the construction of single-family dwellings or structures in avalanche paths until the town enacted zoning ordinances. The town trustees followed this advice, stalling residential construction projects until the sewer line's completion.[271]

At a town hall meeting convened shortly after the Zoning Committee made its recommendations, residents expressed overall support for slow, carefully planned development. They repeatedly noted the town's uniqueness, both in terms of its beauty and its water. City and Forest Service representatives in attendance commented on how the sewer line fit within this planning vision. Salt Lake City's longtime Water Superintendent, Charlie Wilson, observed that the rising coliform levels in Little Cottonwood Creek resulted as much from a lack of sewer line as they did from greater dispersed recreation. In other words, connecting current buildings to a sewer line or curtailing construction would not solve the pollution issue entirely. Forest Supervisor Chandler St. John reiterated the idea that the sewer would not provide a catchall solution. It could open the door for more development uninhibited by the strict regulations associated with the old system of septic tanks and sewage pumping. Thus, collaboration between agencies and proactive planning remained essential.[272]

With St. John's prediction in mind, city officials pursued a cautious and cooperative approach to planning that reflected locals' continued reluctance to accept full-fledged

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[271] Zoning Committee Meeting Minutes, April 19, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; Open Town Meeting Minutes, April 27, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; Town Meeting Minutes, January 13, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; "Alta Approves Strict New Zoning Rules," *Salt Lake Tribune,* July 9, 1972.
[272] Zoning Committee Meeting Minutes, April 19, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection; "Crews Add Final Touch to Alta Sewer System," *Salt Lake Tribune,* September 12, 1973.

development. Mayor Levitt articulated the logic behind this decision, noting that Alta could become a highly commercialized ski town like Aspen, Colorado, but that most residents recognized that the town's lack of growth made it appealing. Levitt rejected the assumption that Alta was affluent because of its connection to skiing. He explained, "We like things the way they are. Granted that we have to make concessions, such as our new water and sewage systems, but Alta will develop slowly—under a plan. We must face the limits of our environment."[273] Yet, this choice came at a cost. Without new income from construction and property taxes, residents took on the highest debt burden per capita in the state to cover water and sewage updates. Residents insisted, however, that this debt was worthwhile. Their decision to incorporate, fund infrastructure, and coordinate zoning set them apart from other Western communities on the urban fringe. Their interest in slow growth, however, echoed rhetoric common in other Southwestern cities. In these cities, surging interest in open space and historic preservation gestured toward residents' fear that their "authentic" nature and culture would disappear amidst the Sunbelt population boom.[274]

To slow the pace of growth, the Planning Commission instituted zoning regulations and worked with stakeholders from the Forest Service and the Salt Lake Valley. The commission's members hesitated on this approach at first. Regardless of whether they agreed with instituting a building moratorium or zoning regulations, the commissioners largely agreed that environmental

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[273] "Alta's Mayor Cool on More Development," *Salt Lake Tribune,* February 16, 1978. Timothy Duane describes the problems of slow growth initiatives in California's Sierra Nevada Range. He explains that areas located on the urban fringe were most susceptible to rapid growth but did not have the benefit of urban infrastructure and zoning. Due to their location, municipal governments could control their growth without annexation. By incorporating and annexing surrounding areas, Alta sidestepped some of these issues. Duane, *Shaping the Sierra: Nature, Culture, and Conflict in the Changing West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 300-305.

[274] "Alta's Mayor Cool on More Development," February 16, 1978; Michael F. Logan, *Fighting Sprawl and City Hall: Resistance to Urban Growth in the Southwest* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1995), 71-72, 157.

and legal constraints would limit development naturally. Specifically, they pointed to the large amount of federal land surrounding the town, the City of Salt Lake City's control of the Little Cottonwood watershed, and the persistent threat of avalanches. As the Planning Commission began to formulate zoning ordinances, it continued to seek collaboration. First, the Town Council and Planning Commission reiterated the importance of partnering with other government entities. As the Planning Commissioners remarked at one meeting, "there can be no meaningful planning for one part of the canyon alone."[275] The town primarily relied on county employees to execute the technical aspects of planning. Since only 19 percent of buildable land (8.9 acres) in Alta was located on private land, the town consulted with the Forest Service on major issues, too. The Town Council also made a point of creating a Planning Commission that consisted entirely of people who lived outside Alta. While the reasoning behind the decision remains unclear, it highlights the fact that local and non-local identities remained just as complex as the ecological, political, and economic boundaries between canyon and valley.[276]

The final zoning ordinances, approved in 1972, reflected the extent to which the Town Council and Planning Commission recognized the connections and divides between Alta and the Salt Lake Valley. In particular, they illustrated the fact that town officials had moved away from their initial belief that Alta's inhospitable environmental would check development automatically. With the exception of a few changes, the Town of Alta adopted the ordinances of Salt Lake County, which had governed the area prior to incorporation. A member of the Planning

[275] Zoning Meeting Minutes, February 4, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection; Alta Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes, December 5, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection.

[276] Alta Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes, November 22, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection; Alta Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes, March 15, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection; Alta Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes, December 5, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection; Town of Alta Meeting Minutes, September 11, 1976, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection.

Commission and planner for Salt Lake County, Jerry Barnes, recommended this move because it would save the cash-strapped community time and money. The commission realized, however, that it could not simply overlay ordinances created for flat, arid, high-density urbanized areas onto Alta.[277]

With these concerns in mind, members changed the ordinances to fit the specific environmental qualities of Alta and Little Cottonwood Canyon. Watershed issues continued to influence planning. For example, individuals had to build structures at least fifty feet away from streams, receive the Salt Lake City-County Board of Health's approval, and choose sites with soil of suitable depth and quality so as not to degrade local water. The commission set the minimum lot size at a half acre; land with more than a 30 percent grade could not count toward meeting this requirement. To preserve the town's aesthetic quality, the commission had to approve the height of each proposed building, required the rehabilitation of preexisting "scars on the landscape," and only allowed construction materials that blended "harmoniously into the natural environment."[278] This form of regulation and preservation allowed the town to shape the character of Alta's appearance, and even engage in environmental restoration, without expending municipal funds. Finally, individuals could not build structures in natural hazard areas, such as known avalanche or flooding sites. The commission's decision to factor in parts of the canyon that were not within the town limits, especially avalanche runs, imparted the growing belief that Utahns needed to conceptualize the Wasatch Front as a whole—canyons, valley, and lake—when

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[277] Alta Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes, February 4, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

[278] Alta Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes, February 4, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive; Alta Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes, August 30, 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; Alta Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes, March 29, 1972, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; Ordinance No. 22, June 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

making long-term plans, even at the micro level, as in the case of Alta. Acting in its own interest and as a partner for Salt Lake City, the Town of Alta leveraged zoning ordinances as a way to extend urban authority over more than the canyon's water, incorporating other aspects of the canyon into the city's sphere.[279]

Not everyone accepted more intensive planning in and around Alta. Local reactions to the Sweetwater Condominium proposal demonstrated that individuals still had mixed views about development. They debated whether new construction hurt or helped the environment and whether the Town of Alta should regulate projects outside its original boundaries. Developers first presented their plan to build 220 condominiums roughly halfway between Alta and Snowbird in 1979. The Salt Lake County Planning Commission approved Phase I of construction

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[279] Ordinance No. 22, June 1972, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT. Alta's evolution does not fit clearly within historiographical traditions of twentieth-century municipal planning, zoning, and annexation. Scholars often focus on large-scale subdivisions, suburban sprawl, and regulations' pervasive role in racial and class discrimination. Adam Rome details how some geologists and engineers questioned the wisdom of hillside construction, which often involved cropping mountains. Many, however, believed that technological fixes would prevent landslides and building instability. Planners in Alta decided to place severe limits on hillside construction, primarily because of the threat of avalanches and watershed contamination, two factors not common in most suburbs. Moreover, Rome argues that states began enacting strict land use regulations in the 1970s to counter the influence of city zoning, which often favored development. Kenneth Jackson offers another angle on this power dynamic, showing how suburbs annexed adjacent areas to gain political power. On the other hand, scholars, such as Lincoln Bramwell and Mike Davis, trace the lack of zoning and planning in Western cities, suburbs, and wilderburbs, noting the region's characteristic sprawl. John Findlay challenges this idea, arguing that communities had defined plans; they just did not fit the model of a typical Eastern city. Raymond A. Mohl and Roger Biles, "New Perspectives on American Urban History," in *The Making of Urban America*, 3rd ed., eds. Mohl and Biles (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2012), 345-373; Rome, *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 166-169, 28-229; Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 151-156; Bramwell, *Wilderburbs*, 9-11; Davis, *City of Quartz: Excavating the Future in Los Angeles* (New York City: Verso, 1990), 306-309, 80; Findlay, *Magic Lands: Western Cityscapes and American Culture after 1940* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 7, 43-49.

(15 units) only a half hour before the Town of Alta claimed jurisdiction over the land where Sweetwater would be located. A state law passed in 1979 allowed towns to annex any land slated for development within a half mile of the town's boundaries. The town had to receive the approval of the majority of property owners to annex, but while waiting for that approval, the town could oversee the land as if it were already annexed for one year. The town argued that annexation allowed for more efficient services since Alta's fire, police, and municipal services were far closer to Sweetwater than those of the county. Thus, the town council issued a Policy Declaration in 1979 that announced its interest in annexing Sweetwater. Residents of the canyon and valley began reaching out to the town, voicing their support and criticism for the Sweetwater proposal. Several worried about traffic since a bypass road, often the only access road to Alta in the winter, would serve as the access road for the condos. Others voiced concern about the condos' impact on the canyon's aesthetic appeal and its water quality. Proponents of Sweetwater, including many representatives of Snowbird, pointed out that water quality had improved in recent years despite an uptick in construction. They argued that Sweetwater would provide structured, slow development, which was exactly what the canyon's communities needed to maintain a balance between economic growth and environmental protection.[280]

Ultimately, the town council sought more time to make a decision. By issuing a Policy Declaration, the town effectively enacted a one-year moratorium on any urban development at Sweetwater. In response, the condos' developers sued the town in 1980 for infringing on their property rights. The district court ruled in favor of Sweetwater, but the Utah Supreme Court

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[280] Alta Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, October 24, 1979, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; Town of Alta Public Hearing Minutes, July 12, 1979, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; *Sweetwater Properties v. Town of Alta*, 622 P. 2d 1178 (Utah 1981); Alta Town Council Meeting Minutes, September 13, 1979, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

overruled this decision, arguing that the creation of a Policy Declaration did not constitute the taking of property without compensation. The justices explained that the needs of public health and safety—protected by delays in Sweetwater construction—overrode the developers' hardship. Since the town's action fell within the bounds of the law, Sweetwater had to challenge the constitutionality of the law itself if it wanted to proceed with litigation. This decision did not end the fight over Sweetwater. By 1983, Sorenson Resources had taken over the Sweetwater project and renamed it Sugarplum. The Town of Alta and Sorenson Resources agreed on a settlement after continued litigation; the town zoned Sugarplum for higher density in exchange for Sorenson's ban on time-shares within the development. Sweetwater's representative, Walter Plumb, thought this meant Sugarplum had the town's approval for more condos. In reality, zoning ordinances related to natural hazards and slope grade still impacted the calculation of net developable acres. Consequently, Sorenson constructed a smaller version of its original plan.[281]

The fight over Sweetwater sheds light on continuities and new directions in canyon governance. First, developers' arguments for new construction—to make ski areas competitive with residential ski resorts elsewhere, to generate year-round income, and to provide better amenities for tourists—harkened back to boosters' calls for expansion in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. The Town of Alta also sought economic growth but believed that higher tax revenues, generated through newly annexed areas, constituted a fundamental component of community growth. Ironically, new building projects created an opening for the town to constrain growth and to manage more of the canyon as a singular ecological unit. City and county officials, along with new partners at the town, continued to prioritize public health and safety over development.

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[281]Alta Town Council Meeting Minutes, September 13, 1979; *Sweetwater Properties v. Town of Alta* (Utah 1981); Alta Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, January 24, 1985, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; Guldner, interview.

Just as watershed regulations allowed municipal authorities to regulate growth, zoning and annexation became new tools for expanding the urban sphere of influence. Zoning and annexation triggered equally vociferous support and opposition. Both sides of the development debate claimed that their plan best protected public health.

As the condo disputes illustrate, however, not everything remained the same. The courts played an increasingly significant role in shaping the direction of development. As Alta town manager John Guldner said, "Everything had been a court decision. Wherever you see a house, people wanted a duplex."[282] Whereas many scholars depict the 1980s as a time when environmental interest groups relied more on litigation to advance their agendas, the Sweetwater/Sugarplum cases suggest that development advocates also took this approach in places where slow growth advocates held the upper hand. Finally, municipal authorities took on greater responsibility for protecting public safety in the 1970s and 1980s. Whether they lived in Alta or not, officials of the newly formed town had a more intimate knowledge of the land that allowed them to manage growth more intensely and comprehensively than their county predecessors had. Yet, as a "two-bit town with two-buck problems," Alta still needed the help of other government and private entities for funding.[283] To tackle one aspect of this challenge, the town required developers to pay for the natural hazard assessments used to calculate net developable acreage. Thus, the town took greater responsibility for individual safety but without the high expenditures associated with older avalanche control programs. Collaboration and

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[282] Guldner, interview.
[283] "Alta," *Salt Lake Tribune*, November 5, 1989; Douglas Bevington, *The Rebirth of Environmentalism: Grassroots Activism from the Spotted Owl to the Polar Bear* (Washington: Island Press, 2009), 9-11, 69-70.

conflict between public power and private money increasingly defined the new model for shared authority in the Wasatch's urbanizing canyons.[284]

The City and County in the Canyons

During the 1980s, Salt Lake City and Salt Lake County developed wide-reaching plans to govern local canyons. Specifically, the former produced the *Salt Lake City Watershed Management Plan* (WMP) in 1988, and one year later, the county commission approved the *Wasatch Canyons Master Plan* (WCMP). Several proposals for large-scale development, including the Winter Olympics and Ski Interconnect, as well as growing pressure on recreation and water infrastructure prompted these plans. The WMP and WCMP inaugurated a new era of planning for the county and city in which the public input and ecology influenced decision-making to a greater degree. At the same time, officials continued to base their decisions on two premises that were not always complementary. They believed that canyon development was inevitable, but they also saw urban water quality as the top priority for any master plan. As the primary drivers behind development, skiers, ski area owners, and recreation-focused businesses, continued to influence officials' pursuit of the perfect balance between economic growth and ecological balance. During the ski areas' early decades, federal, county, and municipal officials had approved and denied ski projects individually. The Forest Service reviewed plans for ski areas' future expansion, but for the most part, agencies approved and denied projects on a case-by-case basis. Different entities collaborated on an informal basis when making decisions. The WMP and WCMP represented an attempt at creating formal channels for interagency cooperation and comprehensive planning that treated the canyons as a more ecologically singular unit. They challenge the idea that urban planners turned inward after the 1970s, planning for

[284] Ordinance, February 9, 1984, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

cities as individual units rather than for the metropolis as a whole. Four facets of the planning process—sanitation system expansion, citizen involvement, cross-jurisdictional coordination, and public reaction—demonstrate the extent to which ski areas impacted this new vision for the Wasatch Front.[285]

The WMP and WCMP increased the environmental scope and scale of previous plans, including master plans for Salt Lake County (1965, 1985), the *Little Cottonwood Canyon/Alta Study* (1973), and *Emigration Canyon Plan* (1985). Each plan noted the need for coordinated planning in the future. The company that developed the WMP, Bear West, reiterated the need for coordination and analyzed all of the Wasatch Front's seven canyons. The WMP provided the Salt Lake City Council with recommendations vetted by experts, officials, stakeholders, and the general public. First, the plan stated that the city must maintain its current excellent water quality and pursue superior water quality. Enacting a uniform set-back policy, promoting public education, and increasing water monitoring would support this goal. The city should work with other agencies to craft consistent policies. For instance, it did not make sense that ranchers grazed cattle in the watershed but that under city policy, people could not bring dogs into the canyons. Planners also encouraged the city to acquire critical watershed lands and to pursue minimum instream flow for canyon creeks, which would improve animal habitat and water quality.[286]

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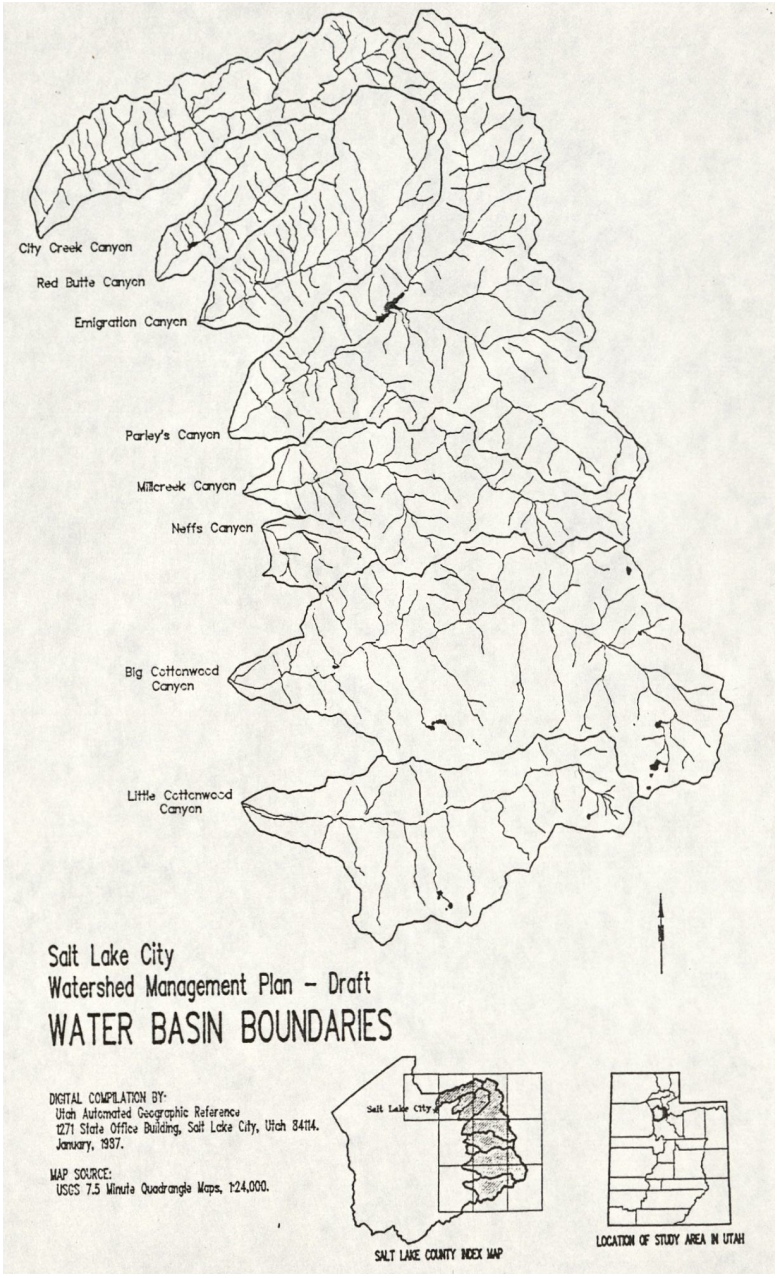
[285] *Salt Lake City Watershed Management Plan*, Prepared by Bear West for Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities and Salt Lake City Planning Division, 1988, Utah Wilderness Association Records, III:9:A, box 2, folder 3, Utah State University Special Collections and Archive Department, Logan, UT; *Salt Lake County Wasatch Canyons Master Plan*, Prepared by Bear West for Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities and Salt Lake City Planning Division, 1989; *A Master Plan for Salt Lake County*, Salt Lake County Planning Commission, 1965, P68, Salt Lake County Archive, West Valley City, UT; Findlay, *Magic Cities*, 300-302.
[286] *Salt Lake City Watershed Management Plan*, Utah Wilderness Association Records, Utah State University Special Collections.



Map 4. Water basin boundaries illustrated in a draft of the *Salt Lake City Watershed Management Plan* (1987). Courtesy of Special Collections & Archives, Merrill-Cazier Library, Utah State University, Utah Wilderness Association records.

The WCMP expanded on the watershed plan's recommendations. Unlike earlier master plans for the county, which made little mention of environmental issues, the WCMP prioritized issues of ecology, development, and recreation. It represented one part of the larger county

master plan, which officials divided by geographic region. Due to budget constraints, the plan's creator, Bear West, addressed the future of all seven canyons but focused on Big Cottonwood and Little Cottonwood Canyons since those areas faced the greatest pressure for growth. The county attempted to pass multiple master plans for the canyons in the past with the idea that canyon spaces offered a solution to the valley's lack of recreation areas. County commissioners charged Bear West's planner, Ralph Becker, with improving past plans through citizen input. The final plan provided general guidance for all of the canyons, as well as place-specific recommendations. Like the WMP, the WCMP called for the acquisition of private lands (which constituted 20 percent of canyon lands) and the maintenance of excellent water quality. Planners advised officials to evaluate instream flow on a case-by-case basis, to negotiate land exchanges to change the checkerboard nature of land ownership, and to demand that building projects harmonized with canyon environments. They asked officials to ensure that if Congress created a national recreation area in the canyons, local entities would receive enough money to deal with higher visitation rates and increased pressure on urban watersheds. Although it lacked decision-making or regulatory power, a new Wasatch Canyons Committee would coordinate safety measures, organize agency collaboration, and solicit public feedback.[287]

Bear West called for strong constraints on the expansion of ski areas outside public lands, new parking lot construction at ski areas, Olympic development, and commercial expansion in backcountry terrain. The plan approved of the completion of the Big Cottonwood Canyon sewer.

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[287] *A Master Plan for Salt Lake County*, P68, Salt Lake County Archive; *Salt Lake Valley 1985: A Master Plan for Salt Lake County*, BCCA Papers, box 7, folder 5, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; "Alta/Little Cottonwood Canyon Preliminary Report," Eckbo, Dean, Austin & Williams, Alta Ski Resort records, Marriott Special Collections,; Ann Wechsler, "Canyon Master Plan," *The Rambler*, June 1987, Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, box 12, folder 4, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; *Salt Lake County Wasatch Canyons Master Plan*.

Future development in Little Cottonwood and Big Cottonwood should be in ski areas' current commercial zones. In short, the plan conveyed a desire to keep ski development on public lands, advance the county's interest in areas outside its control, and to create more structured regulatory processes that factored in ecological concerns. In this respect, the plan echoed the ideas underlying the WMP and Alta's ordinances.[288]

The discussions leading to the creation of the WMP and WCMP reflected Utahns' ongoing debate about whether new construction negatively impacted water quality. By the late 1980s, key policymakers concluded that sewer lines, in combination with strict building ordinances, would protect water quality. They moved away from the idea that sewers would open the door for more intensive construction and recreation in the canyons, which would heighten water pollution. The Little Cottonwood Canyon Sewer played an important role in this decisive shift. The sewer was constructed in stages between 1971-1973. New federal standards required coliform levels in culinary water not to exceed 2,000 MPN (most probable number) per 100 milliliters of water. MPN refers to the density of coliform within the water, derived from a series of samples taken each month. Eckbo, Dean, Austin & Williams tracked coliform levels as part of the *Alta and Little Cottonwood Canyon Study* that it created for the county in 1973. According to the study, coliform levels had remained relatively low in Little Cottonwood Canyon throughout the 1960s but doubled every eighteen months between 1968-1972. Experts argued that at this rate, coliform levels would exceed federal standards by 1978. They linked rising pollution levels to new construction and higher visitation rates, intensified by the opening of Snowbird. On the other hand, Snowbird's founders, Ted Johnson and Dick Bass, convinced the Salt Lake County Commission that further recreation development promised "great economic and ecological

[288] *Salt Lake County Wasatch Canyons Master Plan*.

advantage."[289] Snowbird was the solution to water pollution, not its source. With this logic in mind, the commission approved the new sewer's construction. After the sewer's completion, Snowbird's environmental consultants traced coliform levels in the area around the resort between 1973-1976. They found that coliform counts decreased after construction at Snowbird ended in 1974. In their view, construction led to greater surface runoff, which contaminated Little Cottonwood Creek. [290]

After observing the turnaround in water quality in Little Cottonwood Canyon, both Salt Lake City Public Utilities and the Salt Lake City-County Health Department became more receptive to plans for a sewer in Big Cottonwood Canyon. Solitude Ski Area had campaigned for a sewer to replace the septic and pumping system servicing the canyon. In 1982, the ski area submitted a proposal to the Salt Lake County Planning Commission to build 320 condominiums on private land and a sewer line that would cross private and public land. The county approved the condos, so long as Solitude gained approval for the sewer from effected stakeholders, including the Forest Service. The Forest Service then organized a committee of stakeholders to evaluate the proposal. Noting that Big Cottonwood Canyon's coliform levels were twice that of Little Cottonwood Canyon, the committee agreed that a sewer line would improve the overall health of valley and canyon residents. Salt Lake City Public Utilities director LeRoy Hooton

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[289] *Land Use vs. Water Quality: Wasatch Streams*, Hydroscience, Inc., Salt Lake County 208 Water Quality Project, April 1977; "Alta/Little Cottonwood Canyon Study: Preliminary Report," Eckbo, Dean, Austin & Williams, Alta Ski Area Papers, box 1, Marriott Special Collections; "Petition for the Initiation of Proceedings for the Formation of a County Service Area," July 22, 1970, Town of Alta, Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

[290] Minutes of the Board of County Commissioners, Salt Lake County, May 29, 1969, Salt Lake County Commission Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT; *Summary and Analysis of Snowbird Water Quality,* Jason M. Cortell and Associates, Utah Wilderness Association Records, III:9:A, box 2, folder 3, Utah State University Special Collections and Archive Department, Logan, UT.

explained, "The sewer line is a contradiction. It will put other forces at work to develop the canyons. But, if you don't do it, you will have even more pollution because more people are being funneled into those canyons anyways and you have to have the facilities for those people."[291]

Local officials, such as Hooton, played a key role in the sewer line's approval because the Forest Service trusted that regulations and guidelines at the county and municipal level would constrain any development that the sewer might enable. This constituted a marked shift from a few years earlier, when Hooton suggested that apathy on the part of officials in coordinating planning posed one of the greatest threats to public health. Consequently, and much to Solitude's dismay, the Forest Service delayed issuing any permits until officials could confirm that construction would not undermine the WCMP. The story of Big Cottonwood Canyon's sewer illuminates several patterns in canyon management. Unlike the confusing web of municipal, county, and federal oversight that contributed to Solitude's closure in the 1960s, officials sought proactive and consistent planning that factored in other agencies' potential policy conflicts. They accepted the inevitability of development. Rather than limiting public use of public lands, they sought technological fixes, such as the sewer line. Officials believed that comprehensive planning would allow them to have the best of both worlds, pursuing economic expansion and environmental protection simultaneously.[292]

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[291] U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Environmental Assessment for Solitude Sewer Improvement District Big Cottonwood Canyon Sewer Line*, Salt Lake Ranger District, BCCA Records, box 6, folder 10, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Tom Wharton, "The Canyons," BCCA Records, box 3, folder 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[292] U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Environmental Assessment for Solitude Sewer Improvement District*, BCCA Records, Marriott Special Collections; LeRoy W. Hooton, Jr. to Edwin E. Blaney, January 6, 1982, BCCA Records, box 1, folder 2, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; "Statement for the Salt Lake Planning Commission

The construction of the Little Cottonwood Canyon Sewer and planning process for the Big Cottonwood Canyon Sewer shaped the direction of the county's WMP and WCMP. The former's success convinced many officials and residents that sanitation infrastructure, paired with coordinated regulation, would mitigate pollution. The development of the latter provided a preview of how canyon management would operate under the WMP and WCMP. In particular, the inclusion of a wide range of stakeholders, particularly the general public, played an important role in sewer construction and master planning. Individuals participated in the planning process through public forums and environmental activism. Bear West received public input on the WMP primarily through individuals' interaction with local leaders and businesspeople appointed to the Canyon Advisory Committee in 1981. The nature of advisory committees changed within a few years in that it represented a broader group of stakeholders. At public meetings on the WCMP, the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC)—a group that included environmentalists, ski area employees, developers, politicians, and architects—received feedback on residents' top priorities. The CAC crosschecked individuals' observations against technical studies of canyon suitability and carrying capacity to recommend best practices.[293]

Several ideas surfaced in the final WMP, including a recommendation to end grazing, improve water monitoring, and protect instream flow. Many members agreed with Becker's

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Regarding Solitude's Requirements and Desires during the Canyon Moratorium," Solitude Ski Resort Company, May 10, 1987, BCCA Records, box 9, folder 2, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[293] Bart Barker and William Levitt to Salt Lake City Council of Governments, November 6, 1981, BCCA Records, box 1, folder, 2, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; "Salt Lake City Watershed Management Plan Public Meeting Format and Ground Rules," Bernice Cook Papers, box 25, folder 14, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Salt Lake County Planning Staff Consultant to County Canyons Master Plan Citizens Advisory Committee, November 15, 1987, BCCA Records, box 7, folder 4, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

argument that the CAC had to pay attention to residents' overwhelming opposition to canyon development. Becker believed that constituents had a more holistic view of the canyon's future than influential special interest groups did. At the same time, planners did not agree that preliminary plans overstated downhill skiing or that higher rates of dispersed recreation, not the absence of a sewer, meant Big Cottonwood Canyon had lower water quality than Little Cottonwood Canyon. Moreover, residents expressed greater interest in dispersed recreation; access to traditional rock climbing sites, additional bus stops outside developed areas, and increased trail access topped their list of priorities. On the subject of winter recreation, they called for the preservation of a popular backcountry ski spot called White Pine and limits on heli-skiing, which allowed heli-skiers to reach fresh powder before backcountry skiers could.[294]

Participants' comments reflected their shifting interests and identities as backcountry recreationists, environmentalists, and taxpayers. The Wasatch Mountain Club, Save Our Canyons (SOC), Utah Wilderness Association (UWA), and the Sierra Club tapped into people's interest in backcountry access and ecology, encouraging them to attend citizens' forums. These organizations continued to spotlight topics that did not receive as much attention in drafts and ultimately, the final versions of the WMP and WCMP. For example, in official correspondence with planning officials, SOC stressed that the WMP underestimated the future growth of dispersed recreation while UWA argued that less construction, not sewer expansion, protected culinary water best. Organizations provided members with annotated summaries of county plans to encourage informed dialogue, too. These documents appealed to many Utahns' belief that they

[294]Wechsler, "Canyon Master Plan," Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, Marriot Special Collections; "SLACC Land Use Committee Report on Current Status of Canyon Master Plan," September 9, 1987, Bernice Cook Papers, box 25, folder 14, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Wasatch Canyons Master Plan Public Meeting Minutes, September 8, 1987, BCCA Records, box 7, folder 2, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

held ecological rights. In the past, individuals with a financial stake in the canyons, particularly in the ski industry, dominated discussions of canyon planning. Citizens voiced their concerns indirectly through public officials who governed permitting and sanitation. Now individuals engaged in grassroots organizations, such as SOC, used new channels of direct communication to advocate for their particular way of valuing and using canyon environments. They, like politicians and experts, leveraged the language of ecology to promote their interests. For the first time, the concepts of wilderness and carrying capacity circulated at each level of planning. These changes mirrored the rise of a new national style of environmental politics grounded in grassroots advocacy, wilderness legislation, ecology, and anti-pollution campaigns during the 1960s and 1970s. This pattern extended into the 1980s on the Wasatch Front, defying a general shift toward deregulation in Utah.[295]

Yet this new group of canyon stakeholders included individuals who claimed a right to influence management because they paid taxes. Their argument fit within the conservative

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[295] "Statement of Save Our Canyons to the Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities," May 13, 1987, Utah Wilderness Association Papers, III:9:A, box 7, folder 3, Utah State University Special Collections and Archives, Logan, UT; Howie Garber and Garv Macfarlane to Planning and Zoning, May 27, 1987, Utah Wilderness Association Papers, III:9:A, box 7, folder 3, Utah State University Special Collections and Archives, Logan, UT; Timothy Duane points out that community involvement in planning processes often took the form of "tokenism," meaning agencies already had a plan in mind and simply defended the plan to the public after receiving feedback. In his view, extractive industries continue to dominate planning in the West. Since the Salt Lake County's preliminary plans failed, it made community input integral to the WCMP. This suggests that some genuine consideration existed for public opinion. The story of the Wasatch Front fits somewhere in between the planning models that the authors of *Planning a New West* identify: rule-making (led by federal government, externally-driven) and place-making (locally-driven, grounded in knowledge of land). In the case of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, they argue that no local constituency had the power to direct regional planning. Moreover, the definition of "local" remained unclear since many Portlanders claimed that identity, along with rural residents along the gorge. This contrasted with Salt Lake City, where the union of city and country, urbanite and canyon local were less distinctive. See Duane, *Shaping the Sierra*, 60-6; Carl Abbott, Sy Adler and Margery Post Abbott, *Planning a New West: Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area* (Beaverton: Oregon State University Press, 1997), 14-16, 113.

lexicon common in Republican strongholds, such as Utah, during the 1970s and 1980s. White Americans of the middle and upper class often used this language when critiquing social programs, not advocating for environmental protection. The BCCA's "Statement of Philosophy on Policies of Management for the Watershed Canyons of the Salt Lake Valley" imparted the importance of the taxpayer identity. Members asserted that governing agencies should solicit the opinion of taxpayers and property owners when making decisions since those individuals had a special connection with the land. Thus, homeowners in Big Cottonwood Canyon forged their own place-based political views, blending the environmental discourse of the Left with the identity politics of the Right. Regardless of how residents claimed authority in the canyons, they carved out a role for the public within planning processes. Despite the increasingly centralized nature of canyon management, a current of local, grassroots power continued to shape the Wasatch Front.[296]

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[296] Big Cottonwood Canyon Association of Private Property Owners, "Statement of Philosophy on Policies of Management for the Watershed Canyons of the Salt Lake Valley," November 9, 1982, BCCA Records, box 2, folder, 2, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Molly Michelmore, *Tax and Spend: The Welfare State, Tax Politics, and the Limits of American Liberalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 70-86; Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 1-4. Robert O. Self describes suburban Californians' Tax Revolt in 1978, which culminated in the passage of Proposition 13. Advocates of this limit on property taxes blended agrarian nostalgia with property-rights discourse to challenge growth liberalism. Peter Siskind traces similar rhetoric and policy in the Northeast Corridor. He argues that different levels of government—federal, state, county, and municipal—were too fragmented to enact cohesive, environmentally progressive controls on suburban growth. Suburbanites grew frustrated with pollution, sewage backup, special interests, and rising tax bills in the 1970s. In response, towns created zoning ordinances that required developers to spend private funds on new infrastructure or limited high-density districts. See Self, "Prelude to the Tax Revolt: The Politics of the 'Tax Dollar' in Postwar California," in *The New Suburban History*, eds. Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), 148-156 and Siskind, "Suburban Growth and Its Discontents: The Logic and Limits of Reform on the Postwar Northeast Corridor," in *The New Suburban History*, 163-171.

The Forest in the Canyons

The Forest Service also crafted new master plans for the Wasatch Front, synthesizing top-down expertise with grassroots feedback. The 1979 *Salt Lake Planning Unit Management Plan* (PUMP) and 1985 *Wasatch-Cache National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan* (LRMP) captured the agency's goals and dilemmas during the 1970s and 1980s.[297] In particular, the Forest Service faced three tensions: roadless areas versus general development, ski growth versus constraint, and water quality versus new construction. Different stakeholders agreed that the Forest Service should manage public lands in a way that protected water quality and public health. Yet they disagreed on the best means of accomplishing this. Each side argued that their vision for the future, whether wilderness designations, new ski lifts, or expanded roads, offered the most promise. In the end, the Forest Service decided to pursue the canyon's carrying capacity, or the maximum amount of development possible without undermining water quality. As in the case of the county's planning processes, compromise and collaboration defined the PUMP and LRMP. Urbanites more thoroughly influenced the federal landscape through new channels of citizen input, emboldening the ties between canyon and valley.[298]

The history of the PUMP sheds light on the reasons why the Forest Service pursued interagency coordination and why water quality continued to dominate the agency's agenda. The Wasatch-Cache National Forest began to develop a land use plan in 1971 for all the counties in

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[297] New legislation mandated the creation of the PUMP and LRMP. The Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act (RPA) required the Forest Service to create long-term plans every five years, as well as a budget of the funds required for those plans. The National Forest Management Act of 1976 complemented RPA in that forests had to submit their own supplementary plans. As Paul Hirt argues, these top-down and bottom-up approaches to planning were supposed to merge eventually, but that did not happen. See Hirt, *A Conspiracy of Optimism*, 243-244.

[298] U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Final Environmental Statement: Land Management Plan for the Salt Lake Planning Unit*, United States Forest Service, 1978, BCCA Records, box 10, folder 2, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

its jurisdiction that touched the Wasatch Front, including Summit, Davis, Salt Lake, and Morgan. Facing pressure for development in Little Cottonwood Canyon, however, the Forest Service decided to shrink the plan's region. It renamed the project the Tri-Canyon Study, which focused on three canyons in proximity to Salt Lake City: Big Cottonwood, Little Cottonwood, and Millcreek. In 1975, the county received funding through Section 208 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to conduct a two-year study of water quality in the canyons. Forest Service representatives served on key committees for the study and offered technical advice. The 208 Study emphasized the need for coordinated planning. As a result, the Forest Service expanded the scope of its Tri-Canyon Study to include all national forest lands in Salt Lake County. This new Salt Lake Planning Unit was the focus of the 1979 study known as PUMP. The Forest Service created a Multiple-Use Plan for the forest in 1968. The plan lost efficacy, though, as canyon use increased exponentially in the 1970s. Moreover, the complex web of ownership and jurisdiction in local canyons made the Salt Lake Unit difficult for the Forest Service to manage. The agency hoped that the PUMP would address intensive canyon use and policy collaboration more effectively, creating a building block for the LRMP, which would offer guidance for the forest as a whole.[299]

The PUMP revealed the fault lines that defined county and municipal planning, as well as future discussions of the LRMP. The Forest Service sought out a wide range of stakeholders when crafting the PUMP, sharing its ideas through television programs, panels, and meetings with interested organizations. Personnel met with state, county, and city officials more than thirty times to solicit feedback. The public agreed that water quality must remain the priority, but did not always agree on the ways to achieve that quality. For example, the Utah State Soil

[299] *Final Environmental Statement*, BCCA Records, Marriott Special Collections.

Commission rejected the notion that gradually phasing out livestock in the canyons would protect water; the commission's chairman, Kenneth Creer, suggested that the public needed to accept sheep as part of the canyons' ecosystem. In a similar vein, John Raybourn of the Department of the Interior encouraged the Forest Service to consider the economic impact of curtailing timber, oil, gravel, and metallic mineral extraction. Recreation sparked the most debate. Individuals struggled to find common ground on the subject of commercial skiing. Was more development necessary for economic growth? Would development undermine the canyons' beauty or the water's quality? Were economic health and environmental health complementary goals? The Forest Service decided to allow the expansion of ski areas beyond existing permit boundaries, granted that the ski area submitted an expansion proposal before 1976 and had an Environmental Impact Statement under consideration. In anticipation of better public transit, ski areas could not build new parking lots. Personnel would not allow any development or activity that would undermine ski area use. Finally, the agency would acquire private lands within the watershed if the city or county could not do so. The Forest Service explained its logic to potential critics of ski area expansion. Planners pointed out that new lift-serviced areas would be small in comparison to the backcountry terrain that remained for cross-country skiers. Like county planners, they believed that ski areas had to expand to accommodate future skiers.[300]

Despite the Forest Service's assurances, these concerns resurfaced during community meetings on the proposed LRMP. The agency met with individuals living throughout the forest's region, which stretched into southwestern Wyoming and to the southern border of Idaho. Proposals for the area bordering the urban Wasatch Front, however, received the most feedback. The Forest Service noted that many individuals opposed the expansion of ski areas in watershed

[300] *Final Environmental Statement*, BCCA Records, Marriott Special Collections.

areas and thought that developers should focus instead on improving transportation into the canyons. Commenters argued both for and against eliminating heli-skiing and adding cross-country trails. A local advocate for recreation and conservation, the Wasatch Mountain Club, expressed strong interest in backcountry access, arguing that ski area expansion could jeopardize cross-country skiing terrain. The Town of Alta and the Salt Lake Planning Commission called for greater coordination with the Forest Service. They asked the Forest Service to acquire private lands to support a "harmonious relationship" between watershed health and recreation.[301] This aligned with the Forest Service's land acquisition goals in the PUMP. Finally, private landowners, including members of the BCCA worried that greater development would undermine the local watershed and "unique characteristics of the canyon." Advocates of ski area expansion vocalized fewer concerns about LRMP proposals. Only a few years after the creation of the PUMP, watershed protection, recreation access, and coordination continued to dominate planning conversations.[302]

The final plan approved in 1985 did not deviate significantly from the PUMP and demonstrated the Forest Service's multiple-use vision. At the same time, forest planners attempted to further segment the forest's uses, segregating different forms of recreation, resource extraction, and development in certain areas. First, planners affirmed that heli-skiing remained a legitimate use of the forest, but they promised backcountry skiers that heli-skiing would only be allowed on specific slopes. They acknowledged that cross-country skiing had doubled in

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[301] U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Issues and Concerns for Forest Planning*, Wasatch-Cache National Forest, 1981, Utah Wilderness Association Papers, III:9:A, box 2, folder 1, Utah State University Special Collections and Archives, Logan, UT; "Town of Alta U.S. Forest Service Management Plan Comments," Town of Alta Microfilm Collection, Utah State Archive, Salt Lake City, UT.

[302] USDA, *Issues and Concerns for Forest Planning*, Utah Wilderness Association Papers, Utah State University Special Collections.

popularity since 1980, but they also explained that dispersed recreation, such as cross-country skiing, was difficult to measure in comparison to commercialized sports. Therefore, they committed to improving trailheads and trails but also decided to continue with proposals for ski area boundary expansion. This decision meant that Snowbasin, Solitude, ParkWest, and Snowbird could proceed with their plans. The Forest Service would not issue any permits for new ski venues in Millcreek Canyon. Planners left the door open for resort expansion in popular backcountry areas, such as White Pine Canyon, as long as those projects passed a separate review process. Although downhill skiing had dipped in popularity, experts estimated that skier use would exceed the capacity of facilities in Little Cottonwood Canyon between 1991-2000 and in Big Cottonwood Canyon between 2000-2010. By allowing new development that would push certain canyons to their carrying capacity, planners tried to contain and concentrate urbanization in the Wasatch. This strategy complemented municipal and county management approaches, including high-density zoning, sewage pipes, and mass transit. While the Forest Service accepted the inevitability of ski expansion, it also expressed a desire for constraint. Its approach to watershed protection, resource extraction, and land acquisition echoed the ideas and policies that had shaped the early days of commercial skiing in Utah. Since watershed deterioration concerned the public more than any other issue, the Forest Service prioritized water quality over other considerations. Recreation carried nearly as much importance. Consequently, extractive activity could not interfere with water quality or recreation.[303]

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[303] U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Record of Decision for USDA Forest Service, Final Environmental Impact Statement, Wasatch-Cache National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan*, BCCA Records, box 5, folder 9, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; *Wasatch-Cache National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan* (Washington D.C.: United States Forest Service, 1985).

Planners also responded to city and county requests for private land acquisition. Whereas private boosters had donated land to the Forest Service in the past to protect culinary water, the federal government now acquired land for that purpose. Senator Frank Moss crafted a bill in 1972 that would enable the Forest Service to purchase 3,000 acres in Millcreek, Big Cottonwood, and Little Cottonwood Canyons. The bill passed later that year. Advocates included Snowbird Ski Resort and the Utah Ski Association. In fact, Utahns voiced overwhelming support for the bill, with the exception of a developer in Albion Basin, a key area near Alta that was part of the land proposal. They cited familiar reasons for increasing federal control in the canyons, including preserving water quality, scenery, and public access. Some noted zoning's limited effectiveness in controlling development. Supporters argued that people needed an escape from the densely populated valleys. Speaking as the mayor of Alta and a landowner in Albion Basin, Bill Levitt claimed that the area's beauty and ecological importance outweighed any economic gain. This reinforced his oft-quoted belief that "Alta is to Salt Lake City what Central Park is to New York City."[304] Governor Cal Rampton even suggested that the Forest Service, not state or private actors, could manage the land best.[305]

Regardless, supporters still saw the newly acquired lands as quintessentially local places that derived their significance from their relationship to the city. This idea, along with politicians' preference for federal management, went against the grain of the anti-federal management message of the Sagebrush Rebellion, which was starting to attract attention in the Intermountain West. Chandler St. John's tenure as Supervisor of the Wasatch-Cache National Forest (1969-1981) coincided with the rebellion. He noted the irony of this trend, saying the

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[304] *Cong. Rec*., 92nd Cong., 2nd sess., 1972, 118: 37266; Senate Subcommittee on Public Lands of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Hearing on S.1144*, 92nd Cong., 2nd sess., 1972, 36-43; Guldner, interview.
[305] *Hearing on S.1144*, 1972, 41-43.

Forest Service continued to receive similar requests for land acquisition throughout the 1980s, despite the fact that Utah's public lands formed part of the epicenter of the Sagebrush Rebellion. This twist fits geographer William Graf's observation that internal divisions between cities and rural communities replaced the East versus West tension in land politics. In Graf's view, Eastern investors had dominated the Western hinterland in the nineteenth century, but by the twentieth century, Western cities controlled and extracted wealth in the rural West. Although they sought different outcomes, advocates of land acquisition and of the rebellion both believed that local values, attitudes, and priorities must drive environmental politics. They challenge scholars to rethink the framework of state politics, showing the ways in which the politics of place—whether grounded in region, city, canyon, or even ski slope—reveal a more complex Western landscape.[306]

The planning processes of the 1970s and 1980s illuminated new and old patterns in forest management. Rather than being detached and distant bureaucrats, Forest Service personnel sought community feedback on proposed policies and took public priorities seriously. The "public," however, increasingly referred to urbanites living on the Wasatch Front who recreated on public lands. More specifically, those who enjoyed commercial forms of recreation, including ski areas, had a stronger influence on Forest Service plans than dispersed recreationists did. The Forest Service continued to acquire private lands and to limit extractive industry in an effort to protect cities' water supply. Not everything remained the same. Officials segmented forest uses

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[306] Chandler St. John, interview by Thomas G. Alexander, March 26, 1984, transcript, U.S. Forest Service Intermountain Regional Office, Ogden, UT; Graf, *Wilderness Preservation and the Sagebrush Rebellions*, 249-263. In his study of ski resorts at Lake Tahoe, Bradley Mozee argues that the patchwork of oversight and jurisdiction at Tahoe resorts led to ineffective management. This contrasts the cooperative effort on the Wasatch Front, which had some success in wilderness preservation, zoning control, and watershed protection. See Mozee, "Government Regulation of Ski Resort Development in the Lake Tahoe Region," *Stanford Environmental Law Journal* 11 (1992): 68-72.

more intensely, attempting to isolate different forms of recreation and industry within the forest. This paralleled larger trends in public lands management after the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964, which limited how Americans recreated in designated wilderness. Even though pay-to-play recreation held the upper hand, advocates of wilderness, backcountry skiing, and dispersed access influenced forest policy on a larger scale. St. John noted that for the first time, the Forest Service began to listen seriously to Utahns who interacted with the forests for noneconomic reasons. The voices of these recreationists, now focused on wilderness legislation and the anti-Olympics movement, would challenge the gains that ski industry boosters made in the planning processes.[307]

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, planning embodied and enacted a new way of envisioning the Wasatch Front. Utahns reconceptualized the borders of the metropolis, recognizing that political borders did not always match ecological realities. More than water connected canyon and valley. The planning process also blurred the boundaries between top-down expertise and grassroots local knowledge. Thus, city, county, and federal plans created new openings for public engagement in land management. The voices of urbanites, particularly those engaged in commercial recreation, dominated planning. Officials repeatedly prioritized quantifiable issues, such as watershed contamination and ski lift access, over the intangible ways in which people interacted with the canyons. Their belief in the inevitability of development, both in the canyons and valley, drove their approach to planning. As a whole, the planning era challenges common interpretations of urban planning, environmental politics, and public lands management. Planning did not simply intensify patterns of suburban sprawl; it bound communities and environments as much, if not more, than it divided them on the Wasatch Front.

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[307] St. John, interview.

In the era of the Sagebrush Rebellion, regional and local dynamics complicated the conservative arc of environmental debates in Utah. Likewise, significant overlap existed between federal, county, and municipal policy. Planners' active pursuit of interagency collaboration undermines the idea that patchwork jurisdiction led to patchwork management. Thus, the planning impulse created another tool for tying together the political, economic, and ecological landscapes of the Wasatch Front.

Chapter 6

Urban and Wild, 1970-1990

Born in Riga, Latvia in 1938, Alexis Kelner developed a love for mountain landscapes while living in a German Displaced Persons Camp in the Bavarian Alps after World War II. When he was twelve years old, his family moved to Salt Lake City. He soon became a passionate advocate for the canyons and mountains of his new home. Kelner took a particular interest in Utah's backcountry in the 1950s, writing his first letter to the editor to oppose the damming of Glen Canyon in south-central Utah and northern Arizona. The dam became a lightening rod for environmentalists, who mourned the creation of Lake Powell in its wake. As a teenager and young man, Kelner enjoyed skiing an undeveloped area of Little Cottonwood Canyon called White Pine Canyon and traversing the ridges that linked Park City, Brighton, and Alta. He was part of one the first groups to complete a winter ascent of Lone Peak. Although located near Salt Lake City, Lone Peak remained relatively remote because of the difficulty of summiting the peak in summer or winter; the hike involved a twelve-mile roundtrip trek up steep rock scrambles fully exposed to the elements. Kelner later wrote the first article advocating for the creation of the Lone Peak Wilderness (LPW) with his employer and fellow climber, Cal Giddings, in 1965.[308]

Kelner's experiences in the backcountry inspired his lifelong involvement in environmental activism. He believed that the Wasatch canyons were a de facto extension of city parks, and therefore, deserved protection. Consequently, Kelner cofounded a local environmentalist organization, Save Our Canyons (SOC), with Gale Dick and Floyd Sweat in

[308]Alexis Kelner, interview by Elizabeth Shuput, October 13, 2006, transcript, 3, 15, 21, Everett L. Cooley Oral History Project, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Alexis Kelner, interview, Salt Lake City, UT, July 27, 2017.

1972. He and his wife, Karla, turned their basement into the organization's headquarters, which included a printing press for making newsletters and marketing materials. Kelner relied on his experience as a scientific illustrator and his training in journalism to craft compelling pieces. A skilled photographer, Kelner also printed large photographs of the Wasatch to boost interest in wilderness protection. His photos often featured a "Kelner knoll." A backcountry skier would travel ¼ mile ahead of Kelner and stand on a snowy knoll surrounded by dramatic peaks while Kelner captured the scene with his camera. Kelner included these photographs in his books on ski touring, ski history, and the anti-Olympics movement. He became a go-to person for environmental issues and served on multiple community input committees, including the Utah Winter Games Feasibility Committee in the mid-1980s. Kelner continued to challenge the growth of commercial skiing in the canyons, opposing Snowbird's expansion, explosive-based avalanche control, and Interconnect, a proposed ski lift that would connect all of the Wasatch resorts. He argued that Utahns could not wait for someone else to protect the canyons because "quite often, that someone else's concept of canyon is not one of cool mountain air and green forests—but of cool, green currency."[309]

Kelner embodied a new type of skier in the Wasatch that, in some ways, harkened back to the backcountry days of the early twentieth century. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, backcountry skiing excelled in popularity. Skiers searched for fresh powder beyond the boundaries of ski resorts and lifts, often connecting with the mountains physically, spiritually, and emotionally. Resort and backcountry skiers alike viewed the Wasatch through the lenses of

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[309] "Author-photographer says S.L.'s canyons becoming the domain of outsiders," *Deseret News*, December 10, 1986, Bernice Cook Papers, box 25, folder 18, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City; Kelner, interview; David Hanscom, interview, Salt Lake City, UT, July 25, 2017; "Concerned about Your Canyons? Everybody Is!" Save Our Canyons, Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, box 20c, folder 2, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

ecology and wilderness, two themes running through environmental politics nationally. Yet, the familiar topics of water quality, health, and the economy still peppered Utahns' conversations in public forums, boardrooms, and lift lines. The canyons became the focal point for all of these conversations, especially as some local organizations pushed for new wilderness designations on the Wasatch Front.

Figure 13. A campaign piece that Alexis Kelner created and distributed on the desks of U.S. Forest Service employees to protest ski area expansion. Courtesy of Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Canyons resort records.

Regardless of which side they took in environmental debates, Utahns continued to relate to *their* canyons through their identity as urbanites. Would urbanizing the canyons best serve cities' interests, or conversely, would protecting the canyons from urbanization do so? Each side claimed that their approach protected urban water, skier safety, and local access. They disagreed on whether it was even possible for wilderness to be so close to a major city. Advocates of wilderness and development argued that their opponents' plan would transform the Wasatch into a more exclusionary, elitist place. Each believed that its vision would ensure the greatest good for the greatest number. Two points of contention, the LPW and the Anti-Olympics movement, brought these issues to a head. In their efforts to create greater separation between wild and urban spaces, environmentalists revealed the extent to which even the most remote, unpopular slopes were inextricably tied to the politics, economy, environment, and society of Utah's urban core.

The View from Above: Lone Peak

The LPW represented one facet of a larger national interest in protecting and preserving wilderness in the United States. Americans' fascination with wilderness predated the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964. One of the first scholars to explore the intellectual roots of wilderness preservation, Roderick Nash, describes how Romantics moved away from the colonial fear of wildness. They saw wilderness as an antidote to civilization and as the cornerstone of a unique American identity. During the 1930s, ecologist Aldo Leopold continued to emphasize the links between wilderness and American exceptionalism, but he also argued that wilderness represented an opportunity for Americans to become citizens, rather than masters, of the nonhuman world. He co-founded the Wilderness Society in 1935. Historian Paul Sutter argues that the society ushered in a new era of how Americans understood and advocated for

wilderness. The interwar push for wilderness protection constituted a pragmatic response to the expansion of automobile travel and roads, not a desire to preserve an ahistorical, ecologically cohesive landscape. As Sutter explains, "The modern wilderness idea was shaped more by a collective uneasiness with the enormity of change at a given historical moment than it was by the emergence of a new scientific way of looking at nature."[310] In the 1960s, advocates still focused on the anthropocentric value of wilderness; they appreciated biocentric reasons for protecting wilderness, but for practical concerns, they emphasized the importance of wilderness for familiar reasons. In their view, it was essential to American identity, for biodiversity, and as an escape from consumerism and industrial cities. The Wilderness Act, shepherded by Wilderness Society leader Howard Zanhiser, captured these ideas. In particular, it embodied Zanhiser's belief that wilderness must remain an "untrammeled" place where humans are only visitors. As historian John Morton Turner shows, the law's critics shaped the future of wilderness as much as the law's supporters did. They ensured that wilderness remained under legislative purview, and consequently, became a lightening rod in environmental politics for decades.[311]

Utah influenced the politics of wilderness before and after Congress passed the Wilderness Act. Early debates centered on redrock country in the southern and eastern reaches of the state. During the 1950s, conservationists prevented the Bureau of Reclamation from damming Echo Park, an area located in Dinosaur National Monument on the Utah-Colorado border. Historian Mark Harvey asserts that the fight over Echo Park pitted environmental groups

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[310] Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 4th ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 60-67, 188, 187; Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 24-26; Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), 10-14.

[311] Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 257-262; John Morton Turner, *The Promise of Wilderness: American Environmental Politics since 1964* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012), 31-43.

against the bureau's Progressive Era-style conservation for the first time. The same groups raised less opposition to the damming of Glen Canyon, a lesser-known canyon without national park status. Many later believed that they had made a mistake. Glen Canyon became a flashpoint for environmental politics. Its failure emboldened environmentalists in the same ways that Echo Park's success had, drawing national attention to Utah's public lands.[312]

Redrock country continued to dominate the politics of wilderness in Utah. At the same time, the wilderness narrative of the Wasatch Front tells a different and overlooked story. There, skiers, snowy peaks, and municipal water authorities replace the ranchers, deserts, and federal dam builders so often associated with Utah's wilderness debates. As the first designated wilderness area in Utah, the LPW set the tone for the legislative process on the Wasatch Front. Local environmentalists caught the attention of the Salt Lake County Commission, which asked Senator Frank Moss to introduce a Lone Peak Wilderness Bill in Congress. Moss followed through in 1972, drafting S-3466. Salt Lake County residents expressed overwhelming support for the bill. Forest Service officials, however, opposed the bill. They argued that according to the

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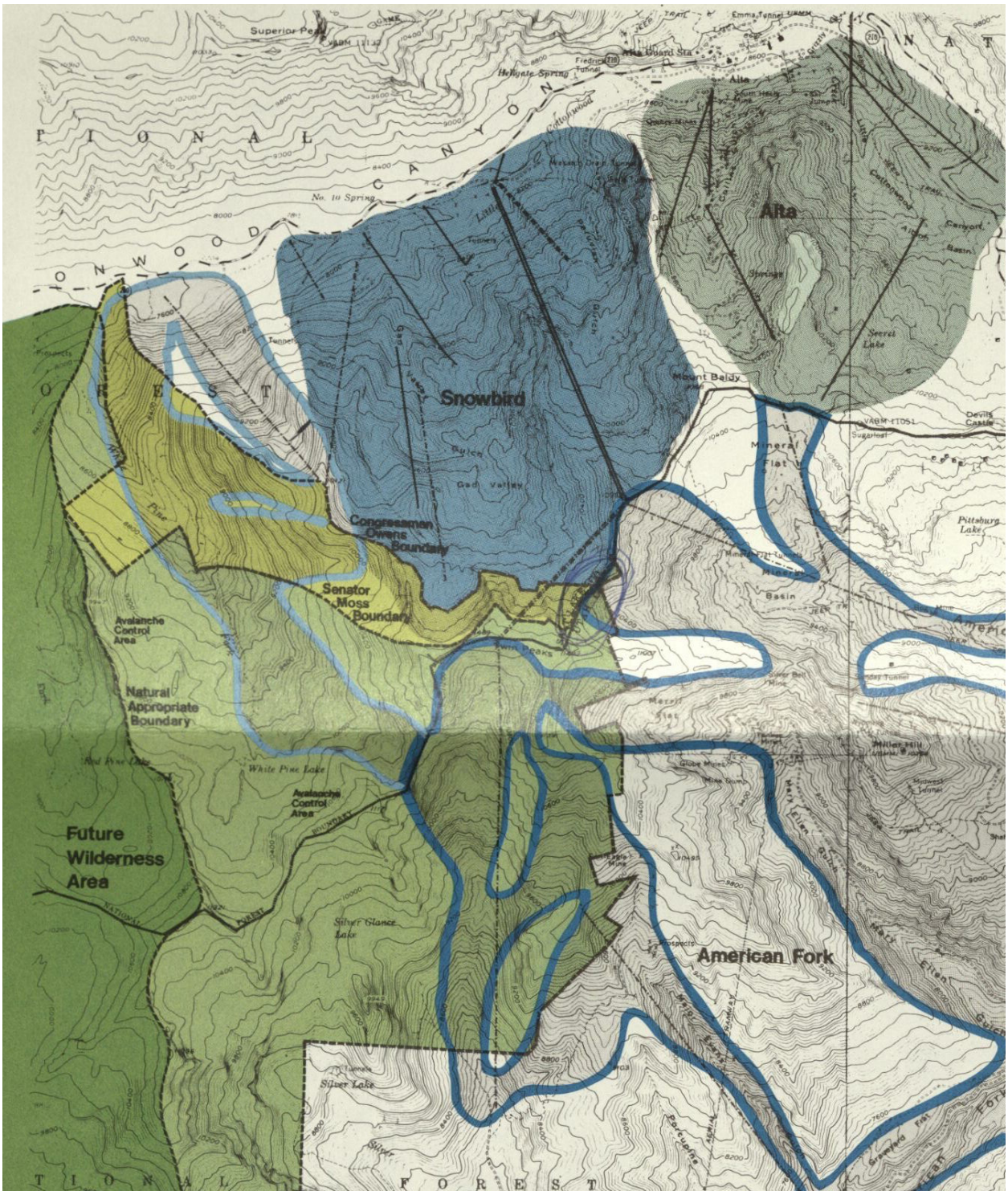
[312] Jared Farmer, *Glen Canyon Dammed: Inventing Lake Powell and the Canyon Country* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999), xv; Mark W. T. Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 298-301, 55-56, xvi-xvii. Several scholars have emphasized the inherently local nature of the politics of wilderness, even as these land management decisions took on national significance. For example, Kevin Marsh explores the importance of boundary making in the Pacific Northwest, showing how developers and environmentalists viewed wilderness legislation as a way to constrain and predict federal management. Stephen Haycox argues that a Tundra Rebellion akin to the Sagebrush Rebellion dominated Alaskan politics as residents tried to balance their dependency on federal funds with resistance to federal oversight. See Marsh, *Drawing Lines in the Forest: Creating Wilderness in the Pacific Northwest* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007); Haycox, *Battleground Alaska: Fighting Federal Power in America's Last Wilderness* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2016). For an overview of the general trajectory of the politics of wilderness in the United States, see Craig W. Allin, *The Politics of Wilderness Preservation* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2008); Michael Frome, *Battle for the Wilderness* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1997).

Wilderness Act, Congress should consider National Forest Primitive Areas established by the Forest Service for wilderness designation. Since the agency was still reviewing Lone Peak, officials believed any wilderness legislation would avoid this bureaucratic process. Therefore, the bill did not pass. In response to the public's enthusiasm, Moss introduced S-27 in 1973. This bill expanded the wilderness area's proposed boundaries, based on the fact that many Utahns had argued for the inclusion of Twin Peaks Summit, Box Elder, and a portion of White Pine Canyon, an area that garnered the most vociferous support. Congressman Wayne Owens then crafted HB-1602, which covered the same area but included all of White Pine. As Moss said at a hearing for his first bill, Utahns largely agreed that Lone Peak should become a wilderness area, but they struggled to find consensus on what its boundaries should be. White Pine was the sticking point for each version of the LPW bill, and as such, its story illuminates the differences and similarities between both sides of the wilderness debate.[313]

[313] Jedediah S. Rogers, *Roads in the Wilderness: Conflict in Canyon Country* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2013), 173; "Lone Peak Wilderness Status Report," Save Our Canyons Newsletter, April, 26, 1973, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 437, folder 13, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; J. Phil Campbell to Henry M. Jackson, August 4, 1972, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 369, folder 10, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; U.S. Congress, Senate, Subcommittee on Public Lands of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Hearing on S.3466*, 92nd Cong., 2nd sess., 1972, 8-15.



Map 5. Wilderness boundaries proposed by Sen. Moss and Rep. Owens. Map prepared by the Salt Lake Ranger District of the U.S. Forest Service (1973). Courtesy of Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Wayne Owens Papers.

Environmental and recreation-oriented organizations played a key role in mobilizing the public. As a longtime proponent of backcountry recreation, the Wasatch Mountain Club (WMC) spearheaded the movement for the LPW. Some members thought that the expansion of commercial skiing threatened their access to backcountry powder. In particular, they worried that the newly opened Snowbird Ski Resort would expand into White Pine, which was adjacent to the resort's western boundary. Members created a brochure and slideshow to make local political leaders aware of this threat and the general value of wilderness. As a result, they secured the Salt Lake County Commission's endorsement of a wilderness bill. The commissioners did not mention White Pine in their official announcement, but they did find the club's argument about scenery and watershed protection compelling. In addition, they hoped that a wilderness area would attract more tourists to the region. Environmentalists did not agree with this vision entirely. The leaders of SOC worried that more tourism might undermine the very qualities that made Lone Peak special. When legislators considered allowing heli-skiing within the boundaries of the LPW, SOC and the WMC opposed the idea, arguing that heli-skiing created unnecessary avalanche danger for backcountry skiers and undermined the pristine qualities of wilderness. Yet, the Utah Wilderness Association (UWA) took the opposite stance. Its leader, Dick Carter, wanted Congress to pass the LPW bill quickly; regulatory agencies would work out the details of heli-skiing later. Ultimately, neither the UWA or its opponents had their way entirely. The bill did not pass quickly, and some areas considered for wilderness designation remained open to heli-skiing. Nevertheless, environmental organizations agreed on the other premises of the LPW, including the inclusion of White Pine. The Audubon Society and Sierra Club joined SOC, the WMC, and UWA in pushing for more expansive wilderness boundaries at Lone Peak. Through

letter writing campaigns, media blitzes, and attendance at Congressional hearings, they forged a unified front of support.[314]

This unified front matched the relatively uniform demographic profile of those who called for White Pine's inclusion in the LPW. More specifically, the average supporter was a college-educated man who lived in the predominantly white, middle and upper-class neighborhoods along the Wasatch Front's eastern bench and enjoyed recreating in nearby canyons. Approximately 20 percent of the individuals who wrote to Moss and Owens advocating for White Pine's inclusion were members of the WMC. Of the sixty-eight individuals with identifiable professions, forty-four worked as professors, doctors, or dentists. Many lived in the neighborhoods near the University of Utah, including Yalecrest, Sugarhouse, and the Avenues. Thirty-four percent of the people who contacted politicians about the proposal were women. While this number represents a minority, it provided a stark contrast with the percent of women who advocated for the exclusion of White Pine, 10 percent. Women's letters illuminate the gendered ways in which they defined their roles as wilderness advocates. For example, Phyllis Robinson described herself as a housewife who was not politically active or a conservationist. She wanted the LPW to include White Pine, writing, "…I would like to know that my children can have the same wonderful times in the Wasatch Mountains that I have been fortunate enough to experience. Designating a wilderness area is the only way to assure this." Many women, such as Robinson, linked wilderness protection with their belief that they had a maternal obligation to protect their children. As historian Susan Schrepfer shows, postwar wilderness became a place

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[314] "Lone Peak," Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, box 5, folder 17, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; W. Sterling Evans to Frank E. Moss, March 13, 1972, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 369, folder 11, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Kelner, interview; 77; Letter to Frank E. Moss, August 31 1972, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 437, folder 6, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

where men and women constructed, performed, and taught gender roles. Many women did not divorce wilderness from human history; instead, they saw wilderness as an extension of their communities. This gendered interpretation of wilderness shaped constituents' advocacy in Utah, but feminine concepts of wilderness were not exclusive to women.[315]

Opponents and supporters of White Pine's inclusion had much in common. They tended to be men who lived in the same neighborhoods. Both typically identified as recreationists. Opponents, however, more often described themselves as alpine skiers who frequented Snowbird's slopes. Many backed the original LPW bill, which excluded White Pine, but they believed the canyon offered a key opportunity for Snowbird to expand and provide a better experience for alpine skiers. This reflected the fact that Snowbird, like SOC and the WMC, asked supporters to contact politicians. Despite these similarities, the two groups differed in terms of state residency and occupation. No one from outside Utah wrote to advocate for the canyon's wilderness status, but eleven skiers contacted Moss and Owens to oppose the designation. Perhaps more significantly, 46 percent of opponents worked for local corporations. Of those businesspeople, one was a woman, and 33 percent held executive positions within their companies. In contrast, three advocates of White Pine's inclusion were known business owners or corporate employees. Many prioritized Utah's economic health in their letters, arguing that

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[315] Phyllis Robison to Floyd K. Haskell, January 25, 1974, Wayne Owens Papers, box 35, folder 17, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Demographic analysis is based on constituent correspondence in the Wayne Owens Papers (box 20, folders 6-8; box 35, folders 17-18) and Frank E. Moss Papers (box 369, folders 10-16) at the University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections; Susan R. Schrepfer, *Nature's Altars: Mountains, Gender, and American Environmentalism* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 157-189, 230-237.

Snowbird's expansion remained essential for improving Utah's general business climate. In light of their profession, this view makes sense.[316]

Undoubtedly, individuals who engaged in the White Pine debate came from privileged backgrounds. As a predominantly white, male, and professional group with the means and time to recreate in the Wasatch, they represented only one segment of the population impacted by canyon management. Their experience fits within the larger narrative of American recreation on ski slopes and in wilderness areas. As Annie Gilbert Coleman details, skiing remained the purview of white, affluent Americans. This pattern only intensified as the cost of ski equipment, lift passes, and resort accommodations increased during the twentieth century. In a similar vein, scholars have analyzed the ways in which wilderness is a cultural construct grounded in the dynamics of race, class, and gender. Carolyn Finney described how the Wilderness Act reinforced the idea that wilderness was a white space. The law's creators assumed a universal, racially exclusive definition of nature. While African Americans have long maintained a vested and active role in preserving treasured landscapes, the advertisements, assumptions, and approaches of environmentalists promulgated the whiteness of wilderness. Other scholars, such as William Cronon, Margaret Brown, and Mark Spence, have highlighted how wilderness advocates, especially those concerned with national parks, have crafted the notion of an unpeopled landscape. By embracing the idea that the absence of people makes places wild, advocates supported the removal of Native Americans and rural whites from their land. Wilderness advocates often took this process of erasure a step further, not only eliminating

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[316] Demographic analysis is based on constituent correspondence in the Wayne Owens Papers (box 20, folders 6-8; box 35, folders 17-18) and Frank E. Moss Papers (box 369, folders 10-16) at the University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections; Ted Johnson to Frank E. Moss, March 15, 1973, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 20, folder 6, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

people and evidence of their habitation from the land, but also inventing wilderness that replicated stereotypical Western landscapes across the United States. In short, scholars have established the extent to which wilderness—both imagined and real—is an exclusive place.[317]

Critics and supporters of wilderness legislation also thought that wilderness connoted exclusivity. On the issue of White Pine, however, both sides argued that their preferred LPW boundaries offered the most inclusive future. Each responded to charges that their particular vision embodied elitism, too. Those pushing for White Pine's inclusion asserted that backcountry skiing offered a cheaper form of recreation and that the public at large enjoyed, or could enjoy, wilderness recreation. Boy Scout leader James Tuthill Weston said that wilderness would provide an affordable outlet for young men to exercise, rather than drinking alcohol or drag racing. SOC leader Gale Dick echoed this point. He stated that the popularity of dispersed recreation in national parks, which officials often regulated through limited permits, proved that many Americans were interested in experiencing wilderness. More families could afford to walk, snowshoe, or backcountry ski through wilderness than could purchase a lift ticket. A fifteen-year-old Boy Scout, Karl Fisher, emphasized that average Americans visited the backcountry. He

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[317] Coleman, "The Unbearable Whiteness of Skiing," 590-597; Carolyn Finney, *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 72-75, 114-117. For analysis of the relationship between culture and environment in American wilderness, see Nash*, Wilderness and the American Mind*; William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature,* ed. William Cronon (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995), 69-90; Mark Spence, *Dispossessing the Wilderness: Indian Removal and the Making of the National Parks* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 5-20; Margaret Lynn Brown, *The Wild East: A Biography of the Great Smoky Mountains* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 10, 140, 87; Jerry Frank, *Making Rocky Mountain National Park: The Environmental History of an American Treasure* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2013), 120-137; 149-190; James W. Feldman, *A Storied Wilderness: Rewilding the Apostle Islands* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011), 149-190; David Louter, *Windshield Wilderness: Cars, Roads, and Nature in Washington's National Parks* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 19-25.

criticized the perception that wilderness was "reserved for a handful of beard-growing professors with liberal viewpoints on political affairs or wealthy families able to afford horses and guides."[318]

The stereotype that Fisher described touched on elements of reality, particularly the fact that professionals with resources and leisure time tended to dominate Wasatch ski slopes. Yet, it did not encapsulate the interests of all wilderness advocates. At the same time, it provided a powerful image for opponents of White Pine, particularly those who preferred Snowbird expansion to White Pine designation. Snowbird's Ted Johnson outlined opponents' argument. He suggested that Americans' growing affluence and leisure time meant they would needed more developed areas, such as ski resorts, to recreate. Citing a recent study by the President's Outdoor Recreational Resources Review Committee, he highlighted the fact that wilderness users represented a small fraction of recreationists and that the majority were affluent, college-educated white-collar professionals. It seemed unreasonable to set aside more wilderness when most Americans preferred developed sites. Others reiterated the idea that backcountry skiers represented an elite minority. State legislator Ernest H. Dean called the larger wilderness area proposal "excessive for a special interest group" while the Salt Lake Area Chamber of Commerce labeled its opponents a vocal but "small minute handful of backpackers."[319] Norman C. Tanner captured the sentiment of many when he contacted Senator Moss to oppose an

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[318]Gale Dick to Wayne Owens, April 11, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 48, folder 12, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee, *S.3466*, 11-15.

[319] Ted Johnson to Senator Moss, March 15, 1973, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 20, folder 6, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Ernest H. Dean to Frank E. Moss, February 12, 1973, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 437, folder 3, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Fred S. Ball to Wayne Owens, April 11, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 20, folder 7, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

expanded wilderness area. Tanner had skied in Little Cottonwood Canyon since 1937 when Alta opened its first lift. He supported a smaller version of the LPW but believed that the "zealots for ecology" and "loners" were restricting multiple-use of public lands and access for the greatest number. He asked, "Why should a big area be reserved for a few hundred people when 10,000 could enjoy it?"[320]

In making their points, both sides of the debate revealed their own privileges and the ways in which those privileges shaped their assumptions about the public's best interest. Those who wanted a larger wilderness area echoed the ideas of an older generation of skiers, who saw skiing as a way of protecting young, white Mormons from the ills of the city. They assumed that the public had the physical ability and technical expertise to explore the backcountry. On the other hand, opponents of the White Pine addition defined dispersed recreation in general terms, missing the significant financial investment needed for alpine skiing as opposed to hiking or picnicking. Resort expansion promised better access for people of their socioeconomic class, but not necessarily for Utahns as a whole. Thus, in fighting charges of elitism, each group affirmed its privileged status.

Beyond exchanges about elitism, opponents and proponents of White Pine's inclusion debated larger questions of accessibility. Their discussions pointed to the centrality of the city in defining the LPW. More specifically, each side argued that the proximity of the city made their preferred land designation necessary. Prior to his election to Congress, Wayne Owens expressed concern that Utah's wilderness would soon disappear as a result of population growth. The LPW offered one of the last opportunities to preserve wilderness adjacent to a major American city.

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[320] Norman C. Tanner to Senator Moss, April 20, 1973, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 37, folder 7, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Norman C. Tanner to Senator Moss, January 17, 1974, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 37, folder 7, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

Gale Dick claimed that having a wilderness area in Salt Lake City's backyard was an asset. He stated, "accessibility is a virtue for wilderness as well as for high density skiing use."[321] SOC acknowledged that White Pine would never be "real wilderness"; the canyon showed evidence of past development and bordered the densely developed and popular resort scene in Little Cottonwood Canyon. They still thought that it should be part of the LPW, though, because it could provide a buffer between more isolated areas and commercial skiing. In their view, wilderness was an escape for the many, not an escape from the many. This idea echoed the early principles of the Wilderness Society, whose members focused less on creating a wild space set aside from human development and more on protecting wilderness areas from the trappings of modern consumerist recreation. The UWA voiced a similar idea. Dick Carter remarked, "…the cityscape looming below the study area may disrupt the primeval character as witnessed/experienced by a wilderness user, but it does not necessarily affect the internal holistic movements of the wilderness ecosystem."[322] In other words, wilderness had an educational and scientific value that extended beyond the solitude of backcountry recreationists. Wild and urban could coexist.

On the other hand, individuals who opposed a larger LPW, particularly those who supported Snowbird's expansion, argued that White Pine's urban qualities and proximity to the city meant it could never be true wilderness. Their perspective aligned with that of the Forest Service in the years immediately proceeding and following the passage of the Wilderness Act.

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[321] U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee, *S.3466*, 7-11; Dick to Owens, Owens Papers, Marriott Special Collections.

[322]Letter to Frank E. Moss, August 31 1972, Frank E. Moss Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections; Paul Sutter, "A Blank Spot on the Map: Aldo Leopold, Wilderness, and U.S. Forest Service Recreational Policy, 1909-1924," *Western Historical Quarterly* 29, no. 2 (1998): 207-208; Dick Carter to Chandler P. St. John, September 16, 1975, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 526, folder 6, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

Although later reversed, the agency followed a purity doctrine, meaning areas with a noticeable human footprint should not qualify as wilderness. Republicans and Democrats questioned the validity of the proposal as a whole. Senator Jake Garn claimed that air traffic, road noise, and recreation activity meant that the Lone Peak area did not merit special protection. Governor Cal Rampton articulated a similar idea, saying Lone Peak did not "fit the spirit of the Wilderness Act."[323] Most critics, however, backed the LPW but believed that including a portion or all of White Pine would form an unnatural border. According to Snowbird representatives, resort skiers would continue to spill into the area, undermining the purpose of wilderness, which they saw as solitude. Moreover, old jeep tracks and mines further negated the canyon's wildness. Like their opponents, advocates of a smaller wilderness area viewed White Pine as an important borderland, a way to protect areas that fit their definition of wilderness more completely. They disagreed on whether private interests or public agencies could create the best buffer zone.[324]

Conflict over watershed protection brought these tensions to a head. As in the case of the master planning process, Utahns debated whether dispersed or commercial recreation posed the greatest threat to Salt Lake City's culinary water. Assuming Snowbird would expand if Congress did not designate White Pine as wilderness, SOC compared the greed of developers to that of nineteenth-century miners. Ski boosters and miners both degraded the canyon environment, especially the streams used by fishers and water consumers. Snowbird representatives countered this claim. They cited a Montana study that showed that coliform counts increased in wilderness

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[323] Jake Garn, Statement on Proposed Lone Peak Wilderness Designation, September 29, 1975, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 526, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Cal Rampton, Lone Peak Wilderness Area Proposal Statement, 1975, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 526, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[324] Jason M. Cortell, Statement on Lone Peak Area Wilderness Bill S. 29, Wayne Owens Papers, box 48, folder 11, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

areas. In addition, they pointed to data in the canyons' 208 Water Study which suggested that "alpine skiing is a clean activity, having little or no measurable impact on water quality…"[325]

Officials from the Salt Lake County-City Board of Health did not comment on the effect of resort development, but they did worry about the expansion of dispersed recreation. A wilderness designation would just draw more attention to the area, increasing pollution caused by campers, hikers, and backcountry skiers. The Salt Lake City Department of Water and Waterworks, which shared the responsibility for watershed protection, took a similar stance. Although originally supportive of the LPW, the department announced its opposition in 1975, arguing that the entire wilderness proposal threatened the city's water. Officials explained that wilderness provisions would prohibit necessary sanitation facilities and increase dispersed recreation, increasing water pollution. Proponents and opponents of expansive wilderness disagreed about the environmental impact of different forms of recreation, but on a deeper level, they also disagreed about the necessary wildness of local canyons. Should Utahns try to preserve whatever wildness remained in the canyons, for the sake of urbanites physical, spiritual, and emotional wellbeing? Conversely, should they recognize that the canyons were already urbanized and integrate these wild spaces more thoroughly into the city sphere? The future of skiing brought the contradictions of wilderness to the forefront; Lone Peak was both separate from and entangled in city life, intensely used and seemingly unpopulated, and finally, a material reality and a cultural construction.[326]

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[325] "Help Save Our Canyons," Save Our Canyons, Gale Dick Papers, box 1, folder 9, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Cortell, Statement, Owens Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections.

[326] Harry L. Gibbons to Jerry Horton, October 30, 1974, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 526, folder 6, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Charles W. Wilson to Frank E. Moss, October 30, 1975, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 437, folder 3, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT. Historian Brian Allen Drake

The prospect of the LPW forced Utahns to grapple with the nature of borders, not only between city and canyon but also between resorts and the backcountry. Avalanches complicated these borders. Again, they challenged public officials, skiers, and resort operators to find a balance between wildness and control on local slopes. Evidence of a recent avalanche that had pummeled through White Pine loomed on the minds of advocates and critics of the canyon's wilderness designation. Environmental organizations argued that the canyon's avalanche threat made it unfit for Snowbird terrain. One advocate, Charles Mays, emphasized the limits of avalanche management. He thought that clearing runs would increase the avalanche risk. To Mays, resorts carried responsibility for protecting customers' safety, and he worried that Snowbird skiers might drift into uncontrolled avalanche runs in White Pine, particularly if only half of the canyon became wilderness.[327]

Snowbird representatives countered that avalanche danger meant that all of White Pine should be part of the resort. If Congress designated part or all of White Pine as wilderness, Snowbird would have to restrict ski expansion in the resort areas adjacent to the canyon because it could not control the possibility of avalanches in White Canyon threatening skier safety in border areas. They argued that avalanches destroyed vegetation and increased the fire hazard by leaving felled trees in their paths. Ted Johnson claimed that ski areas could mitigate this threat

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traces a similar narrative in his analysis of antistatist environmentalism. He argues that Barry Goldwater opposed the Wilderness Act because he worried that Americans would love wilderness areas to death, polluting them and gradually demanding more access and infrastructure. This concern was rooted in his own appreciation for wild spaces and his opposition to federal expansion. See Drake, *Loving Nature, Fearing the State: Environmentalism and Antigovernment Politics before Reagan* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2013), 47-48.

[327] Alexis Kelner, Memorandum, Wayne Owens Papers, box 48, folder 14, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Charles W. Mays to Congressman Owens, January 31, 1974, Wayne Owens Papers, box 35, folder 17, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

more than any other entity because they had the financial resources for extensive avalanche management. Dick Bass pointed to the success of controls at Alta and Snowbird, which he thought had a greater avalanche threat historically. This discussion shows that both sides recognized that wilderness was not an isolated place that humans simply visited; even temporary ski tracks could remold the snowscape, and consequently, White Pine's vegetation, soil stability, and stream channels. Opponents and proponents grounded their anthropocentric arguments in an understanding that humans remained an integral part of mountain ecosystems. They realized that skier tracks and avalanche paths defied the artificial boundaries of the proposed LPW, but they disagreed on which pattern they could control more easily. Which was more natural—the steady flow of skiers in an avalanche-blasted canyon with fire mitigation measures, or an area surrounded by urbanization but seemingly frozen in time? The perceived tension between city and wilderness shaped both views.[328]

Many believed that population growth on the Wasatch Front would lead inevitably to higher demand for alpine ski terrain. From their perspective, ski expansion would not only serve tourists and local skiers but also foster greater economic growth. Thus, economic concerns figured prominently in the debate over White Pine. Advocates of White Pine's inclusion insisted that their plan prioritized local needs and did not undermine the economy. The WMC stated, "We do not view wilderness as a scourge to be used against the economic enterprises on which our society depends nor as a diabolical tool for depriving the infirm and the aged of their birthright…wilderness can provide a link with our past which can adorn the present and the

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[328] Ted Johnson, Statement by Snowbird Recreation Area on Lone Peak Wilderness Bill S. 29, January 15, 1974, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 48, folder 11, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Dick Bass to Frank E. Moss, January 28, 1974, Frank E. Moss Papers, box 48, folder 11, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

future…"[329] Yet, the ways in which environmentalists and businesspeople described each other gestured toward a different reality, grounded in the idea that initiatives of economic growth and environmental protection could not complement each other. Only public health officials identified the LPW's potential to boost tourism and undermine the environment. Instead, each side painted a stark dichotomy. Many environmentalists highlighted Snowbird's greed whereas those who wanted a smaller wilderness area stressed the selfish elitism of their opponents. As Robert Fowler wrote, "It would be a tragedy at this point if Snowbird was deprived of reaching its full potential—merely to satisfy a few selfish people…The, so called, environmentalists' arguments are rarely based on facts or needs, but only on their members' emotions. In simple terms, they are greedy."[330]

Others focused on the positive benefits of smaller wilderness boundaries. Their comments reveal their mixed feelings about Utah's tourist industry. They remained anxious about other Americans' negative impression of their state and hoped Snowbird's expansion would continue to put a positive spin on the local ski scene. A larger resort could accommodate local families, ensuring that ski areas would not become so crowded and expensive that Utahns could no longer ski there. It would boost peripheral industries, such as construction; Snowbird announced that it had already spent 90% of its development funds locally. Even J. Warren King, who headed Snowbird's rival in Park City, supported White Pine development because he believed Snowbird could be a great partner in transforming Salt Lake City into the global ski

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[329] "Lone Peak," Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections.

[330] Harry L. Gibbons to Jerry Horton, Moss Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections; "Concerned about Your Canyons? Everybody Is!" Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections; Robert A. Fowler to Frank E. Moss, March 27, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 20, folder 7, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

capitol. One Snowbird supporter, M. Walker Wallace, explained that commercial skiing could have a negative environmental impact on White Pine, but as in the case of the then-flooded Rainbow Bridge National Monument, economic benefits outweighed environmental costs. Regardless of which side they took, Utahns implied a desire to keep the Wasatch local. In other words, they wanted to make a decision that would enhance local interests, whether economic growth, family ski access, or enterprise-free wilderness. Their concerns had a uniquely Utahn twist, particularly their interest in wholesome recreation and in turning around Utah's reputation. Utahns worried less about an influx of affluent skiers or federal bureaucrats and more about which local group would control the most Wasatch powder. This made the LPW debate decidedly urban.[331]

After significant negotiation over White Pine, Congress established the Lone Peak Wilderness in 1978 as part of the Endangered American Wilderness Act (EAWA) crafted by Senators Morris Udall of Arizona and Frank Church of Idaho. The LPW proposal seemed to hang in the balance not long before Congress passed the EAWA when two Utah Democrats who backed the LPW, Senator Frank Moss and Congressman Wayne Owens, did not win their election campaigns. Jake Garn beat Owens in a Senate race in 1974, and Moss lost to Orrin Hatch in 1976. This represented Utah's transformation into a reliably Republican state. Before leaving office, Moss had switched his position on White Pine, supporting the exclusion of the entire canyon from the LPW. He did not believe the canyon was true wilderness. As the

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[331] John David Rose to Dave Smith, March 23, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 20, folder 6, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; R.M. Robinson to Wayne Owens, March 27, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 20, folder 7, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; J. Warren King to Wayne Owens, April 6, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 20, folder 7, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; M. Walker Wallace to Wayne Owens, March 29, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 48, folder 12, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

"backbone of Utah's winter tourism," commercial ski expansion had to take precedence over backcountry skiing in White Pine.[332] This flip, in combination with the election of Republicans Garn and Hatch, concerned the environmental community. Garn and Hatch did express skepticism about the LPW. In particular, they worried that any wilderness designation (with or without White Pine) would undermine Salt Lake City's culinary water quality. Both eventually supported the bill, especially after Garn and the mayor of Salt Lake City, Ted Wilson, negotiated concessions for watershed management. Wilson had worked on older Lone Peak bills as part of Moss's staff. In the end, the LPW symbolized compromise. It excluded White Pine, and therefore, disappointed many backcountry recreations. At the same time, it embodied a shift away from the purity doctrine, a more expansive definition of wilderness, and a powerful check on commercial skiing. The same tension between development and preservation would shape plans for the Olympics, too. [333]

The View from Outside: The Olympics

After multiple failed attempts, Utahns continued to pursue a Winter Olympics bid. Salt Lake City coordinated bid proposals for the 1976, 1992, 1996, and 2002 games.[334] Criticism and support for these bids echoed the debates surrounding the LPW, particularly concerns about the

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[332] Kelner, interview; "Moss Calls for Decrease in Lone Peak Acreage," *Salt Lake Tribune*, March 20, 1974, Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, box 5, folder 26, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; For analysis of the EAWA, see Sara Dant, "Making Wilderness Work: Frank Church and the American Wilderness Movement," *Pacific Historical Review* 77 (May 2008): 237-272.

[333] Jake Garn, Statement on Proposed Lone Peak Wilderness Designation, Frank E. Moss Papers, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections; Orrin G. Hatch to Judith Lee Thomas, February 16, 1977, Wasatch Mountain Club Papers, box 17a, folder 8, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Kelner, interview transcript, 70-71, Cooley Oral History Project, Marriott Special Collections; Ted Wilson, telephone interview, Salt Lake City, UT, July 26, 2017.

[334] The rotation of the Winter and Summer Olympic Games changed in 1986. Although Salt Lake City, considered bidding to host the 1996 Olympics, the games actually occurred in 1998.

economy, environment, and elitism. In later bids, however, opponents increasingly focused on public spending, pushing locals to consider whether officials should spend tax dollars on Olympic development. Both sides returned to a perennial question: Would urbanizing the canyons help or hurt the city? To find a satisfying compromise for all involved, bid supporters redefined the economic and environmental boundaries of Salt Lake City.

Salt Lake City had an unexpected but short opportunity to host the 1976 Winter Olympics, unleashing a quick effort to garner support for a bid. The U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) selected Denver as its candidate to host the 1976 games. Yet, a new coalition, Citizen's for Colorado's Future, united a diverse group of Coloradoans concerned about the Olympics' potential impact. Urban minorities feared eviction, rural residents worried that their towns would become unsightly event venues, and citizens opposed public spending on Olympic projects. Many believed that Colorado was growing too quickly and becoming too much like Southern California. Ultimately, Colorado voters approved the restriction of state and city spending on the Olympics in two 1972 referendums. Some Lake City officials jumped at the chance to takeover Denver's spot as the U.S. nominee to host the Olympics. In the same month that Denverites turned down their selection, Salt Lake City's mayor, Jake Garn, fielded questions from the USOC on hosting the games. He responded to repeated charges that Utah's Mormon culture would hurt its chances for selection by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Garn argued that the Mormon majority constituted an asset; many Mormons could use their foreign-language training as missionaries to welcome guests. He assured the committee that Utah's laws did not discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnicity, or religion. He acknowledged that the city might

not pass a bond a to fund the games, especially in light of Denver's vote and the short time frame, but he hoped that the federal government might make up any shortfall.[335]

After Garn made his pitch to the USOC, local environmental organizations and Utahns organized an opposition movement. The newly formed SOC hosted silk-screening events to make bumper stickers that said "Utah Yes—Olympics No."[336] Some individuals who supported larger LPW boundaries also opposed an Olympic bid, but the bid drew the attention of a larger demographic, albeit one that still lived in predominantly affluent, white communities. Critics expressed their concerns to Utah's delegation in Washington D.C. Peter and Margo Hovingh claimed that the Olympics would support the selfish interests of businesspeople but hurt the average citizen. Ann Dick commented on the potential environmental impact of the games, especially in Salt Lake City's watershed. She wrote, "after 10 days of competition, the whole Olympic parody would depart, leaving us with a collection of outsized and unstable sport and housing facilities, scarred hillsides, a ruined watershed, and a canyon filled with asphalt, restrooms, and viewing stands."[337] In his correspondence with Jake Garn, James Webster responded to charges that Olympic opponents were elite, backcountry recreationists promoting their own self-interest. Instead, he painted business promoters as the truly selfish elites. Webster explained, "…I was rather disgusted with your comments regarding those people who wear waffle-stompers and backpacks …I happen to be one of those and resent that implication. We are

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[335] Childers, *Colorado Powder Keg*, 68-95; Jake Garn, Presentation by Salt Lake City, Utah for Winter Olympic Games, 1976, Wayne Owens Papers, box 79, folder 17, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[336] Alexis Kelner, *Utah's Olympic Circus* (1989), 28-31.
[337] Demographic analysis is based on correspondence in the Wayne Owens Papers (box 28, folders 23-27) at the University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections; Peter and Margaret Hovingh to Wayne Owens, January 6, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 28, folder 24, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Ann V. Dick to Wayne Owens, January 10, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 28, folder 24, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

continuously striving to save the mountain environment from those individuals who would destroy our canyons for the almighty dollar."[338] These concerns about environmental degradation, abandoned facilities, and public subsidies for private profit echoed the criticisms of Olympic opponents in Colorado.[339]

Other Utahns focused on the potential positive impact of the Olympics, including a better image, economy, and ski access. They argued that the Olympics would bring Utah out of the "hick category" and make Salt Lake City more cosmopolitan.[340] Bruce Miller suggested that the Olympics offered a chance to raise statewide incomes and to expand the economy without new smokestacks or larger military bases. Miller's comment reiterated themes from the LPW debate, namely the idea that skiing offered a "clean" economic future that would support the inevitable population boom of the Wasatch Front. Robert Pruitt also captured this sense of inevitability, stating that the region needed more ski facilities to accommodate the growing skier demographic. In his view, those who opposed the Olympics were selfish because constraining ski terrain growth would lead to higher lift ticket prices and overcrowded slopes. Again, charges of elitism pervaded Utahns' reactions. Individuals, such as Pruitt, commented on how the Olympics might impact skiing, but more often, people focused on how the games would impact the state on a

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[338] James W. Webster to Jake Garn, January 8, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 28, folder 24, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[339] For analysis of Olympic bids and development, see Stephen Wenn, Robert Barney and Scott Martyn, *Tarnished Rings: The International Olympic Committee and the Salt Lake City Bid Scandal* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2011); Allan Guttmann, *The Games Must Go On: Avery Brundage and the Olympic Movement* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984); John Gold and Margaret Gold, eds. *Olympic Cities: City Agendas, Planning and the World's Games, 1896-2012* (New York: Routledge, 2007); Laura Lee Katz Olson, "Power, Public Policy, and the Environment: The Defeat of the 1976 Olympics in Colorado" (PhD diss., University of Colorado, 1974).

[340] Memo to Sheldon from Peggy, January 19, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 28, folder 24, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Memo to "whoever writes Olympics letters" from Peggy, January 23, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 28, folder 24, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

larger scale. Thus, the canyons of the Wasatch Front began to take on greater significance beyond the local level; this signified a continuation of the marketing campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s.[341]

As in previous attempts at securing an Olympic bid, Salt Lake City failed to become the nominee for 1976. The plan fell apart after Wayne Owens announced that he would not support a bid. Owens worried that a bid would put Salt Lake City in debt. Without a guarantee of federal funding on such short notice, the bid seemed too risky. Moreover, the unknown environmental impact of the games made Owens, and many of his constituents, uneasy. After Owens made his announcement, Mayor Garn lost the momentum behind his bid, especially since the city needed federal funding to build a viable bid. Nevertheless, Olympic advocates remained undaunted and began coordinating a bid for the 1992 games in the mid-1980s. After making a pitch to Governor Scott Matheson, they formed a Utah Winter Games Feasibility Committee. The chairman, Dale Carpenter, argued for the inclusion of two environmentalists, which led to Alexis Kelner (SOC) and Karin Caldwell (WMC) joining the group. Kelner and Caldwell then convinced the committee to admit two more members, David Hanscom (Utah Nordic Ski Association) and Andrew White (Utah Audubon Society) but failed to secure spots for representatives from the Utah League of Women Voters or professional women's organizations. The committee chose a Canadian firm, Underwood McLellan Ltd., to develop a feasibility study. The firm had crafted Calgary's successful bid. Salt Lake City's mayor, Ted Wilson, traveled to Calgary to learn more about the Olympic process, and upon his return, created a new Olympic committee. While the

[341] Bruce Miller to Wayne Owens, January 12, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 28, folder 24, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Robert G. Pruitt to Wayne Owens, Wayne Owens Papers, box 28, folder 24, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

feasibility committee would continue to weigh the Olympics' merits, this new committee would actively pursue a bid.[342]

In the meantime, the older committee evaluated the feasibility report in 1985 and solicited public feedback on its findings. The initial report recommended concentrating Olympic venues in Little Cottonwood and Big Cottonwood Canyons. A new tunnel through the mountains between the canyons would connect venues. Planners explained that this plan fit within the Forest Service's multi-use policy and complied with the agency's master plan for the forest. They argued that development would improve water quality, which dispersed recreation had undermined in recent years. The planners insisted that new road access would alleviate traffic, and thus, improve safety. Finally, they questioned the wisdom of relying on carrying capacity evaluations in determining the canyon's development potential; in their view, these numbers could change as experts developed new technology and understanding of ecology. Planners suggested that the canyon's collaborative system of management—governed by state oversight of sewage in creeks, city control of watershed construction, and county enforcement of hillside zoning—would provide sufficient checks on environmental damage.[343]

This report, and the general prospect of the Olympics, triggered considerable criticism, particularly from local environmental organizations. Their concerns centered on environmental and economic issues. Several critics noted the report's trust in technological fixes and planning. Yet, if planners could not be certain about carrying capacity, how could they be sure of the

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[342]Statement of Representative Wayne Owens on the 1976 Winter Olympic Games, January 17, 1973, Wayne Owens Papers, box 79, folder 17, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Kelner, *Utah's Olympic Circus*, 28-38.

[343] David W. Eckhoff, Neil W. Richardson and Harry A. Connolly to Utah Winter Games Feasibility Committee, February 22, 1985, David Hanscom Papers, box 10, folder 2, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Utah Winter Games Feasibility Committee, "Executive Summary," 1985, Gale Dick Papers, box 3, folder 4, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

accuracy of their environmental impact evaluation? Alta employee Chic Morton questioned the wisdom of building snowsheds in the canyons, a key point of contention for the Olympics' opponents. In theory, these sheds would cover avalanche prone areas of canyon roads, allowing the roads to stay open. Morton did not think that snowsheds could mitigate all of the avalanche hazards in the canyons, and he asked planners to consider the tremendous damage that media coverage of avalanches could bring. The Audubon Society called for a longer, more transparent process that illustrated the potential benefits for taxpayers more concretely. Speaking on behalf of the WMC, Kelner worried that the majority of the feasibility committee members and the company they contracted for a report favored an Olympic bid from the start. Salt Lake Citian Charles Reichmuth reiterated the idea that the Olympics would only benefit the ski industry, claiming "we taxpayers are apt to foot the bill while a few ski tycoons become even richer." [344]

Local and state officials also remained unconvinced on the Olympic proposal. Representatives from the State of Utah Department of Natural Resources challenged the report's assertion that Olympic development would not impact wildlife. Crowds could create additional stress for elk, moose, deer, and sharp-tailed grouse during the winter when their energy reserves were already low. Jerry Barnes of Salt Lake City's Public Works Department thought the report was not thorough enough. Planners needed better data on the impact of development and sewage infrastructure on water pollution. Moreover, he believed that planners had underestimated the events' costs because they had not factored in the costs associated with environmental damage

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[344] "Critical Concerns," David Hanscom Papers, box 10, folder 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Charles Morton to Brad T. Barber, May 29, 1985, David Hanscom Papers, box 10, folder 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; "Environmentalists List Shortcomings of Olympic Games Research," *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 7, 1985, David Hanscom Papers, box 12, folder 6, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Charles F. Reichmuth, letter to editor, *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 19, 1985, David Hanscom Papers, box 10, folder 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

and restoration. Barnes pointed out the problem with basing the feasibility study on the Forest Service's master plan, suggesting that the Olympics would involve private land not considered in public land studies. The county had not yet released its more comprehensive master plan for the canyons. Barnes thought the feasibility committee should consider moving events to areas with a smaller potential environmental impact, such as Snowbasin in Ogden or Deer Valley in Park City. This would move Olympic events outside Salt Lake City's watershed. In short, the feedback from public officials and environmental groups conveyed concern over the hastiness of the study, faith in technology, questions of public spending, and above all, the environmental impact of canyon development.[345]

The feasibility committee measured the general public's opinion through a University of Utah poll and community meetings. This feedback directed the changes that the committee made in its final bid recommendation and echoed the concerns of environmentalists and officials. The statewide university poll taken in 1985 identified general support for the games. 79.2 percent of Utahns favored the games while 18.8 percent opposed them. Among those who wanted the Olympics, 90 percent said they would back the games even if they took place in the Cottonwood canyons while 67 percent approved of tunnel construction. 50 percent approved of a tax increase. Their top reason for backing the games was the opportunity to improve Utah's image, followed by jobs and tax revenues. Opponents overwhelmingly listed tax increases as their main reason for disapproving of the games and cited environmental degradation and facility crowding as secondary motivators. Consequently, most would still vote against the games if no events happened in the Cottonwood canyons or if the committee ended the tunnel proposal.

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[345] William H. Geer to Brad Barber, May 30, 1985, David Hanscom Papers, box 10, folder 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Public Works Department Comments: Utah Winter Games Feasibility Study, David Hanscom Papers, box 12, folder 6, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

Interestingly, the Olympic bid had the lowest support in Salt Lake County, where the games would occur. Community input meetings held in Salt Lake County illuminate why this was the case. 70 percent of opponents cited environmental degradation as their top concern while 44 percent said higher taxes worried them most. The intensity of their opposition correlated with how often people recreated in the canyons. In other words, Utahns with a personal connection to the proposed Olympic sites were more likely to challenge the bid process. For Utahns outside the county, the environmental impact of site development lacked exigency.[346]

Local resistance to the Olympics mattered in the long run. Officials agreed to eliminate snowsheds and the tunnel from the plan. They promised to complete an environmental impact study for each site as well as a comprehensive analysis of the games' overall impact. The committee also decided to coordinate an aggressive bid for the 1992 or 1996 games. The USOC, however, selected Anchorage as its nominee for the 1992 games (and later for the 1994 games once the IOC changed the games' order). Salt Lake City's bidding process illustrated the city's evolving relationship with the rest of the state. Utahns still saw the city as the dominant force within the state's economy, and by extension, a place that could turn around their state's negative reputation. At the same time, Utahn and Salt Lake Citian were not interchangeable identities. The politics of place—rooted in people's dependence on mountain water and personal experience in the canyons—meant that Salt Lake Citians had different priorities. For many, environmental protection remained more important than the state's economy.[347]

In 1988, the mayor Salt Lake City, Palmer DePaulis, formed the Salt Lake Winter Games Organizing Committee to organize a bid to host the 1998 Olympics. With the city's failed bids in

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[346] "Final Report," Utah Winter Games Feasibility Committee, 1985, Gale Dick Papers, box 1, folder 3, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[347] "Final Report," Utah Winter Games Feasibility Committee, Dick Papers, Marriott Special Collections.

mind, DePaulis insisted that any plans must protect watershed health, have significant private funding, garner public backing through a referendum, and include notable volunteer labor. DePaulis asserted that Salt Lake City had to break free of "Denver's shadow."[348] Recognizing the role of the environmental community in thwarting previous bids, DePaulis tapped three leaders, Ann Wechsler, Gale Dick, and Tom Berggren, to join the committee. Wechsler worried that the other committee members did not take environmental concerns seriously. When the public raised questions about the environment, the committee responded that it had at least three "watch dogs" who would monitor these issues.[349] This characterization bothered Wechsler. In correspondence with Dick, she claimed that other committee members expected the environmentalists to serve as their conscience; she suspected that they were merely "pledging allegiance" to the environment and that in reality, being a voice for the environment would be "quite a burden in an atmosphere of shameless boosterism." [350] In short, environmentalists worried that the committee was stacked against them once again.

Pressure from citizens and organizations concerned about development in the Cottonwood canyons ultimately prevailed. In November 1989, Utahns voted on whether the state should fund the construction of Olympic facilities. The USOC had already selected Salt Lake City as its candidate, but under new guidelines, potential host cities had to show they had sufficient facilities before the IOC made its selection. The referendum on public spending included several caveats. First, the Salt Lake Winter Games Organizing Committee promised to repay any public money spent on the Olympics through television and sales tax revenues. All

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[348] Kelner, *Utah's Olympic Circus*, 47; Winter Games Organizing Committee Meeting Minutes, December 2, 1988, Gale Dick Papers, box 1, folder 2, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[349] Ann Wechsler to Gale Dick, December 5, 1988, Gale Dick Papers, box 1, folder 2, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.
[350] Ibid.

events would occur in Park City, Salt Lake City, or Ogden. This meant that the issues related to the Cottonwood canyons—watershed contamination, tunnel construction, and road expansion—lost their sense of exigency. Some Utahns, however, wondered if local leaders could actually follow through with this promise. Specifically, the WMC opposed the new Olympic plan because they thought that IOC officials would takeover decision-making if Salt Lake City became the 1998 host and move events to the Cottonwood canyons. The club summarized its position, explaining, "Our membership is made up of labor, business, and professional people who have varied views on many issues, but all eleven hundred care greatly about their home—the Salt Lake Valley and Utah."[351]

While a smaller group of Utahns continued to express concern about development, organizations began to shift the focus of their critique, targeting the public spending referendum. Members of SOC criticized the bidding process because many did not trust Olympic boosters and wanted more concrete promises about protecting the Cottonwood canyons. The organization polled its members in 1989 to determine if it would attack the public spending referendum. Some members worried that this strategy would undermine SOC's credibility as an environmental organization. The majority supported an anti-public spending campaign, citing their belief that those who would profit most should pay for venue construction. They also thought that economic arguments would appeal to a broader Utah audience, as opposed to place-specific environmental concerns.[352]

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[351] "November Ballot," *Park Record*, November 2, 1989; Dan Pambianco, "Debate over Games Continues," *Park Record*, June 1, 1989; Kelner, *Utah's Olympic Circus*, 54; Press Statement, Wasatch Mountain Club, October 23, 1989, Larry Warren Papers, box 3, folder 16, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[352] Ann Wechsler to Gale Dick, February 10, 1989, Gale Dick Papers, box 1, folder 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

Ultimately, Alexis Kelner started Utahns for Responsible Public Spending (URPS), which used SOC membership rolls and polls to target voters who might oppose the Olympic agenda. This new organization worked with the WMC, distributing neutral literature that the WMC had created to explain both sides of the debate. Like participants in the county's master planning process, URPS appealed to popular ideas about taxpayers' rights in its campaign. Members critiqued seemingly extravagant public spending and the possibility that the public might subsidize affluent resort owners. In their minds, the Olympics were simply another way for elites to control local canyons. Activists saw taxation rhetoric as an effective tool for advancing an underlying environmental agenda. More specifically, they argued the Olympics would bring unwanted levels of development and canyon use, simply by drawing international attention to the region. What happened in Park City and Ogden could impact the Cottonwood canyons ecologically, economically, and politically. Boosters saw this in a positive light, but opponents wondered whether this change would truly benefit the majority, or at least canyon recreationists.[353]

The USOC nominated Salt Lake City to host the 1998 games, but Nagano, Japan won the bid. Yet, the IOC chose Salt Lake City to host the games in 2002. The city recycled many of its older ideas when it finally hosted the Olympics, building venues in Ogden, Park City, and the Salt Lake Valley. Salt Lake City's long journey to hosting the Olympics highlights broader themes about boundaries and identities at the state, regional, and city levels in the 1970s and 1980s. In some ways, the bidding process challenged Utahns to redefine the area that formed Salt Lake City in cultural, political, and economic terms. The idea that the Salt Lake City games

[353]Alexis Kelner to Friend of Save Our Canyons, September 12, 1989, Gale Dick Papers, box 1, folder 7, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Alexis Kelner to Sierra Club Member, Gale Dick Papers, box 1, folder 7, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

would be the Utah games, and therefore, receive public funding from residents throughout the state, affirmed that the city was becoming a stand-in for the state as a whole. While boosters had spun that relationship during the 1950s and 1960s, public funding made this concept a material reality. The Olympic movement represented one of the first tangible outcomes of the county's master plan, which envisioned the city as a larger space and called for limits on Olympic development in the Cottonwood canyons.

The city, however, did not disappear. Salt Lake Citians wanted to preserve the older boundaries of urban influence and control, inspired by early twentieth-century water science and instituted through state law. Skiing had reinforced Salt Lake Citians' belief that the canyons were *their* city park. In an effort to maintain the integrity of this relationship, they had to forge a new periphery that extended beyond Little Cottonwood and Big Cottonwood Canyons, integrating Ogden and Park City into the same urban sphere in more enduring and substantial ways. Thus, the Olympics provided a long-awaited tool for reinventing city, region, and state. This process of incorporation was not comprehensive. While Utahns blurred the meaning of Salt Lake City economically, politically, and culturally, they still envisioned different areas of the Wasatch Front and Wasatch Back as ecologically separate units. They were willing to define the city more expansively, so long as Salt Lake Citians did not suffer any environmental consequences. More than anything else, this decision asserted the primacy of Salt Lake City. It points to the importance of recreation spaces, debates, and policy in entrenching urban power in the twentieth-century West.

Epilogue

Utah skiers have made new tracks in search of fresh powder since the first lift opened in 1937. Yet, they often return to longtime favorites, skiing old trails to secret powder caches and passing on their best trails to the next generation. In a similar way, the story of skiing in Utah is as new as it is old. Skiers have broken new ground, building larger resorts, creating year-round playgrounds, and molding a tourist market. They still struggle to make skiing financially viable, to control avalanches, and to balance development with environmental health. Two places, Snowbasin and Bonanza Flat, illustrate the extent to which change and continuity have defined the Utah ski scene in the last twenty years.

Snowbasin emerged from the shadow of Salt Lake City resorts on the eve of the Olympics. Earl Holding, owner of Little America Hotels, Sinclair Oil, and Sun Valley Resort, purchased the ski area in 1984. He wanted Snowbasin to resemble its wildly successful counterpart in Idaho, Sun Valley. Holding believed that the ski area needed more private land to become a competitive, year-round destination resort. The previous owner, Pete Seibert, had planned on building a lodge on private land in Strawberry Bowl, but Holding preferred to build it in Wheeler Basin. The Olympics created the perfect opening to initiate this transformation. After the Salt Lake Organizing Committee promised not to host events in the Cottonwood canyons, it selected Snowbasin as the Super-G site. Holding requested a land exchange to expand Snowbasin in preparation for the games. In exchange for Forest Service lands, Holding would deed lands located outside the basin to the federal government. Land trades between federal agencies and private owners are fairly common. The size of Holding's request, however, raised concerns. He asked for 1,320 acres in 1987; the Forest Service began an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposal in 1989. Forest Supervisor Dale Bosworth approved a smaller

exchange of 220 acres in the final EIS in 1990. The EIS expressed the agency's concern about privatizing this particular acreage, almost all of which businesses and Ogdenites had donated to the federal government in the 1940s. To many, Snowbasin symbolized public access and environmental protection. The slopes belonged to the community.[354]

Not everyone supported the smaller land deal. Senator Orrin Hatch remarked, the "Forest Service decision was short-sighted, faulty, and unrepresentative of the desires and interests of the majority of Utahns."[355] Hatch claimed that the people who donated the land in the 1940s did so with the understanding that the Forest Service would pursue full recreational development of Snowbasin; he did not comment on how concerns about watershed contamination influenced the donation. Some Ogden business owners worried that Holding would sell Snowbasin if he found the exchange unsatisfactory. Even environmentalists critiqued the trade, arguing that no exchange should occur. Consequently, Regional Forester Stan Tixier reviewed the deal and approved a larger trade for 695 acres. Save Our Canyons (SOC) successfully sued the Forest Service over this deal on the grounds that the exchange's EIS was inadequate. The lawsuit stalled the exchange so Holding and his supporters regrouped. Utah Congressman James Hansen drafted a bill that would not only exempt the exchange from the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which required an EIS, but also double the acreage involved. Bosworth, who was now the regional forester, supported this 1,300-acre exchange because it would prevent the basin from

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[354] Stephen Trimble, *Bargaining for Eden: The Fight for the Last Open Spaces in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 22, 28-29, 74, 77-83, 89; Statement of Citizens' Committee to Save Our Canyons: H.R. 2402—Snowbasin Ski Resort Land Exchange, November 9, 1995, Ann Wechsler Papers, box 1, folder 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; "Snowbasin Traces Roots to City Deal," *Ogden Standard-Examiner*, December 10, 1995, Ann Wechsler Papers, box 1, folder 9, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[355] Orrin G. Hatch to Ronald J. Younger, May 21, 1990, Ronald Younger Papers, box 1, folder 16, Weber State University Special Collections, Ogden, UT.

becoming a patchwork of private and public land. Again, supporters argued that a larger exchange would enable a better Olympic experience. Hansen noted that temporary permits for Olympic facilities on public lands would not attract enough private investment for construction projects.[356]

The games would also create an important launching point for Snowbasin's transformation into a world-class resort. As the CEO of the Salt Lake Organizing Committee, Mitt Romney, noted, new facilities and a larger land base were not vital for the Olympics, but "It's nice that Mr. Holding will be able to have a more complete resort to showcase."[357] This idea fit within the larger scheme of the Olympics campaign, which promoted the idea that Utah was a cosmopolitan, snowy collection of cities rather than a rural desert. The exchange offered an ideal chance to advance this imagery, linking Salt Lake City with peripheral communities and transforming a family-style ski area into a world-renown resort. With these factors in mind, Congress approved the exchange as part of the Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act in 1996, and the Forest Service finalized the terms of the exchange in 2000.[358]

Snowbasin and Forest Service representatives insisted that the exchange and the construction it enabled did not jeopardize the local environment. The Forest Service spun the exchange as a continuation of the Snowbasin's legacy of stewardship, which dated back to the original land donations in the 1940s. The agency assured the public that environmental

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[356] Hatch to Younger, May 21, 1990, Younger Papers, Weber State University Special Collections; James V. Hansen to Christopher Mallett, July 2, 1996, Ann Wechsler Papers, box 1, folder 5, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Trimble, *Bargaining for Eden*, 79-84, 89, 97-98.

[357] Christopher Smith and Linda Fantin, "Snowbasin Land Swap Finally Signed," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 24, 2000, Michael Joseph Gorrell Papers, box 50, folder 9, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[358] "Salt Lake City Is a Very Cool Place. Honest." Salt Lake Convention & Visitors Bureau, Mike Korologos Papers, box 10, folder 7, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Trimble, *Bargaining for Eden*, 119.

evaluations and public input would still shape development, despite Snowbasin's NEPA exemption. Hansen reiterated this point, saying local and state officials would monitor any watershed impact. Snowbasin also emphasized the idea that ski development could enhance rather than undermine environmental stewardship. The resort announced that its long-term goal was to create a year-round, financially viable resort. In pursuing this vision, it would minimize the impact of construction on wildlife and vegetation. The new buildings, gondolas, snowmaking machines, quad lift, and helipad would blend with the local landscape. For instance, Snowbasin announced that it would use local stone for buildings and would rely on wells for snowmaking so that it would not need to construct reservoirs. Snowbasin promised to restore disturbed areas. In other words, Snowbasin developers believed that they could not only control the basin's environment through restoration but also that they could enhance its natural beauty through aesthetically pleasing projects. Statements by the Forest Service and Snowbasin suggest that both saw economic growth and environmental health as complementary. This belief mirrored the logic of early land donors, who did not see any contradiction between ski area construction and watershed protection. Representatives of the Forest Service and Snowbasin differed, however, in how they valued the public nature of Snowbasin. Now, many politicians, business boosters, and ski representatives saw private control as the best way to bolster the local economy and environment. SOC leaders thought that this idea represented the most disturbing aspect of the trade. They disliked the fact that the land was not necessary for the Olympics and that developers had a NEPA exemption, but they worried more that the exchange opened the door for the privatization of public lands adjacent to other resorts.[359]

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[359] United States Department of Agriculture, "The USDA Forest Service and the 2002 Winter Olympic Games: Snowbasin and Land Exchange Update," Forest Service Intermountain Region, January 1997, Michael Joseph Gorrell Papers, box 58, folder 8, University of Utah J. Willard

Issues of private control, luxury development, and public access continued to dominate the politics of play in the twenty-first century. The story of another popular recreation space, Bonanza Flat, illustrates a different approach to stewardship. At 1,350 acres, the flat is roughly the same size as the lands involved in the Snowbasin exchange. It was originally owned by the United Park City Mines Company, which considered developing it for golfing and skiing. When this plan never materialized, the flat grew in popularity among backcountry recreationists from nearby Park City and Salt Lake City. A 2017 survey found that 41.13 percent of recreationists lived in Park City while 41.77 percent lived in Salt Lake County. They identified non-motorized recreation, particularly cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and hiking, as the most appropriate activities for the flat. In other words, the flat functioned as backyard for urbanites who valued the easy access and undeveloped nature of the area.[360]

By 2016, however, the flat's owner, Wells Fargo, revived the mining company's original vision and planned on selling the area to a luxury home and golf course developer. Wells Fargo gave the Town of Park City the opportunity to purchase the land and turn it into a permanent public space, but to accomplish this goal, the town had to raise $38 million by June 15, 2017. The town quickly organized a bond measure, which Parkites approved in November 2016. This effort contributed $25 million toward the flat's cost. Commenting on the measure's success, Summit County Councilman Chris Robinson said, "This is really an asset and a legacy not just

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Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Mallett to Hansen, July 2, 1996, Wechsler Papers, Marriott Special Collections; USDA, "The USDA Forest Service and the 2002 Winter Olympic Games," Gorrell Papers, Marriott Special Collections; "The Land and the Environment," Snowbasin, Larry Warren Papers, box 8, folder 8, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT; Trimble, *Bargaining for Eden*, 136-139; Gale Dick to Ann Wechsler, April 27, 1996, Ann Wechsler Papers, box 1, folder 1, University of Utah J. Willard Marriott Special Collections, Salt Lake City, UT.

[360] "Park City plans for Bonanza Flat won't lift ski industry," *Park Record*, April 6, 2018; Heinrich Deters, "City Council Staff Report," Town of Park City, August 31, 2017, accessed October 3, 2018, https://www.parkcity.org/home/showdocument?id=44567.

for this county, not just for this city, but for the whole region."[361] Other government entities agreed and committed to chipping away at the additional $13 million that Park City needed to purchase the flat. Summit County, Wasatch County, Midway, and the Utah Reclamation Mitigation and Conservation Commission contributed. The Metropolitan Water District of Salt Lake & Sandy and the Salt Lake City Department of Public Utilities added $2.5 million toward the purchase, noting that Bonanza Flat formed part of the Salt Lake Valley's water supply. Salt Lake County waivered on whether it should back the purchase; the county's council thought that it should spend its funds within the county's boundaries. These contributions left Park City approximately $2.6 million short of its goal only three weeks away from the June deadline.[362]

Nonprofit organizations played a key role in driving the purchasing campaign and in filling this last minute shortfall. From the start, Wendy Fisher, Executive Director of Utah Open Lands, spearheaded grassroots fundraising for Bonanza Flat on behalf of her organization and as part of the eleven-member nonprofit coalition, Save Bonanza Flat. This coalition included organizations with national roots, such as The Nature Conservancy and Sierra Club, and local entities, including Friends of Alta, Wasatch Mountain Club, SOC, Wasatch Backcountry Alliance, Winter Wildlands Alliance, Summit Land Conservancy, Mountain Trails Foundations, and Trails Utah. Salt Lake County ultimately committed $1.5 million to the fundraising drive in June. Shortly after this final push, the Town of Park City purchased Bonanza Flat. The town is

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[361] Mike Gorrell, "Salt Lake County Won't Help Pay for Bonanza Flats," *Salt Lake Tribune*, March 15, 2017; Ryan Morgan, "Hundreds celebrate success at saving Bonanza Flat," *Deseret News,* June 16, 2017.

[362] Park City Town Council Meeting Minutes, March 9, 2017, Park City Municipal Corporation, Park City, UT; Brian Maffly, "Businesses race to rescue Bonananza Flats," *Salt Lake Tribune*, May 31, 2017; Tamara Vaifauna, "Supporters of Bonanza Flats make aggressive push to raise $2.6 million by June 15 deadline," Fox 13 Now, May 31, 2017, accessed October 4, 2018, https://fox13now.com/2017/05/31/supporters-of-bonanza-flats-make-aggressive-push-to-raise-2-6-million-by-june-15-deadline.

now working with other government and nonprofit partners to plan for the area's future. It must find a way to balance Bonanza Flat's many purposes—watershed health, open space, wildlife habitat, backcountry recreation, and more—for different stakeholders. The town is considering restrictions on hunting, motorized use, and ski lifts. This project will require a level of cross-jurisdictional collaboration akin to the partnerships that shaped early commercial skiing on the Wasatch Front. The environment and the wandering skier, hiker, and biker have no use for political boundaries. Fisher summarized this challenge best: "What is incumbent on us who end up being protectors of the land, who buy open space, we have to find ways we can come together to help each other…The user isn't defining what county they are in or what boundary they are in. When they are on a trail and it crosses into another county or crosses a city line, they are not thinking about it."[363]

The stories of Snowbasin and Bonanza Flat reflect the dominant patterns of Utah's ski history. At Snowbasin, local developers partnered with federal actors to expand commercial skiing. They believed that technology and economic growth would not only tame the environment but also enhance it. Holding and members of the SLOC engaged in a long process of mainstreaming and Americanizing Utah by trying to make the state a nationally and internationally competitive destination for skiers. Holding (and Seibert before him) embodied the broader corporate consolidation of the ski industry occurring within and beyond Utah. On the other hand, Bonanza Flat epitomized continued local control of recreation spaces. Save Bonanza

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[363] Utah Open Lands, accessed October 4, 2018, https://www.deseretnews.com/article/900027944/a-village-came-together-in-bonanza-flat-conservation-effort.html; "Salt Lake County Pledges $1.5M to Preserve Bonanza Flat," KUTV, June 15, 2017, accessed October 5, 2018, https://kutv.com/news/local/salt-lake-county-pledges-15m-to-preserve-bonanza-flat; Amy Joi O'Donoghue, "'A village came together' in Bonanza Flat conservation effort," *Deseret News*, August 12, 2018.

Flat represented an older tradition of grassroots movements led by urban environmental and recreation groups focused on preserving backcountry access. The coalition's government partners also built on legacies of the past, recognizing the economic, political, and ecologic ties of the valley and its watershed. The Bonanza Flat purchase further solidified and expanded the boundaries of urban influence. Finally, by channeling urban capital into the mountains to transform private lands into public spaces, the flat's supporters followed in the footsteps of the ski industry's founders.

Despite their differences, the narratives of Snowbasin and Bonanza Flat point to common themes. Utahns began to differentiate between public and private space more definitively in the late twentieth and early twentieth-first centuries. Cross-jurisdictional collaboration still defined the nature of ski landscapes, but more often, stakeholders made sharper delineations between who could access and control different slopes. Conflict between backcountry and downhill skiing impacted this shift, especially as Utahns saw these types of skiing as incapable of sharing the same powder. Slopes remained exclusive places. By building lifts in backcountry terrain, eliminating hunting, or funneling public funds into traditionally privileged outdoor spaces, stakeholders entrenched the exclusivity of public and private slopes. Points of contention still existed. Supporters and opponents debated whether development or preservation best served the interests of the urban valleys. In other words, the city remained at the center of these discussions, and by extension, at the center of ski slopes, the Wasatch Front, and Utah.

Prior to the Bonanza Flat campaign, urbanites had refashioned place and power on the Wasatch Front during a century of skiing. They crafted new political, environmental, cultural, and economic ties, forging mountain and valley into a singular urban space. "America's Ski City" became an interchangeable term that referred to Ogden or Salt Lake City, suburb or

downtown, resort or backcountry. By creating a new city grounded in leisure, Utahns also attempted to make a new place for themselves on the national and international stages. With some effectiveness, they complicated the exceptionalism of Utah and the American West. Their efforts resulted in a multi-layered convergence—of wild and urban, Mormon and American, public and private, and local and outsider—that reveals the centrality of leisure in twentieth-century America. George Watson noted that Alta was "reborn on skis," but in reality, Utah was reborn, too.[364] As the stories of Snowbasin and Bonanza Flat show, Utahns continue to defy expectation. Their attempts at finding the perfect balance between risk and control, wilderness and development, distinctiveness and assimilation, and local power and federal oversight illuminate an unpredictable and contradictory Western landscape that stretches far beyond the Wasatch slopes.

[364] Jackson Hogen, "The Lodge Where Old Meets New," *Skiing Heritage Journal*, March 2010, 19.

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