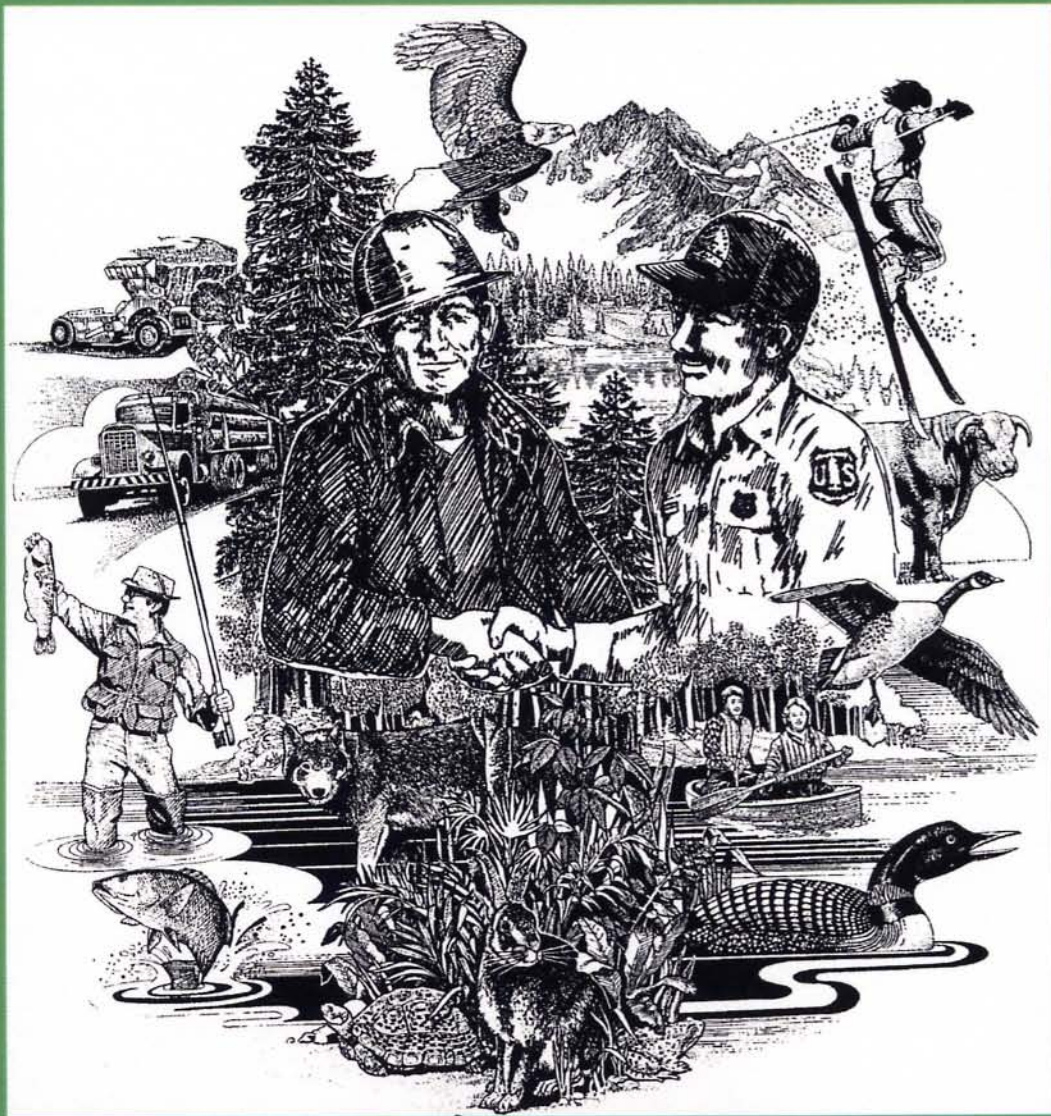


**Social Assessment:
Kootenai National Forest
Update: 2003**



January 26, 2004

“A FOREST, LARGE OR SMALL,
MAY RENDER ITS SERVICE IN MANY WAYS.”
GIFFORD PINCHOT 1905: A PRIMER OF FORESTRY



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Social Assessment: Kootenai National Forest

Update: 2003

Final Report

January 26, 2004

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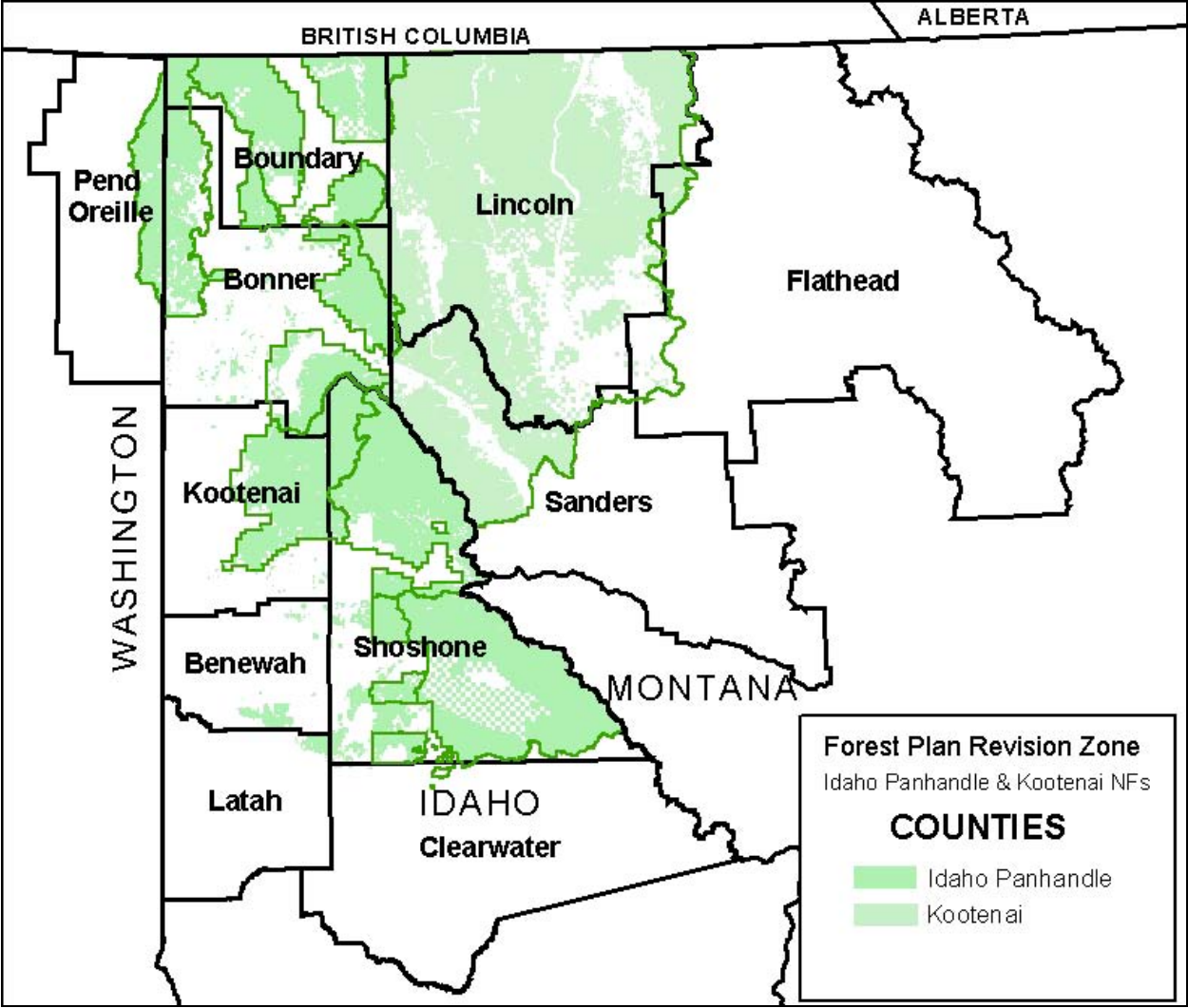
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Figure 1: Forest Plan Revision Zone



ABSTRACT

In support of revision of the existing Forest Plan, the Kootenai National Forest (KNF) conducted a study to update the 1995 Social Assessment of the Kootenai National Forest. The update had several specific purposes: (1) to examine perceived benefits and uses of United States Forest Service (USFS) lands in Lincoln and Sanders counties; (2) to assess communication and collaboration between Lincoln and Sanders County governments and the staff of the Kootenai National Forest; (3) the emergence of new constituent groups with interests in natural resource issues; (4) socioeconomic data regarding community dependency on Kootenai National Forest resources; and (4) assessments and expectations about public involvement methods for Forest Plan revision. Selected socioeconomic data in the 1995 report were updated and additional demographic, economic, and social data were compiled for the update report. Primary data were also collected using a discussion guide. Sixty-eight persons participated in the data collection effort. These individuals included community opinion leaders as well as representatives of stakeholder groups with diverse perspectives on natural resource management.

The update reports several important socioeconomic changes since completion of the 1995 social assessment. Demography, the structure of local economies, and the social environment for cooperative problem solving are among the notable changes. Natural resource dependency continues to characterize local economies, but these conditions appear to be changing. The study reports the emergence of several new stakeholder groups with interests in natural resource issues, including some specifically concerned with the process of Forest Plan revision. The findings describe a more favorable climate for cooperation and collaboration among these groups, despite long-standing historical conflicts.

Residents perceive a variety of economic, recreation, lifestyle, and other benefits from the KNF. The KNF is perceived as also contributing to environmental quality, wildlife habitat, and the scenic beauty of the region. The study also reports that another perceived benefit is contribution the KNF makes to the social environment of the study area. These benefits derive from the institutional contribution of the KNF (leadership, expertise, and infrastructure resources) as well as the contribution of individual staff to the social institutions of their communities. These social contributions are an important asset of the KNF for these communities.

Since the 1995 Kootenai National Forest Social Assessment, there is a notable improvement in the working relationship between the KNF, county government, and other community constituents. Cooperation and collaboration between the KNF and local government is evaluated as positive and improving. The study suggests that leadership, improved communication, and improved assessments of trust in forest management have contributed to the changes in the working relationships between the counties and the KNF. These improved relationships have positive implications for future public involvement efforts.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This update for the 1995 Kootenai National Forest Social Assessment brings up to date relevant secondary source data and presents new primary data to address the following topics.

1. The interaction of county governments with KNF managers.
2. New stakeholder/constituent groups and their place in the mix of groups in Lincoln and Sanders counties.
3. The nature of community-forest interactions, including perceived benefits of National Forest lands for local residents.
4. Community assessments of forums for public involvement.

Primary data to address these topics were collected using a discussion guide with an open-ended format. This was intended to allow discussants to structure their responses to express their points of view. Sixty eight persons participated in these discussions.

Discussants represent diverse stakeholder groups including, environmental interests, recreation groups, local businesses, outfitters and guides, loggers, mill owners, economic development staff, local government officials, teachers, USFS staff, and other community opinion leaders. Some discussions were conducted with small groups, but the majority of the discussions were with individuals. The length of these discussions ranged from about forty-minutes to more than three hours. The average discussion lasted about one and a half hours. The findings reported in this update report are based on an analysis of the data from these discussions combined with a review of secondary source data. Below key findings from each chapter are summarized.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

This chapter summarizes selected regional and local literature relevant to this update. The regional studies are the Columbia Basin Socio-Economic Assessment (CBSEA) the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Project (ICBEP), and the Northwest Regional Comprehensive Economic Strategy (NRCES). The local studies are the Idaho Panhandle National Forest Social Assessment, and the original 1995 Kootenai National Forest Social Assessment. Relevant findings from each of these studies are summarized to update the social, economic, and demographic setting for this update. The ICBEP categorized communities based on multiple criteria to compute a “specialization ration.” The criteria for computing the specialization ratio are community isolation, proximity to public lands, and employment specialization in natural resource industries. Specific communities were examined for their specialization ratios and the higher the specialization ratio the higher the potential for socioeconomic impacts. Most communities in Lincoln and Sanders counties received “high” specialization ratios in at least one category. Noteworthy findings from CBSEA include communities in Lincoln and Sanders counties have “lower” vitality scores among all counties studied for the CBSEA; and, the two project counties also cluster with other rural counties in having lower vitality scores. Each of these findings suggests these counties have a higher potential for socioeconomic impacts related to forest management decision making. The NRCES reports on changes in regional populations and economic trends. This report also suggests some vulnerability to socioeconomic impacts based on demographic changes and economic conditions. Collectively these regional studies suggest some vulnerability to socioeconomic impacts within Lincoln and Sanders counties.

Comparisons of the Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF) and Kootenai National Forest 1995 Social Assessment suggest some differences and similarities in the communities

adjacent to these forests. Although a thorough analysis of these similarities and differences is beyond the scope of this summary review, important dimensions for comparison are land ownership patterns, population structure and dynamics, income, employment, and wildland dependency measures.

Chapter 2: County Government and the Kootenai National Forest

The KNF and the two counties have mutual interests in the management of federal lands. Local governments receive important revenues from Payments to States funds as well as from Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT). These provide important fiscal benefits to citizens of the two counties. Cooperation and collaboration between the KNF and the counties has shown a significant change since the 1995 Social Assessment. Trust in leadership has improved along with overall assessments of the working relationship between KNF and the County Commissioners. The contributions of KNF personnel to leadership and civic involvement are recognized as an important asset for community well-being. The existing working relationship with the counties is a basis for continued improvement in KNF relationships with both counties.

Chapter 3: Natural Resource Interest Groups

Since the 1995 Social Assessment several new natural resource interest groups have emerged in Lincoln and Sanders counties. The groups identified by this work are the Resource Advisory Council (RAC), TIMBER (Totally Involved in Managing Better Economic Resources), The Yaak Valley Forest Council, local watershed groups, Project 56, and the Lincoln County Recreation Association. The RAC is a citizen's group that was mandated by Payments to States legislation. This group is evaluated by its participants as providing a cooperative working environment for addressing natural resource management issues among participants with diverse views. TIMBER is a group based in Eureka that has formed to focus on providing community input during the process of Forest Plan revision. The group is composed of a range of community interests with some limited participation by environmental interests. The Yaak Valley Forest Council is based in the Yaak Valley, but it has members in other parts of Lincoln and Sanders counties. The focus of this group is the protection of wilderness and especially roadless areas, although they have concerns about the spectrum of forest management issues. They have worked with other interest groups to identify potential areas of cooperation to resolve long-standing differences between environmental and industry interest groups. Watershed councils are most active in Sanders County where they work to maintain and restore stream water quality. In Lincoln County the Kootenai River Network has new leadership that is working with other community groups to address water quality issues as well as the Kootenai River as a community asset. These watershed groups work with the KNF on selected issues where forest management affects watershed issues. Project 56 is based in Lincoln County and has specific concerns about local control of resource management. This group indicates a specific interest in the process of plan revision and advocating for access issues and increased use of timber and other natural resources on National Forest lands. The Lincoln County Recreation Association is in the initial stages of development as an organization. The interests of this group are in advocating for more consideration of recreation issues in the management of forest resources. The relationships between some groups suggest the potential for improved cooperation to address existing conflicts about the use and management of forest resources.

Chapter 4: Community Forest Interactions

The relationship between the KNF and surrounding communities has demographic, economic, social, and cultural characteristics. These characteristics are briefly summarized in this chapter. Among the noteworthy demography changes are an increase in the median age for Lincoln (42.1 years) and Sanders (44.2 years) counties in comparison to the state as a whole (37.5 years) as well as an increase in the over 50 age cohort and a decrease in the under 25 age cohort. In the 1990-2000 decade Montana's population increased 12.9 percent while Sanders County increased 18 percent and Lincoln County 7.8 percent.

Economic trends affecting other rural communities of the west are also present in Lincoln and Sanders counties. These include lower than average household incomes, an increase in non labor sources of income as a share of personal income, increases in service sector jobs, and decreases in jobs associated with natural resource extraction. Unemployment in both counties has traditionally been above the state average with seasonal patterns that suggest the influence of employment in natural resource industries. Recent mill closures in Libby have contributed to Lincoln County unemployment rates in the range of 14-18 percent in the spring and summer of 2003. Other data also suggest a dependency on natural resource industries as indicated by IMPLAN income analysis. This preliminary analysis suggests that for Lincoln County 18.41 percent of total labor income is accounted for by natural resource industries (grazing, timber, mining, government, and recreation). Timber accounts for the largest share of this total with 13.63 percent. In Sanders County, natural resource income accounts for 8.76 percent of total labor income. Timber accounts for 4.62 percent of this total.

Social conditions are also changing. Residents point to decreases in school enrollments as an important local indicator of social change. In the 1993-2003 decade total enrollment in the state decreased 6.2 percent, but in Lincoln County the decrease is 18.5 percent and in Sanders County 4.6 percent. Per capita public assistance payments are also generally increasing. In Lincoln County per capita public assistance was \$634 in 1997, dipping to \$611 in 2000 and then rising to \$866 in 2002. In Sanders County the 1997 per capita public assistance amount was \$547. This decreased to \$462 in 2000 and then increased in 2002 to \$622. The persons in poverty in Lincoln County increased from 14.1 percent in 1989 to 19.2 percent in 1999. Sanders County numbers show a decline from 19.6 percent to 17.2 percent for the same years. The Montana poverty rate decreased from 16.1 percent in 1989 to 14.6 percent in 1999. Libby's designation as a superfund site and health problems associated with asbestos exposure from the W.R. Grace mines is a noteworthy characteristic of the changed social environment from the 1995 Social Assessment.

The KNF makes several noteworthy institutional and social contributions to communities in Sanders and Lincoln counties. The institutional contributions are leadership resources, professional expertise, infrastructure capabilities, and fiscal contributions, especially from Payments to States funds. The social contributions of USFS personnel to the communities are perceived as enhancing overall community resources to adapt to changing conditions. Residents also suggest that they receive a variety of other benefits from the presence of the KNF in their counties. These perceived benefits include recreation, wildlife and plant habitat, scenic and existence values, environmental quality, lifestyle enhancements, and economic opportunities.

Chapter 5: Public Involvement: Assessment and Expectations

There are several consistent themes and issues in the data regarding public involvement and information needs. Participants indicate that ample opportunity exists for participation if

residents choose to do so. They also acknowledge that many choose not to participate for one or a combination of the following reasons: their lives are too busy; they believe forest management issues do not affect them; or, they assess the process of public involvement as not meaningful. Some residents also argue that the public comment process has been “captured” by environmental and non-local interests. These residents suggest they are at a disadvantage in relationship to those who know the process and use that knowledge to manipulate it. The methods for public involvement are evaluated differently. Public meetings are often described as “public performances” in which there is limited useful discussion or exchange of ideas about topics of interest to participants. Other methods such as open houses, field trips, and letter writing are each evaluated as having different strengths and weaknesses. Publics generally believe they have good access to Rangers and the Forest Supervisor; and, these are assessed as meaningful channels for public input. These evaluations suggest the need to use multiple methods to reach diverse constituents.

Residents also expressed desire for other changes in agency interactions with communities and individuals in the two counties. They wish to have more information from the USFS about plans, management decisions, and natural resource issues. They also desire more leadership from the agency to identify and resolve natural resource conflicts as well as more leadership to address community problems and issues. There is also a strong desire for the agency to explain the scientific basis for decision making about forest plans and management decisions. There is also sentiment that local input should have more weight and value because it is based in local knowledge about ecological processes and conditions.

1 INTRODUCTION

As the 1995 Social Assessment for the Kootenai National Forest was completed, a downward trend in the volume of timber cut on the Kootenai National Forest (KNF) was accelerating: from 1986 through 1990 timber volumes usually exceeded 200 MBF per year, but volume dropped to the range of 110 MBF to 174 MBF between 1991 and 1994 and then to between 50 MBF and 100 MBF in the years between 1995 and 2002. Some residents of Lincoln and Sanders counties perceive these numbers as the canary in the mine, signaling danger to the relationship of nearby communities with the KNF. Others evaluate this trend as indicating a new balance in the relationship of communities and natural resources. Neither of these assessments tells the whole story.

The 1995 Kootenai National Forest Social Assessment (KNFSA) (Russell and Downs, 1995) described some of the socioeconomic factors that influence how different groups of residents interpret such numbers and assess the relationship of their community and lifestyle with the KNF. That social assessment suggested that context factors such as views about nature in general, lifestyles, social differences, population dynamics, and economic processes influence how people view the KNF, assess its management issues, and evaluate desired futures for community-forest relationships.

Many of the broad-context factors were established in the 1995 assessment allowing this update to focus on specific issues that are of concern for the line officers and staff of the KNF. The specific issues identified as the focus for this social assessment are as follows:

- Perceived benefits and uses of United States Forest Service (USFS) lands in Lincoln and Sanders counties.
- The relationship of Lincoln and Sanders County governments with the USFS.
- The organization and resource management issues among new interest groups in the counties.
- Community dependency on the KNF and resources for adaptation.
- Communication and collaboration with local governments and interest groups.

1.1 Background for the Update

Since the 1995 KNFSA new literature and updated demographic, socioeconomic, and other data have become available. This information is useful background since it examines notable changes in the socioeconomic environment of the two counties. A Data Appendix updates relevant demographic and socioeconomic data while the body of the report discusses notable trends and issues in these data. Similarly, there is relevant literature published since the 1995 report that offers additional information about the socioeconomic environment of the forest. Key issues and findings from this literature are summarized as part of developing the background for discussion of the primary topics for this update.

1.2 Recent Literature

The recent literature of concern for this update is composed of localized studies that address the socioeconomic context of the KNF and the Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF) (Parker, et al., 2002) and regional studies that concern socioeconomic conditions in Northwest Montana and the Pacific Northwest. The 1995 KNFSA and the 2002 Social

Assessment for the Idaho Panhandle National Forest represent the local studies for review. The Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Project (USFS, 1998) and the Northwest Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (Northwest Resource Conservation & Development Area, 2002) are the regional documents discussed.

1.2.1 REGIONAL STUDIES

The Columbia Basin Socio-Economic Assessment – CBSEA -- (Barney & Worth, 2000) and the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Project – ICBEP -- (USFS, 1998) assessment of social and economic conditions each address communities in Lincoln and Sanders counties. The ICBEP used quantitative measures to examine 543 communities in 98 counties of the Interior Columbia Basin. This project, "... was designed to aid in identifying communities within the project area that may be economically and socially vulnerable to shifts in the management of Forest Service and BLM-administered lands" (USFS, 1998). This study examined impacts to standardized industry category data for agriculture, wood products, manufacturing, and mining, but not non-standardized or recreation related industries. The report acknowledges the importance of these other industries in the larger regional economies, but the focus is on the specialized industries within these communities. The purpose of the CBSEA project was to: "... evaluate what socio-economic impacts due to changing demographics, market shifts, and federal land use decisions have been felt by rural, resource-dependent towns and counties. Community vitality is measured for 99 counties with the results presented in the form of a regional index" (Barney & Worth, 2000).

The ICBEP (USFS, 1998) characterizes communities within the Interior Columbia Basin, focusing on factors that interact with land management planning. The ICBEP analysis categorizes communities using three criteria: geographic isolation, community specialization in certain industries, and association with either BLM or USFS lands. Within each of these criteria, communities were then scaled or classified. Specifically, communities were given a "specialization ratio" based on the number of jobs in industries such as mining, wood products, and agriculture. The scaling of association with USFS/BLM lands communities was accomplished by examining economic contributions from agencies, the amount of surrounding agency lands, and the presence of agency offices in communities. Geographic isolation was assessed by distance from a population center of 20,000 persons or greater (USFS, 1998). Most of the Lincoln County communities (Eureka, Fortine, Rexford, and Troy) were categorized as "isolated" communities, but because Libby's population is greater than 1900 persons, it was categorized as "isolated trade center." All of the Sanders County communities (Hot Springs, Noxon, Plains, Thompson Falls, and Trout Creek) were categorized as "isolated." Employment in specialized industries showed more variation. Eureka, Rexford, and Thompson Falls were categorized as "high" for wood products manufacturing. Plains was categorized as "very high" for agriculture as well as "high" for federal government. Hot Springs and Rexford each were categorized as "high" for agricultural services. With the exception of Hot Springs, communities in Sanders and Lincoln counties are categorized as "high" for association with public lands.

The ICBEP analyzed the potential for impacts resulting from seven draft management alternatives. In general, the findings suggest the higher the classification of a community on any set of criteria (isolation, specialization, association with public lands), the more likely they are to experience impacts. This analysis offers a large-scale comparative analysis on some broad measures that affect resource dependent communities.

The Columbia Basin Socio-Economic Assessment (CBSEA) uses a similar approach to categorize 99 counties within the Interior Columbia Basin and to construct regional measures of “economic vitality” (Barney & Worth, 2000). The indicators of economic vitality were in these broad categories:

- Population e.g., growth, change in youth and retirement populations.
- Income e.g., per capita income, wage and salary income, public assistance payments.
- Labor Force e.g., 24-month unemployment rate, labor force participation.
- Economic Base e.g., natural resource employment, employment growth, output exported.
- Federal Government Influence e.g., public lands, timber harvests, timber tax (PILT).
- Social Indicators e.g. crime rate trends, physicians per 100,000 residents.
- Tribal Characteristics, e.g., population, parent-child population, unemployment, labor force.

(Barney & Worth, 2000).

Broad regional trends for each of these seven categories are described. Each measure within these categories is then categorized as “low,” “medium,” or “high” based on comparison to national or regional averages. Several alternative categorizations are proposed. In general, Sanders and Lincoln counties show moderate to low vitality and they tend to cluster with other rural counties in adjacent states such as Shoshone and Boundary in Idaho. However, Lincoln County was reported among the ICB counties that consistently scored at the lower end of the vitality scales (Barney & Worth, 2000).

The “Northwest Regional Comprehensive Economic Strategy” (Northwest Resource Conservation & Development Area, 2002) is a discussion of economic development issues in Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, and Sanders counties. The regional discussion presents an overview of the economy, natural resources, infrastructure, and environmental issues before proceeding to county-specific assessments of economic development issues and potentials. Some noteworthy points regarding the region are summarized below.

Regarding the environment:

- Public lands consume a major portion of each county’s total land area. Private ownership is 23 percent in Flathead County, 33.8 percent in Lake County, 19 percent in Lincoln County, and 32 percent in Sanders County (Northwest Resource Conservation & Development Area, 2002).
- An abundant and generally high quality water supply, significant forested areas on public and private lands, scenic mountain ranges, and diverse wildlife are significant natural assets of the region.
- There are some significant environmental issues, including air quality in some of the mountain valleys, the W.R. Grace superfund site in Libby, and high Total Maximum Daily Loads in some bodies of water.

Regarding population and economy:

- Sixty percent of the region’s population is located in Flathead County.
- The region’s population increased by 22.2 percent in the 1990-2000 decade; however, the majority of the increase was in Flathead County.

- Population composition has changed: the 25-34 age cohorts and the less than 5 years age cohorts have shown declines in the 1990-1996 and 1996-2000 time periods.
- All counties in the region show high rates of unemployment in comparison to comparable areas elsewhere in Montana.
- Natural resource economies, especially agriculture and wood products industries, are declining in their share of total employment and total dollar output.
- Flathead County accounts for the majority of a 36.8 percent increase in the region's personal income.
- Transfer payments increased as a percentage of personal income at rates higher than Montana averages.
- For the 1995-1999 interval, the region had an unemployment rate of 10.4 percent compared to 8.7 percent for Montana; and, unemployment in Lake, Lincoln, and Sanders (aggregate 11.5 percent) was higher than in Flathead County (9.7 percent)
- The agriculture and forestry sectors of the regional economy showed lower percentages of change in employment (24.6) percent and earnings (12.7 percent) than Montana averages (38.8 percent and 17.2 percent respectively). The surrounding counties (Lake, Lincoln, and Sanders) showed negative changes in earning and employment.
- Other economic sectors showed different patterns of change: construction, transportation and utilities, wholesale trade, FIRE (finance, insurance, and real estate), and services were generally more comparable to state averages than mining, retail trade, and government sectors that were below Montana averages.
- In addition to discussing infrastructure and other specific population and economic issues for each of the four counties, the report indicates that the region is at an "economic crossroads" (Northwest Resource Conservation & Development Area, 2002). From this crossroads, the paths lead to additional development of tourism and high technology industries. The development of additional transportation, communications, and other infrastructure components are perceived as necessary for future economic expansion (Northwest Resource Conservation & Development Area, 2002).

1.2.2 LOCAL STUDIES

The KNFSA and the IPNF social assessment (IPNFSA) describe features of the social environments of communities in Montana and Idaho that are adjacent to National Forest lands. Each of these works uses similar methods to develop findings. Additionally, the content of the information is similar, but there are some key differences in the types of data presented and discussed. To facilitate comparison of the documents, we have organized this summary using common categories that are not necessarily represented in the organization of each document. These categories are: community characteristics; community concerns about forest management; community-forest management; and, Tribal and forest relationships and issues.

1.2.2.1 THE 2000 IPNF SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

The 2002 Social Assessment for the Idaho Panhandle National Forest is relevant for this work because it describes a nearby social environment and its relationship to the IPNF that is similar to the social and ecological environment of the KNF; and, the IPNF is now combined with the KNF into a single planning zone to complete the revision of the Forest Plans. Below is a brief summary of major points regarding the social environment and community-forest issues described in the IPNFSA (Parker, et al., 2002).

The IPNF is within nine counties in three states. The Idaho Counties are: Boundary, Bonner, Benewah, Kootenai, Shoshone, Latah and Clearwater counties. Portions of Lincoln County in Montana and Pend Oreille County in Washington are also within the IPNF. Among the Idaho counties, Bonner (36,835) and Kootenai (108,685) account for the largest share of the Census 2000 total population of 178,333. These two counties also have the highest population increases within the region growing 38.4 percent and 55.7 percent respectively since the 1990 census. Spokane, located some 35 miles from the IPNF, has a total population of 417,939. Coeur d'Alene (34,515), Sandpoint (6835), and Bonner's Ferry (2515) are the other areas of population concentration in this portion of Idaho. In comparison, Lincoln (18,837) and Sanders (10,227) counties in Montana have a Census 2000 combined total population of 29,114 with Libby (2,626) being the largest population center. However, Flathead County communities such as Kalispell (17,149) and Whitefish (6292) are population centers that use the resources of the KNF.

1.2.2.1.1 IPNF CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY AREA COMMUNITIES

The IPNFSA identifies several noteworthy characteristics of Idaho communities:

- There is a strong regional or “Northern Idaho” identity among communities.
- The IPNFSA argues that there is diversity in the values and preferences within the region creating a “melting pot” type of social organization (Parker, et al., 2002). The components of this melting pot include woods workers, artists, conservatives, and seasonal residents.
- Northern Idaho communities depend on extractive and amenity uses of IPNF resources.
 - Sandpoint and Coeur d'Alene exemplify amenity/tourist-based connections with forest resources.
 - St. Maries and Priest River exemplify traditional extraction based economies.
 - The resource extraction economies are not diverse whereas the amenity and retirement based economies are more diverse.
 - Amenity based economies are perceived as less secure than extraction based economies.
 - Maintaining the health of resources (mountains, streams, forests) that can be adversely affected by tourism is perceived as important for local economies and community quality of life.
 - There is a perceived loss of jobs in the extractive resource industries in these Northern Idaho communities contributing to individual and community concern about the nature of local economies.
- IPNF communities are in different states of change, but all are experiencing some transition from extractive to amenity connections with forest resources.
 - Rapid population growth has been a notable source of change, contributing to an increasing social, economic, political, ethnic, and racial diversity.
 - Retirees are perceived to be an important source of increased diversity, although they also are perceived to affect a decline in the tax base, contribute to increased use of recreation resources, and they may have different expectations about forest management.
 - Many communities retain a strong extractive resource identity, although the reality is changing to more amenity and tourist based economies.
 - Most communities exhibit some resistance to changes in their traditional resource extraction culture and social organization.

- The wages for tourist and amenity employment are perceived as incapable of replacing the more desirable wage in resource extraction industries.
- Bonners Ferry and Silver Valley communities exemplify transitional communities with mixtures of amenity and extractive economies; Sandpoint and Coeur d'Alene the amenity based economies and connections with forest resources; and, St. Maries and Priest River maintain some traditional economic and social connections to forest resources.
- Residents attribute decreased timber sales as the source of the change from an extractive resource economy to the amenity/tourist based economy.
 - Global and national markets are also likely contributors to the economic changes affecting job pressures.
 - Nonetheless, residents perceive changes in access to USFS timber resources as a significant factor affecting job loss and economic change.

1.2.2.1.2 IPNF COMMUNITY CONCERNS ABOUT FOREST MANAGEMENT

The IFNFSA also identifies particular forest management issues of concern to local residents. These include the following:

- Local and regional offices and staff are evaluated as different from Washington D.C. offices and staff.
- Residents perceive various barriers to effective forest management, including: litigation and appeals of management decisions; federal-level policy; and, environmental legislation, especially the Endangered Species Act.
- “Neglect” is a theme in community concerns about management of timber and recreation resources and in the restoration of forest resources.
- Community support exists for restoration programs, but there is concern that restoration activities are not proceeding fast enough.
- Residents perceive local managers should manage the KNF with the best possible science, but that is being under-mined by the intervention of special interests and bureaucrats.
- Forest health is an important value for residents, but it has at least two different meanings.
 - Forest health is believed to result from naturally occurring processes that do not require man's intervention.
 - Forest health is believed to result from man's intervention through activities such as practicing sustained yield forestry.
- Some issues stand out in community concerns, including:
 - Fire management, including fire suppression, urban-wildland interface issues, and the risks posed to communities from increased fuel loads in the forests.
 - Road closures are supported by a cross-section of residents while opposition is focused among those with resource extraction lifestyles or identities.
 - Residents are frustrated by limited local control and a perception that outside interests have excessive influence over management decisions. Given their local stake in forest issues, residents argue that their sense of stewardship about forest resources should have more weight in management considerations.
- Residents have several specific desires for future forest management, including: setting clear and achievable goals; balanced use of forest resources; increased attention to recreation management; and, more awareness of the people management issues resulting from increased use of forest resources.

1.2.2.1.3 IPNF COMMUNITY-FOREST RELATIONSHIPS

The IPNFSA also describes several issues about the relationship of the Forest Service with local communities.

- Forest management decisions impact everyone, but the effects are experienced more widely in resource dependent communities where perceptions of losing a way of life are pronounced.
- The IPNF is perceived to have social, recreation, and economic benefits to local communities.
- There are also perceptions that IPNF management inhibits community economic development, especially on small scale loggers and others in the timber industry. Similarly, perception exists that forest managers are unconcerned about the loss of lifestyles and economic benefits associated with decreased timber harvests.
- Residents have a mixture of distrust in agency management practices; they also express a desire for agency personnel to practice scientific management that is not influenced by outside interests.
- Residents desire local representatives of the agency and a local presence that understands their unique circumstances and needs.
- There is a desire for public involvement efforts that address the “middle 80 percent” of the population rather than the extremes that appear to dominate current public involvement processes. Some residents commented that too much public involvement was inhibiting management of the forest by the agency experts.

1.2.2.1.4 IPNF FOREST-TRIBAL RELATIONSHIPS

Members of the Kootenai, Coeur d’Alene, and Kalispell Tribes have special interests in forest lands and their management.

- Tribal members have ancestral ties to IPNF lands that create a strong sense of attachment and interest in land management issues. Additionally, there are treaty rights that structure relationships between the Tribes and the IPNF.
 - There are places of sacred importance to the Tribes on IPNF lands.
 - The Tribes also value certain plants for traditional uses that express their connection with IPNF lands.
- Tribal elders have traditional knowledge about forest resources that is under-used by forest managers.
- Tribal members have been directly affected by the loss of timber industry jobs in the region.
- Traditional uses of IPNF resources (hunting, fishing, gathering) create competition with recreational users of the same resources.
- Tribal members desire more outreach and greater interactive communication with agency personnel.

The IPNFSA closes with several recommendations for forest managers including the importance of maintaining a local presence, consideration of the regional and local nature of community socioeconomic processes, and methods for improving communication with all constituents.

1.2.2.2 THE 1995 KNF SOCIAL ASSESSMENT

The 1995 Kootenai National Forest Social Assessment (KNFSA) focuses on the social and cultural environment of Lincoln and Sanders counties and their connections with the KNF. The document presents a brief summary of social history, demography, and economy as background to develop the social organization and cultural orientations among the communities within the counties.

1.2.2.2.1 KNF CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY AREA COMMUNITIES

- The social history of the region shows communities that developed in response to resource development, particularly gold, silver, and timber. Construction of the railroads in Montana also was an important factor contributing to regional development. These communities have a history of “boom-bust” cycles associated with the economics of resource development.
- Lincoln (77 percent) and Sanders (65 percent) counties contain relatively high proportions of public lands, affecting population density, settlement patterns, the available tax base, and patterns of land development.
- The extraction of natural resources (mining, timber, grazing) has made significant contributions to local economies.
- Other notable uses of KNF lands include: recreation (e.g., horseback riding, skiing, camping, snowmobiling); viewing; hunting and fishing; firewood collection; and, birding and other non-extractive uses of resources.
- Lifestyles include those who work in resource extraction industries (timber and mining), ranching, “back to the-land”, retirees, and those with employment in government and private businesses.
- The preservation of the rural character of communities, recreation (especially hunting), scenic beauty, self-reliance, and personal freedom are important values among residents.
- Cross-cutting¹ ties characterize most social relationships, although some groups (e.g., Montana Militia) and individuals limit their social interactions with other who have their same lifestyles and values.
- Key groups affecting the integration of local communities include: churches, service clubs, schools, and especially volunteer fire departments and other emergency services.
- The Montana militia and related groups express some local concerns about limiting the influence of government and extreme self-reliance. These groups are perceived by some to be divisive.
- Residents in each county share concerns about community issues such as population growth, preservation of local lifestyles and communities, overall environmental quality, and the need for infrastructure improvements.

1.2.2.2.2 KNF COMMUNITY CONCERNS ABOUT FOREST MANAGEMENT

- Stakeholder groups in the counties include: timber, agriculture and ranching, guides and outfitters, business interests, recreationalists, subsistence users (e.g., firewood or

¹ Cross-cutting ties is a term that refers to the nature of bonds in social networks. Cross-cutting or “multiplex” ties describe bonds that have multiple interests in the relationship between individuals or organizations. For example, in rural communities a neighbor may also be the mechanic who may also be the little league coach for one’s children. Cross-cutting ties are usually more prevalent in rural than in urban communities.

mushroom gathering) environmentalists, tribal interests, government, and community development interests.

- Among these stakeholders, at least five sometimes overlapping views exist about the use of natural resources: economic interests perceive forests should be managed for community economic benefits; utilitarian interests perceive forest resources as a “managed farm”; preservation interests perceive “natural processes” as the basis for forest management; multiple use views perceive resources should be managed for a variety of uses, including timber harvesting; and, the bedrock view emphasizes the inherent beauty and contribution of natural resources to the quality of life in the region.
- Each of these perspectives affects how constituents perceive management issues of concern to multiple groups, including: fire management and salvage logging; access issues raised by road closures; wildlife issues, including grizzly bears and wolves; the role and value of wilderness in local ecosystems; forest appearance and environmental quality; and, evaluations of ecosystem management.
- Residents expressed several themes regarding their desired future for the forest: “true multiple use”; practicing “sustained yield” in forest management; increasing the priority of recreation uses and planning; and, continuation of timber lifestyles, although focused on small-scale logging. The use of clear cuts, as a means for large scale logging, was described with mixed assessments, although the most often expressed sentiment opposed large scale clear cuts in favor of selective logging practices.
- Resource interest groups (e.g. Communities for a Great Northwest) and local environmental groups (e.g., Cabinet Resource Group) are frequently in conflict over resource management issues and lifestyles. These groups share many “bedrock values” but their conflicts tend to emphasize their differences rather than their shared values.
- The appeal of forest management decisions by environmental interests and individuals from outside the region is perceived as under-cutting effective management of the KNF.
- The concept of “ecosystems management” is poorly understood and is sometimes interpreted as a variation on the theme of “sustained yield” or as an effort to lessen the importance of “humans” and local communities in considerations about forest management.

1.2.2.2.3 KNF COMMUNITY-FOREST RELATIONSHIPS

- Residents in both counties express low levels of trust in the USFS as an agency, but higher levels of trust in local Forest Service personnel. Within the KNF, higher levels of trust were expressed for personnel in the District offices than in the Supervisor’s office.
- The agency is perceived as too rigid and bureaucratic in their relationships with local stakeholders; and, decision-making is too centralized and removed from the realities of conditions on particular Districts.
- Residents perceive timber interests, especially larger timber interests, are favored over recreationists and other categories of stakeholders.
- Residents perceive “new” forest managers as guided by “book knowledge” rather than on-the-ground experience with local issues. The “old” styles of managers are perceived to be losing ground to the “new” style managers within the agency.
- Local knowledge is under-used in making forest management decisions.
- “Outside” interest groups have paralyzed decision-making about forest management resulting in adverse affects on forest health.

- Balancing the needs of conflicting and sometimes contradictory views among stakeholders is perceived as a difficult task for local managers.
- The KNF is perceived to be the “only hope” for resolving ongoing conflicts about management issues that will result in better forest management.
- Publics desire more outreach for gathering input regarding management issues.
- Public meetings are perceived as arenas for the expression of long-standing stakeholder conflicts.
- Residents express frustration that local input often appears to have little or no effect on management decisions.

1.2.2.2.4 KNF FOREST-TRIBAL RELATIONSHIPS

- The Kootenai Tribe has historical connections to the lands of the Kootenai National Forest. Places such as Kootenai Falls have cultural importance to Tribal members; and, their interests in such places have special status in considerations about management decisions.
- Tribal members emphasize that treaty rights guarantee access to their traditional lands for their use.
- There is a perceived need to reinforce the importance of treaty rights because other forest users disregard them and some federal agencies under-appreciate their significance.
- KNF lands are used by Tribal members for hunting, fishing, camping, gathering of medicinal plants and plants used for other traditional purposes, ceremonial and religious activities, and recreational activities.
- Tribal cultural resources exist within the boundaries of the KNF and represent a present-day connection with the Tribe’s past. These cultural resources should be protected from predation by recreational and commercial collectors.
- Tribal members often compete with others for the use of the forest and its resources. Commercial huckleberry and mushroom gatherers represent examples of this competition.
- Environmental quality related to mining, timber harvesting, and other extractive uses represent important management concerns for Tribal members.
- There should be more recognition of tribal processes in interactions regarding soliciting responses about forest management issues.

These two local studies suggest both differences and similarities in the communities adjacent to the IPNF and the KNF. A thorough analysis of these similarities and differences is a task that would require some thoughtful comparison and analysis that is beyond the scope of what can be accomplished in this discussion. However, we can suggest some of the obvious comparisons that are indicated by the regional and local data. Table 1: IPNF and KNF County Comparison compares selected demographic and economic variables that suggest some of the similarities and differences among the Idaho and Montana counties.

Table 1: IPNF and KNF County Comparison

		State		Idaho Counties					Montana Counties	
		Idaho	Montana	Benewah	Bonner	Boundary	Kootenai	Shoshone	Lincoln	Sanders
Land Ownership										
Total Acres		52,960,576	93,048,320	496,640	1,112,064	812,032	796,928	1,685,760	1,727,692	921,925
% Federal Ownership		63.1%	28.8%	12.0%	44.3%	61.0%	31.9%	74.5%	74.6%	51.8%
% USFS Lands		39.0%	18.1%	7.0%	42.0%	60.0%	31.0%	71.0%	73.4%	51.7%
% Private Ownership		31.6%	62.6%	77.6%	39.6%	25.6%	62.1%	22.0%	8.1%	19.0%
Population										
Total Population		1,293,953	902,195	9,171	36,835	9,871	108,685	13,771	18,837	10,227
1990-2000 Population Change		28.5%	12.9%	15.5%	38.4%	18.5%	55.7%	-1.1%	7.8%	18.0%
% White		91.0%	90.6%	88.7%	96.6%	95.2%	95.8%	95.8%	96.1%	91.9%
% Male		50.1%	49.8%	51.0%	50.1%	50.4%	49.5%	49.9%	50.7%	50.5%
% Female		49.9%	50.2%	49.0%	49.9%	49.6%	50.5%	50.1%	49.3%	49.5%
Median age		33.2	37.5	39.2	40.8	38.3	36.1	41.8	42.1	44.2
% Age 24 or Younger		39.2%	35.0%	33.7%	32.2%	36.0%	35.8%	29.6%	30.9%	29.3%
% Age 65 or Older		11.3%	13.4%	14.2%	13.1%	13.4%	12.3%	17.4%	15.2%	16.9%
Average Household Size		2.69	2.45	2.52	2.49	2.61	2.60	2.30	2.40	2.35
Home Ownership Rate		72.4%	69.1%	78.5%	77.9%	78.3%	74.5%	72.6%	76.6%	76.4%
Income										
Median Household Income		\$ 37,572	\$ 33,024	\$ 31,517	\$ 32,803	\$ 31,250	\$ 37,754	\$ 28,535	\$ 26,754	\$ 26,852
Per Capita Personal Income		\$ 23,987	\$ 22,961	\$ 19,595	\$ 19,583	\$ 17,902	\$ 23,436	\$ 19,438	\$ 17,756	\$ 17,108
% Per Capita Personal Income to State				81.7%	81.6%	74.6%	97.7%	81.0%	77.3%	74.5%
% Per Capita Personal Income to U.S.		80.6%	77.2%	65.8%	65.8%	60.2%	78.8%	65.3%	59.7%	57.5%
% Age 5 to 17 in Families in Poverty		14.2	17.8	18.5	18.7	21.4	13.5	22.0	23.8	23.3
Employment										
1998-2002 % Average Unemployment		5.2%	5.2%	11.4%	8.4%	9.0%	7.9%	11.1%	12.5%	10.1%
Wildland Related Sector Dependency (1998 IMPLAN)										
Industry Income as % of Cnty Total				36.36	18.32	37.31	8.6	17.09	29.9	24.61
Timber Industries Income % Cnty Total				33.49	17.93	37.2	7.47	5.74	29.35	23.14
Industry Employment as % of Cnty Total				17.96	7.65	15.91	3.8	12	12.52	9.76
Timber Industry Emp. as % of Cnty Total				16.98	7.31	15.76	3.08	1.85	12.19	8.9

Source: U.S. Census 2000 and 2000 IMPLAN data

Some noteworthy patterns are in these data:

- Federal lands account for the majority of total land area in Boundary, Shoshone, Lincoln, and Sanders counties.
- Kootenai and Bonner counties in Idaho have significantly larger populations and larger communities than the other counties.
- Bonner and Kootenai counties show higher rates of population increase in comparison to the state rates of growth. Sanders County has more than twice the growth rate of Lincoln County.
- The median age of Lincoln (42.1) and Sanders (44.2) counties is higher than any of the Idaho counties, although Bonner and Shoshone counties are most similar to the Montana counties.
- With the exception of Shoshone County, Sanders and Lincoln counties have higher proportions of older residents.
- Median household income and per capita personal income are lower in the Montana counties than in the Idaho counties.
- Montana counties have a higher percentage of children (age 5-17) in poverty.
- The percentage of annual unemployment shows that for the 1995-2002 time period, the percentage of average annual unemployment was highest in Lincoln, Benewah, Shoshone, and Sanders counties. The remaining Idaho counties have similar, lower unemployment rates.
- Benewah and Boundary counties have the highest “Wildlands Sector Dependency” (timber, mining, grazing) as measured by the percentage of total county income and total county employment. Lincoln and Sanders counties are next highest, followed by Bonner and Shoshone counties.
- Timber output and employment as a percentage of county totals, shows a similar pattern, although Shoshone County has less percentage of timber output and employment than any of the other counties.

In summary, some of the noteworthy similarities and differences in the IPNF and KNF socioeconomic and cultural environments are as follows:

- The Idaho counties have a higher percentage of private land ownership than the Montana counties with implications for economic development pressures and future demographic changes.
- The IPNF counties have a mixture of urban and rural environments while the Montana counties are entirely rural. This has implications for a variety of relevant issues including the pressure on surrounding resources, differences in lifestyles and values, and differences in the availability of resources for community development.
- Population dynamics in both areas mirror those in other western states: median age is increasing, the population of older age groups is increasing at the same time younger age cohorts are decreasing, and counties with high scenic and amenity resources are experiencing a higher rate of population growth. This will have implications for the types of use and demands for resources for both forests.
- The increase in non-labor sources of income shows the increasing importance of retirees and others with non-wage dependent sources of income within these populations. This may result in an increase demand for professional and other services that will accelerate existing trends in these economies. This may result in a different types of resource dependency that is based on the amenity values that attract and retain retirees and those who provide services to them.

These are a few of the similarities and differences that need consideration when comparing these two regions for planning purposes. This update along with the IPNFSA, the 1995 KNFSA, and other emerging studies offer the data to assess the potential for different socioeconomic outcomes from plan alternatives.

1.3 Primary Data Collection for the Update

The topics addressed by this update include the following:

1. The interaction of county governments with KNF managers.
2. New stakeholder/constituent groups and their place in the mix of groups in Lincoln and Sanders counties.
3. The nature of community-forest interactions, including perceived benefits of National Forest lands for local residents.
4. Community assessments of forums for public involvement.

To collect the information to address these issues, several broad categories of constituents were identified for participation in discussions regarding the above topics. Elected county government officials; community business persons and economic development specialists; environmental interests; extractive industry interests; recreational interests; community development interests; watershed groups; and other community opinion leaders. A total of sixty-eight persons participated in these discussions. Six individuals who participated in the 1995 KNF Social Assessment were included in these discussions to provide some continuity in information about stakeholder groups and changes in their management concerns. While the average discussion lasted about an hour, several lasted between two and three hours. Some individuals were interviewed twice to follow up on points that were elicited in the first discussion. Most discussions were recorded, although approximately eighteen interviews were not because of technical problems. Notes were also made during the recordings and index marks were used to identify portions of the files to transcribe. The notes and data were coded by category and then organized into themes for analysis. These themes were used to construct the narrative in the body of the report.

1.4 Summary of Key Points

This chapter summarizes selected regional and local literature relevant to this update. The regional studies are the Columbia Basin Socio-Economic Assessment (CBSEA) the Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Project (ICBEP), and the Northwest Regional Comprehensive Economic Strategy (NRCES). The local studies are the Idaho Panhandle National Forest Social Assessment, and the original 1995 Kootenai National Forest Social Assessment. Relevant findings from each of these studies are summarized to update the social, economic, and demographic setting for this update. The ICBEP categorized communities based on multiple criteria to compute a “specialization ration.” The criteria for computing the specialization ratio are community isolation, proximity to public lands, and employment specialization in natural resource industries. Specific communities were examined for their specialization ratios and the higher the specialization ratio the higher the potential for socioeconomic impacts. Most communities in Lincoln and Sanders counties received “high” specialization ratios in at least one category. Noteworthy findings from CBSEA include: communities in Lincoln and Sanders counties have “lower” vitality scores among all counties studied for the CBSEA; the two project counties also cluster with other rural counties in having lower vitality scores, suggesting these counties are more prone to socioeconomic impacts. The NRCES reports on changes in regional populations and economic trends. This

report also suggests some vulnerability to socioeconomic impacts based on demographic changes and economic conditions. Collectively, these regional studies suggest some vulnerability to socioeconomic impacts within Lincoln and Sanders counties.

Comparisons of the Idaho Panhandle National Forest (IPNF) and Kootenai National Forest 1995 Social Assessment suggest some differences and similarities in the communities adjacent to these forests. Although a thorough analysis of these similarities and differences is beyond the scope of this summary review, important dimensions for comparison are land ownership patterns, population structure and dynamics, income, employment, and wildland dependency measures.

2 COUNTY GOVERNMENTS AND THE KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST

National Forests have unique relationships with other governmental entities, including tribal and county governments. County governments have multiple interests in the federal lands within their boundaries. These interests include how federally owned lands affect the fiscal conditions within the county as well as interests in how federal land management influences the quality of life and resources for social and economic adaptation. These multiple interests suggest that the relationship of county government with the KNF is a topic of special concern for both County Commissioners and KNF line officers and staff. In this chapter we provide an overview of the current relationship between the counties and the KNF, including a brief description of the structure of county government, the fiscal interests of the counties in the KNF, and county evaluations and expectations about their current and future relationship with the KNF.

2.1 Local Government Structure and Political Constituents

Lincoln and Sanders counties each have county and municipal levels of government. Each county has three commissioners who are elected based on the population of each district. The commissioners serve a six-year term of office. Among the current commissioners in Sanders County, The District One Commissioner (central portions of the county) is a Democrat and the District Two Commissioner (eastern portion of the county) is a Republican as is the District Three Commissioner (western portion of the county). In Lincoln County, the Libby District Commissioner is a Republican, the Eureka District Commissioner is a Republican and the Troy District Commissioner is a Democrat.

Other elected positions in these counties include the following: the Clerk of the Court; Clerk and Recorder; the County Attorney; Treasurer; Sheriff; Coroner; and the Superintendent of Schools. Lincoln County also has an Executive Assistant to the County Commissioners to assist with the details of day-to-day county business; and, Sanders County has an Administrator that performs similar functions.

As elected officials, commissioners are “high profile” and need to be accessible to their constituents. Indeed, commissioners in each county noted that the demand for accessibility often results in long hours and contacts with constituents at odd times of the day. And they suggest that their constituents perceive this type of accessibility as essential. The effect of these demands is that commissioners are actively involved in a wide range of meetings and interactions with public groups. Furthermore, the constraints of county funding often means they perform a wider range of tasks because there is limited funding for staff support. They are busy people.

Commissioners govern based on their authority as officials elected by their constituents. Commissioners in both Lincoln and Sanders counties describe voters as “politically conservative” regardless of their party affiliation. Similarly, none of the commissioners appear to believe that party affiliation is the essential characteristic that motivates voters to elect them to office. The personal identity of candidates and their stance on key local and philosophical issues is believed to be more important than party affiliation for electing candidates to office. Indeed, commissioners describe their constituents as especially concerned about issues concerning personal freedom, property rights, taxation, and the role of government in their personal lives. In both counties, constituents do not favor zoning. In fact, in Sanders County a group named Montanans for Property Rights is especially active in

limiting planning and zoning actions by county government. These constituents took actions to eliminate the County Planning Board, an action also supported by the Montana Militia. This took place through an initiative placed on the ballot that was approved by the voters.

Such actions as opposing the Planning Board represent a more general orientation to favoring limited government among some constituents in these counties. These constituents place a high value on personal freedom and property rights; and, some suggest the numbers of these constituents are growing because those with this philosophical orientation are attracted to the political climate of Sanders and Lincoln counties. Indeed, in each county groups have formed to express their concerns about limiting the role of government in the personal lives of county citizens. In Sanders County, the Militia as well as Montanans for Property Rights expresses this orientation. In Lincoln County a group known as "Project 56" is active in expressing their concerns about the role of government in public life. However, Project 56 also has a specific concern with the relationship of community life to natural resources as expressed in a portion of their Mission Statement which describes the purpose of the group as promoting: "... the moral, physical and economic well-being of Lincoln County and the people living here by utilizing our natural resources through the empowerment of the Lincoln County Government." Their emphasis is on individual and property rights with special concerns about access to public lands and the use of natural resources to sustain community ways of life. Project 56 has made specific efforts to run candidates for local office in Lincoln County, including the School Board and City Council. Some of the commissioners on both counties suggested that governing in general is made more difficult because of the overall opposition to policies or actions that may involve regulation or enforcement of state or federal mandates that require counties to take particular actions. This component of the political constituents of both counties is noteworthy because it may influence planning and other actions that interact with county-KNF relationships.

Political constituents also occasionally bring to the attention of their commissioners alternative approaches to resource management based on what has been termed county supremacy or approaches rooted in the "Sage Brush Rebellion." As one commissioner noted:

We had someone from out of the area come in and talk about county empowerment where the County Commissioners would have a role that would put them above the Forest Service and they (the commissioners) would be telling them what to do. That was very attractive to a lot of people. Lots of other people saw the fallacy of it. We are a conservative county and we have a certain element of people that are extremely independent and they don't want us telling them what to do any more than they want the Forest Service telling them what to do. You just have to work around that.

The conservative ideology and approaches of some constituents thus represent a governance challenge for commissioners in both counties. And, although other constituents may empathize with ideas such as county supremacy, they are not willing to take the next step to encourage adoption of that particular approach to forest management.

Another legitimate question about political constituents is the participation of voters in electing their commissioners. That is, does limited voter turnout affect the political base of commissioners? A brief overview of voter turnout in both counties can address that question. Political constituents in the two counties show similar characteristics in the

patterns of voting. Information for 1998, 2000, and 2002 elections indicates that voter turnout in the two counties is about the same as the Montana average. Table 2: Voter Registration & Turnout 1998-2002 shows that for the 2002 elections, Montana had an average of 54.5 percent voter turnout whereas Lincoln County had 56.9 percent and Sanders County 57.3 percent. The average voter turn out for all Americans for the 2002 elections was 54.7 percent. However, data compiled by the Federal Elections Commission suggests that in 1996 Montanans ranked third in the nation (62.06%) in the ratio of voter turn out to registered voters (FEC, 1996). For all states, turnout tends to be higher in presidential election years. This probably accounts for the differences between 1998 and 2000 in Table 2. Although the overall state average decreased more than 5 percent between 2000 and 2002, the turnout for both Lincoln and Sanders counties did not show as large a decline. This is probably accounted for by local issues that were important for residents in the 2002 county elections. Yet, the overall degree of voter participation suggests that residents of these two counties turn out in numbers comparable to the rest of Montana.

Table 2: Voter Registration & Turnout 1998-2002

Location	Year	Primary Votes			General Votes		
		Registered	Cast	%	Registered	Cast	%
Montana	1998	602,716	161,568	26.8%	639,241	338,733	53.0%
	2000	671,325	223,419	33.3%	698,260	417,916	59.9%
	2002	606,147	174,730	28.8%	624,548	340,272	54.5%
Lincoln County	1998	12,541	4,622	36.9%	11,871	6,961	58.6%
	2000	13,274	4,030	30.4%	13,776	7,999	58.1%
	2002	11,914	3,149	26.4%	12,286	6,987	56.9%
Sanders County	1998	7,458	2,324	31.2%	7,612	4,181	54.9%
	2000	8,009	2,355	29.4%	8,339	4,800	57.6%
	2002	7,085	2,348	33.1%	7,294	4,180	57.3%

Montana State Source: http://sos.state.mt.us/css/ELB/Voter_Turnout.asp

Lincoln County Source: Lincoln Clerk and County Recorders Election Department

Sanders County Source: Sanders Clerk and County Recorders Election Department

2.2 County Revenues and Federal Funding: PILT and Payments to States

Montana counties receive a variety of federal funds that are important revenue sources, including both Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and what we will term "Payments to States" monies. PILT funds derive from a 1976 law (Public Law 94-565) that provide funds to local governments based on the number of acres of federal lands within their jurisdiction. These payments are affected by federal funding limitations, prior year "Payments to States", and formulas based on county populations. Based on annual congressional appropriation decisions, PILT payments may not always be fully funded. Counties may also receive monies based on a 1908 law ² that allocated ten percent of the gross revenues generated from timber harvest, grazing, mining, and all other uses from the federal lands within their jurisdictions. The Weeks Law of 1911 increased the amount from ten to twenty-five percent. These

² Usually termed the "Forest Receipts Program" the provisions were specified in the Agricultural Reapportionment Act of 1908. The Chief of the Forest Service at the time stated, "It pays those counties in which the Forests are located 10 percent of all the receipts from the sale of timber, use of the range, and various other uses, and it does this every year. It is a sure and steady income, because the resources of the National Forests are used in such a way that they keep coming without a break."

“twenty-five percent monies” are mandated to be used for schools and roads. With recent diminishing commercial uses of federal lands, in 2000 the President signed the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act (PL 106-393). The purpose of this Act is to directly address diminishing amounts of the twenty-five percent monies. This new law allows counties the option of continuing to receive the twenty-five percent amount or to elect to receive a fixed amount based on the average of the three highest years between 1986 and 1999. Payments to States and PILT funding for the counties is briefly summarized in the following sections.

2.2.1 PAYMENTS TO STATES: PL 106-393

Payments to States monies are also substantial sources of revenues for both Lincoln and Sanders counties. Table 3: Payments to States for Montana 1986 - 1999 shows the payments to all Montana counties and the average for the 1986-1999 time period. The table is sorted high to low for the average amount, showing that Lincoln County ranks 1st and Sanders County 2nd among the 56 counties for the 1986-1999 time period. Table 4: Payments to States FY2001-2003 shows the top ten Montana counties for recent Payments to States funding. Again, Lincoln and Sanders counties rank first and second with a total of \$5,108,387 and \$1,447,394 respectively. Table 4: Payments to States FY2001-2003 shows the totals and Title I, II, and III allocations for the time period since the law was enacted.

Commissioners acknowledge that these funds provide a substantial contribution to the revenues for both counties. For example, one noted:

If we had to replace that money (Payments to States) it would take around a 100 mils to make up the difference. It’s a huge boon to the local tax payers.

The commissioners also suggest that while the “secure funding” provided by PL 106-393 is important:

It would be so much better if we could have healthy forests and healthy communities. The secure funding is not a cure all. It has been a good thing to know that we had it, but our ultimate goal is to get the jobs back, to get our forests cleaned up. ... It has always been very clear that we realized what we were losing with the declining revenues that were coming off the forest. And we needed to do something to protect that with a long term goal of we would really like to get back into the woods. It is easier said than done.

We recognize that we will never be back to the level we were and maybe we shouldn’t be. But, we also recognize we are a county that is 78 percent forest. In order to have healthy communities and healthy forests, those forests have to be used. I believe we can and we will reach a level of management, if we can struggle to hold on to what we have for infrastructure.

These sentiments suggest that while Payments to States monies are an important short-term benefit to county fiscal health, timber harvesting that supports local businesses and lifestyles will guarantee long-term fiscal health for counties.

Table 3: Payments to States for Montana 1986 - 1999

County	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Aver.
Lincoln	2,806.7	2,138.8	2,636.3	2,926.5	4,932.6	4,518.2	5,413.4	6,721.4	6,128.0	4,521.4	4,009.9	3,388.4	3,651.0	2,319.2	4,008.0
Sanders	601.9	749.7	969.1	851.8	1,378.9	1,054.0	1,594.0	1,452.1	1,867.8	1,290.1	1,175.5	945.8	1,251.1	960.3	1,153.0
Flathead	1,124.9	1,049.6	1,907.0	1,148.6	1,038.1	966.8	1,352.2	1,624.3	839.6	983.2	795.4	635.7	909.4	505.7	1,062.9
Mineral	227.3	223.7	218.7	269.1	679.2	334.0	537.0	868.3	1,287.1	452.5	430.3	615.4	666.6	294.7	507.4
Missoula	287.5	279.1	358.4	322.2	630.8	349.8	545.3	831.5	1,084.4	445.1	411.5	545.0	612.5	279.0	498.7
Powell	239.7	251.8	362.3	268.9	377.8	243.9	375.5	436.5	460.6	335.1	270.3	317.9	393.5	185.9	322.8
Lewis&Clark	149.7	233.7	165.6	165.4	326.4	216.0	351.2	266.0	416.6	405.7	330.4	380.1	565.7	216.2	299.2
Granite	134.4	133.7	191.0	239.0	390.0	168.8	293.3	370.9	608.7	345.7	269.4	318.7	420.2	179.6	290.2
Ravalli	468.9	458.7	386.0	429.4	276.8	223.1	158.5	212.9	86.3	218.5	166.6	212.1	183.5	98.4	255.7
Beaverhead	147.6	146.5	140.5	66.8	149.4	129.8	123.2	86.9	200.3	135.1	237.3	132.7	116.6	223.6	145.5
Jefferson	63.4	77.1	109.5	136.7	173.5	69.4	129.4	75.6	170.8	203.5	133.7	141.7	215.2	90.1	127.8
Park	66.5	97.0	102.5	108.2	90.1	97.8	82.9	114.5	181.2	101.2	122.9	134.9	68.2	69.4	102.7
Madison	85.7	89.8	98.2	71.2	107.9	81.8	86.3	68.5	144.9	107.5	144.6	97.2	95.3	122.9	100.1
Meagher	34.0	67.2	41.9	46.7	61.0	63.3	106.4	86.5	140.7	146.6	133.1	92.7	236.3	68.7	94.6
Lake	93.8	89.1	166.3	96.1	79.4	75.0	107.2	127.7	56.9	76.4	60.7	47.9	71.7	39.4	84.8
Gallatin	50.7	74.9	79.3	83.2	68.8	74.4	61.7	86.0	136.1	74.1	92.9	103.3	50.7	49.3	77.5
Broadwater	30.2	54.4	25.3	28.7	77.1	43.0	70.2	21.7	52.0	85.9	60.6	95.3	105.7	47.8	57.0
Judith Basin	16.9	35.1	24.6	27.3	24.8	36.4	63.1	57.6	89.7	86.6	82.7	42.4	150.2	38.2	55.4
Silver Bow	24.0	24.1	44.0	52.3	58.9	22.8	41.6	29.1	65.2	69.4	48.9	41.5	69.5	33.2	44.6
Teton	13.3	27.8	19.4	21.6	19.6	28.8	49.8	45.5	70.9	68.4	65.3	33.5	118.6	30.2	43.8
Powder River	26.8	27.3	27.6	35.1	31.4	31.1	41.8	36.1	43.1	56.2	37.6	29.1	26.3	66.5	36.9
Carbon	25.8	27.8	28.4	34.9	30.8	31.0	39.2	35.9	44.9	51.9	37.4	30.9	25.2	58.7	35.9
Sweet Grass	23.4	31.8	33.2	36.3	30.6	32.5	31.1	38.0	56.0	38.5	39.9	40.8	24.2	32.2	34.9
Cascade	10.1	21.1	14.8	16.4	14.9	21.9	37.9	34.6	53.9	52.0	49.7	25.4	90.2	22.9	33.3
Deer Lodge	20.9	20.9	30.0	29.3	37.6	19.1	27.7	19.4	43.8	41.7	38.4	28.2	44.1	31.4	30.9
Stillwater	14.7	15.0	15.1	19.2	17.2	17.1	23.0	19.8	23.6	30.8	20.6	15.9	14.4	36.4	20.2
Pondera	6.0	12.6	8.8	9.8	8.9	13.1	22.6	20.7	32.2	31.1	29.6	15.2	53.8	13.7	19.9
Fergus	5.4	11.2	7.8	8.7	7.9	11.6	20.1	18.4	28.6	27.7	26.4	13.5	47.9	12.2	17.7
Wheatland	2.9	6.1	5.2	5.8	5.2	7.7	13.4	12.6	19.6	18.9	18.1	9.2	32.8	8.3	11.8
Rosebud	7.6	7.7	7.8	9.9	8.9	8.8	11.8	10.2	12.2	15.8	10.6	8.2	7.4	18.7	10.4
Carter	7.0	7.2	7.3	9.2	8.3	8.2	11.0	9.5	11.3	14.8	9.9	7.6	6.9	17.5	9.7

County	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Aver.
Chouteau	1.7	3.6	2.5	2.8	2.6	3.8	6.5	6.0	9.3	8.9	8.5	4.4	15.5	3.9	5.7
Glacier	1.6	3.4	2.4	2.6	2.4	3.5	6.1	5.6	8.7	8.4	8.0	4.1	14.5	3.7	5.3
Golden Valley	1.3	2.8	2.0	2.2	2.0	2.9	5.0	4.6	7.1	6.9	6.6	3.4	12.0	3.0	4.4
Total	6,822.6	6,500.2	8,238.5	7,581.9	11,149.7	9,009.5	11,839.5	13,854.9	14,482.3	10,555.7	9,383.2	8,558.1	10,366.7	6,180.9	9,608.8

Source: USDA Forest Service http://www.fs.fed.us/payments/payments_table.pdf
Amounts in \$1000's

Table 4: Payments to States FY2001-2003

County	Title I	Title III	Interest	Total
Lincoln	\$4,848,391	\$248,124	\$11,872	\$5,108,387
Sanders	\$1,394,777	\$49,227	\$3,390	\$1,447,394
Flathead	\$1,285,764		\$3,074	\$1,288,838
Missoula	\$603,304	\$106,465	\$1,563	\$711,332
Mineral	\$577,670	\$108,319	\$1,549	\$687,568
Powell	\$390,485	\$68,909	\$1,011	\$460,405
Lewis & Clark	\$361,930	\$63,870	\$937	\$426,737
Granite	\$330,429	\$82,607	\$909	\$413,945
Ravalli	\$309,333		\$681	\$310,014
Beaverhead	\$165,582	\$41,396	\$456	\$207,433

Source: 2002-2003 Montana Association of Counties website <http://maco.cog.mt.us/newsletters/February2003.htm>

Source 2001-2002 USFS website http://www.fs.fed.us/payments/Title_I_II_III_summary_by_county.pdf

Source 2000-2001 2000-2001 USFS website http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/forest_range/payment_to_states/Distribution_MT.htm

2.2.2 PILT

PILT payments are also an important source of local government revenues throughout the western United States. These funds may be used for essentially any governmental purpose. Table 5 titled PILT for Thirteen Western States 1995-1999 shows these payments. As this table shows, Montana ranked 5th or higher among the 13 western states in PILT payments for each of the years from 1995 to 1999.

Table 5: PILT for Thirteen Western States 1995-1999

State	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Alaska	\$4,713,149	\$4,881,171	\$6,780,912	\$8,067,394	\$8,734,619
Arizona	\$8,435,276	\$9,637,593	\$9,439,156	\$10,033,602	\$10,275,296
California	\$9,620,931	\$10,981,158	\$11,144,562	\$12,001,299	\$12,783,359
Colorado	\$6,621,107	\$7,817,409	\$8,083,786	\$8,464,227	\$9,294,770
Hawaii	\$0	\$0	\$9,865	\$13,987	\$14,500
Idaho	\$7,055,419	\$7,995,619	\$7,719,459	\$8,024,068	\$8,354,480
Montana	\$7,728,062	\$8,932,523	\$8,932,282	\$9,345,804	\$9,846,022
Nevada	\$6,462,215	\$7,061,291	\$6,863,738	\$6,973,002	\$7,180,805
New Mexico	\$10,526,826	\$11,799,581	\$11,152,959	\$11,375,334	\$11,597,426
Oregon	\$2,750,818	\$3,469,868	\$3,497,163	\$3,778,244	\$3,720,267
Utah	\$8,682,991	\$9,587,416	\$9,308,104	\$9,477,033	\$9,783,359
Washington	\$4,790,444	\$2,210,219	\$2,812,553	\$3,253,931	\$3,707,574
Wyoming	\$5,740,222	\$7,220,748	\$7,465,499	\$7,658,654	\$7,969,204

Source: University of Nevada, Reno, Cooperative Extension Fact Sheet 2-03

Table 6: 2002 County PILT Payments Ranked by Amount shows that Lincoln County ranked 20th among the fifty-six Montana counties in PILT payments and Sanders County ranked 32nd for the 2002 year.

Table 6: 2002 County PILT Payments Ranked by Amount

Montana Totals	\$16,163,888.00	27,095,167			
County	Payment	Total Acres	County	Payment	Total Acres
Flathead County	\$1,441,781.00	2,440,181	Lake County	\$175,103.00	155,444
Ravalli County	\$1,282,827.00	1,109,623	McCone County	\$154,437.00	273,745
Lewis & Clark County	\$1,187,404.00	1,070,978	Judith Basin County	\$152,810.00	308,427
Gallatin County	\$815,683.00	703,199	Sanders County	\$147,452.00	914,740
Missoula County	\$740,216.00	711,563	Powder River Cnty	\$131,131.00	594,815
Park County	\$723,202.00	945,492	Granite County	\$125,143.00	703,947
Fergus County	\$557,567.00	486,084	Pondera County	\$116,819.00	107,919
Carbon County	\$541,960.00	572,524	Meagher County	\$107,187.00	483,883
Beaverhead County	\$502,724.00	2,047,829	Garfield County	\$101,396.00	814,977
Jefferson County	\$501,736.00	555,697	Carter County	\$99,002.00	594,642
Valley County	\$480,083.00	1,122,308	Yellowstone County	\$89,540.00	77,952
Glacier County	\$473,847.00	401,496	Musselshell County	\$82,895.00	87,517
Madison County	\$457,383.00	1,052,173	Fallon County	\$80,287.00	115,901
Powell County	\$427,143.00	720,108	Dawson County	\$75,341.00	63,960
Custer County	\$389,742.00	334,095	Wheatland County	\$71,330.00	65,924
Rosebud County	\$384,326.00	329,949	Prairie County	\$69,150.00	411,364
Blaine County	\$358,310.00	453,106	Richland County	\$62,076.00	54,194
Broadwater County	\$325,315.00	282,537	Hill County	\$56,430.00	47,790
Teton County	\$312,686.00	284,568	Toole County	\$53,313.00	45,579
Lincoln County	\$281,797.00	1,748,177	Big Horn County	\$48,148.00	41,434
Sweet Grass County	\$275,850.00	303,397	Liberty County	\$39,490.00	33,656
Silver Bow Census Ct	\$256,609.00	233,632	Petroleum County	\$39,084.00	335,040
Phillips County	\$244,702.00	1,382,944	Golden Valley Cnty	\$34,930.00	31,537
Cascade County	\$236,641.00	215,467	Wibaux County	\$30,973.00	26,995
Anaconda Deer Ldge	\$221,332.00	197,219	Roosevelt County	\$4,820.00	4,284
Stillwater County	\$220,596.00	191,880	Sheridan County	\$2,106.00	1,781
Mineral County	\$189,797.00	642,654	Treasure County	\$877.00	748
Chouteau County	\$181,126.00	157,892	Daniels County	\$233.00	200

Source: BLM http://www.blm.gov/pilt/pymt_result.php?searchtype=MT&searchterm=FY_2002

Table 7: PILT and Acreage 1999-2003 indicate the specific payments to Lincoln and Sanders counties in the 1999-2003 years.

Table 7: PILT and Acreage 1999-2003

Year	Montana		Lincoln County		Sanders County	
	Payment	Total Acres	Payment	Total Acres	Payment	Total Acres
1999	\$9,846,022	27,169,848	\$174,546	1,773,891	\$91,227	914,507
2000	\$10,109,778	27,126,242	\$184,332	1,747,833	\$96,473	914,755
2001	\$15,713,745	27,121,607	\$267,350	1,748,177	\$139,894	914,755
2002	\$16,163,888	27,095,167	\$281,797	1,748,177	\$147,452	914,740
2003	\$16,874,448	27,103,714	\$317,881	1,748,177	\$166,332	914,740

Source: 1999 – 2002 BLM website <http://www.blm.gov/pilt/>

Source: 2003 Montana Association of Counties website <http://maco.cog.mt.us/pages/PILT2002&2003.htm>

For both Lincoln and Sanders counties, PILT payments represent a steadily increasing source of revenue that is important for counties with a limited property tax base.

2.3 Communication, Collaboration, Cooperation with the USFS

Communication and collaboration with county governments exists within the context of the fiscal interests of counties and the political interests of the constituents who elect County Commissioners and other officials. These context factors affect working relationships between the commissioners and the KNF. With these other factors in mind, this section addresses several questions about the relationship of county government with the staff of the Kootenai National Forest:

- **What is the character and quality of the relationships between the counties and the KNF?**
- **What are the expectations and desires of County Commissioners for communication with the KNF?**
- **How will county expectations and desires for communication and working relationships with the KNF affect Forest Plan revision?**

2.3.1 CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH COUNTIES

What is the character and quality of the relationships between the counties and the KNF? In general, the County Commissioners for both Lincoln and Sanders counties describe a cooperative and satisfactory relationship with the KNF. For example, a Sanders County Commissioner commented:

I look at the Forest Service as being in partnership with the county. We have been very lucky in Sanders County to have such a good relationship with both our Forests. We have gotten along just really well with the Forest Service. They have helped us with things and we have helped them. That is not always true that counties get along with their Forests. The Forests have offered open door policies to us and us to them. We have regular meetings with them ... it has just been a really good relationship. The people that

work for the Forest Service are really visible ... they are participating and giving back to their community....

Lincoln County Commissioners also suggest there is a cooperative working relationship between the county and the KNF that is built on trust:

The way we interact with the Forest Service has changed dramatically since we took office. We requested they give us an update on the Forest and how it affected the county so we would have a foundation of understanding of what their role was and how they interact with us. That has been very beneficial.

In the beginning they were very, I think, uncomfortable. We would meet for lunch and that was not the best way. When they changed Forest Supervisors, we asked that they come to our normal meeting. And they have been very good to do that and very open. That has been a tremendous help, it has helped to build trust because what they say in private and what they say in public are the same. It has not only built trust, but it has also built a respect for the position that we fill and the value of our input. We value what they tell us and they value what we have to share with them, because we are the elected officials that represent the people. They are hired employees and we are elected and they have a great level of respect for that.

Commissioners characterize their working relationship with the KNF, and especially the Forest Supervisor, as “constructive” and “cooperative.” This is acknowledged as a change from what was described as a previously adversarial relationship. In part, this is attributed to a greater integration of KNF personnel into community activities and events. For example, one commissioner commented that in the past USFS personnel were perceived as stand-offish and as not socializing extensively with other community members. This is a description that fits with one of the dominant themes in the 1995 KNF Social Assessment. However, this perception has changed.

We see a real difference today where the Forest Service people integrate into the community at every level and they make a real effort to be good community citizens. And I don’t think that was there before. I think it has been a change. In my area the soccer wouldn’t go without them, the Little League would not run without them, they are active in the Rotary, the churches, and the Chamber of Commerce. It was one of the things that was pointed out to the Ecology Center when they started to run down the Forest Service. We told them to stop right there, we are not going to allow you to run down the citizens of our community. The people that work for the Forest Service are the same people that are a part of our community.

Agency personnel and leadership are perceived to be part of the community. The support of them as community members when they were “run down” by an outside group illustrates a change in local assessments of the integration of USFS personnel into local communities.

The agency is also perceived as offering information and resources to assist counties. For example, when PL 106-393 was first enacted, the Lincoln County Commissioners suggest

that the Forest Supervisor and other agency staff provided help interpreting and implementing the details and provisions of the law. Two Commissioners suggested:

That did not happen in every community like it happened here. We know it did not. We heard other communities (from other counties) say that it was such a struggle and that their Forest Service did not help out. They have helped us by pointing us to the right people in Washington and they put on conferences so we could learn together.

This appears to exemplify an effort by KNF line officers and staff to support local government with resources; and, an effort to anticipate needs and potential problem areas that might otherwise strain county-KNF relationships.

In summary, the information that emerged in conversations with all six commissioners in Lincoln and Sanders counties suggests there is a relatively cooperative and high quality relationship based on strong communication and mutual trust and respect. This is a dramatic change from findings in the 1995 Social Assessment. Other research (Rodriguez, 1995) also addresses the variable nature of USFS-county relationships; and, some of the social and economic characteristics that appear to influence these relationships. Counties that have more confrontational and less desirable working relationships with land management agencies have characteristics such as: higher dependence on federal funds related to natural resource industries; small total population; large land area with higher percentages of public lands; weak retail sectors; and higher employment in natural resource industries (Rodriguez, 1995). Using the criteria identified in the Rodriguez work, both Lincoln and Sanders counties might be characterized as having characteristics that would predict a more confrontational and less desirable working relationship between local government and the USFS. However, this is clearly not the case for the KNF. Factors related to the communications and styles of interaction between the KNF and county government appear to account for some of the reasons for the high quality of existing relationships.

2.3.2 COUNTY EXPECTATIONS AND DESIRES FOR COMMUNICATION

What are the expectations and desires of County Commissioners for communication with the KNF? Addressing this question requires consideration of patterns of communication between elected officials and the KNF. These patterns include the interactions between the County Commissioners and the Forest Supervisor, the Public Information Officer, and the District Rangers. Rangers are especially important in those areas more distant from the Supervisor's Office. However, even in Libby and Troy, District Rangers are important channels for communication with a wide range of publics including County Commissioners.

To address this question, discussions were conducted with the six commissioners in Lincoln and Sanders County. In both counties, two of the three commissioners participated in a joint discussion and the third was interviewed at a later date. While the information elicited in these discussions suggests similar expectations, there are also some differences that indicate the social conditions in each county. In general, the commissioners expressed positive assessments of the relationship and patterns of communication with the KNF. This leaves a limited amount to present in terms of desired changes. However, in addition to discussing some selected areas for improved communication, this discussion reviews the factors that seem to be contributing to a constructive working relationship between the Commissioners and the KNF. We have aggregated the information for both counties since many of the issues are similar.

Commissioners indicate that prior to the present Forest Supervisor, communication with KNF staff was infrequent and irregular. However, the commissioners generally praise the present leadership team, especially KNF staff attendance at County Commissioner meetings. Although there was some suggestion that KNF leaders are not attending these meetings as frequently as in the past, commissioners are overall satisfied with the communication and coordination with the KNF. Indeed, Lincoln County Commissioners indicate they value the quality of existing working relationships with KNF leaders and contrast this with their knowledge of similar relationships in other counties. The noteworthy themes in the discussions with the Lincoln County Commissioners suggest characteristics identified below are contributing to existing satisfaction with the county-KNF relationship. These characteristics also apply to Sanders County, although there are some differences as noted later in this discussion.

The relationship is based on mutual respect. Commissioners emphasize that they perceive that KNF leaders understand and acknowledge their status as elected officials. Elected officials represent their constituents on issues of interest to the county; and, their elected status represents a “voice of the people” that commissioners perceive as acknowledged by KNF leaders. Similarly, the commissioners acknowledge the expertise and professionalism of KNF personnel in managing the Forest. This assessment of “mutual respect” in the relationship and acknowledgement of the status of commissioners as elected officials is an essential building block in the current success of the KNF-county relationships.

Forest management is a topic of mutual interest between the counties and the KNF. Commissioners suggest there are mutual interests with the KNF regarding forest management issues. For example, a Lincoln County Commissioner suggested:

We are a natural resource dependent county and we need our relationship with the Forest Service, the interaction about grazing, recreation, timber or whatever. Maybe there has been a realization in building this relationship that we need each other: they need us and we need them and we are in this together.

The commissioners recognize how that KNF management influences, in their words, “the social, economic, and cultural” environment of both counties. This recognition of mutual interests should not be taken for granted. For example, a Lincoln County Commissioner contrasted KNF management and communication styles with other federal and state agencies:

The other agencies in the county are not very receptive to working with us. They just try to ram things down our throats. The other agencies do not meet with us regularly; they only meet with us when they have to.

The points of contrast are noteworthy: Commissioners perceive that other agencies do not recognize the interests of the county, they pursue their plans and interests with limited consultation, and they attempt to “ram down” their throats actions that may have important consequences for county residents.

Trust is fundamental to an effective working relationship between the county and the KNF. The 1995 Social Assessment suggested that trust in KNF management was an issue of concern among most stakeholders. The assessment of trust in KNF managers, especially as expressed by County Commissioners, has changed. Commissioners indicate that trust is a

fundamental component of their relationship with the KNF. Part of this trust is built on effective and specific styles of communication. For example, the commissioners suggested that formal meetings were preferable to informal gatherings because there was less potential for confusion about communication. A commissioner quoted earlier commented:

What they say in private and what they say in public are now the same.

However, more fundamentally, this trust is built on a history of positive working relationships that is evaluated as mutually beneficial. For example,

All the people here, the Forest Service and us, have worked very hard to sit down at the table and see what we can do.

The outcome of that hard work is an evaluation by the commissioners of the good faith of the KNF leadership team.

Accessibility and responsiveness contribute to effective communication. Commissioners suggest that KNF managers are accessible. For example,

We feel comfortable picking up the phone and saying 'you need to have a public meeting.' And I go to Rotary with two of them from the Forest Service and we often talk after Rotary. The process we have probably is not standard. It is above standard. I think it is a two way street, it is building a relationship and making it a team effort.

And another statement expresses the same sentiment:

They meet with us regularly. We see them individually; and, we are in touch with our District Rangers. We can walk into their offices anytime and be treated respectfully and that has a lot to do with it.

Similarly, another Commissioner commented:

When the fires started in 2000, both the District and the SO offices were on top of it and they kept us informed. I was invited to come to the command meetings and when we were too busy they came here! They took us out on the fire and lots of Rangers wouldn't do that... We appreciated that.

These statements do not suggest any barriers to communicating with or getting access to KNF line officers and staff. They also suggest a willingness to be responsive to community and commissioner needs for information in fire situations, even though agency staff is exceptionally busy at these times. Additionally, several District Rangers were praised for their anticipation of potential impacts to communities from upcoming management actions or other initiatives, suggesting that KNF staff is perceived as responsive to community needs in performing their usual duties.

KNF leadership and USFS personnel are perceived as both community minded and "part of the community." This assessment represents one of the most dramatic changes from the

1995 KNF Social Assessment. It was our assessment in 1995 that community members evaluated KNF staff as not involved in their communities and “cliquish.” In fact information from discussions for this update indicates this was once a common community perception. For example, one discussant commented:

When we were kids growing up here the Rangers and Forest Service people were always kind of looked at as sticking to themselves and just their own little clique. We don’t look at them that way now.

Information collected for this update suggests a substantially different assessment of KNF staff as part of the community:

If we lost the SO (Supervisor’s Office) out of this county it would have a huge economic impact, not to mention socially and culturally. We appreciate their presence here. They bring fresh ideas here and they are willing to participate and be leaders. The children of the employees are very involved in our schools. They belong to our clubs and our Cultural Arts Center. Our District Rangers are very involved in our community....

The integration of KNF personnel into the community was also expressed in an earlier quote from a commissioner who described a recent interaction with groups from outside the community. Members of this outside group criticized KNF staff in their discussions with the commissioners, but the commissioners suggested that such statements were inappropriate because the persons being criticized were fellow community members. Their response suggests that agency personnel are indeed considered part of the community that should be supported and defended when criticized. This integration into the community is an important basis for the relationship with the County Commissioners because it suggests that the well-being of the community will also be part of the considerations by KNF managers who are fellow community members.

The Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) is an asset in the County-KNF relationship. Commissioners in Lincoln County commented directly on the value of the RAC as an arena in which forest management issues can be productively discussed. For example:

Another thing that has helped has been the RAC. We are only in our second year and at first we were very fearful. We were very fortunate we were able to ...get environmentalists that wanted to sit down and come to common decisions. Everybody we have on our RAC, well, we kid each other about our points of view knowing that we are opposed. But, we sit down at the table and work through things. Last year we had, I think, 19 projects and there were unanimous decisions on each one.

The Forest Service has been there at every meeting. They have been guiding us, but not telling us. They sit back and let the group interact. They have been really good. The RAC has been a catalyst. The environmentalists have come in to talk to us apart from the RAC. I don’t know if that would have happened before the RAC. Now we can have respectful disagreements. It would not have worked five years ago... but it does now.

The RAC has proved to be an arena in which relationships between industry, community, environmental, and other stakeholder groups have developed. The RAC provides an opportunity for discussion of management issues, working to achieve consensus about project goals, and communication that might not otherwise exist. Importantly, KNF staff provides guidance and consultation that is positively evaluated by the commissioners. The perceived success of the RAC is partially attributed to the efforts of KNF leaders as well as participants in the RAC. Commissioners evaluate this success as contributing to a changed environment in which new solutions may emerge to prior conflicts about resource management.

Communication needs improvement in selected areas. In general, the regular meetings with the commissioners combined with outreach efforts to inform the commissioners of upcoming management actions are evaluated as sufficient for the current needs of both counties. However, one Lincoln County commissioner did comment about other patterns of communication between the KNF and Lincoln County communities they feel need to be changed. The specific examples cited include Open Houses, the structure of public meetings, and the willingness of publics to comment on management actions. Echoing ideas expressed by other discussants that participated in this update, the commissioners were not satisfied with Open Houses as a forum for communication about forest management issues. One commissioner emphasized that these were generally perceived as a less than desirable forum for communication, but the KNF persists in holding Open Houses.

We hate, the public hates, the Open House policy and the way they run meetings. We have been very vocal about it. They are reluctant to change it. I am assuming they don't change it because it is some directive from Washington that it is the way to conduct meetings. But what our constituents feel, and we do as well, is there should be another way. Maybe a combination of a structured meeting where they get up there and explain what they are doing and then let people go to stations around the room. Then we could come back to another structured venue to ask questions and then close it in a structured way. But, the Open House where you don't get to hear what my concerns are or your neighbor's concerns are, it leaves us all without an assessment of the problem.

A key issue is that attendees at Open Houses do not have the opportunity to hear either opposing or supporting points of view about a management issues or topics. There appears to be a strong need for this opportunity. That need is not met by the current structure of KNF Open House meetings. The suggestion for some combination of structured presentation, small group discussion, and then structured collective discussion further expresses a theme from other discussions about ensuring that different stakeholders can hear the points of view of others about a particular management topic.

A related issue concerns the process for publics to provide comment about management issues. There are some contrasting points of view about this topic. One perspective suggests that past public comment has not resulted in any outcomes that people evaluate as directly related to their input. The popular sentiment is something such as,

They asked for our input and we gave it to them, but they did nothing about it.

The absence of any direct response to the comment is then used as an explanation for limited interest in meetings or other venues that address forest management issues.

There are positive characteristics about communication between the county and the KNF. There are some noteworthy characteristics about the KNF-Sanders County relationship that need highlighting. Sanders County Commissioners are generally satisfied with the relationship they have with the KNF. Although they do not have the same proximity to the Supervisor's Office as Lincoln County Commissioners, there is the perception that the Forest Supervisor and local Rangers are accessible. In their words,

Things are working and there's no need for change.

There are several specific points to note that contribute to the expressed satisfaction with the relationship between Sanders County Commissioners.

- The commissioners have confidence and trust that KNF managers will inform them of issues that need attention. The commissioners noted that in the recent past KNF staff scheduled a meeting to discuss Forest Plan revision issues. This exemplifies the assessment that when there is a need for an exchange of information, KNF staff contacts the commissioners. However, it also suggests that the commissioners trust the judgment of KNF managers about when it is important to communicate. And, the commissioners also perceive that if they have a need to discuss issues, there is an open door at the District Ranger's office or the Forest Supervisor's office. This attribution of trust is an important contribution to current satisfaction with the KNF-Sanders County relationship.
- As with Lincoln County Commissioners, trust seems to be a foundation of the working relationship, but there is also a noteworthy definition of the roles and responsibilities of commissioners in relationship to the KNF. The attribution of trust and the nature of roles and responsibilities are each illustrated in the following quotation:

The Forest Service people are the professionals. They are also local people with local concerns and their concerns should not be that much different from ours. That is what bothers me about people like the Ecology Center trying to run things from outside when they do not know the local scene. And I think if we went in and tried to tell them (KNF) how to manage it, then we would be doing the same thing because they are professionals and we are not.

The attribution of trust is in part based on the perception that KNF personnel are community members and, like other community members, they will not take actions to undermine the community. This is the kind of mutual trust that is often described as characterizing neighborly relationships in rural communities (Luloff and Krannich, 2002). The other element of this quotation suggests a perception of particular roles and responsibilities of the commissioners and the KNF. The Forest staff are the "professionals" who are trained to manage the ecosystem. The County Commissioners are elected officials with their own responsibilities. They realize the mutual interests of the county and the KNF, but they also appear to perceive a boundary that defines different roles and responsibilities: "... they are the professionals and we are not."

- Commissioners also have the expectation that because they have limited time and resources, it is the responsibility of the KNF to contact them when there are issues that need attention. As one commissioner noted,

We have so many other things we have to do. As County Commissioners we don't want into this area (forest management) any more than we have to be. We have our senior citizens to care for and bills to pay and other problems to take care of day-to-day. Lots of time I have three or four meetings a day, everything from weeds to low cost housing and we have our road crews to deal with. We don't need to micro-manage the Forest. We would like to see ... if they have specific issues they would like to talk about, I would like to meet with them and they can take our input. But I really think they have met that by coming to us periodically. They keep us pretty well informed.

Because commissioners have high demands on their time and a full agenda both in and out of their office, they rely on KNF managers to provide information as necessary. The attribution of trust in combination with the definition of the KNF as the responsible professionals suggests that there will be a need for ongoing outreach to the commissioners to maintain the strong working relationship that currently exists.

2.3.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR PLAN REVISION

What are the implications for LRMP revision of county expectations and desires for communication and working relationships with the KNF? As Forest Plan revision moves forward, the process for working with the County Commissioners should take into consideration the successes of the current relationship:

- Regular communication based on outreach by the KNF managers and staff.
- Inclusion of the commissioners into discussions about topics that are likely to have major consequences for their constituents.
- Awareness of and respect for the elected status and role of the commissioners as representatives of the citizens of their respective counties;
- Consideration for the high demands on commissioner's time in performing the everyday tasks of their position.
- Continue to build on and protect the trust between the commissioners and the KNF. This trust contributes to the overall positive evaluation of current patterns of communication and collaboration; and, it will be an important basis for any future relationships with KNF managers.

2.4 Summary of Key Points

The KNF and the two counties have mutual interests in the management of federal lands. Local governments receive important revenues from Payments to States funds as well as from Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT). These provide important fiscal benefits to citizens of the two counties. Cooperation and collaboration between the KNF and the counties has shown a significant change since the 1995 Social Assessment. Trust in leadership has improved along with overall assessments of the working relationship between KNF and the County Commissioners. The contributions of KNF personnel to leadership and civic involvement are recognized as an important asset for community well-being. The existing

working relationship with the counties is a basis for continued improvement in KNF relationships with both counties.

3 NATURAL RESOURCE INTEREST GROUPS

The 1995 KNF Social Assessment identified local interest groups and organizations with an interest in forest management. These entities included environmental organizations, industry groups, community-based groups, as well as recreational groups (e.g., Rod and Gun Clubs, Backcountry Horsemen, etc...) and other interest groups such as the Militia Montana. For this update, the task was to focus on identifying new groups that have emerged since the 1995 update. Consequently, this section addresses three specific questions:

- What new groups have emerged?
- Given the presence of new groups, what are the effects on the social dynamics for all groups?
- What are the implications of these new groups for Forest Plan revision?

3.1 New Groups

The Montana Wilderness Association, the Cabinet Resources Group, Communities for a Great Northwest, and other groups identified in the 1995 Social Assessment remain active and concerned with forest management issues. However, several new entities have emerged that have changed the social dynamics among all interest groups. These new groups of interest for this work include:

- Resource Advisory Council (RAC)
- TIMBER (Totally Involved In Managing Better Economic Resources)
- Yaak Valley Forest Council
- Lincoln County Recreation Association
- Local Watershed Groups

In this discussion we briefly describe the emergence of these groups, their purpose and goals, activities, and their interests in forest management. This is general background for a more focused discussion of how these groups have changed the overall social environment of natural resource groups in the region; and, the implications of these changed dynamics for Forest Plan revision and other responses to management actions and plans.

3.1.1 THE RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Resource Advisory Councils were mandated as part of the Payments to States H.R. 2389 (P 106-393) legislation briefly summarized in a previous chapter (section 2.2). Section 205 of H.R. 2389 provides for the establishment of a 15 member Resource Advisory Committee. The purpose of the RAC as described in Section 204 (a) (2) is: "The purpose of a resource advisory committee shall be to improve collaborative relationships and to provide advice and recommendations to the land management agencies consistent with the purposes of this Act." Section 205 describes four primary duties for the RAC:

1. Review projects as proposed by counties or other parties under Title II of the law.
2. Propose projects and funding as limited by Section 203.
3. Coordinate with land management officials in proposing projects for consideration.

4. Provide an opportunity for all interested parties to participate in the formulation and advancement of projects for consideration.

Members of the RAC apply for positions that have a three-year term. The counties and the KNF review the nominations before they are forwarded to the Secretary of Agriculture for appointment. Five persons from three categories form the fifteen member RAC. The three categories and the persons on the current RAC in those categories are as follows:

- Category One: representatives of organized labor, developed outdoor recreation, off-highway vehicle use, energy and/or mining development, timber industry or holders of federal grazing permits.
 - Tony Johnson -- organized labor
 - Timothy Ryan -- developed outdoor recreation, off-highway vehicle use
 - Kenneth Stephens – energy and minerals development
 - Robert Glover – commercial timber
 - Lee Disney – grazing
- Category Two: representatives of environmental and resource conservation organizations, with a focus on wildlife and/or fisheries resources, dispersed recreation, archaeological and historic interests, and wild horse and burro groups.
 - Timothy Linehan – nationally recognized environmental organization
 - George Martin – nationally recognized environmental organization
 - Robyn King – locally recognized environmental organization
 - Peter Kitts – dispersed recreation
 - D. Wayne Hirst – archaeological and historical interests
- Category Three: representatives of State and county government, Native American tribes, school officials or teachers, and the public-at-large.
 - Eileen Carney – state elected official
 - Rita Windom – county elected official
 - Gary Huntsberger – school official or teacher
 - Russell Hudson – affected public at large
 - Bruce Vincent – affected public at large

The RAC meets about once a month to discuss and review projects to be funded with Title II monies. The KNF maintains a web site³ with links to the minutes of meetings, project activities, and other essential background information about RAC activities and legislative authority.

Members from each of the categories of RAC membership participated in the discussions for this project. Uniformly, these individuals praised the RAC as operating effectively, although often cautiously, in the types of projects considered for funding. That is, members of the RAC suggest they have considered projects for which they could reach consensus. The emphasis has been on building working relationships and providing a forum for the discussion of projects and issues of concern to all parties.

³ <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/kootenai/rac/documents.shtml>

The success of the RAC appears to be related to the following factors:

- Membership represents a diverse set of views among the constituents of the KNF. Discussions suggested that RAC members are perceived as holding moderate points of view. Both the diversity and the moderate perspectives of RAC members is evaluated as positive assets that contribute to the RAC's success.
- KNF leadership provides an important support role in guiding but not directing the meetings. KNF personnel who participate in the RAC are perceived as providing a useful resource that guides the functioning of the RAC without dominating its operation. This non-overbearing support has enabled the RAC to perform successfully as an advisory group for the KNF.
- Collectively, the membership has worked hard to develop cooperative working relationships. RAC members suggest that everyone involved in this volunteer group has extended special effort to minimize conflict and respect opposing opinions. This is not to suggest that differences in points of view are set-aside, but rather that in spite of their differences, RAC members have focused on building relationships that can be applied to constructive problem solving
- There has been an emphasis on consensus building in selecting projects to consider and to fund. Several members suggested that the RAC has focused on projects where agreement could be reached. This has allowed the group to build solid working relationships and to make consensus decisions rather than engage in conflict that results in no decision. Although some members suggested that tougher decisions are in the future, there is a more solid foundation to address these more difficult projects because of the experience in consensus building.
- Members have found common ground in some areas, but they also respect their differences on natural resource management issues. This is the underlying theme in all of the above points: differences in views about natural resource management exist, but they are not polarizing the RAC. Success is enabled because members do not allow different points of view to become the issue addressed by the group.

Importantly, the RAC is evaluated as a more or less neutral forum in which diverse interests can meet to work on common problems. This addresses one of the major issues about community problem solving addressed in the 1995 Social Assessment: there was no arena for community members to meet to engage in problem solving. The measured and steady success of the RAC provides an example that collective problem solving among diverse local interests can succeed.

3.1.2 T.I.M.B.E.R.

T.I.M.B.E.R. (Totally Involved in Managing Better Economic Resources --TIMBER) is a group that formed in the spring of 2003 in Eureka of northern Lincoln County. The group meets monthly and posts minutes of their meetings on the web site of the Tobacco Valley News, the local paper. Membership is open only to local residents. The group describes itself as representing diverse interests, although local environmental interests have chosen not to participate at this time. The issues related to participation by local environmental interests are discussed in more detail below. There are between 8 and 15 active members who regularly attend group meetings.

3.1.2.1 GROUP PURPOSE

The purpose of TIMBER is to address issues about Forest Plan revision and the use of natural resources in the environs of northern Lincoln County.

Our analysis of discussions with TIMBER members suggests the following factors contributed to the group's formation.

A perceived need to include more community interests in discussions about forest management issues. Member's perceived a need to find some middle ground in the discussions about the use and management of forest and other natural resources. As one of the TIMBER founders noted, there is a perception that the "middle ground" has been missing in discussions regarding forest management issues:

I found ...polarization ... the (timber industry) on one side ...and the Ecology Center on the other side. In decision after decision there were the same arguments ... in which each accuses the other of one thing and another, each demanding from the Forest Service 'this' or 'that.' Nowhere were the business community, the education community, and all these people who say the management of this Forest is absolutely essential to our livelihood. If it is, then, why is no one ever participating in anything? I came to the realization no one is participating because everyone is busy. Everyone agrees it is an important issue, but no one has taken the time to get the community involved.

The perceived lack of "community" participation in forest management decisions combined with an assessment that such decisions affect local livelihoods is a fundamental reason for formation of this group. Although TIMBER would like to represent all interests within Eureka and environs, local environmental interests are currently not participating in the group. As one TIMBER member noted:

In this group TIMBER we have tried to invite people ... we have tried to get local environmentalists and couldn't get anyone. I asked the Yaak Valley Forest Council and the Montana Wilderness Association (MWA), but no one has stepped forward. Why they are not joining us ... we were told quite plainly at a meeting just recently by one of our long time environmentalists That the reason none of his group would join us is because of the intimidation they are victims of. They did not give any clarification of that....

TIMBER members acknowledge that the Yaak Valley Forest Council (YVFC) is a group that is outside of their geographic area and therefore would not normally be asked to join the group. However, TIMBER members also suggest they have requested assistance from the YVFC to identify local environmentalists who might become TIMBER members. This expresses the need of some TIMBER members to include environmental interests in their efforts. "Environmental" interests represent a specific identity in these communities. For example, there are local members of the Montana Wilderness Association, some of whom are also TIMBER members, in the community. However, these individuals are not likely to identify themselves as "environmentalist" nor would they suggest that because they are MWA members, they can represent an environmental perspective on forest management. There are also local "environmentalists" who are also MWA members, but these individuals

have not yet attended TIMBER meetings. Consequently, there is no “official” local representation of an environmental perspective in TIMBER.

Some meetings have been attended by representatives from the Montana Wilderness Association from outside the county. However, because TIMBER has restricted formal membership to local residents, the MWA representative who attends does not necessarily represent a local environmental presence in the group. Local environmentalists, some of whom are members of the Tobacco Valley Resources Group, suggest that participation in TIMBER may not be possible because of their concerns about perceived intimidation of others with environmental interests. This will be discussed in more detail in as a separate topic below. The identity of who is and who is not an environmentalist and who can represent this point of view is important since TIMBER desires to represent a cross-section of interest groups and points of view.

A perceived need for a new type of community participation in issues related to forest management in general and Forest Plan revision in particular. Members also suggest that other important functions of the group are to advocate for community interests in Forest Plan revision and to provide information to their community about Forest Plan revision and related issues. The group thus fills a gap in public involvement with a community-based group that was formed to represent diverse points of view about forest management issues. As noted above, TIMBER members suggest that in the past, community members were often just too busy to participate in many of the meetings and other activities associated with forest management.

We have been negligent in getting out and getting involved in the planning process. It was never put home, it never came out it was an important step to take. It has become evident that it is important to be involved. The planning effort is there for people to use and use it as a bible for how we are going to manage our Forest.... I was involved in the Upper Columbia Project ... we made some substantive comments on that project ... that we are a timber dependent community and it became clear then that whether we have the time or not, we need to be involved in this process. At least 50% maybe 90% of people who live in Eureka have some association with the timber industry and we need to encourage people to get involved.

TIMBER members hope to fill a role in acting for many of those individuals who have not, in the past, participated in what is now acknowledged as an essential issue. TIMBER also hopes to represent those who know it is important to be involved, but who may not have the time to do so. They describe their emerging role as follows:

Public involvement does not have to mean everyone getting involved in every decision at every meeting. That does not work, that is impossible. What we recognize is that an institutionalized group that has the ‘o.k.’ to represent the community and it (the group) feels it has the community’s backing in tracking some of these issues and taking on corollary objectives such as educating people about what is happening. For example, having an in-service at the school ... about the forest planning process, Forest Plan revision, the old growth law suit, simply as an educational tool to discuss the process and what is going on and this is why we perceive it should be of interest to them. The next step is to ask them to be involved by simply submitting comments or if not submitting comments to the planning group

in Libby, then at least to us, so that we know what it is they are looking at. We see other ways to be involved in the community without necessarily asking them to come to every meeting.

TIMBER hopes to both represent community interests and to act as a catalyst to involve other individuals in the forest planning process.

An assessment of the need to work proactively to protect a valued heritage and way of life perceived as threatened by changes in resource uses that affect local economies. The founders and some other members who participated in discussions for this update described the importance of the “timber town” identity among residents of this region. This identity is important because it links lifestyles with an identity that is “in the woods.” For example,

This is a timber town in identity. To me it has always been a timber town. There is some diversification, but it is some individuals who see an opportunity to use resources that are a direct benefit to them. I don't see them expanding to the kind of breadth and width say that an Owens and Hurst and other people that have a history of logging. If you ask ten people in this town, nine out of ten will tell you it is a timber town. I am not even sure even one would tell you different. By- in- large our identity is out in the woods.

Another TIMBER member also suggested the deeply felt assessment of the community as having both a timber history and a current timber identity that residents desire to preserve. There is also a strong sense of pride in community heritage and identity, but there is also a sense that community heritage and identity are threatened:

If you go to Butte or Whitehall and the vein runs out, then you put up statues of your heritage because it is tapped out. I don't want to see statues of loggers showing that's what it used to be and people saying 'guys get over it.' We have a renewable resource. ... It is like a wheat field ... you let it rest, you come back, and you take another piece. That is how we are being pigeon holed - people are saying 'northwest Montana get over it' your timber industry is dead it is all over.... And I wonder why we are shutting down a wheat field, why are we shutting down a renewable resource?

There is also a linkage of community pride, heritage, and identity that is linked with a sense of stewardship of natural resources:

Where we are misrepresented ...is the pride and the heritage come from our families and people we know are good stewards of our environment. We don't want to see this environment destroyed for our children. That is why most of us are staying here. And we have other people telling us that we don't know what we are doing or that our fiduciaries (USFS) are not managing it right. Now, there will be abuses, but none of us want that. We want sound management. Part of our heritage is taking care of our lands and waters and soils. If I see an abuse of that I am working hard against it. But I want to see it used too and if it is not, then that is an abuse too. If that

forest is not managed ...(that is not) respectful and taking pride in our heritage.

This sense of heritage also links family experience, community, and the timber industry:

A lot of the people in this community ... the goal they have is not to be a millionaire, it is to do what their dad did, what their grandfather did. The cultural heritage of that is something people want to continue. I live out past the mill ... and when I drive in I get that smell and it is just such a good smell and it is something that reminds me of our heritage. And when I take my kids up in the woods and they can see some space between the trees and I take them to places and tell them 'there is where your grandpa logged' and then I feel a sense of this is who we are. And I am proud to be a part of that. And even as a community ... we know our loggers are doing a good job out there. They are investing lots of money in equipment to take better care of the environment so that it is there for their grandkids. I think that science has advanced, and the logging industry has advanced along with it ... and we want to make sure we have a forest here forever and clear streams. We are going to work with the science and talk to the loggers and see what they are doing, we are going to sit down and work together rather than the way some groups just say 'we are just going to stop what you are doing.' We want a solution and we want to work with groups that want solutions.

Family, experience, and community become connected and expresses individual as well as community identity. One result for this connection is that community interests, individual interests, and overall well being are perceived as continuous. An implication of this assessment is that community interests are consistent with a "healthy forest." If healthy forests do not exist, neither will healthy communities. The definitions of healthy forests for members of TIMBER include timber harvesting that protects communities from catastrophic fires and otherwise making use of available resources without abusing them. It also implies working with others who have diverse interests that have sincere interests in developing solutions to different points of view about managing forest lands in a way that can also support local communities.

There may be other reasons that contributed to the formation of this group, but these are core reasons that influence TIMBER activities and interests concerning forest management. In noting some of these interests and concerns, an issue also emerged about the participation of environmentalists in the group that may affect how TIMBER contributes to representing diverse community interests.

3.1.2.2 ENVIRONMENTALIST PARTICIPATION IN TIMBER

As noted previously, TIMBER currently lacks a local member from the "environmentalist" community. Although many current TIMBER members believe they are also ardent conservationists and they have deeply felt beliefs about environmental stewardship, they generally do not consider themselves as members of the greater Eureka "environmental community". The Tobacco Valley Resource Group (TVRG) is traditionally identified as the core of the local environmental community, but there are other environmentalists who are not TVRG members. TIMBER members suggested that they desired participation from local environmentalists, but they were informed that there were concerns about "intimidation" and they were reluctant to participate. TIMBER also contacted the Yaak Valley Forest

Council and members of the Montana Wilderness Association in Kalispell for assistance in identifying local environmentalists to participate. At the time of the writing of this update (September 2003), no local environmentalists are participating, but the meetings are attended by a Montana Wilderness Association representative from Kalispell. The situation about local participation is expressed in recent minutes from the August 2003 TIMBER meeting.

One "environmentalist" applauded the efforts of the committee to gather input from the community during the forest planning process. He had at least one caveat, however, one that reflected a Catch 22 worthy of Joseph Heller.

The committee has no one "representing that part of the community which is made up of environmentalists," this visitor explained. The reason, he said, is because environmentalists who speak up in the Tobacco Valley find themselves on the receiving end of intimidation that includes boycotts. No further elaboration was offered.

Despite its efforts of recruitment, the committee is thus hard pressed to find an "environmentalist" willing to serve with other members of the community. "It's an unfortunate reality," the environmentalist said, pointing out that the problem is not unique to Eureka.

His Catch 22 is this, then: TIMBER needs a representative of the environmental community on the committee, but no one from the environmental community is willing to serve (TIMBER, 2003).

Self-identified local environmentalists who participated in discussions for this update suggested that they have witnessed recent intimidation that they do not wish extended to them. One specific incident cited concerns work done for an out-of-area environmental organization by a Eureka area resident. The products of this work were used in the recent old growth lawsuit against the KNF by the Ecology Center. The local resident who prepared the report was, according to other environmentalists, intimidated or what was described as at least subjected to "uncivil" behavior. The possibility that they would be subjected to similar actions inhibits the willingness of these local environmentalists to participate in TIMBER. These sentiments and their influence on public participation in general are expressed in the following statement:

There is an attitude among some people here that is not particularly civil. I can remember at one point being at a meeting of snowmobile interests and someone I was with raised a question and people said, 'Who are you and what group do you represent?' And there was this very hard intimidating kind of behavior. After awhile, you just say 'I don't really need this'. An agency like the Forest Service trying to get both sides in a small community like this, it just does not give a lot of free space for a free discussion and dialogue about this (environmental issues). I know they are trying some new things and maybe that is going to improve things so there is not this sense of numbers overwhelming you. They are also using facilitators to make sure everyone gets heard. In a larger group people can get up and point their fingers at you and scream at you and they have the safety of all these other people behind him. In a small group it is like a one on one and that helps tone them down.

In a small community in which one's neighbor may also be your dentist or grocer, public conflict can be especially complicated because of the multiple ties that people have with one another. Consequently, participating in arenas where such conflict is assessed as likely has a high social risk that members of the Eureka area environmentalist community evaluate for each particular situation. This evaluation has clearly affected their decision about participation in TIMBER.

TIMBER members are uncertain about "intimidation" although they do recognize that some community members did have a strong response to the individual who prepared the report used by the Ecology Center in its old growth lawsuit. It is suggested that this individual was working with other community interests at the same time that the report was in preparation. This report was used by the Ecology Center, according to some TIMBER members, to attack community interests and lifestyles. It was also used to "call the Forest Service crooks and criminals." TIMBER members indicated that they and others in the community felt betrayed because of the involvement in community-based development efforts while simultaneously working on a report that was used to undermine the community and the Forest Service.

Local environmentalists also suggest they have concerns that TIMBER is not truly seeking the "middle ground" in representing the entire community. An environmentalist who attended one of the initial TIMBER meetings observed to others that they would not be participating further because, "The middle was in a different place than he felt comfortable with." There is also the suggestion that TIMBER was formed as a "very emotional" response to the old growth lawsuit by the Ecology Center; and, the process of forming the group was not perceived as including diverse interests:

I was at the Chamber meetings in which the announcement of the group (TIMBER) occurred. And if you look at the name they took and what they said is the purpose of the group, it is not a neutral process. If it was a neutral process it would have been somebody from that side of the argument calling somebody from the other side of the argument saying, 'let's get a group together' so common ground can be explored. But that is not how it came about. I think they want it to be very much unbiased, I think it will be very difficult to get that. Those of us on the other side of the argument just feel it was very biased from the beginning. Although some people in that group want to be open and welcoming, I don't think others are in that place and they are just unable to be in that place (open and welcoming).

There is acknowledgement by local environmentalists that a process that includes diverse interest to establish common ground is viable:

I believe that if you can get both sides together, we can eventually find common ground and produce something of value to both sides. You can have a happy medium. Other environmentalists (from outside the area) think that I am foolish with that type of approach, and they say that it will not be possible to find common ground and that what we need to do is win. But, I have problems with that approach. I see compromise and common ground as possible. I have seen examples of how it can happen.

While an approach of diverse interests working to achieve common ground is perceived as possible, TIMBER is not currently assessed as a feasible approach to find that common ground because: the process to form TIMBER is not perceived as inclusive of diverse interests; TIMBER is not perceived as representing middle ground approaches to resource issues; and, the risk of possible intimidation for holding environmentalist positions in such an organization may not be worth the possible rewards.

3.1.3 YAAK VALLEY FOREST COUNCIL

The Yaak Valley Forest Council (YVFC) is a non-profit organization (501.C3) with environmental concerns about the Yaak Valley. YVFC has a membership of about sixty-five persons with approximately eight to ten persons who are actively involved in the work of the organization. There is a paid Executive Director who works with an eight-member Board of Directors. YVFC interests are concentrated on forest and resource management issues in the Yaak Valley, particularly advocacy for roadless areas in the Yaak. The YVFC is similar to the Cabinet Resource Group and the Tobacco Valley Resource Group in that they are locally based with local interests. There is a perception that the Yaak is an area that requires an advocacy group just as the Tobacco Valley and the Cabinet Mountains do. As one YVFC member indicated:

Well this whole place is looked at as the Cabinet-Yaak ecosystem as one region. What we say is that it is really two separate ecosystems because the Kootenai River divides us and there are two different things going on even though people talk about the area as being joined, but they are not. The Kootenai River separates them. If you are looking at grizzly bears, the Kootenai River cuts that off. If you look at the landscape of the Cabinets as compared to the Yaak, they are different. And the issues are totally different. Plus if you look at the Cabinets up to the Canadian border, it is a big area. ... We felt there was a need for a focus on this area, to focus on protecting the last roadless in the Yaak. That is very specific; it is to the west of the reservoir and to the north of the Kootenai River and that is our focus.

YVFC suggest their concern is with the management of the KNF in general, but very specifically with issues in the Yaak: "If it involves the Kootenai we try to be involved, but where we will be most present is where it involves Three Rivers (The Three Rivers Ranger District)." There is thus at once a very local focus, but a more general concern with the management of the KNF. Although roadless areas are a specific concern of the YVFC, there is also a more general interest with advocating for productive community-based dialogue about forest management issues, particularly ending what is described as the "forty year war on the Kootenai." This war is described as having polarized interests so that seeking common ground and finding broad-based solutions to environmental issues has not been possible:

It has been a war about wild places, roadless areas, land management and permanent protection of roadless areas. We have been fighting over roadless and wilderness areas for forty years. The war is about how we ... ah, it has been so incredibly polarized. Groups like ours have more common ground with the local logging community and not just the local logging community; it is the local community period. But, what has continued to

keep the polarization is that if you are an 'environmentalist' then you are 'this.' And if you stand for wilderness, then it must mean 'you want us to be shut out of the woods.' ... We have had conversations with those in the logging industry and they say they agree with a lot of what we are saying....

This statement expresses the assessment that polarization of interests has prevented finding 'common ground' or pursuing mutual interests because of an emphasis on the differences rather than the commonalities about resource management issues:

There is a lot of common ground between some in the environmental movement and those in industry --- all of it became such a labeling thing. It is the fact that people who are local and consider themselves conservationists, we have this common ground with them, but because of the word 'environmentalist' or what they think their friends will think about them if they get involved with 'environmentalists' then everybody - well about 75% of the people here have the same interests (about conservation). Early on when we came to this community and had conversations with people, it became obvious there was more to agree on than disagree about. And, in theory, many people agreed with us about the roadless areas, but it became so hot because it became associated with 'locking out' and it became 'us' and 'them.' One of the things we wanted to do in this organization was to end that polarization because there is really no reason for it. I hear people throwing around the word stewardship and people asking 'who are the real environmentalists?' We should be talking together about what is best for the landscape and what is best for the community and to continue that dialogue.

The YVFC does not oppose timber harvesting per se, that is they are not identified as a "no cut" organization as are groups such as the Ecology Center. In fact, YVFC members have participated in efforts to find timber to keep the now closed Stimson Mill open and they have expressed an interest in understanding the timber needs of Owens and Hurst in Eureka. They are also perceived by different interest groups, including some timber industry groups, as an entity that is "reasonable" and credible. They are contrasted with other entities that are described as "no cut" and not credible because their positions are classified as "extremists." That is, the current receptiveness to the YVFC is in part because they are perceived to contrast with other types of environmental groups that are not local and they are perceived as radical and extremist in their approach to land management.

The YVFC has participated in other community efforts that have in effect extended its range of influence and built new ties with those who previously may not have worked with environmental groups. One of these efforts was the previously mentioned initiative in Libby to respond to the pending closure of the Stimson Mill. The group that formed included a wide range of interest groups; and, members of the YVFC were among those who participated in the committees and discussions to respond to the pending mill closure. YVFC members perceived this as consistent with their concerns and interests in the relationship of their communities with the KNF. One member described the collective efforts of the group to "find" the timber Stimson said was needed to keep the mill open:

So, we worked very hard to come up with more timber than Stimson needed. That is not what they wanted to hear. Once we did it, in a relatively short time, then we said that what we needed was a special

exemption from the Region and the delegation. So the timber task force committee recommended 'let's ask for money so the Forest Service can fast track the fuels reduction project.' So, we don't have to do anything with appeals because if we work in the wild land-urban interface and we are very careful about what we are picking and we have environmental groups on board that are with us working through the process, then we can lessen the chance of appeals and litigation on this issue. We found more than what they asked for and found a way to fast track it and we kept appeals in play. What we found was that ... this was not the intent of some of those involved.

Despite the collective efforts of the group, the mill was closed. The YVFC actively participated in ways to identify a timber supply that could assist in keeping the mill open. This expressed their assessment that mills and timber harvesting are not inconsistent with their view of forest management. And, they did have the opportunity to work with others that created new bonds that may be useful for future problem solving efforts. The utility and consequences of this participation is expressed in the following statement:

What I found in participating in this was that there were so many people ready to find a solution. And in private conversations we said 'we have to stop the fighting between these two interests (environmentalists and timber industry).' And we said we think it is really simple and it is what we have been saying since 1997: Get the roadless areas off the table and then we can sit down and get some agreements about how to work in the front country. That will have to be defined and we will have to look at it, and some groups will be more open to regular timber sales than other groups.

There will be zero cut groups and there is nothing we can do about that. There are other groups out there ... enough folks think that treatment is necessary and we can find common ground. It (participation in the Libby task force) opened the door for us to be involved in the community in a way that we were not involved before and that was a good thing. We are still involved in the healthy community meetings, but we had to pull off and work on the Forest Plan revision issues because that is our priority to be involved in Troy, Libby, and Yaak.

We are not zero cut, but we will not get off the roadless issue. We believe we need a facility like the Owens and Hurst Mill to process the fiber that is coming off the Kootenai. We ... went up there to Eureka to introduce ourselves. He (the mill owner) has been willing to talk to us and we call him up and ask him about things we hear and he calls us up and asks us about things he hears. We are trying to build a relationship there. He has been very honest with us.

Participation led to cross-cutting ties with other individuals and groups, it demonstrated the willingness of the YVFC to consider what they identified as reasonable timber harvesting, and it expressed a willingness to demonstrate the continuity of the YVFC interests with the interests of others in their community. These efforts appear to be building some trust that local environmental interests can work with other community interests and pursue common ground.

An implication of this is that the YVFC may occupy a unique role in assisting with environmental problem solving in the region. That is, in the past the polarization around

issues has had a cultural and social basis that has affected ongoing conflict. The activities and the stated interests of the YVFC suggests they can enter into working relationships with timber and other community interests to engage in productive problem solving. This has been demonstrated in some of the activities of the YVFC wherein they have provided information or facilitated discussions and exchanges of views about specific forest management issues. Another example illustrates this emerging role:

We brokered a dialogue between the Forest Service and the Ecology Center. We got the Ecology Center to sign off on ... we went out and did ground truths on 80 some units held up in that judgment. We went out and looked at them and took photos and asked all the questions and said, 'O.k. ... Ecology Center this is what it looks like to us.' It would be o.k. to let these go only if you think it is o.k. to let this go. We acted as a kind of broker between the two because there was some angst between those two groups. They agreed with us, they looked at everything we said. Their agreeing and being willing to release those sales so that fiber could start moving through this area again (was positive).

This role as a broker or intermediary between different environmental interests and the Forest Service, the timber industry, or other community groups may be only a secondary function of the YVFC. However, it is socially important because it suggests establishing new bonds and ties that can be a basis for collective problem solving. As noted previously, TIMBER in Eureka has contacted the YVFC to assist in finding local environmental interests to participate in that group. TIMBER also invited a presentation by the YVFC about their interests and concerns regarding the old growth lawsuit and other issues. This suggests they do have an emerging role in establishing common ground. However, the actions of non-local environmental groups will affect the ability of the YVFC to perform this role. Since groups such as the Ecology Center, the Alliance for the Wild Rockies, and related groups are perceived as attempting to "win" and not find solutions to the issues that meet community as well as environmental interests, the relationship of the YVFC with these other groups will likely affect their success in establishing a different and new forum for problem solving. If those "external" groups are perceived as controlling or directing the YVFC or if the YVFC is perceived as subordinating its local interests to maintain ties with these external groups, then this role will likely diminish. It is also likely the YVFC may then be lumped with these other groups and its effectiveness in building bridges and establishing common ground may also diminish.

Nonetheless, the YVFC appears to represent an emerging organization that offers the promise of new types of problem solving efforts in Lincoln and Sanders counties because of their local status, their willingness to work with diverse community interests, and an unambiguous statement of what is important to them in the debate about resource management issues: protection of roadless areas in the Yaak.

3.1.4 WATERSHED COUNCILS

There are watershed groups in both Lincoln and Sanders counties. These groups appear to be of two types: community-interest based and private-landowner based. The community-interest based group, the Kootenai River Network, is composed of individuals with diverse interests in the relationship of the Kootenai River to local environmental and economic conditions. Members do not necessarily live along the river, but their interests are in how rivers benefit the community and quality of life in the region. The private-landowner type

group is composed of individual landowners who share a river or stream as a common property resource with their neighbors. Their interests are usually specific to their watershed, although there is recognition that their public and private neighbors influence their watersheds. Both types of groups appear to organize around localized concerns about water quality, stream restoration, and fisheries issues.

In Lincoln County, the Kootenai River Network has been in existence since 1991 and exemplifies the community-based watershed type group. The Bobtail Creek Watershed Group was formed in 1996. It is the only private-land owner group the county. In Sanders County there are approximately six watershed groups in the area of interest for this study and all of these are private-land owner groups. Most of these groups have formed since 1995. The Sanders County watershed councils are Bull River, White Pine Creek, Elk Creek, Prospect Creek, Pilgrim Creek, Trout Creek/Little Trout, and Rock Creek. There is currently an umbrella organization that has formed to add administrative and coordination efficiency among the Sanders County watershed councils.

Both community interest and private land owner groups have some interest in Forest Plan revision. However, their general concerns appear to be focused on issues specific to their locality and watershed. The groups in Sanders County cooperate with the KNF on projects of mutual interest, but beyond these project specific interactions, their interests in other plan revision issues appears limited. Similarly, in Lincoln County the Bobtail Watershed Group has specific interests in KNF plans that may affect water quality. However, they do not perceive a wider involvement in Forest Plan revision issues beyond those that have an immediate effect on their watershed. Similarly, the Kootenai River Network has a broad interest in forest management and plan revision issues that affect communities and residents adjacent to the Kootenai River. However, their interests and activities appear to be focused on other community development and watershed issues. Beyond these general interests, these groups are not especially active as advocates for any positions beyond those that affect their local interests. They are noted here because they are new natural resource groups that have emerged as part of the social environment since the 1995 Social Assessment.

3.1.4.1 KRN: A COMMUNITY-INTEREST WATERSHED GROUP

The Kootenai River Network (KRN) is the only community-interest based group in the region. This group appears to have waxed and waned since its formation in 1991. The organization now has a new Executive Director and is making new efforts to pursue watershed projects of interest to a range of interests in the region. The KRN describes itself as follows:

The Kootenai River Network is an alliance of diverse citizen's groups, individuals, businesses, industry, and tribal and government water resource management agencies in Montana, Idaho, and British Columbia. Our mission is to involve stakeholders in the protection and restoration of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Kootenai River Basin waters (Kootenai River Network 2003).

The organization is apolitical and, like other watershed organizations, they prefer not to take political stands on environmental issues.

In contrast to the private-land owner based watershed groups, the KRN is not membership driven and in fact has a relatively limited membership. The board of directors and the paid

staff, an Executive Director and a Financial Director, are the working members of the organization. The organization is funded almost exclusively through grants for stream restoration and related projects. Projects have been funded primarily in the Tobacco Valley, including a restoration project on Graves Creek. Additionally, the organization collaborates with a variety of federal and state agencies, including tribal entities, in performing its restoration work. Collaborating organizations include the following:

Montana Department of Environmental Quality

Resource Protection Planning Bureau

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Libby Area Conservancy District

USACE Libby Dam / Libby Dam Visitor Center

USDA Forest Service

Plum Creek Timber Company

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

US Fish and Wildlife Service/Montana Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Free Run Aquatic Research, Hayden Idaho

Kootenai Tribe of Idaho

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

East Kootenai Environmental Society

Canadian Columbia River Inter-tribal Fisheries Committee

Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Tribal Council

USFWS Partners for Fish & Wildlife

KRN is also initiating coordination with other regional entities, but these efforts are in their initial stages as the new Executive Director takes the helm of this organization. KRN does not appear to be coordinating with other local watershed groups. As a community-based group with regional interests, KRN has a wider range of interests that cross county as well as international boundaries. This group appears to have some interest in Forest Plan revision, but its focus is on a wider range of development interests that may benefit local communities.

3.1.4.2 PRIVATE-LANDOWNER WATERSHED GROUPS

The private-land owner groups focus on issues such as bank erosion and stabilization, riparian vegetation and other habitat issues, fish populations and native fisheries, point source pollution, and other chemical and biological factors that contribute to water quality. Streams that are on what is known as the “303(d)” list, or streams that are “impaired” because of the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) are ones for which state and federal grant monies are available for restoration projects. The formation of these types of groups may be in response to specific events or more general concerns about water quality issues. For example, one of the founders of the Elk Creek Watershed group described the formation of this council as follows:

The 1996 rain and flood event was the start of it, but there was some interest prior to that in the condition of Elk Creek. We thought conditions could be better. There was 319 (Section 319 of the Clean Water Act) funding available for watershed councils and doing restoration work. So the council was formed in response to a specific problem - the availability of funding helped - but it was more the fact the local conservation district and state agencies were very supportive and helpful. That made the most difference, it was great cooperation. AVISTA also helped through their dam re-licensing program. They wanted to enhance habitat within their dam-affected areas. Their support is through their professionals (biologists and scientists) and with funding.

In this instance the availability of external funding and the support of state agencies and AVISTA were key events that led to the success of this group. In fact, the success of the Elk Creek Watershed Council was a stimulus for landowners in other watersheds to form groups and seek funding for projects of concern to them. White Pine Creek, Prospect Creek, Bull River, and the other local watershed groups subsequently formed to address TMDL, riparian habitat, and fisheries issues.

The Bobtail Creek Watershed Council in Lincoln County has a somewhat different origin, but the types of issues of initial concern are similar. An individual with a general interest in watersheds contacted a local representative of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks for suggestions about pursuing those interests. Bobtail Creek was suggested because it was of a scale and size that local efforts could address some of the problems and issues that affect many watersheds in the region. This individual contacted a variety of federal and state agencies as well as private landowners along Bobtail Creek to form this citizen's group. After some initial meetings, the group eventually developed a Mission Statement that included improvement of fisheries and the overall stability of the watershed. The group worked to collect data about existing conditions in Bobtail Creek and found some specific issues regarding TMDL's, 303d listing, fisheries, and riparian restoration that needed to be addressed. The group made some efforts to write grants to address these issues, but their initial efforts were not successful. They then contacted some entities outside the community that specialize in watershed consulting and grant writing for assistance in preparing another grant. This effort was successful in obtaining some 319 monies that funded several projects and additional grant writing efforts. This watershed council exemplifies the type of grassroots effort to stabilize stream channels, improve riparian habitats, and otherwise address stream water quality issues that are of concern to private landowners as well as public land managers.

As with many grassroots efforts, establishing the group and developing a dialogue among diverse interests required ongoing effort and problem solving to promote communication about mutual interests. As one of the group members suggested,

We went from the common point of everyone wanting to have a stable stream and more fish in the creek. We went as far as each land owner was willing to go to get to that.

These dialogues also focused on "cutting past the politics" of environmental issues, to emphasize the common interests of the landowners. In fact, those who participated in discussions emphasized that since they must work with diverse groups of stakeholders in

pursuing projects, they try to refrain from engaging in discussions that take sides about the politics of environmental issues.

The Bobtail Creek group as well as the Elk Creek and other Sanders County watershed councils also exemplify how such groups often require external resources to maximize the opportunity to succeed. The Bobtail Creek group notes they did seek some assistance from the Kootenai River Network, but found sources outside the community more receptive to providing grant writing help and grant administration assistance. The Elk River Council notes that they have sought grants as well as professional assistance from a variety of state and federal agencies, including the Kootenai National Forest:

When our interests and activities coincide they have helped us out and we have appreciated their receptiveness to helping small locally based groups concerned with watershed issues.

Grass-roots groups that are focused on localized watersheds may require external assistance to pursue successfully the stream quality and restoration issues of concern to them. The recent “umbrella” organization that provides assistance to the Sanders County watershed groups represents another type of solution that may also support the efforts of these types of groups.

3.1.5 OTHER GROUPS OF INTEREST

There are two other groups of interest for this discussion: the Lincoln County Recreation Association and Project 56. For each of these groups limited information was collected. The Lincoln County Recreation Association is still in the process of organizing, but the purpose and major goals of the organization are worth noting, even if the data are limited. Project 56 is an ongoing group, but we were able to collect only limited data about the activities and goals of this group. Nonetheless, there is some information and we present as a preliminary discussion about Project 56 in Lincoln County.

3.1.5.1 THE LINCOLN COUNTY RECREATION ASSOCIATION

The Lincoln County Recreation Association is a newly forming organization that has yet to complete its organizational structure and membership. The idea for the organization was developed by local ATV (all terrain vehicles) interests about access and recreation opportunities on the Kootenai National Forest. Since other recreationists and recreation groups also have concerns about access issues, it was decided to form a county-wide organization that could “speak with a larger voice.” At least two information meetings were held to identify if there was enough local concern about access and trails. At least one of these meetings is reported to have been attended by about sixty persons. Organizers of the developing group suggest that their interest is in working with the KNF to identify recreation access issues, trail maintenance, and related issues. As one of the organizers noted,

People here have seen their access to the woods change and we are trying to work with the Forest to keep recreation access. If we all band together, we have a better chance to be heard. We are not the jump up and down and scream type people. We want to sit down with the Forest and talk things over in a calm and rational manner.

Another organizer suggested:

We decided that we needed to have an association that represents all users of the forest, not just ATVs. The reason is that there needs to be a presence within the Forest Service that looks at everybody's needs and balances those needs as best as they possibly can. So this association we agreed on should include hunting, fishing, hiking, ATVs or OHVs, horseback riding, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, and any body with a recreation interest. So, we decided to have a meeting about that and I'll be dammed if we didn't have a whole bunch of people show up, even people not from our county!

The organizers also hope to develop an entity that can pursue grants that can be used for improving trails and providing maps that will benefit local users as well as attract out of area visitors. Among the ideas for attracting out of area visitors is an ATV Jamboree and a Cross-Country Ski and Snowshoe event. Promoting these types of recreation events is also perceived as providing a benefit to the local economy:

Our economy, well what else do we have now but recreation opportunities? If we can make this a destination, then it will benefit the whole economy in the county and broaden our economic base.

However, there is an emphasis on integrating diverse recreation concerns for local benefit, even though some of those interests in the past may have had conflicts:

What we are trying to do is form an organization that can at best mitigate but hopefully eliminate the conflicts between the hikers and the mountain bikers or the horse back rider and the ATV rider or whatever the issues seem to be. So, we decided we had to get involved in the Forest Plan. And we met with them and they were all for this idea because they wanted to have one group that they could deal with that would represent all users. The idea was to sit down with a map and representatives from different types of recreation, hikers, bikers, horsemen, and figure out where we want to have each of these user groups to have access. We wanted to have a group where we could provide the opportunity for everyone to get along and to realize we are all tied at the hip.

This is the stated goal of the group to develop a multi-interest group that has problem solving as well as advocacy for the access interests of all recreation users. The association also has the stated purpose of working with the KNF to develop trails and other recreation infrastructure that will benefit the community, individual recreation users, and the economic interests of Lincoln County.

Although the association has not yet formally organized, the leaders have reached out to various recreation groups as well as the Kootenai River Network to pursue mutual interests. These leaders report that some in the community have responded positively because of the interest in an organization that advocates for the needs of multiple recreation interests. These leaders also suggest there is some negative response among some interest groups. This negative response is based in the concern that the recreation association may be an

effort to replace the interests of their particular group. As one leader observed about this negative response,

Our interest is in supplementing the interests of these other groups and not replacing them. Our interest is in providing multiple-use opportunities and ensuring we can address conflicts among different users.

As the association develops, the leaders suggest they have more ground work to do to integrate the potentially conflicting views among diverse recreation interests.

3.1.5.2 PROJECT 56

Project 56 takes its name from Lincoln County as the 56th county in Montana. Project 56 was formed in 2000 by a core group of about five individuals. One of these members suggested that concerns about forest management, issues about local control of resources, and concerns about local government were primary reasons for the formation of the group. Project 56 holds weekly public meetings; and, one member reported that about twelve to fifteen people usually attend the meetings to discuss topics of interest to the group. The Mission Statement of Project 56 is as follows:

The Project 56 Mission Statement is: to promote the moral, physical and economic well-being of Lincoln County and the people living here by utilizing our natural resources through the empowerment of the Lincoln County government.

We Support: God, U.S. Constitution, Bill of Rights, limited federal government, free enterprise system (capitalism) and home rule (local self-government); in short, the principles upon which this Christian nation was founded.

We Oppose: Atheism, socialism, racism, collectivism, pluralism, social engineering, the New World Order and the United Nations; in short, the ideologies of tyranny.

Focus Areas: Individual rights, the right to own and use private property, multiple use of public lands (federal and state), road closures, roadless areas, mining, ranching, farming, grazing, livestock, hunting, fishing, trapping and water use regulations (Project56, 2003).

In addition to holding weekly meetings to discuss issues of concern to the group, they attend meetings of local government, public meetings about natural resource issues, and they have sponsored local seminars by the National Center for Constitutional Studies. These types of activities are consistent with other such groups in the west that are “watch dogs” on the activities of local, state, and federal government.

Project 56’s activities are diverse, but as noted above their published materials emphasize a focus on public lands and issues related to access to those lands. However, many of these forest management issues are part of other beliefs related to constitutional concerns and the role of local control in government.

An expressed concern of Project 56 is “top down” management of the KNF that does not take into consideration local needs and the custom and culture of Lincoln County communities.

I have heard them say down there (at the Forest Service) that we cannot talk about this, this, and this because they are off limits because of the federal mandate. It is top down management and it does not work. It is not management. It is control. That makes me bristle. Those top down management issues where the powers that be say 'this is how it has to be' and we look around and say 'that does not work here.'

Endangered species issues represent some of the “top down” mandates that Project 56 members suggest are problematic and do not take into consideration both local knowledge and local conditions. Local managers are perceived as knowledgeable, but undercut by others outside the local agency:

I would trust the District Ranger and the Forest Supervisor or any of many of the employees working over there to take the ball and run with it. They know what works and I would say to them 'have at it.' That is a better management style. Federal edicts just don't work and we are subject to a continual barrage of them. There is this tyranny of federal laws and it is not good. ... There are some real constitutional scholars in Project 56 and they can tell you about tenth amendment rights, state's rights, and county supremacy.

A specific concern of Project 56 members is the very nature of the Forest Plan and especially how the previous Plan has not been followed. Members indicate that they plan to be actively involved in Forest Plan revision because, 'The world belongs to those that show up. And this is going to affect us all. What we believe is that if you are involved and you have a say then you have an opportunity to direct it. Maybe not, but you have had your say.' Members are skeptical about the process that may be used, especially the influence of outside groups and the use of facilitators in meetings.

When outside groups can come in and shut things down, that is not local control. The obstructionist industry has an interest in shutting things down.

The way meetings are run now, the facilitated meetings, are unethical and a manipulation of the meetings. The facilitator says they are a disinterested third party, but they direct the meeting and they direct the outcome. Consensus is the product of that unethical manipulation. I would prefer meetings run by Robert's Rules of Order. It would take longer, but in America everybody has their say. If the facilitator does not care for you point of view in those meetings, you may not get your chance to say what you need to say....

Local control and manipulation of the process are concerns about participating in the process, but there remains a fundamental belief that participation is necessary to have a say in the development of the Forest Plan. They suggest that a possible solution is to have smaller group meetings on topic specific issues that are chaired by local experts.

I would love to see a focus meeting on wildlife issues; a focus meeting on access issues; and, a focus meeting on wilderness issues. You are just doomed from the beginning when you say 'we are going to discuss the Forest

Plan' because it is such a complex subject. A thousand people show up and you have two hours. It is not going to work.

The “conflict industry” and “obstructionists” who reside outside and in some cases inside the county are a major concern of Project 56. These interests are perceived as concerned primarily with prolonging conflict, obstructing resolution of forest management issues, and pursuing their own self-interests by pursuing conflict rather than solutions.

We are right here in the bread-basket of timber and we don't have a mill. I know these forests ... and I have never seen these forests so unhealthy. There are patches of dead trees like I have never seen before. It is disturbing. I did not like the clear cuts ... but at least we had people out in the forest and it was being managed. Now it is not being managed.... The obstructionists and activists think we should go back to the pre-settlement era, but we can't, we are here. It is a fantasy. The reality is we live here, we have to manage fires, and we have to manage the forest.

Activists, obstructionists, and the conflict industry are perceived to be paid for what they do. They are believed to be good at networking and 'working the system' although they are not perceived to believe in what they are doing. This contrasts with Project 56 members who are believed to be “rugged individualists” who are not necessarily good at networking and care not to be otherwise; but, they believe in what they do.

The people who founded Project 56, and there are constitutional scholars in the group, the constitution was supposed to give everyone a voice. The main focus and the big hope for us is local control. Now, I can go to the District Ranger and the Forest Supervisor and I respect them. They may not agree with me, but I always feel respect. I walk out of there maybe not getting what I wanted, but knowing that I had my say.

Local control and 'having one's say' is perceived as a sharp contrast to what is described as the obstructionists and conflict industry that focuses on manipulation of the process without true belief in what they are doing.

Access is an issue of fundamental concern to Project 56 members. As one member suggested:

Access and obliterating roads is a waste. When I was a kid, when we were not hiking, we were driving up the roads just to see where they went. There was a lot to do like that when we were kids. Matter of fact I told my kid one time when he was whining 'there is nothing to do here', I told him to do just like we used to do, go get in the truck and start driving up a road just to see where it goes. And he said back to me, 'I know where they go, they all end in a gate.'

There is also a belief that access is tied up with a larger set of issues about outside groups that wish to keep the public off public lands. For example:

People hate the gates. They feel it is their lands. They live on the land, hunting, fishing, and picking berries and they hate not having access. It is like a rural cleansing is underway. It is an effort to rid people of the area. The Sierra Club, Alliance for the Wild Rockies, the Ecology Center all want to turn this place back into something like a National Park and have all of us gone.

Again, the theme of local use, local control, and local knowledge is prominent in the concerns of Project 56. Many outside interests are perceived to have more of a “fantasy” about local conditions. That is, the concerns of outside interests about forest management are perceived to be based in how they would like things to be or what media sources tell them rather than on local knowledge and awareness of local conditions.

However, the group appears to believe that local control is being inhibited by internal conditions related to social and cultural changes that are occurring in Lincoln County.

Right now there is a change in our culture that has come about through the loss of our resource extractive industry. People are now more involved in surviving at this point. They won't go to meetings, they just don't have time and they tell me they are just barely surviving. In the past we directed our own destiny. We controlled our own lives. Now we are controlled. Deep down we are neutered and that is a sad way to live your life when you have known freedom. There are these top down edicts that we can't get around. There are a few of us that stand up to it. Somebody has to when others can't.

Project 56 continues to meet weekly and there continues to be the strong belief that, “The world belongs to those who show up.” Project 56 plans to be involved in expressing their views about revision of the KNF Forest Plan.

3.2 New Groups and the Implications for LRMP Revision

Given the presence of these new groups, how may they influence the process for Forest Plan revision? To address this question, it is important to assess the relationship of these new groups to existing groups; and the relationships of these new groups with one another. The relationship of new groups to existing groups with similar interests may affect the management issues that may be pursued in LRMP revision. The inter-group relationships may influence how groups position their issues given the current mix of all groups in the region. The combination of these two issues is likely to affect how these groups participate in the LRMP revision process.

3.2.1 RELATIONSHIPS OF NEW TO EXISTING GROUPS

The Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) is a unique organization. Its mandated structure ensures a diversity of local and other interests have representation on the RAC. Furthermore, the mandate of the organization to gather public input on Title II and III expenditures and also to develop programs for those expenditures results in a forum for these multiple interests to work together. The implications of the RAC as a unique organization are discussed in more detail below.

Existing environmental groups in Lincoln and Sanders counties have been joined by the Yaak Valley Forest Council. The Cabinet Resources Group and the Tobacco Valley Resource Group have interests in management issues such as: pollution from mining; developing a fire plan for the KNF; cultivating responsible extractive use of natural resources; the use of stewardship programs for timber harvesting; protection of old growth; endangered species protection; creating roadless and wilderness areas; water quality related to timber harvesting; the effects of OHV activity on other recreational users; and, monitoring of forest projects and plans to ensure compliance. Many of these same interests are shared by the Yaak Valley Forest Council. Indeed, the Cabinet Resource Group and the YVFC share two board members and are aware of the activities of each other through these shared board members. However, the geographic area of interest for the YVFC and its emphasis on creation and protection of roadless areas provides a specific focus and defined interests for this new organization. Furthermore, the participation of the organization in a wider range of community arenas, such as the healthy community's initiative, has broadened its base and established new connections with non-environmental groups and interests. The YVFC also has connections with non-local environmental interest such as the Montana Wilderness Association and related groups. The connections the YVFC has with these other groups, positions the organization to work cooperatively with them as well as to act as a "bridge" group that can communicate interests across boundaries.

TIMBER is an emergent group that is in some respects similar to the Healthy Communities group in Libby. This group was formed in Libby to respond to the pending closure of the Stimson mill in Libby. This group evolved into an entity with wider community development interests, but this group is not directly focused on LRMP revision. Nonetheless, each of these organizations is concerned with the implications of Forest Plan revision for local economies and lifestyles. Both are also concerned with promoting access to KNF timber as a means to provide jobs and community enrichment by contributing to a broader social mix within each of their communities. TIMBER's closest relationships are with the Eureka Chamber of Commerce and the Eureka Economic Development Agency. Thus, its focus is clearly northern Lincoln County. Given the historical differences between Eureka and Libby, it may take extra effort for these groups to cooperate to work on Forest Plan revision.

The private watershed councils in Sanders County have an umbrella organization that is providing a wider organizational base for watershed interests in western Sanders County. Members of these groups represent diverse interests, although there is a strong concern with environmental protection, developing conservation easements to protect the natural resources of the region, and working with diverse entities to pursue improved water quality and fisheries. The Bobtail Creek Watershed Council does not have the same type of connections with other groups as does the private landowner groups in Sanders County. Despite what might appear to be a natural alliance with the Kootenai River Network (KRN), these entities do not appear to have a working relationship. Although the KRN is not a new organization, it is experiencing some rejuvenation and it was included in this update because of its watershed focus. This group continues to develop relationships with governmental agencies and other groups that are concerned with watershed issues in the Kootenai River basin. However, it appears to have limited interaction with other watershed groups.

The Lincoln County Recreation association is not yet a functioning organization. If it does continue to develop, it will represent a unique coalition of recreation interests within the region. The interests of the organization are multiple and range from promoting community economic development, advocating for recreational access to public lands, and providing a forum for recreational users to address potential conflicts in their use of public lands. These are ambitious goals that are likely to require a broad membership base representing diverse interests and strong leadership skills.

Project 56 is also a unique organization. While some have linked the group to the Militia Montana and to Project 7 in the Flathead, the group indicates they have no such connections with these other groups. They emphasize the local focus of their interests and suggest that as a group of “rugged individualists” they are content with their lack of networking and inter-group coordination.

3.2.2 RELATIONSHIPS AMONG NEW GROUPS

The work for this update identified some noteworthy relationships among these new groups. The first noteworthy connection is between the RAC and other entities throughout Lincoln County. These connections are through the individual members rather than through the organization operating as a particular group. These diverse members ensure that the RAC is connected to the spectrum of economic, community, environmental, and recreational interests in the region. A second noteworthy connection is among the private watershed groups in Sanders County. Through the umbrella organization working with these groups, they have also developed crosscutting ties across watersheds and to some extent across interest groups. However, these are relatively new ties and how they unfold to act on common interests remains to be seen. A third noteworthy inter-group connection is between the YVFC and other community and other interest groups in the region. Some members of the YVFC participate on the Resource Advisory Council and others are members of the Healthy Community’s group; and, they have also been asked to assist TIMBER with some issues. Although their resources to respond to the demands for their time are limited, the organization is in a position to develop crosscutting relationship that can be a basis for local problem solving.

3.2.3 THE IMPLICATIONS FOR PLAN REVISION

TIMBER, the Lincoln County Recreation Association, and the Yaak Valley Forest Council each express a direct interest in participation in Forest Plan revision. TIMBER was, in part, formed to represent the middle ground in advocating for the community and economic interests of northern Lincoln County. If the organization is acknowledged as representing diverse interests; and, if it is perceived as not an advocacy group for past approaches to timber management, then it is likely to offer a presence in the forest planning process that will effectively advance its interests. However, if local or non-local environmental interests refuse to work with TIMBER, it is likely to be perceived as industry advocacy group rather than a voice of the middle ground. This may compromise its ability to develop common ground with other interest groups concerned with forest management. The Lincoln County Recreation Association also plans to advocate for access and recreation issues in Forest Plan revision, but since it is a nascent group, we cannot speculate on its potential for effectiveness.

The YVFC and TIMBER share similar positions in the implications for plan revision. A strength of the YVFC is its cross-cutting ties with other groups; and, the assessment of the YVFC as “reasonable environmentalists.” While not everyone may share that assessment, there are existing working relationships with other environmental and community organizations that empower this group to develop common ground with diverse local and non-local interests. This may mean that it can act as a broker between diverse interests that could create conflicts over planning issues. In fact organization members indicated that they have a vested interest in trying to create useful problem solving in the Plan revision process, despite arguments from other environmentalists that the Forest Plan cannot be litigated so their efforts should be invested elsewhere. However, YVFC members suggest that Plan

revision is important because it represents a blueprint for the future of the environment and surrounding communities regardless of the ability to litigate the Plan.

While this may appear a potentially volatile mix, the RAC appears to provide some stability for the region because it offers a forum for diverse interest groups to work together. In this sense, it offers a model of diverse interests cooperating in a civil and productive manner. Other groups may engage in conflict and others may disagree with positions about forest management, but the RAC exemplifies the potential for productive problem solving among local interests.

Diverse groups appear to have a strong interest in advocating for their positions as Plan revision moves ahead. An important implication of this fact is that the process for involving and working with these groups will need to address concerns about fairness and consideration of all points of view.

3.3 Summary of Key Points

Since the 1995 Social Assessment several new natural resource interest groups have emerged in Lincoln and Sanders counties. The groups identified by this work are the Resource Advisory Council (RAC), TIMBER (Totally Involved in Managing Better Economic Resources), The Yaak Valley Forest Council, local watershed groups, Project 56, and the Lincoln County Recreation Association. The RAC is a citizen's group that was mandated by Payments to States legislation. This group is evaluated by its participants as providing a cooperative working environment for addressing natural resource management issues among participants with diverse views. TIMBER is a group based in Eureka that has formed to focus on providing community input during the process of Forest Plan revision. The group is composed of a range of community interests with some limited participation by environmental interests. The Yaak Valley Forest Council is based in the Yaak Valley, but it has members in other parts of Lincoln and Sanders counties. The focus of this group is the protection of wilderness and especially roadless areas, although they have concerns about the spectrum of forest management issues. They have worked with other interest groups to identify potential areas of cooperation to resolve long-standing differences between environmental and industry interest groups. Watershed councils are most active in Sanders County where they work to maintain and restore stream water quality. In Lincoln County the Kootenai River Network has new leadership that is working with other community groups to address water quality issues as well as the Kootenai River as a community asset. These watershed groups work with the KNF on selected issues where forest management affects watershed issues. Project 56 is based in Lincoln County and has specific concerns about local control of resource management. This group has a specific interest in the process of plan revision and advocating for access issues and increased use of timber and other natural resources on forest lands. The Lincoln County Recreation Association is in the initial stages of development as an organization. The interests of this group are in advocating for more consideration of recreation issues in the management of forest resources. The relationships between some groups suggest the potential for improved cooperation to address existing conflicts about the use and management of forest resources.

4 COMMUNITY-FOREST INTERACTIONS

The explorations of the Lewis and Clark Core of Discovery offered a literal and figurative roadmap for those from the east who traveled west in search of adventure as well as gold, silver, timber, grasslands, land, and other natural resources. As exploration gave way to settlement, community economies and lifestyles were based on the commercial use of natural resources. A common historical legacy of these communities is an identity that merges lifestyle, resource extraction, and the expectations of personal and community well-being. Early in the 20th century, Gifford Pinchot and many of those who followed him as Chief of the Forest Service recognized that National Forests provided timber, supporting the economies and lifestyles of adjacent communities. Congress also recognized the interaction of forests and communities in what is often termed the “Sustained Yield Act” of 1944 (US, 1944) the purpose of which is stated in Section 1 of PL-78-273:

Sec.1. In order to promote the stability of forest industries, of employment, of communities, and of taxable forest wealth, through continuous supplies of timber; in order to provide for a continuous and ample supply of forest products; and in order to secure the benefits of forests in maintenance of water supply, regulation of stream flow, prevention of soil erosion, amelioration of climate, and preservation of wildlife, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Interior are severally authorized to establish by formal declaration, when in their respective judgments such action would be in the public interest, cooperative sustained-yield units which shall consist of federally owned or administered forest land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary establishing the unit and, in addition thereto, land which reasonably may be expected to be made the subject of one or more of the cooperative agreements with private landowners authorized by section 2 of this Act. (US, 1944)

Promoting stability in communities that were often highly unstable because of boom and bust cycles in demands for natural resources thus became a concern of the Forest Service. In fact, Libby and Troy were among the communities included in the “The Montana Study” that focused on identifying how to promote “community stability.” Harold and Lois Kaufman, the authors of that study, were perceptive in their definition of community stability:

The term community stability ... does not imply a static condition, the absence of change or the necessity of maintaining the status quo. The basic implication is orderly change rather than a fixed condition. Synonyms of stable are lasting, permanent and durable. But for an institution to be lasting ... it must gradually change to meet new conditions. For this reason the most stable type of community in the present day (1944) would probably be one in which there was orderly change toward given goals; those goals embracing ‘the good life’ in whatever way that might be defined (Kaufman and Kaufman, 1946).

Before and shortly after World War II community stability was defined in terms of sustainable timber harvests that could support local economies. Lifestyles, healthy local economies, and timber production were linked in conceptualizing the promotion of community stability. The Kaufman’s notion of “community stability” foresaw changes in

demand and supply that eventually lead to the Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960 that broadened the dimensions of interaction between forests and adjacent communities to include recreation, grazing, watersheds, and wildlife habitat. Subsequent laws further broadened the range of issues affecting the interaction of the Forest Service with adjacent communities.

Social science has examined this relationship with concepts such as: stability (Kaufman and Kaufman, 1946), economic dependency (Robbins, 1987), well-being (Kusel, 1996), and resiliency (Barney & Worth, 2000). Research about sustainable communities and “community viability” (Michaelidou, et al., 2002) also examine the interaction of ecosystem conservation and forest communities. Although social science research remains diverse in approaches and conclusions about the relationships between communities and national forests, it is clear that a focus only on timber production is insufficient to characterize the complexity of these interactions. Indeed, these studies suggest the importance of social and cultural variables as well as a wider range of economic factors other than timber production. The discussion in this chapter is a preliminary assessment of social as well as economic issues that describe the range of interactions between the KNF and adjacent communities.

To describe these dimensions of interaction, we examine demographic conditions and trends, economic characteristics and trends, and social conditions and trends. This examination includes a specific discussion of the socioeconomic contributions of the KNF to county communities. This discussion can serve as one source of information to assess the socioeconomic consequences of alternative forest management approaches.

4.1 Demographic and Socioeconomic Trends

The socioeconomic conditions in Lincoln and Sanders counties are linked to the conditions in the rest of Montana. There are some general demographic and economic trends that characterize existing conditions, especially in western Montana, that constitute the broader context for understanding changes in Lincoln and Sanders counties. The discussion below highlights some of these broader trends and then summarizes specific demographic and economic changes for each of the counties.

4.1.1 DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS AND ISSUES

The following are among the noteworthy trends in Montana demography for the 1990-2000 decade.

- There is a shift in the patterns of population growth. Most of eastern Montana counties are experiencing population declines, most western Montana counties are experiencing population growth. Some of this growth is a result of residents relocating from other parts of Montana, but in-migration from other states accounts for a significant component of the overall growth. Some interpreters of this shift suggest that population growth tends to be focused on those areas with high scenic and recreational values.
- The overall proportion of urban residents in Montana is rising. In the 1990 Census approximately 60.8 percent of the state residents lived in the urban counties and the Census 2000 data show an increase to 63.6 percent.
- The population is aging. The median age of Montanans for Census 2000 (37.5) is higher than the overall median age of the United States (35.3; and, within Montana, rural counties have higher median ages than more urban counties. This highlights

what appears to be a trend in younger people moving out of rural communities combined with older in-migrants and older residents remaining in their communities.

- Montana continues to have a relatively homogenous population. As the population has grown, the region has become more heterogeneous, yet in comparison to other parts of the intermountain West, Montana remains a relatively homogenous population with more than 90% of the population classified as Caucasian by the 2000 census.

With these broad trends in mind, we summarize here some of the recent demographic changes for Lincoln and Sanders counties. The Data Appendix contains tables that update selected information presented in the 1995 Social Assessment. In this discussion we briefly summarize some of the information about demographic changes in the two counties.

Table 8 and Table 9 show some of the characteristics of population change in Montana as a whole and for places within Lincoln and Sanders counties for the past two decennial census periods. Table 8 shows that in comparison to the 1980-1990 decade, growth in Montana as a whole as well as for Lincoln and Sanders counties increased substantially the 1990-2000 decade. In this decade Montana grew at 12.9 percent, Lincoln County 7.8 percent, and Sanders County 14.4 percent. Each of these rates of growth are more substantial than the preceding decades in which both Lincoln and Sanders counties experienced population declines.

Table 8: Percent of Population Change 1980-1990 and 1990-2000

	1980-1990	1990-2000
Montana	1.6%	12.9%
Lincoln County	-1.5%	7.8%
Eureka	-6.8%	-2.5%
Libby	-7.9%	3.7%
Rexford	1.5%	14.4%
Troy	-12.4%	.4%
Sanders County	-.1%	18%
Hot Springs	-31.6%	29.2%
Plains	-11.1%	13.5%
Thompson Falls	-10.8%	.2%

SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Decennial Censuses of Population (title varies by census), 1890-2000. Processed by the Census and Economic Information Center, Montana Department of Commerce, March 21, 2001

Table 9 shows a longer term perspective on population growth for Montana as a whole and for places in Lincoln and Sanders counties. In general, these data show that prior to 1960 growth trends in both counties are generally consistent with the trends in Montana as whole. After 1960 the trends show some notable differences. In the 1950's and 1960's Lincoln County growth was significantly more than the state or Sanders County. However, in the 1980's Lincoln County's population declined whereas the state and Sanders County continued to grow.

Table 9: Decennial Census by Place 1910-2000

Census Region	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
MONTANA TOTAL		548,889 46.0%	537,606 -2.1%	559,456	591,024 5.6%		694,409 14.2%	786,690 2.9%	799,065 13.3%	902,195 12.9%
LINCOLN COUNTY	3,638	7,797	7,089	7,882	8,693	12,537	18,063	17,752	17,481	18,837
% Change		114.3%	-9.1%	11.2%	10.3%	44.2%	44.1%	-1.7%	-1.5%	7.8%
Eureka	603		680	912	929	1,229	1,195	1,119	1,043	1,017
% Change				34.1%	1.9%	32.3%	-2.8%	-6.4%	-6.8%	-2.5%
Libby	630		1,752	1,837	2,401	2,828	3,286	2,748	2,532	2,626
% Change				4.9%	30.7%	17.8%	16.2%	-16.4%	-7.9%	3.7%
Rexford	no record		329	274	248	no record		130	132	151
% Change				-16.7%	-9.5%			-46.5%		14.4%
Troy	483		498	796	770	855	1,046	1,088	953	957
% Change				59.8%	-3.3%	11.0%	22.3%	4.0%	-12.4%	0.4%
SANDERS COUNTY		4903	5,692	6,926	6,983	6,880	7,093	8,675	8,669	10,227
% Change		32.0%	16.1%	21.7%	0.8%	-1.5%	3.1%	22.3%	-0.1%	18.0%
Hot Springs	no record		447	663	733	585	664	601	411	531
% Change				48.3%	10.6%	-20.2%	13.5%	-9.5%	-31.6%	29.2%
Plains	481		522	624	714	769	1,046	1,116	992	1126
% Change				19.5%	14.4%	7.7%	36.0%	6.7%	-11.1%	13.5%
Thompson Falls	325		468	736	851	1,274	1,356	1,478	1,319	1,321
% Change				57.3%	15.6%	49.7%	6.4%	9.0%	-10.8%	0.2%

SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Decennial Censuses of Population (title varies by census), 1890-2000.
Blank cells indicate missing or non-available data, or not an incorporated place when census was conducted.
Processed by the Census and Economic Information Center, Montana Department of Commerce, March 21, 2001

The distribution of recent growth is also indicated in Table 9. Although Lincoln County's population increased only 7.8 percent from the 1990 census, Sanders County has increased to 18 percent. Plains and Hot Springs show substantial growth, but there is also significant growth in the western end of the county in Herron, Noxon, and other unincorporated communities. Lincoln County incorporated communities show less dramatic growth, although there has been noteworthy increase in the unincorporated regions of the county. Table 10 below is a rough measure of the stability of the population in both counties, as indicated by the percentages of persons living in the same residence and county since 1995.

Table 10: Residence Since 1995

	Montana	Lincoln	Sanders
Same as in 1995	53.6%	55.6%	56.7%
Different House U.S.	45.6%	44%	42.3%
Same County	22.5%	23.5%	16.2%
Different County	23.1%	20.5%	26.2%
Same State	9.9%	4.8%	8.7%
Different State	13.2%	15.7%	17.4%
Elsewhere in 1995	.8%	.3%	1.0%

Source: Census 2000 analyzed by the Social Science Data Analysis Network (SSDAN).

As new residents have arrived, concerns have developed about changes in community culture and the loss of traditional ways of life. Some of this concern is attributable to subdivision of ranch and farm lands, often in response to poor economic conditions. In other instances, private timber lands (such as those owned by Champion or Plum Creek) are being sub-divided for residential development. In either instance, new residents move in with values and ways of life that do not necessarily conform with those of existing residents. Some of these new residents participate in community events, while others do not. Some demand services such as paved roads and immediate fire and emergency responses that cannot be provided by existing fiscal resources and infrastructure. These demands are often evaluated by longer-term residents as the new residents “bringing with them what they want to get away from.” That is, some newer residents appear to wish to transform their new communities into those very types of places they left behind. Although new residents are often potential resources for community development, these resources are sometimes not tapped because of tensions between new and long-term residents.

The Data Appendix for this document contains additional demographic data that are an update and augmentation to the 1995 Social Assessment. Among the noteworthy points that stand out in these data are the following points:

- The median age of residents in both Lincoln and Sanders counties has increased since the 1990 census. The median age for Montana residents for 1990 was 33.8 and for 2000 37.5. The median age for Lincoln County for the same two periods is 34.7 and 42.1 and for Sanders County from 37 to 44.2.
- There is an increase in populations over 50 years of age and a decrease in populations less than 25. Population pyramids in the Appendix show the relative changes in males and females by age groups in five-year increments.

4.1.2 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND ISSUES

Economic measures such as employment, income, natural resource dependency, and industry diversity are commonly used to describe local economic conditions for social assessments. We will briefly summarize information about each of these variables in this section. However, it is also important to note that there is a national and regional context to these local conditions. Their contexts are relevant because they may identify broad trends and characteristics that may have local manifestations or otherwise affect local economic conditions. Noteworthy conditions, issues, and trends in the national and regional contexts include the following:

- There is a general decline in natural resource extraction industries and a specific decline in the timber industry.
- Timber harvests on public lands have steadily decreased, including USFS lands in western Montana and Idaho.
- Since the early to mid-1990's mill closures have occurred throughout western Montana as well as in Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.
- There is an increased call for limiting commercial uses of public lands, including timber harvesting and mining on public lands.
- The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has contributed to increased imports of lumber from Canada and elsewhere. Approximately one-third of all lumber sold in the U.S. is imported from Canada. This has affected the economic markets for U.S. producers, especially given the strength of American currency relative to Canadian currency in recent years. Recent decisions by the U.S. Department of Commerce have imposed approximately a 29 percent tariff on imported Canadian lumber.
- Montana income remains lower than the national average.
 - Median Household income in the United States is \$41,944 where Montana ranks 46 with \$33,024 (1999 dollars) as the median household income.
 - Personal income per capita for the United States is \$27,813 while Montana is \$21,872 or 46th in the U.S. in 1996 dollars.
 - For the U.S. as a whole 12.4 percent of persons are below the poverty level. In Montana 14.6 percent of persons are below the poverty level. Montana ranks 10th highest among all states in persons below poverty.
 - Average annual pay in the U.S. is \$36,214. In Montana, the average annual pay is \$25,194 making it last among all states.⁴
- Non-labor sources of income are among the fastest growing in the Intermountain West.
- Service sector jobs are the fastest growing segment of local economies in the Intermountain West, including Montana.

Since the 1995 report, several noteworthy changes have occurred in the local economic environment of Lincoln and Sanders counties. Some of these changes are related to national and regional trends affecting local economies throughout western Montana and elsewhere in the inter-mountain West. Some of these changes are expressed by data about income, employment, and natural resource dependency as summarized below and included in the Data Appendix. There are also some specific conditions that have influenced the economic environment of Lincoln and Sanders counties. These include:

- The Stimson Lumber Company closed its operation in Libby, resulting in the loss of approximately 300 employees.
- Mining also has not flourished in the two counties. Currently, there is limited mining activity, although some residents are hopeful the Sterling Mining Company will develop the Rock Creek Mine in the Cabinet Mountains and restore the mining industry in the region. Others see this as another potentially harmful exploitation of natural resources with adverse consequences on nearby residents and communities.
- Local attitudes to mining may be affected by the health and other community consequences of the operation of the vermiculate mine previously owned by W.R.

⁴ State rankings on selected social and economic variables for 2001 can be found at <http://www.census.gov/statab/www/ranks.html>

Grace. Although this mine was closed at the time of the 1995 Social Assessment, in the years afterward problems related to asbestos and its contribution to mesothelioma seriously affected Libby residents. Housing prices decreased and there were some reported tourism issues related to the stigma associated with the perceived pollution of Libby and environs.

- Champion, Plum Creek and other private timber companies are selling some of their lands for residential development. Some of this development is attracting in and out of state migrants to the two counties.

Individually and collectively these events have affected the economic outlook and conditions in the two counties. We first summarize some of the major economic conditions as indicated by readily available data from state and federal sources. The essentials of the current status of county economies can be described by summarizing the data for the following topics:

- Employment information is required to understand the size of the overall work force, the rate of employment (annual and seasonal), and the composition of the work force by gender.
- The structure of employment is also indicated by the percentage of employees in the standard categories that describe employment by industry. This is a useful measure of the relative size of different economic sectors within an economy. However, it is not the ultimate indicator of the importance of each economic sector. This would require additional data about the proportion of output of each economic sector combined with information about earnings per job by sector.
- Income is another useful indicator of the economic status of county communities. Income variables are diverse (e.g., personal income, per capita income, household income) and have different limits and uses. For our purposes, the following income variables are useful to profile county incomes:
 - Wages and salaries by industry is a compliment to similar data noted above about employment by industry. These data describe the relative contribution of different industries to total wages and salaries.
 - Personal income describes all sources of income, including wages and salaries as well as transfer payments and other income sources. This also allows us to examine the contribution of wages and salaries to total income.
 - Income distribution measures the percentage of persons in specified income categories. This is a useful means to measure trends in the change of the structure of income.
 - Household income is important because communities are composed of households as well as individuals. Household income is defined by the 2000 Census as: “the sum of money income received in calendar year 1999 by all household members 15 years old and over, including household members not related to the householder, people living alone, and other non-family household members. Included ... in the total are amounts reported separately for wage or salary income; net self-employment income; interest, dividends, or net rental or royalty income or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); public assistance or welfare payments; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and all other income” (Census 2000). This is similar to how individual personal income is measured.
 - Persons and families in poverty is also a useful economic indicator since it describes an income threshold below which individuals and families are considered as “poor.”

4.1.2.1 EMPLOYMENT

The civilian labor force and the number of employed persons shows a slight increase for both Lincoln and Sanders counties in the interval between 1990 and 2000. Table 11 summarizes some of the changes in the labor force for Montana and, Lincoln, and Sanders counties for the 1990-2000 interval.

**Table 11: Labor and Income Characteristics for
Montana, Lincoln County & Sanders County 1990 & 2000**

Characteristic	State Total		Lincoln County		Sanders County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Persons 16 years and older	599,765	701,168	12,890	14,798	6,469	8,178
Persons in labor force	381,860	458,306	7,756	7,916	3,382	4,383
Civilian labor force	376,940	454,687	7,749	7,907	3,382	4,379
Employed Persons	350,723	425,977	6,500	6,814	3,061	3,952
Unemployed Persons	26,217	28,710	1,249	1,093	321	427
Percent Unemployed	6.9%	6.3%	16.1%	13.8%	9.5%	9.7%
Armed Forces	4,920	3,619	7	9	0	4
Persons not in labor force	217,905	242,862	5,134	6,882	3,087	3,795
Percent of Males (16 or over) in labor force (as % of total male labor force)	71.9%	71.0%	70.8%	57.6%	61.0%	59.9%
Percent of Females (16 or over) in labor force (as % of total female labor force)	55.8%	59.9%	49.8%	49.4%	43.5%	47.2%
Percent of Males Unemployed (as % of total male labor force)	7.7%	7.1%	17.7%	16.9%	9.4%	10.3%
Percent of Females Unemployed (as % of total female labor force)	6.1%	5.2%	13.9%	10.2%	9.6%	9.1%
Median Household Income *	\$22,988	\$33,024	\$20,898	\$26,754	\$18,616	\$26,852
Median Family Income *	\$28,044	\$40,487	\$25,084	\$31,784	\$21,320	\$31,340
Median Nonfamily Household Income *	\$12,502	\$19,484	\$10,920	\$14,315	\$10,863	\$14,564
Per capita income *	\$11,213	\$17,151	\$9,813	\$13,923	\$9,459	\$14,593
Persons below poverty level *	124,853	128,355	2,450	3,558	1,680	1,737
Percent of persons below poverty level *	16.1%	14.6%	14.1%	19.2%	19.6%	17.2%

1990 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary Tape File 3C.

2000 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary File 3 (SF 3).

* 1990 numbers are from 1989 and 2000 numbers are from 1999

Annual unemployment data since 1970 are presented in Table 12. As these data show, both Lincoln and Sanders counties have higher than average unemployment rates when compared to Montana as a whole.

**Table 12: Average Annual Labor Force for
Lincoln County, Sanders County & Montana 1971 - 2002**

Year	Lincoln Co.		Sanders Co.		Montana	
	Civilian Labor Force	Unemployment Rate	Civilian Labor Force	Unemployment Rate	Civilian Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
1970	7,275	8.9%	2,686	6.0%	273,021	4.3%
1971	7,176	9.1%	2,993	5.5%	278,513	4.8%
1972	7,282	9.0%	3,126	5.2%	291,152	4.8%
1973	6,872	9.2%	3,215	5.0%	303,186	4.8%
1974	6,552	12.1%	3,372	6.6%	318,602	5.2%
1975	6,315	14.3%	3,644	8.7%	322,575	6.4%
1976	6,505	13.1%	3,934	7.4%	335,000	6.1%
1977	6,788	12.8%	4,071	8.5%	348,000	6.4%
1978	7,291	12.4%	3,939	8.5%	368,000	6.2%
1979	7,202	10.3%	3,887	7.9%	371,000	5.1%
1980	6,992	15.3%	3,972	9.6%	370,000	6.1%
1981	7,558	15.0%	4,005	11.6%	385,000	6.9%
1982	7,788	19.4%	4,062	16.0%	394,000	8.6%
1983	8,497	13.4%	4,262	12.6%	395,000	8.8%
1984	8,847	12.8%	3,875	12.4%	404,000	7.4%
1985	8,691	11.6%	3,280	16.5%	405,000	7.7%
1986	8,816	11.4%	3,265	15.5%	407,000	8.1%
1987	8,712	10.9%	3,282	12.8%	403,000	7.4%
1988	8,879	11.7%	3,231	12.8%	402,000	6.8%
1989	8,431	10.2%	3,129	12.4%	405,000	5.9%
1990	8,272	11.2%	3,734	10.2%	401,087	6.0%
1991	8,273	14.9%	3,666	14.0%	406,533	7.1%
1992	8,050	13.0%	3,782	12.1%	421,525	6.9%
1993	8,296	14.0%	3,817	11.9%	426,482	6.1%
1994	8,065	13.6%	3,855	10.7%	439,502	5.1%
1995	7,398	14.9%	4,097	14.2%	437,098	5.9%
1996	7,136	11.7%	4,057	12.5%	445,910	5.3%
1997	7,244	12.1%	4,079	10.7%	454,614	5.4%
1998	7,457	10.5%	4,089	10.5%	466,450	5.6%
1999	7,110	12.4%	4,324	9.2%	474,006	5.2%
2000	6,974	11.8%	4,293	8.2%	476,508	5.0%
2001	6,740	11.3%	4,323	8.2%	463,479	4.6%
2002	6,776	11.5%	4,315	8.4%	463,859	4.6%

Source: Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Research & Analysis Bureau, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Table 13: 2003 Percent Unemployed by Month shows unemployment data from the State of Montana Research and Analysis Bureau for Montana and the two project counties. The numbers for Lincoln County are the most dramatic, indicating a monthly unemployment rate that is at least twice and in some months three times the state average. While Sanders County also shows a higher than average unemployment rate, the effects of recent economic circumstances in Lincoln County are apparent. However, as previously noted, both project counties have historically had higher than average unemployment rates. Seasonal

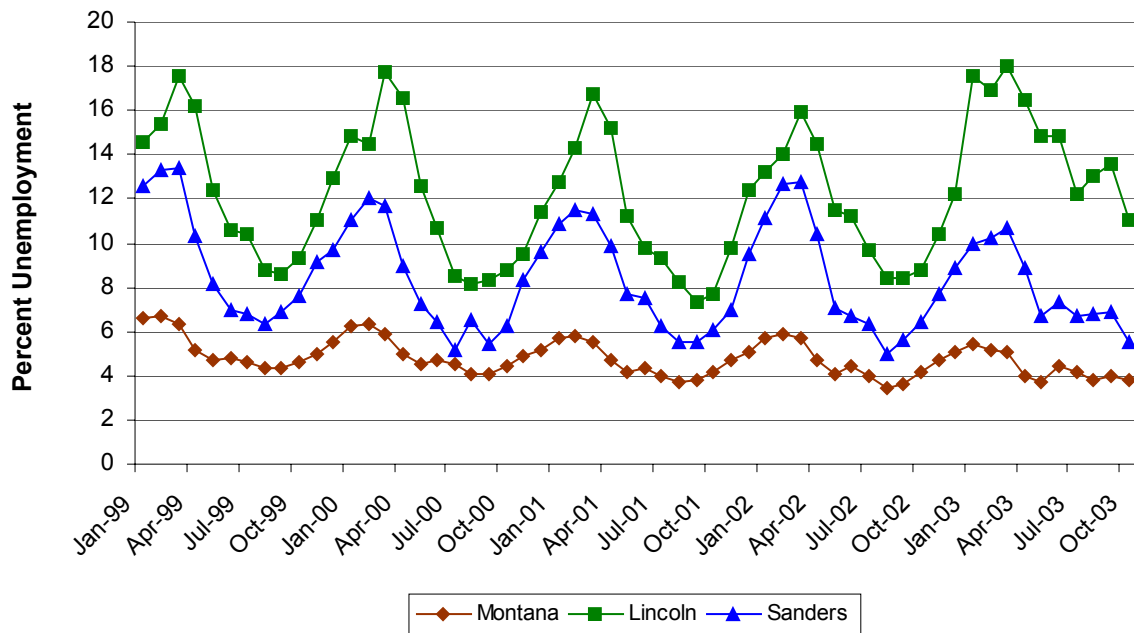
unemployment rates are displayed in the graph titled Figure 2: Monthly Unemployment Rate - Not Seasonally Adjusted, 1/1999 – 10/200. These data clearly show peaks in the winter months and decreases during the summer months. This pattern is consistent with the rise of seasonal employment opportunities with the KNF and other sources of summer employment.

Table 13: 2003 Percent Unemployed by Month

Month in Year 2003	Montana	Lincoln County	Sanders County
Jan-03	5.4	17.6	10
Feb-03	5.2	16.9	10.2
Mar-03	5.1	18	10.7
Apr-03	4	16.5	8.9
May-03	3.7	14.8	6.7
Jun-03	4.4	14.8	7.3
Jul-03	4.2	12.2	6.7
Aug-03	3.8	12.9	6.8

Source: State of Montana Research and Analysis Bureau

Figure 2: Monthly Unemployment Rate - Not Seasonally Adjusted, 1/1999 – 10/2003



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics
<http://data.bls.gov/labjava/outside.jsp?survey=la>

4.1.2.2 INCOME

There are two categories of income data of interest to describe recent trends: changes in personal income and changes in household income. Table 14, titled "Per Capita Income,

Total Personal Income and Components of Total Personal Income: 1997 - 2001” shows the changes in personal income and the components of personal income.

Table 14: Per Capita Income, Total Personal Income and Components of Total Personal Income: 1997 - 2001

Per Capita Personal Income				Total Personal Income		Components of Total Personal Income			
	(\$)	% Chng		% Chng	Earnings (%)	Dividends, Interest, & Rent (%)	Transfer Payments (%)		
			(\$1,000s)						
Montana	1997	19,920			17,726,294		59.6%	23.9%	16.6%
	1998	21,225	6.6%		18,941,950	6.9%	59.7%	24.3%	16.0%
	1999	21,621	1.9%		19,405,391	2.4%	61.7%	23.0%	15.4%
	2000	22,961	6.2%		20,743,596	6.9%	60.4%	23.7%	15.9%
	2001	24,044	4.7%		21,769,095	4.9%	60.4%	23.4%	16.2%
Lincoln County	1997	15,564			292,474		54.7%	20.0%	25.2%
	1998	16,345	5.0%		306,847	4.9%	53.9%	21.0%	25.1%
	1999	16,518	1.1%		311,152	1.4%	54.4%	20.5%	25.1%
	2000	17,756	7.5%		334,517	7.5%	53.3%	20.9%	25.8%
	2001	18,260	2.8%		341,303	2.0%	51.5%	21.1%	27.3%
Sanders County	1997	14,607			148,332		48.6%	24.2%	27.2%
	1998	15,747	7.8%		159,000	7.2%	48.6%	25.4%	26.0%
	1999	16,147	2.5%		163,472	2.8%	51.0%	23.8%	25.2%
	2000	17,108	6.0%		175,442	7.3%	49.6%	24.5%	26.0%
	2001	17,978	5.1%		186,950	6.6%	49.4%	23.9%	26.7%

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis website <http://www.bea.doc.gov/bea/regional/reis/action.cfm>

These data show a gradual rise in total and per capita income although the patterns are different for Lincoln and Sanders counties. For both counties, the components of personal income show slight changes in percentage of earnings and other income sources. In 1990 non-labor sources of personal income accounted for 36 percent of personal income by 2000 they accounted for 47 percent. For Sanders County, non-labor sources of personal income were about 45 percent in 1990 and in 2000 they were nearly 51 percent. Non-labor sources of income are a steadily increasing source of personal income in each county.

Table 15, titled “Percent Income Generation by Major Industry” shows the percentage of income by industry for Lincoln and Sanders counties for 1990 and 2000. As these data indicate, for both counties services manufacturing and durable goods are decreasing while services and government employment is increasing. Data from the Bureau Of Economic Analysis show that for both counties, local government is the greatest source of growth in jobs and income in the government sector.

Table 15: Percent Income Generation by Major Industry

County	Industry	1990	2000
Lincoln	Durable goods manufacturing	29.8%	21.5%
	Services	11.2%	18.4%
	Federal civilian government		15.3%
	Mining	12.0%	*
Sanders	Services	14.8%	25.5%
	State and local government	15.9%	17.4%
	Durable goods manufacturing 1/	18.7%	11.5%

* Not present in the top 3 industries for that date.

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, BEARFACTS and Regional Accounts Data

Household income is the second major income category of interest for this update. Table 16, titled "Household Income by Range 1989 & 1999" shows the percentage of households in income categories identified below. The data in this table are also grouped to show changes in selected ranges as indicated below.

Table 16: Household Income by Range 1989 & 1999

Income Level	Montana		Lincoln County		Sanders County	
	1989	1999	1989	1999	1989	1999
Less than \$10,000	19.9%	11.3%	21.2%	16.3%	24.2%	15.8%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	12.2%	8.9%	15.8%	11.7%	13.5%	11.6%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	21.8%	17.1%	21.6%	18.2%	29.8%	19.3%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	17.1%	15.4%	17.6%	17.5%	17.3%	16.5%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	15.9%	18.2%	15.3%	16.1%	9.5%	16.6%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	9.2%	17.1%	6.4%	13.5%	3.8%	13.2%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	2.2%	6.4%	1.0%	4.6%	0.8%	3.0%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	1.1%	3.6%	0.7%	1.6%	0.4%	2.5%
\$150,000 or more	0.6%	1.9%	0.4%	0.5%	0.8%	1.4%
Less than \$25,000	53.9%	37.3%	58.5%	46.2%	67.5%	46.7%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	33.0%	33.6%	32.9%	33.6%	26.7%	33.0%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	11.4%	23.5%	7.5%	18.1%	4.6%	16.2%
\$100,000 or more	1.7%	5.6%	1.1%	2.1%	1.2%	4.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Data Set 1990 Summary Tape File 3 (STF 3) Sample Data and 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) Sample Data

Another indicator of economic change is the average earnings per job defined as the total wages divided by the total number of full and part time jobs. Data analyzed by the Sonoran Institute using the Economic Profile System (Sonoran Institute 2003) indicate the following trends in earnings per job for Lincoln and Sanders counties.

- In 2000, the average earnings per job in Montana were \$23,653 while the value for the United States as a whole is \$36,316 per job.
- In Lincoln County, average earnings per job for 2000 were \$21,706 down from \$35,527 in 1970 (2000 dollars).
- In Sanders County, average earnings per job in 2000 were \$16,403 down from \$23,092 in 1970 (2000 dollars).

These income data show that Lincoln and Sanders counties have lower incomes than Montana as a whole, which has one of the lowest income levels of all the states.

4.1.2.3 LOCAL ECONOMIES AND NATURAL RESOURCE DEPENDENCY

Historically, local economies in the Western States have been influenced by a range of extra-local forces and present-day conditions in Lincoln and Sanders counties are no exception. As noted previously, factors such as the North American Free Trade Agreement have influenced the availability of logs and lumber from Canada that affects mills in the counties. Similarly, the demand for lumber resulting from the recent (2002-3) housing boom affects harvesting on private lands and the employment of loggers, truck drivers, and others in the timber industry. Some sectors of local economies (e.g., construction) have benefited from regional trends such as the population increase in western Montana. Consequently, this discussion of natural resource dependency is framed by recognition of such extra-local influences. This discussion is also a precursor to a complimentary discussion below about the interconnections of the KNF with project area communities. This complimentary discussion includes consideration of social and institutional as well as economic interdependencies as summarized in this section.

If the county economies may be influenced by present or future KNF management policies, then there is a need to describe the essential components that may be affected. To describe these essential components, this discussion addresses two questions: (1) what is the current status of natural resources employment and income within the two counties; and (2) what is the contribution of natural resources employment to the economy of these counties? The first question describes the fundamentals of who is working in what industries for what amounts; and, the second questions develops the contribution of natural resource industries to local economies. We therefore use a pragmatic definition of “forest dependency”: reliance on resources provided by forest lands that contribute to local economies and lifestyles.

The available data allow us to assess: timber, grazing, mining, and recreational contributions to local economies from natural resources. We use recent IMPLAN data to describe the labor income derived from each of these sectors of local economies. The IMPLAN data uses labor income, including indicators of primary and secondary labor income. Primary labor income is defined as the sum of employee compensation and proprietor income, which is the income of sole proprietorships and partnerships. Secondary labor is calculated by IMPLAN using Type II⁵ multiplier that includes “induced” or secondary income derived from the Primary income expenditures. The table below summarizes the percentage of timber, grazing, mining, and recreation total labor income (primary + secondary = total labor income) for Lincoln and Sanders counties.

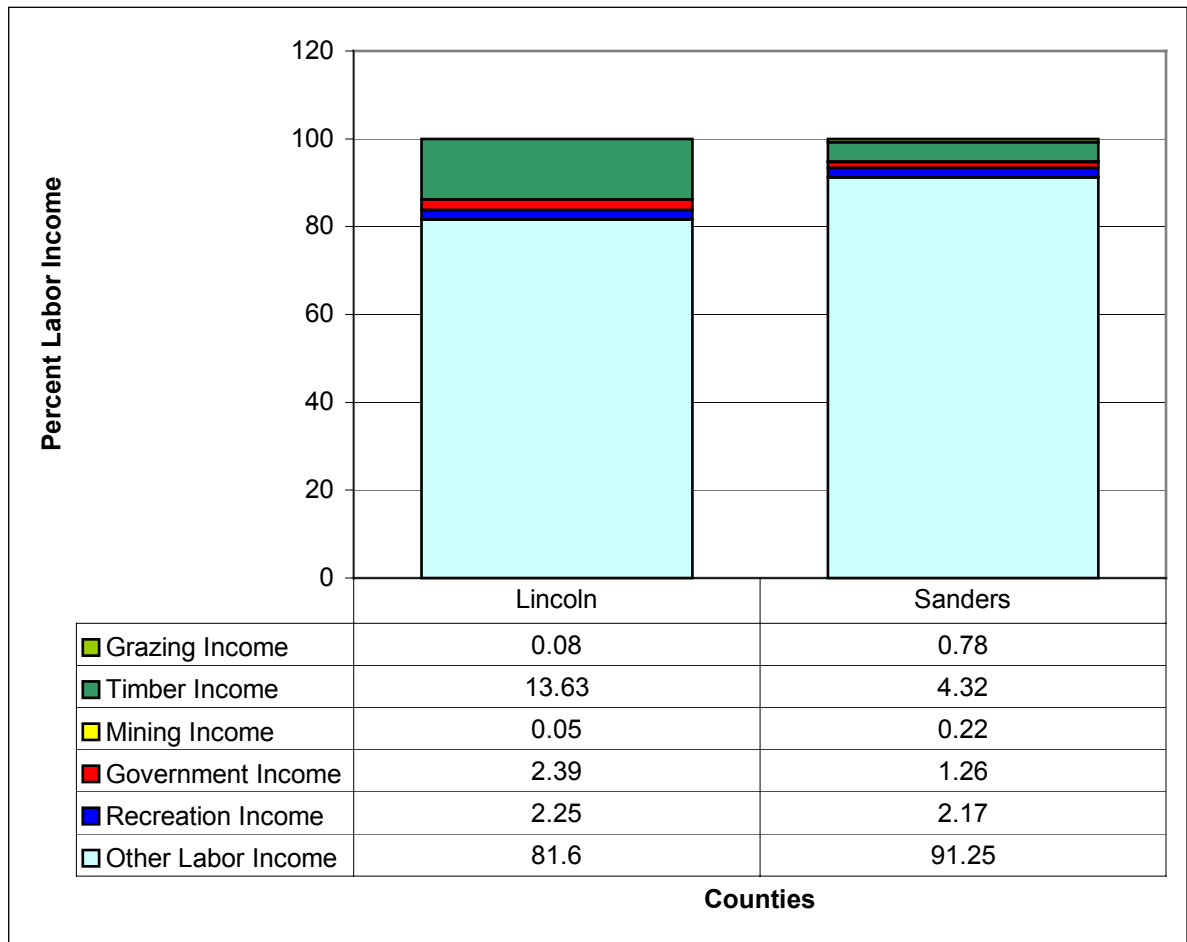
Table 17: IMPLAN Data: Percent Total Labor Income By Sector

	Grazing	Timber	Mining	Government	Recreation	Total Labor Income
Lincoln	.08	13.63	.05	2.39	2.25	18.41
Sanders	.78	4.62	.22	1.26	2.17	8.76

Source: 2000 IMPLAN data

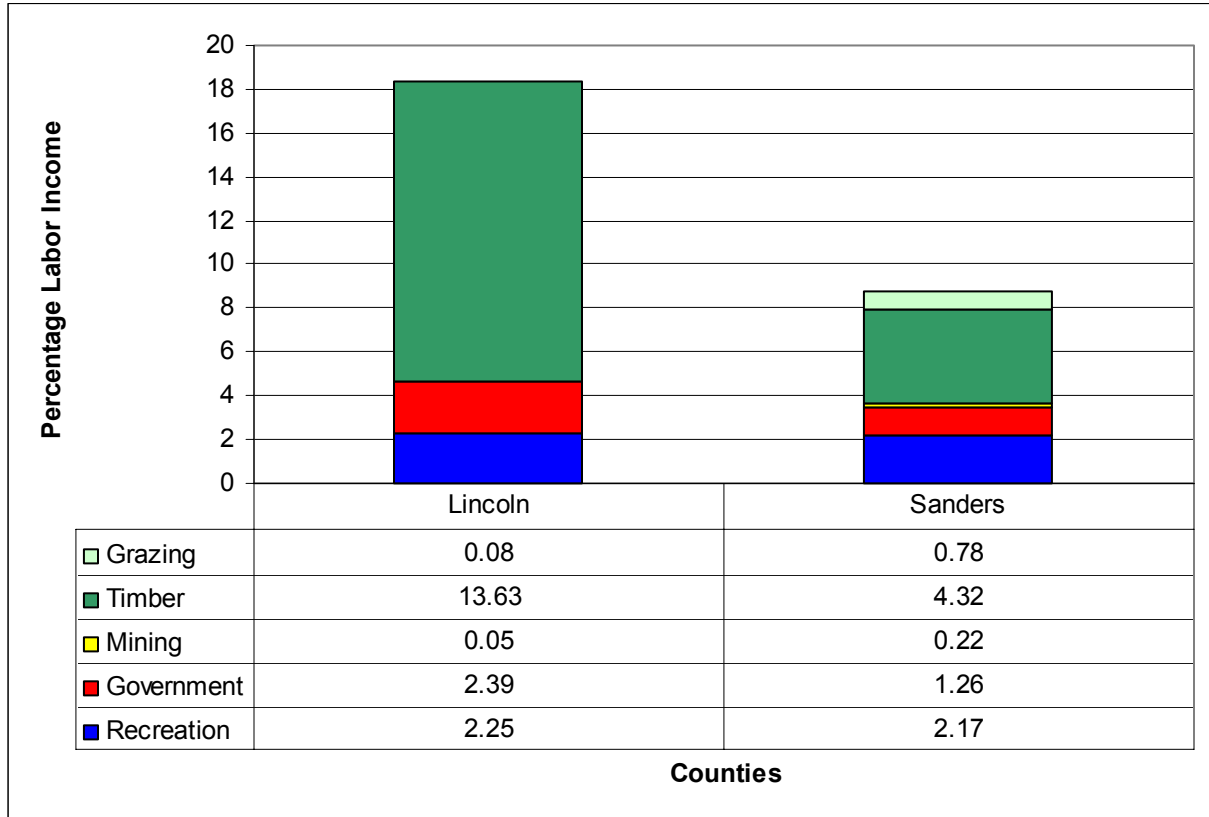
⁵Type II multipliers measure the direct, indirect, and induced effect. This type of multiplier accounts for secondary income those results from the expenditure of primary income.

Figure 3: Percent Labor Income All Sectors



Source: 2000 IMPLAN data

Figure 4: Percentage Labor Income Wildland Sectors Only



Source: 2000 IMPLAN data

These data show some noteworthy points:

- The majority of total labor income in both counties is derived from non-wildland sources.
- Wildland sources in Lincoln County account for 18.41 percent and Sanders County is 8.76 percent of total labor income. Considering all counties in Idaho and Montana for the year 2000, Lincoln County ranks 7th among the 100 counties and first among Montana counties while Sanders County ranks 33rd overall and 17th among Montana counties.
- Timber accounts for the largest percentage of total labor income from wildlands in Lincoln County at 13.63 percent. Of that amount 5.21 percent is accounted for by timber from Forest Service lands and the remaining 8.42 percent is accounted for by private timber. For Sanders County, timber also has the largest share of total labor income from wildlands at 4.32 percent.
- Government related wildland employment followed by recreation accounts for the next two largest sources of labor income. Grazing and mining account for relatively small proportions of the overall total labor income for each county, although Sanders County does have a higher percentage of mining and grazing labor income than does Lincoln County.

In relatively small economies, and arguably these are small economies, any economic sector is an important one. And where nearly 20 percent of the economy in Lincoln County and almost 9 percent in Sanders County is accounted for by natural resource related labor income, then these are important income sources. In fact, these data may not show the full range of labor income related to natural resources if definitions were expanded to include other labor income that derives from the amenity values that attract people to live and spend money in these counties. Nonetheless, these data suggest an important contribution of natural resources to these economies. Although the proportion of labor income from timber sources may appear small, these data so show that it in a small economy, this is an important source of diversification that adds to the adaptability of local economies.

4.1.3 COMMUNITY VULNERABILITIES

Part of the assessment of socioeconomic conditions in Lincoln and Sanders counties includes consideration of indicators of community vulnerabilities. For our purposes, we define community vulnerability as the presence of conditions that affect the resources available to communities to adapt to changing conditions. Such indicators are similar to “well-being” and “quality of life” measures that are often used to assess socioeconomic conditions. We focus on indicators that reflect local conditions in Sanders and Lincoln counties, especially school enrollments and various measures of social assistance.

4.1.3.1 SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS

Rising or falling trends in school enrollments can indicate diverse social conditions. This indicator alone does not indicate vulnerability. However, it can suggest changes in population that may affect community stability, which can also affect the capacity of a community to adapt to changing conditions. As we will be noting in a discussion later in this chapter, in both Lincoln and Sanders counties, residents are aware of declining school enrollments and perceive these as indicators of a decreasing mix in their social environment. These changes are evaluated as an indicator of increased vulnerability for adverse changes to local communities. The information below summarizes some data regarding school enrollments for the 1992/1993 and 2002/2003 school years.

Table 18: School Enrollment 1993 & 2003

	School Year	Pre-K	Kinder- garten	Elementary (1-8)	High School	Total Enrollment
Montana	1992-93	549	11,932	102,752	44,758	159,991
	2002-03	665	9,899	90,518	48,913	149,995
	% Chng	21.1%	17.0%	-11.9%	9.3%	-6.2%
Lincoln County	1992-93	22	271	2,512	1,129	3,934
	2002-03	36	172	1,778	1,220	3,206
	% Chng	63.6%	36.5%	-29.2%	8.1%	-18.5%
Sanders County	1992-93	0	123	1,192	558	1,873
	2002-03	13	109	967	697	1,786
	% Chng	1300%	11.4%	-18.9%	24.9%	-4.6%

Source: Montana Office of Public Instruction <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/>

As these data show, kindergarten and elementary school enrollments decreased for Montana as a whole and similar declines in enrollment in Lincoln and Sanders counties for the same

1993 to 2003 time period. High school enrollments for this time period show a modest increase for the state and Lincoln County and more substantial percentage increase for Sanders County. However, the decrease in enrollment elementary grades indicates that high school enrollments are also likely to decline in both counties in the coming years.

Table 19 focuses on recent changes in high school enrollments for both Lincoln and Sanders counties.

Table 19: County High School Enrollments 1999-2002

Lincoln County		
School Year	Total	% Chng
1999-2000	1194	
2000-2001	1213	1.6%
2001-2002	1196	-1.4%
2002-2003	1220	2.0%
Sanders County		
School Year	Total	% Chng
1999-2000	597	
2000-2001	629	5.4%
2001-2002	638	1.4%
2002-2003	697	9.2%

Source: Montana Office of Public Instruction <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/>

From 1999 to 2002-2003, Lincoln County high schools experienced a relatively modest increase in enrollments, whereas Sanders County enrollments increased at a higher rate. These rates of change are perceived by study participants as noteworthy if not prophetic:

If you look back at our history, when mining was going good here, our high school was among the best in the state in sports. We were state champions for a good while in various sports and the whole community was proud of it. Look at what is happening today. Our enrollments are down, our sports teams are not as good as they were in the past, and we aren't doing any mining. There is a connection there and I am not the only one who sees it.

While not everyone may share this assessment of the relationship between high school enrollments, the success of sports teams, and the nature of local economies, this appears to be a wide-spread sentiment and a locally meaningful indicator of community vulnerability.

4.1.3.2 SOCIAL WELFARE

Public assistance programs provide another source of information that can be used to assess community vulnerabilities. There is a wide-range of programs from assistance provided by the Women Infant and Children's Program to low income energy assistance. Rather than profile all possible social welfare data, an aggregate per capita expenditure as shown in Table 20: Per Capita Public Assistance 1997 - 2002 may be the most useful measure. These data can be examined to show any trends that indicate an increase or decrease in the funds expended on social welfare programs. As the data in the table show, in Lincoln County there has been an increase in per capita expenditures from \$634 to \$866 or a thirty-six percent increase from 1997-2002. For Sanders County the increase is from a per capita expenditure

of \$547 to \$622, or about 13.7 percent. The data show some decreases from 1997, but the trend is upward since FY 2000 for both counties.

Table 20: Per Capita Public Assistance 1997 - 2002

Lincoln County						
Obligations Incurred	FY 2002	FY 2001	FY 2000	FY 1999	FY 1998	FY 1997
All Public Assistance	\$16,167,945	\$14,739,715	\$11,504,161	\$12,696,182	\$11,313,170	\$11,870,958
Population	18,665	18,664	18,837	18,819	18,717	18,726
Per Capita Assistance	\$866	\$790	\$611	\$675	\$604	\$634
Sanders County						
Obligations Incurred	FY 2002	FY 2001	FY 2000	FY 1999	FY 1998	FY 1997
All Public Assistance	\$6,451,678	\$6,100,806	\$4,719,811	\$5,002,723	\$5,084,091	\$5,594,636
Population	10,367	10,443	10,227	10,233	10,185	10,226
Per Capita Assistance	\$622	\$584	\$462	\$489	\$499	\$547

Source: State of Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services, Operations & Technology Division
Source: U.S. Census website

Information included in the Data Appendix show the expenditures by program for the two counties for the 1997-2002 time periods.

4.1.3.3 PERSONS IN POVERTY

In 1989 Montana had approximately 16.1 percent of its population below the poverty level and in 1999 the percentage was 14.6 or a 1.5 percent decrease. At the same time Lincoln County had 14.1 percent of the population in poverty, but this number increased dramatically to 19.2 percent in 1999. However, for the same time period, Sanders County persons in poverty showed a drop from 19.6 percent in 1989 to 17.2 percent in 1999. In Lincoln County there was an increase of over three percentage points in persons in poverty for persons age 18-64. The data in Table 21: Poverty Level by County & Percentage, 1989 & 1999 show different trends in the economic status of residents in Lincoln and Sanders counties.

Table 21: Poverty Level by County & Percentage, 1989 & 1999

Poverty Level by Count	Montana		Lincoln County		Sanders County	
	1989	1999	1989	1999	1989	1999
Total Population:	776,793	878,789	17,315	18,568	8,566	10,074
Income below poverty level:	124,853	128,355	2,450	3,558	1,680	1,737
Under 5 years	13,980	12,174	255	279	130	143
5 years	2,915	2,184	44	32	26	40
6 to 11 years	15,634	14,875	337	485	255	172
12 to 17 years	12,177	13,679	259	459	184	235
18 to 64 years	67,714	75,074	1,288	2,008	785	992
65 to 74 years	5,916	4,473	149	177	137	84
75 years and over	6,517	5,896	118	118	163	71
Income at or above poverty level:	651,940	750,434	14,865	15,010	6,886	8,337
Under 5 years	43,620	41,591	929	635	433	328
5 years	9,786	8,868	250	105	146	49
6 to 11 years	61,451	61,346	1,479	1,138	626	561
12 to 17 years	58,960	70,795	1,569	1,531	654	869
18 to 64 years	391,379	463,844	8,887	9,158	3,994	5,000
65 to 74 years	54,081	57,478	1,163	1,527	695	908
75 years and over	32,663	46,512	588	916	338	622
Poverty Level by %	Montana		Lincoln County		Sanders County	
	1989	1999	1989	1999	1989	1999
Income below poverty level:	16.1%	14.6%	14.1%	19.2%	19.6%	17.2%
Under 5 years	1.8%	1.4%	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%
5 years	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%
6 to 11 years	2.0%	1.7%	1.9%	2.6%	3.0%	1.7%
12 to 17 years	1.6%	1.6%	1.5%	2.5%	2.1%	2.3%
18 to 64 years	8.7%	8.5%	7.4%	10.8%	9.2%	9.8%
65 to 74 years	0.8%	0.5%	0.9%	1.0%	1.6%	0.8%
75 years and over	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%	1.9%	0.7%
Income at or above poverty level:	83.9%	85.4%	85.9%	80.8%	80.4%	82.8%
Under 5 years	5.6%	4.7%	5.4%	3.4%	5.1%	3.3%
5 years	1.3%	1.0%	1.4%	0.6%	1.7%	0.5%
6 to 11 years	7.9%	7.0%	8.5%	6.1%	7.3%	5.6%
12 to 17 years	7.6%	8.1%	9.1%	8.2%	7.6%	8.6%
18 to 64 years	50.4%	52.8%	51.3%	49.3%	46.6%	49.6%
65 to 74 years	7.0%	6.5%	6.7%	8.2%	8.1%	9.0%
75 years and over	4.2%	5.3%	3.4%	4.9%	3.9%	6.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Data Set 1990 Summary Tape File 3 (STF 3) Sample Data and 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) Sample Data

4.1.3.4 AT RISK POPULATIONS

A 2001 white paper prepared by the Montana Primary Care Association (Frideres, 2001) identified several populations at risk in Lincoln County including the following:

- Individuals and families exposed to asbestos from the W.R. Grace mining operations and related events. This report indicates, "... staff for the Center for Asbestos Related

Disease (CARD) clinic in Libby report that over 500 people (9-10% of those tested) tested had an abnormality that needed immediate follow-up” (Frideres, 2001). The Lincoln County Health Department indicates that more than 850 persons have been diagnosed with asbestos related diseases.

- Uninsured and underinsured residents also represent another category of persons at risk. The initial screening program in the Libby area showed that 21% of the 6000 persons participating were uninsured.
- Poor families are at risk because of the limited resources of the county to respond to their needs. The report notes that there is a relatively high proportion of persons at or below the poverty level; and, in combination with high unemployment, health concerns, and teenage pregnancy rates, low income and poor families are at risk in Lincoln County (Frideres, 2001).

While there may be other populations at risk in Lincoln County, this report is an indication that prevailing health and welfare conditions contribute to the vulnerability of selected populations within the county.

4.2 KNF-Community Interdependencies

Any national forest interacts with communities and creates interdependencies in at least three ways: (1) the effects of natural resource management; (2) the community contributions of the agency and its personnel; and (3) the institutional contributions to the socioeconomic and sociopolitical infrastructure of surrounding communities. Economic dependency is one important aspect of the overall nature of interconnections between national forests and communities in adjacent counties. However, there are other types of connections that are also important in assessing the overall interdependencies of communities and national forests. In this discussion, we briefly describe some of the connections noted in discussions with residents of the two counties that illustrate these other types of connections and contributions of the KNF to adjacent counties.

4.2.1 INSTITUTIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The Kootenai National Forest has been a part of the social environment of Lincoln and Sanders counties since shortly after the Kootenai and Cabinet Forest Reserves were formed in the early 1900's. The agency thus has a long history as a part of the sociopolitical or institutional environment of these counties. As an institution of the federal government, it also brings potential resources and benefits to nearby communities. Discussants who participated in this update noted several types of resources the agency provides to the community:

- **Leadership** is an important contribution of the agency to the sociopolitical environment of these communities. KNF personnel have leadership training and professional expertise that is recognized as an available resource that can be accessed when necessary. For example, when the Lincoln County Healthy Communities group formed to address problems of the Stimson Mill closure, KNF personnel assisted with some of the structure and format for the group, especially the use of an “incident command system” framework to organize activities. This type of leadership resource enhances the overall ability of communities to respond to situations that require leadership resources that are often easily overwhelmed in small communities.

- **Professional expertise** is another noted institutional contribution of the KNF to local communities. The Forest Service has a staff of engineers, landscape architects, archaeologists, economists, biologists, and other professionals who are charged with managing the forest and its resources. Agency personnel are, of course, dedicated to agency work. Nonetheless, this expertise is often shared in presentations to schools, the professional contributions of agency personnel to service clubs (e.g., Rotary, Lions, etc...), and in special circumstances where this expertise is of value to communities.
- **Infrastructure** capabilities, especially those related to employment opportunities, office facilities, and fire fighting resources were noted by several discussants as contributions of the agency to local communities. The agency is one of the largest employers in the region with approximately 320 full time employees. However, the KNF also offers part-time as well as student employment opportunities. Community groups sometimes use Forest Service meeting rooms when there is an appropriate need. Similarly, fire-fighting resources of the KNF are also recognized as a substantial resource that benefits the communities when wild land fires arise. In small communities with limited infrastructure resources, an agency such as the KNF is recognized as contributing resources that are an overall benefit to local communities.

4.2.1.1 FISCAL CONTRIBUTIONS

There are at least three types of fiscal contributions to local communities that result from the presence of the KNF: payroll, contracting opportunities, and direct payments to counties from Payments to States (Forest Receipts) and Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT). As one of the largest employers in the region, the KNF payroll is about 18 million dollars annually. This is a substantial contribution to local economies through direct expenditures on goods and services. Similarly, the agency contracts with local businesses and individuals for a range of goods and services that are required to do the agency's business. This includes the hiring of bulldozers and other heavy equipment for fire fighting and fire prevention work. We also previously noted that the counties receive both Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) as well as Payments to States or Forest Receipts funds. These constitute substantial contributions to county revenues and are a direct benefit to county residents. (Schuster and Rocky Mountain Research Station--Ogden., 1999) For example, in Lincoln County, the Superintendent of School calculated that Payments to States funds result in a 23.54 mil tax benefit to county residents. County Commissioners in Lincoln County estimated an overall tax benefit to county residents of approximately 100 mils. The data in the tables below show some historical information about the relationship of PILT and Forest Receipts (25 percent funds) received by Lincoln and Sanders counties.

Table 22: Payments as a Percent of Budget for 1996-97 (Thousands of Dollars)

County	25% Payments in 1996	PILT in 1996	Total 1996 Payments	1996-97 County Budget	Payments % of Budget
Lincoln	4,010	165	4,175	12,255	34%
Sanders	1,175	84	1,259	7,341	17%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of the Government 1997

Clearly these are important funds that forge a fiscal connection between the presence and operation of the Kootenai National Forest in both Lincoln and Sanders counties.

4.2.1.2 SOCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

A strong theme in discussions with diverse discussants is the contribution of KNF personnel to a range of activities that enhance the quality of life in these communities. From schools and church to Rotary and Little League, KNF personnel and their families are acknowledged as making an important contribution to their communities. Indeed, the volunteer efforts of USFS staff are pervasive. For example, when one discussant was asked to describe as many activities in which both she and the USFS participated, she replied:

Let's see, there is soccer, bowling, and school things, then most of the clubs I belong to there are Forest Service people in them. Come to think of it, there isn't anything I do that someone from the Forest Service isn't involved in. It's not like it used to be in the 80's here when the Forest Service people were their own clique. Now they are in almost everything and they don't hang with each other the way they used to do.

While there is a tribute to the community involvement of KNF personnel, it is not surprising since the agency employs a relatively large number of persons. Nonetheless, the volunteer efforts and participation in clubs and other community events is a notable social contribution of KNF personnel to these communities. As one person noted, these volunteer efforts are essential to the maintenance of community:

The spirit of this place is its volunteers. We just don't have the money to do things any other way. Everything in this town is done by volunteers. Just look in the paper some time and you will see ads thanking people for their volunteer efforts. It is just part of the culture of this place.

Clearly, KNF personnel are part of the efforts that support volunteerism in these communities.

A less obvious issue noted by several discussants is the contribution of Forest Service personnel to the social mix in communities. Discussants suggest that in the recent past, communities in both counties were more socially diverse than they are now:

There used to be more of a middle-class here than now. With the loss of jobs we have had in the area, we are losing the people in the middle. It is not just the mill jobs or mining jobs, but it is the people who do their taxes, teach their kids, care for their pets, and are their doctors. The Forest Service is holding the middle for us now.

Social diversity that is not socially pretentious is an important value of these rural communities. Losing that diversity degrades the overall social environment and the perceived quality of life in these communities. As the quality of community life declines, then the social mix is threatened: people leave the community because they see a decline in services, resources, opportunities, and especially opportunities for the education of their children. As these individuals leave the community, then the decline in social mix continues. A one discussant observed:

Pretty soon we could just be a community where there are those who are well off and then the retirees and then those who are not doing well. There just might not be the mix of people that keeps the community going. It depends on how you look at it, but it is not the kind of thing we want for our future. We would like to see more of a mix of people and that will keep good schools and good medical facilities and some decent local shopping. If there were not enough people to volunteer for sports and things like that, there could just come a point that you have to think about leaving.

The threat of a declining social mix is somewhat mitigated by an assessment of the contributions of KNF personnel as contributing to the social mix of communities. This expression of this assessment may have been exaggerated somewhat because of news released during data collection about the possibility of out-sourcing jobs in the Supervisor's Office and in other District Offices. This may have influenced the frequency and intensity of comments regarding the contributions made by KNF personnel to local communities. However, the event raised an issue that discussants noted as a possible consequence of out-sourcing.

4.2.2 PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF KNF RESOURCES

Persons who participated in discussions for this update were asked open-ended questions about the benefits of national forest lands for their family and community. Analyses of the responses to these questions suggest six principal types of perceived benefits of the lands and resources of the Kootenai National Forest: existence, economic, environmental, lifestyle, recreation, and scenic. Each of these perceived benefits is briefly described below.

4.2.2.1 EXISTENCE

It was not uncommon for discussants to reply to questions about the benefits of KNF lands and resources with a phrase such as, "It's why I am here." The "it" for each discussant was variable. For some "it" means the recreation opportunities of the forest, for others "it" is the value of being near wildlife and perceived wild places, and for still others "it" is the assessment that their personal and family history is connected with the landscape through a pattern of use such as cutting logs, grazing cows, or mining. Collectively these sentiments can be interpreted as expressing an "existence value" or the benefit that derives from knowing a resource is there, independent of any use of that resource. For some this "existence" value is akin to a spiritual assessment of the forest as a place that needs to be there because of the nature of modern life. For others the existence value has more utilitarian content, but it is not completely economic. Rather this utilitarian assessment emphasizes the value of using forest resources, although there remains an emphasis on the independent value of the forest and its resources. A theme that emerges from an analysis of the data is: an important benefit of the KNF is that it simply exists; and, there is value in passing on the resource to future generations.

4.2.2.2 ECONOMIC

KNF lands and resources are perceived to have important direct and indirect economic benefits for communities in both Lincoln and Sanders counties. The direct benefits are the ones that accrue from timber harvesting, mining, grazing, recreation, and the commercial use of forest products such as mushrooms and other plant material. The "indirect" benefits accrue from having the infrastructure such as a lumber mill that derives direct economic

benefit from national forest lands. The type of “indirect” benefit most often discussed concerned the ability of private land owners to sell timber to local mills when they need the income. Their processing needs alone are not likely to support a mill. However, the presence of a mill supporting a larger timber industry allows the capability to process timber from their lands and “fill in the gaps” in income. This is an especially important indirect economic benefit for small and medium sized land owners in Lincoln and Sanders counties.

4.2.2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL

A theme of the “environmental benefits” was expressed by some discussants. Although this is a weak theme, it is nonetheless present in the comments of several discussants. The theme expresses the value of forest lands in contributing to the healthy natural environment of the two counties. One sub-theme concerns how the use of forest lands through grazing and timber harvesting contributes to creating a healthy forest through managed use: “A healthy forest creates a healthy environment and that is what we live in here, a healthy environment.” Another sub-theme suggests that KNF lands, if properly managed, can promote water quality and improve the overall environmental quality of lands in the west: “If you manage an ecosystem, a forest ecosystem, then you are creating environmental quality beyond just the forest. And if you manage it for ecosystem health, then there is room for all kinds of uses.”

4.2.2.4 LIFESTYLE

Lifestyle benefit is a construct from various discussant comments regarding how KNF lands enable a lifestyle that is out-of-doors oriented. This is more than providing recreational opportunities. It is the benefit that working people derive from living close to natural resources that they find meaningful. Homes are close to the forest. As one discussant noted:

It (the forest) makes my backyard a whole lot bigger than that little fenced area at the rear of my house. I can look out to the Cabinets and I know that it is my backyard to go play in when I get off work. It is a place my family and I can go hunt, go gather huckleberries, or just go be there together. It makes my life bigger than what it could be in the city.

There is also the sentiment that living in the midst of these surroundings adds a value to ways of living that cannot be bought:

Most everyone that is here by choice, the reason they say they are here is the quality of life here. You can be the only one on the river and never see another person. You can go out on a trail and never see another person. The river, the forest, the place is just something that makes you stay here even though there are things that need improvement in the community. It is something you can't buy with money or you can't find in Whitefish.

In communities where wages are lower than average and where the ability to travel and vacation in distant places is somewhat limited for the general population, KNF lands are a place that becomes integrated into a pattern of working, recreating, and living close to resources people value. In this sense, there is a lifestyle benefit that accrues to those who live in proximity to KNF lands.

A sub-theme among some discussants concerns how there are some who come to the region to “live off the land.” As one discussant noted,

There are people who move here and think they can live off the land. They want that lifestyle of hunting for their breakfast and fishing for their dinner. They don't care much about working, they just take advantage of the forest being here. Usually, they are gone after a winter or so, but there are some who hang on.

There are others who work part-time and live an out-of-doors lifestyle as weather and funds permit. Whether fully employed or unemployed, the forest is recognized as enabling a lifestyle that allows living close to resources they value; and, there is the opportunity to integrate these resources in their patterns of living.

4.2.2.5 HABITAT

Another theme in the responses about perceived benefit is the value of KNF lands as habitat for wildlife and vegetation. Specific species such as elk, grizzly bear, deer, sheep, and mountain lions were mentioned, but there was also discussion about the value of KNF lands as habitat for birds and less dramatic mammalian species. Similarly, there was also discussion of the benefits of having lands where old growth trees can develop and for the growth of a variety of vegetation that contributes to overall biodiversity. However, the strongest sentiment for this perceived benefit is the value of forest lands as habitat for larger mammals such as elk, deer, lion, and bear, especially grizzly bears. As one discussant suggested:

There are just not that many places where you get this much open space in such wild country. It is a value you cannot place a dollar on. It is a benefit to posterity to have this kind of space where bears can live and we can too.

4.2.2.6 RECREATION

Hunting, gathering, driving roads, wildlife viewing, skiing, trail riding and other recreational uses are an important perceived benefit of KNF lands and resources. Nearly everyone who responded to questions about perceived benefit mentioned some form of recreation as a personal benefit of KNF resources. In some instances the recreational benefits are from active use or engagement with resources such as hunting wildlife or picking huckleberries for recreation. In other instances the recreational activities were wildlife viewing or hiking to special places and quiet spots. The availability of national forest lands provide this breadth of personal, family, and community recreational opportunities that attracts people to the communities of Lincoln and Sanders counties and also motivates them to stay.

Some perceive the recreation opportunities offered by the forest as having direct economic benefit to their communities. The trail systems, the wilderness and roadless areas, and the diversity of recreational opportunities are assessed as an economic resource. There is also the more personal assessment that these recreation resources are an enhancement of personal lifestyles, if not the primary reason for residence in the region. As one retiree noted,

I always wanted to live in a place where I could hunt and fish out my back door. It is not quite out my back door, but I can see it from where I live and it isn't a multiple hour drive to get to it.

Another longer term resident commented:

There are some special places here like the 1000 Lakes that we use for all kinds of recreation. We hike and fish up there in the summer and use it in the winter too. You can't do that in the city, but you can here and that's why we love it.

These types of observations indicate the personal benefit individuals perceive as resulting from the recreational opportunities on KNF lands and resources.

4.2.2.7 SCENIC

The quality of "place" and specifically the range of scenic resources within KNF lands are perceived as a special benefit to individuals and their community. As one participant commented:

Just look out at that (towards the Cabinet Mountains). Have you ever seen anything as beautiful as that? You couldn't pay me to leave this place, just because it is so beautiful.

This scenic value is perceived to enhance the quality of life for individuals and the overall attractiveness of area communities. Participants commented that these are unique resources that attract others for viewing, but they provide enrichment for those who live in adjacent communities. The assessment of personal enrichment from the common property resource of the KNF is not one that individuals appear to understand as having specific economic value. That is, although the scenic values of the KNF may attract tourists and this may result in economic benefits, there is an assessment of the scenic values of the forests as enriching the overall quality of living in Lincoln and Sanders counties.

There is some important variability among participants in what constitutes "scenic" when discussions address forest conditions. For some, scenic constitutes a "park like" setting while for others it is a more dense forest. However, despite these differences on the specifics of how forests should look, the broader assessment is that the landscape of mountains, rivers, valleys, and forested lands is of high scenic value. This scenic value of large tracts of land that are more or less undeveloped appears to be the common ground among participants in assessing this particular benefit of KNF lands and resources.

4.3 Summary of Key Points

The relationship between the KNF and surrounding communities has demographic, economic, social, and cultural characteristics. These characteristics are briefly summarized in this chapter. Among the noteworthy demography changes are an increase in the median age for Lincoln (42.1 years) and Sanders (44.2 years) counties in comparison to the state as a whole (37.5 years), as well as an increase in the over 50 age cohort and a decrease in the

under 25 age cohort. In the 1990-2000 decade, Montana's population increased 12.9 percent while Sanders County increased 18 percent and Lincoln County 7.8 percent.

Economic trends affecting other rural communities of the west are also present in Lincoln and Sanders counties. These include lower than average household incomes, an increase in non-labor sources of income as a share of personal income, increases in service sector jobs, and decreases in jobs associated with natural resource extraction. Unemployment in both counties has traditionally been above the state average with seasonal patterns that suggest the influence of employment in natural resource industries. Recent mill closures in Libby have contributed to Lincoln County unemployment rates in the range of 14-18 percent in the spring and summer of 2003. Other data also suggest a dependency on natural resource industries, as indicated by IMPLAN income analysis. This preliminary analysis suggests that for Lincoln County 18.41 percent of total labor income is accounted for by natural resource industries (grazing, timber, mining, government, and recreation). Timber accounts for the largest share of this total with 13.63 percent. In Sanders County, natural resource income accounts for 8.76 percent of total labor income. Timber accounts for 4.62 percent of this total.

Social conditions are also changing. Residents point to decreases in school enrollments as an important local indicator of social change. In the 1993-2003 decade, total enrollment in the state decreased 6.2 percent, but in Lincoln County the decrease is 18.5 percent and in Sanders County 4.6 percent. Per capita public assistance payments are also generally increasing. In Lincoln County per capita public assistance was \$634 in 1997, dipping to \$611 in 2000 and then rising to \$866 in 2002. In Sanders County the 1997 per capita public assistance amount was \$547. This decreased to \$462 in 2000 and then increased in 2002 to \$622. The persons in poverty in Lincoln County increased from 14.1 percent in 1989 to 19.2 percent in 1999. Sanders County numbers show a decline from 19.6 percent to 17.2 percent for the same years. The Montana poverty rate decreased from 16.1 percent in 1989 to 14.6 percent in 1999. Libby's designation as a superfund site and health problems associated with asbestos exposure from the W.R. Grace mines is a noteworthy characteristic of the changed social environment from the 1995 Social Assessment.

The KNF makes several noteworthy institutional and social contributions to communities in Sanders and Lincoln counties. The institutional contributions are leadership resources, professional expertise, infrastructure capabilities, and fiscal contributions, especially from Payments to States funds. The social contributions of USFS personnel to the communities are perceived as enhancing overall community resources to adapt to changing conditions. Residents also suggest that they receive a variety of other benefits from the presence of the KNF in their counties. These perceived benefits include recreation, wildlife and plant habitat, scenic and existence values, environmental quality, lifestyle enhancements, and economic opportunities.

5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT: ASSESSMENT AND EXPECTATIONS

Public involvement was a topic of frequent comment by discussants who participated in this update. In other sections of this report portions of these comments have been presented. In this section we briefly summarize some of the highlights and major points that emerged in other discussions. These comments address assessments of current public involvement issues and desires regarding public involvement regarding management of the Kootenai National Forest. The specific topics developed in this section are:

- The opportunities for public involvement.
- An assessment of the forums for public involvement.
- Issues and desires that apply to improving public involvement.

The substance and details regarding each of these major themes in discussions about public comment is summarized in the three sub-sections that follow.

5.1 The Opportunity for Public Involvement

Participants in this update expressed three strong themes about the opportunity for public involvement:

- There are ample opportunities for area residents to provide public comment about forest management issues.
- Some segments of the population choose not to participate because they are not interested, they perceive barriers to participation, or they have some despair about the viability of the public involvement process.
- Public involvement is assessed as dominated by “the left” or “environmentalists” who know how to use the process; and, this places others in the community at a disadvantage.

5.1.1 OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVOLVEMENT EXIST

In general, the participants for this update describe an awareness of the opportunities that exist for public involvement, including writing letters, attending public meetings, participating in open houses and field trips, and personal contact with District Rangers and other KNF leadership. Some of the comments suggest that if there is any discontent about the opportunity to participate, it is not because of a lack of opportunity:

They are doing everything they can do to engage the public—I don’t know how you can make the public feel heard when the opportunity is there.

Similarly, other participants suggested that being involved takes a personal commitment that individuals must be willing to make as part of being “active” in community affairs. For example:

If you take the time to be active, then you can be heard. You can have your say, maybe not have your way, but you can have your say. People who are unwilling to take the time and make the effort just lose their say while those of us who take the time at least have the satisfaction of knowing we tried.

Others suggested there is sufficient opportunity to provide comment regarding management issues. Additionally, discussants also evaluated KNF communication about the opportunities to participate as sufficient. In general, residents positively evaluate the efforts of the KNF to provide opportunities to participate in public involvement. However, as will be developed below, there were other opinions about the desires for communication about specific management actions that might affect publics, especially road closures

5.1.2 SOME PEOPLE CHOOSE NOT TO PARTICIPATE

A second theme that emerged from the discussions with participants in this update is the assessment that fellow citizens are choosing not to participate in public involvement. Several different reasons were noted for their observations, including the following:

- **Life is too busy.** Other life demands were cited as a reason others do not attend meetings or participating in public involvement efforts. One discussant made the following comment about a neighbor he asked to attend a meeting with him about KNF management issues:

I knew it was important to attend the plan revision meeting because it is the only way we are going to get heard. I went down the street to talk to (my friend) about going with me. He just said he was too busy with trying to make enough money to pay his bills and feed his kids. When he had any free time he said he would rather spend it with his family than go to a meeting. I don't disagree with him. I understand his point of view. He is just up against the wall and going to a meeting seems like a luxury to him. To me it is a necessity and so I just make time and go.

The difficulties of life for many people appear to result in choices not to participate because they evaluate other demands as having a higher priority. Observers suggest that these are often the individuals who should be participating because they are among those most affected by management decisions. A related theme is that individuals who are active in their community often attend a variety of meetings and they have too little time to spend with their families. For example, one discussant who is involved with service clubs, high school sports, and the Healthy Communities initiative in Libby observed:

Three nights a week I am at meetings and I often just don't have time to go to another meeting.

For those who are very active and those who are consumed with life's other demands, public involvement in KNF management issues is a lower priority.

- **It does not affect me.** A similar thread in these discussions is a more general assessment that it is only worth attending meetings that appear that directly affect individual interests and concerns. For example:

It is real hard to get people to these meetings, unless there is some issue they are specifically concerned about. It is just hard. We have the same problem with lots of government meetings so it is not just them (KNF) it is really a community-wide issue of people just coming out when their ox is being gored.

This is not apathy. But, it is selective participation that may be based on limited information and a limited view of the interactions among management issues. This may also represent some of the most common motivations for involvement or not in public comment.

- **The process of public involvement is not meaningful.** Discussants also observed that some of their fellow citizens have lost faith in the value of the public input process. The reasons they have lost faith vary, but two themes emerged from examination of the data. One theme is that in the past individuals have provided input, but there is no action based on the input. Consequently, they evaluate the process as not meeting their expectations for action resulting from their input. While this may be an incorrect evaluation of the purpose of the public input process, it is cited as an example of one reason individuals choose not to continue with their past participation. For example,

You can't just listen to us and walk away. People don't think their voices are heard. We are losing our culture, our economy, our history, and our way of life. There is concern about closing gates ... but people are not heard when they speak out.

The second theme is that the process has become so filled with conflict that they choose not to attend public meetings. For example:

There are lots of people who are still burnt from the old Save the Yaak days where there were accusations about burning people out and various things. People who lived here in that era tend not to be involved in anything that might be politically... well, they don't get involved because they are burned out over the paving of that road.

A similar sentiment is expressed in the following comment:

There are a lot of people who don't even vote, who don't want to get involved for whatever reasons. There is also a fair amount who also stay away because the meetings are just so hateful and they don't want to be a part of that hatefulness.

There are other reasons cited for non-participation such as meetings being held at inconvenient times or at inconvenient locations. However, more often the choice not to participate was evaluated in terms of one of the three points noted above. In general, there is the assessment that, "There are a lot of people who don't speak up and have their say when they should."

5.2 Perceived Differences in Public involvement

Another noteworthy assessment of the public involvement process is the evaluation that the process has been captured by a particular group of stakeholders and constituents. This evaluation contributes to some mistrust of the process and its outcomes. At the same time, this assessment also suggests to those who evaluate their position as disadvantaged that they should become more aware of and involved in the process.

The assessment of being at a “disadvantage” in the process is expressed in statements such as the following:

People here do not understand the public comment process well. The left understands it very well and they use it to their advantage. The rest of us are left out because we are not as aware of the process. It is kind of hard to win a race when they (the environmentalists) are riding a thoroughbred and we are riding a donkey.

People will talk to you, but they won't write a letter. The environmentalists normally have the time, money, and effort. Their networking is far superior to everyone else to get their word out. There was this public comment period about a lake nearby, making it a no wake lake, and 1,236 comments came back and 13 were from Montana and the rest were from out of state. One person who was an environmentalist got onto the internet and got a thousand people to send in a comment. Now it is a no-wake lake. That is what is wrong with public comment: people who don't know anything about a local issue and live outside the area can write a letter and it has as much say as the person who lives here and knows things on the ground.

While this last comment also incorporates another notion about the weighting of public comment and the value of local knowledge, (topics developed in a separate discussion below), there is also the evaluation of “the environmentalists” as being more organized and aware of the public comment process than others. There is often a further evaluation of the “left” and “environmentalists” as having the funds to pay staff or “hired professionals” to attend meetings. For example:

It is very difficult to get to meetings for a variety of reasons. If they want input they should send out letters or questionnaires so they can find out what we think. What you (the interviewer) are doing is what they should be doing on a regular basis. Right now the green groups pay people to attend meetings and write letters. So why should we go when they are stacking the meetings?

This assessment of disadvantage has resulted in some groups and individuals emphasizing the need to be more involved in the Forest Plan revision process. For example:

I am making sure I get everyone I can to go to those meetings. And I am reading and getting informed about the NEPA process and things like that. You have to do that if you want a seat at the table. We have not had a seat because somebody took our chair. Well, that is not going to happen for these plan revision meetings. We are going to be all over plan revision and

turn out as many people as we can and get them to write letters and do all those things the environmentalists do. We are learning the process.

This sentiment articulated by some new groups and existing groups, expresses a need to become more aware of the process for organizing public comment to present a particular point of view. Whether or not the assessment is correct about “one side of the argument” capturing the public involvement process, the net result is new impetus for increased public involvement by some community groups and individuals.

5.3 Forums for Public Involvement

Discussions with update participants elicited comments and evaluations about various forums for public involvement: public meetings, open houses, field trips, letter writing, and personal contact with District Rangers and other leadership team members. We summarize the content of these comments and evaluations in separate sections that follow.

5.3.1 PUBLIC MEETINGS

Public meetings are perceived as a difficult forum for acquiring meaningful comments from interested publics. The contentious nature of past meetings, observations of public scolding in meetings, and arguments among meeting participants are evaluated as negative elements of this forum for input about management issues. In small communities where residents have multiple types of relationships with each other, there is an incentive to minimize conflict and limit interactions that can complicate their multiple ties. That is, it is difficult to argue with your dentist, accountant, or mechanic in a public forum and then expect to have amicable relationships in the normal course of everyday community life. Consequently, conflict in public meetings appears to inhibit a willingness to participate or at least it inhibits comment from many of those who attend. In fact, some perceive past public meetings as a forum in which those who are especially frustrated or who hold particular positions come to express their frustration or engage in stereotyped conflicts and finger pointing. That is, these meetings become a type of public performance that expresses the differences and conflicts without a mechanism to resolve or meaningfully address those conflicts and differences.

Given the skepticism about past public meetings, there remains some hope that they can be a meaningful forum for individuals to acquire information and provide their input and opinions about management issues. For example, recent meetings about plan revision were generally evaluated in positive terms, although there were some reservations expressed by a range of participants with different viewpoints about management issues. The positive evaluations of these meetings emphasized:

- Holding meetings in local venues that can draw people who might not attend meetings distant from their residence.
- The role of District Rangers in leading meetings since they are familiar with local issues and the local groups and individuals who attend.
- The combination of small group discussions combined with all participants meeting together to review issues and points raised in small groups.
- The availability of the biological and other experts to answer questions about management issues.
- The meetings were well-managed by those in charge.

Comments about the difficulties with these meetings included the following:

- A neutral facilitator should be present to ensure all points of view are heard. Using facilitators from the KNF presents a conflict of interest if the agency opinion is challenged.
- Facilitators are inherently problematic at these meetings in any role because they are biased and tend to limit discussion to only those points of view that are acceptable to the facilitator.
- Local meetings were attended and “stacked” by those from other communities and regions and stifled the expression of opinions by residents of the Districts where the meetings were held.
- The method of recording the views of local residents was inflammatory and did not foster constructively addressing issues. For example, recording comments such as “kill all grizzly bears” was perceived as inflammatory and not constructively addressing the comments offered.
- The manner in which issues were identified and recorded gave the impression of a “vote” on the value of the issue rather than only recording the issue’s existence. This resulted in concern about manipulation of the process by those with vested interests on both sides of the argument.

The information collected for this update suggests that, although there is some reservation about public meetings as a viable forum for acquiring public comment, there is also hope they can be useful if conflicts are more effectively managed. The majority opinion also appears to be that “professional facilitators” should be used to ensure that the meetings remain constructive and do not transform into the public performances that limit contributions by the majority of participants. There is also a minority opinion that views any facilitation of such meetings as problematic.

5.3.2 OPEN HOUSES

This forum for acquiring public input received mixed evaluations. Although some discussants perceive the open house as an effective means to interact with KNF staff and to express their views about management issues, the more dominant sentiment expressed by participants is similar to that of a County Commissioner previously quoted who said in response to a question, “If you could tell the people at the KNF any one thing, what is it you would want them to know?” And the response was:

We hate, the public hates, the Open House policy and the way they run meetings. We have been very vocal about it. They are reluctant to change it. I am assuming they don’t change it because it is some directive from Washington that it is the way to conduct meetings. But what our constituents feel, and we do as well, is there should be another way.

The reason for this evaluation of open houses is that they do not provide the opportunity for people with different points of view to hear and respond to the opinions of their neighbors. Underlying this concern is what we interpret as some concern that the informal forum in which there is the opportunity for one-to-one discussions without challenge from those with opposing views hides the basis for management decisions. The positive evaluations of open

houses express a theme of a more relaxed setting where the opportunities for conflict are limited; and, the opportunities for extended discussions are possible.

5.3.3 FIELD TRIPS

Field trips were raised as a forum for public involvement by a limited number of the participants in this project. Nonetheless, those who raised the issue suggest this is a powerful means to see and examine specific management issues. These discussants also emphasized that a value of field trips is the opportunity for extended discussions with the professionals who know the issues and make the recommendations for management decisions. As one discussant observed:

I have gone on a couple of field outings with people from the KNF. I did not expect much, but I was very surprised. The people doing the field trip impressed me with their knowledge and their concern to do the right thing for the resource. I felt that those scientists were trying to do the right thing and it gave me confidence in them. The political process that affects what happens with their recommendations is one thing, but their knowledge and concern for the resource was eye opening.

The comment expresses the sentiments of others who noted that field trips provide the opportunity to become informed about management issues by knowledgeable scientists and management personnel. This forum appears to be one in which there is limited participation among area residents.

5.3.4 LETTER WRITING

Letter writing to gather public input about management issues was evaluated by some as problematic and by others as an efficient and effective method to provide comment about management issues. Those who evaluate it as problematic suggest that letter writing, especially the use of form letters, can result in skewing the information available to decision makers about the breadth and depth of public concern. For example,

What has happened is that the Forest Service gets a letter from the Save the Butterfly organization and that could be 2 people, but it is usually just a handful of people. They think it is this big organization and represents a lot of people, but it may not. My letter should count as much as the Save the Butterfly group, but I am not sure it does.

The use of form letters is a topic that evoked special concern:

We are asking people to write letters about Forest Plan revision. We are not asking them to sign some form letter. We are not giving them what to say. We want them to write what they think. There are organizations that just ask people to sign a form letter or send a post card and it isn't really what they may think. They are not taking the time to speak their minds. Should that kind of letter count more than a letter I pen by hand?

Expressed concerns about letter writing are similar to those noted previously in Section 5.2 about how some interest groups and organizations mobilize individuals and other groups to affect a local management issue. That is, there is concern that some interest groups are using letter writing as a means to give extra weight to their opinion by the use of form letters and post cards. These letters and post cards are perceived to be sent by persons who may not be informed about local issues. As one discussant observed,

There should be no form letters allowed. Only letters from real people in their own hand should count.

However, there was also a strong theme from multiple points of view about resource management that letter writing is an effective means to provide comment. One discussant that represents what might be termed an “industry” point of view made the following comment in response to a question about how individuals can provide public comment about forest management issues:

Your best bet is to write a letter. Your best chance of getting heard is writing a letter. Everyone can afford a 37 cent stamp and if you can't there are plenty of people who will loan you the money. Every letter from an individual should be as good as a letter from an organization.

This same sentiment was echoed by others who suggested that for those with limited time to attend meetings or other constraints affecting more in-person participation methods, letter writing is an effective means to provide comment about management issues.

5.3.5 ACCESS TO RANGERS AND THE FOREST SUPERVISOR

A strong theme in the discussions for this update is the general accessibility of Rangers and the Forest Supervisor. For example,

We are very happy with our Rangers up here. I feel like I can walk into their office any time and ask to see them and tell them what is on my mind. It is a way that I can get my say across. Now, they don't agree all the time, but I usually feel like I have the chance to make my point. Not everyone feels like they can come in and talk to the Rangers, but I don't have any problem with it. It is an open door and I take advantage of it.

There was a consistent theme in comments about the accessibility of the Forest Supervisor from diverse perspectives in the two counties. For example,

When he came in things changed. He is out in the public and he attends community meetings. He is the kind of guy you feel like you can walk up and talk to and he will listen to what you have to say. Now, I don't agree with everything he does. But, I like the fact that I feel that I can go to his office or call him on the phone and get his attention. It is just not that way everywhere and it makes a difference in our relationship with the forest. They listen to you. They may not always hear what you say, if you know what I mean, but they do listen.

Personnel on some Ranger Districts suggest they would like to provide all the access and communication opportunities possible. However, their workload is such that meeting all public demands for communication and access sometimes falls short of their own expectation. For example,

Sometimes people come in and we try to be as responsive as possible. And we also respond to all the requests for information we can. Sometimes I don't think the public appreciates the workload to respond to appeals, to engage in collaboration, and just the time required to meet our mandates. If we are not as responsive as people would like, it is because the demands on our time don't always allow us to engage the public as much as they needs us to. It is especially the case on a District where there are lawsuits and the amount of time consumed in responding takes away from meeting some of our other demands, including meeting with the public or keeping them updated about everything they would like to know from us.

This sentiment expresses a general concern about responsiveness to public inquiries and communication about management issues. However, discussants generally expressed a positive assessment of access to District Rangers and the Forest Supervisor. This access is viewed as an important means to provide feedback and comment about management issues.

5.4 Issues and Desires Regarding Public Involvement

Discussions about public involvement also elicited some desires for changes in communication and interaction with the KNF. There were also other issues that our analysis of discussant comments categorized as relevant to public involvement. These comments were organized into the following themes:

- The constituents of the forest desire and have a need for ongoing communication about the activities of the forest and the management decisions that affect resident's use of forest lands.
- The concerns of local constituents about weighting their input, since they perceive they are most affected by management decisions.
- Desires for expanding the leadership role of KNF managers in local efforts to resolve conflicts about natural resource issues.
- The desire to have management decisions "make more sense." A perception exists that management decisions consider facts or result in outcomes that are contrary to common sense.
- The desire to have the best science used in making management decisions and to have that science accessible to the public.

Some of these points are variations of issues discussed previously in this and other chapters. However, to ensure that these desires are explicitly discussed, we briefly develop the substance of each point in the remainder of this chapter.

5.4.1 THE NEED FOR INFORMATION

A theme in comments from discussants is the desire for ongoing communication about management and planning issues. In general, discussants perceive there are limited sources of information for residents. The newspaper and limited choice in radio in some areas are primary sources of information about local issues. However, as one resident noted:

The local rumor mill here is intense. Rumors about what they (KNF) are doing spread fast and they are usually not true. They need to counteract that with a good flow of information about what is going on down there.

There were suggestions that a weekly newspaper column, a KNF news web page, or some other regular communication about management issues could provide a means for interested persons to keep informed about local issues. A variant of this theme is the notion that the KNF managers, “need to toot their own horn.” That is, there is a need for the Forest Service to inform constituents about KNF activities and successes in the regular course of everyday business.

Related to this need for information is a desire for less jargon and more “straight talk” in presenting issues:

One thing they need to start looking at is they need to look at talking more straight to us rather than getting a four page description of something that take a couple of sentences. They need to tell us what they can and can't do and not hide it in bureaucratize.

They should avoid the use of jargon and talk to people in language they can understand. Don't assume we know the technical details. Just tell us in laymen's terms where possible so that everyone can know what is being said.

These types of desires for more communication and less technical jargon in the communication of management issues were expressed by discussants with diverse points of view.

A second theme about the need for information is a desire for education about natural resource and forest management issues. For example,

People here really want to know about environmental issues and how things work. They (KNF) have a great resource that I would hope they could share more with the community than they do. I would like to see some educational programs or something like that for people in the community. Now, some of them are not the best communicators, so maybe they could use some kind of liaison to help them out there.

A similar idea is expressed in this statement by a discussant:

We mostly learn about what they do through the newspaper. It is a great source of information here. You see people lined up down there when it comes out and if it is late then they are knocking on the door to get their

paper. But, they could use some educational programs that explain how what they do will affect us.

This need for information about management actions is especially acute around road closures, but the general need expressed is that communities desire more information about KNF activities and education programs about environmental processes.

A final theme about the need for information concerns how information and other public meetings are scheduled and organized. For example,

Most of the time they are pretty good in knowing what is going on and when to schedule meetings. But sometimes they will schedule a meeting at the same time as a local basketball game or some other high school sports event. They should know that people are going to choose to go to the basketball game and not their meeting. They need a little more awareness about when local events happen.

Publics express a need for more information that can be communicated in straightforward language that makes the information accessible to them as well as to those with more technical knowledge. There is also the expressed need to have venues to communicate this information that show awareness of local schedules and other means for acquiring information.

5.4.2 THE VALUE OF LOCAL COMMENTS

There is one dominant theme and another sub-theme in the comments about the value of local input in the public involvement process. The dominant theme is that local concerns about management issues should be weighted. The logic behind this concern is that residents live in and interact with the natural resources of the region and know its capacity and limits; and, residents directly experience the effects on their personal and community lives that result from management actions. A related sentiment is that without weighting local input, then community, lifestyle, and values are at risk:

I want this to be a community of place for the residents rather than a community of interest for the nation. I would like to have some say in how the land supports this community. I would like people to know that it is not a problem to cut a tree, they do grow back. I just don't want the town to be a colony. Is it fair for our national forests to be a place where you cannot cut a tree? We should be able to use some trees, but there are those who use trees as a means to an end. We just want more opportunities for our daughter so she has the chance to live here and raise a family here if she wants to.

“Outsiders” are perceived to have more input in the process of forest management or at least the input they have is more effective:

Right now outsiders have more input than we do. They need to figure out a way to let local input have more weight than the person in New York who writes a letter. Their fantasy about our forest has as much say as my

understanding of the place that I learned from my father who learned from his father. We have an on-the-ground knowledge of the place and it needs to be respected.

These types of sentiments were expressed among many of the longer term residents and among those who advocate for the continued presence of a forest products industry.

The sub-theme expressed by discussants with what is commonly known as an “environmental” point of view also stresses the value of local on the ground knowledge. For example,

We don't just sit here and write letters and go to meetings. We do those things too, but we are out in the woods, visiting management units and seeing the conditions on the ground. When we offer a point of view about how things should be it is because we have taken the time to go out there and see it for ourselves. We want them (the KNF) to pay attention to that experience and to respect it rather than dismiss it because they are the “professionals” and we are just the folks who live in the hills.

This sentiment expresses a need to acknowledge local knowledge and experience and to consider its value in formulating management plans and actions.

5.4.3 MORE LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Residents who participated in this update commented about generally positive leadership of the KNF management team, but there were also expressed desires for expanding their involvement in community problem solving. For example,

We see that the Forest Service needs to step up in leadership and assist in ending the conflict here. There is a lack of leadership in that area. They may not know whose role it is. Maybe there is some kind of a disconnect there. They are human beings too and they live here and have us as their neighbors. They have to be involved socially with the people they are having these arguments with. I think it is a federal agencies job to step up in leadership on resolving these issues. I mean they need to know who the stakeholders are and who is invested in the process and who is not. It is their responsibility to make sure all those interests are represented. Now, look at our RAC committee. The Forest Service helped to create the success of that committee. They failed miserably on the Yaak Stewardship project. They need to step up in solving some of the conflicts.

A similar sentiment was expressed by another discussant:

The process needs to be more transparent in how things work. Not just having the meetings and having the public come in. If they really want this to be a constructive process that is solution driven, they have to make that happen. It is their responsibility to get involved in resolving some of the conflicts that have gone on forever. If they don't do it, then who will?

These sentiments indicate the expectation that KNF managers should have a role in working with groups in conflict to assist in resolving problems related to resource management issues. This may reflect ongoing frustrations with extended conflicts about management issues with little hope of resolution outside the courts. Many residents perceive the courts as part of the current management problem rather than a true source of locally meaningful solutions.

A second theme about leadership concerns the responsibility of the “upper level” managers to ensure their staff implements policy consistently:

I expect the upper level managers to make sure their employees understand that whatever group comes forward, I expect them to let them know what the tone of the forest is going to be. If the managers set a tone of working collaboratively with the community, then they need to make sure their employees are on board with that. They are not doing the job as well as they could be on getting everyone on board with how they want things to be.

A third theme is the expectation that the KNF should have greater involvement as an agency in community events and processes. For example,

Don't get me wrong, Forest Service people are among the most involved in community affairs here. That is not what I am saying. As an agency, they need to step up and participate more in the community. Companies like (name) make contributions to the little league and they sponsor things for kids and they do things to help out the community. The Forest Service used to loan equipment out more than they do now. They need to show the flag more as the Forest Service.

A related theme is the desire for greater involvement in community affairs by the KNF leadership team. Discussants suggested that the KNF has a storehouse of leadership talent that can benefit small communities that have limited resources to organize efforts for a variety of purposes. For example,

We are a small place and everyone who is involved is about as involved as they can be. Sometimes it just takes a spark to help something get done and lots of times people just don't have the resources to generate that spark. I would like to see them (KNF) get more involved in sparking community efforts and supporting them.

Most of these expectations may be beyond the mission and capacity of the KNF. However, residents express an expectation for more community leadership by the agency. This expectation may need to be addressed by communication about the limits and capabilities of the agency in this arena.

In general, discussants recognize the breadth and depth of leadership skills within the KNF and their desire is to have more sharing of these skills and talent with local communities. These desires need to be placed within the context of current high demands for leadership within both Lincoln and Sanders counties for response to changing economic conditions.

5.4.4 THINGS JUST DON'T MAKE SENSE

Among some segments of both counties there is strong sentiment that some management decisions, “just don’t make sense.” The desire is for KNF managers to listen to the common sense perspective of people who have grown-up and lived their lives in and around the forest. There is an important social context to these sentiments that is revealed in the details about what does not make sense. What is perceived as nonsense often concerns endangered species issues, management of old growth, and other common issues in the ongoing debate between the two traditional points of view about resource management in the region. For example,

They will tell you they need to close off that area because grizzly bears don’t cross roads and so they are going to obliterate the roads. I don’t know when the last time was they were in the woods, but I saw a bear walking down a road just last week. I guess he didn’t read the report they wrote. It just seems they lack common sense in what they are doing and it makes me wonder if they care more about bears or people. I would like to see them take people into consideration a lot more in how they manage the forest.

These types of sentiments are most often expressed by those who feel their way of life is threatened by management decisions that favor wildlife or outside concerns over local ways of life. They perceive major changes in their schools, their ability to access public lands, and the values about resources that they were taught by their parents and teachers. For example,

People grew up here knowing the world made sense. People went on tours with the Forest Service in 6th grade and we always thought the forest and the community would always be here. What we believed in does not hold true anymore and it was not our fault. We may not always be here and we did not do anything wrong.

This statement expresses the notion that individual and community ways of life are changing for reasons that do not appear to make sense. Trees appear to be plentiful, there are bears crossing roads in the woods, and there are plenty of bull-trout in the Kootenai River. The apparent contradiction between local experience and management actions that “don’t make sense” highlights the need for clarification about the broad context of forest management decisions and planning. The legal and regulatory constraints that affect management decisions may need more explicit discussion when such issues are raised by concerned publics.

5.4.5 LET US KNOW YOU ARE USING THE BEST SCIENCE

A range of residents expressed the desire to know that the Forest Service is using the “best science” in making management decisions. However, there are two variations of this expressed desire. One is the perspective that the KNF is staffed by professionals who know their work and have the responsibility to apply the best science in managing forest resources. This point of view is commonly expressed in sentiments such as the following statement by a Lincoln County logger:

They (KNF scientists) know how things work. We just need to let them alone and let them use their scientific expertise to make things right. If they are using good science, then even if they do things that go against how I want them to be, I can live with that. If they are doing things because someone in Missoula yells loud and makes a stink, then I have a problem with that. Just let the scientists do what they do.

This perspective places trust in the expertise and professionalism of local managers. At the same time there is the need to know that the management process is driven by science and not “politics.” A similar perspective was expressed by a member of a local environmental group:

We have been on field trips with the biologists and silviculturalists. They impressed me that they know their science and they know what they are doing. The managers need to keep listening to those scientists who know about what they are doing and who care about the forest. It is important for us to know that the process is science driven.

A different idea about science-based management was expressed by another member of an environmental organization in the region:

I want them to use the best science, but sometimes I hear from scientists not in the Forest Service who have a different assessment of the same situation. Then that makes me wonder if they are using the best science. I think that a layer of peer review should be built into the process when they are doing planning. They should use the best possible science available and I just want to make sure they are doing that. I know they don't like to be challenged, but we need to make sure the science is right.

This perspective also desires to know that the best-science available is the basis for making management decisions. However, the guarantee that the science is credible is based on using peer review and not inherent trust in the expertise of KNF staff. This perspective presents different challenges for response to public concerns about the scientific basis for management decisions.

5.5 Summary of Key Points

There are several consistent themes and issues in the data regarding public involvement and information needs. Participants indicate that ample opportunity exists for participation if residents choose to do so. They also acknowledge that many choose not to participate for one or a combination of the following reasons: their lives are too busy; they believe forest management issues do not affect them; or, they assess the process of public involvement as not meaningful. Some residents also argue that the public comment process has been “captured” by environmental and non-local interests. These residents suggest they are at a disadvantage in relationship to those who know the process and use that knowledge to manipulate it. The methods for public involvement are evaluated differently. Public meetings are often described as “public performances” in which there is limited useful discussion or exchange of ideas about topics of interest to participants. Other methods such as open houses, field trips, and letter writing are each evaluated as having different strengths

and weaknesses. Publics generally believe they have good access to Rangers and the Forest Supervisor; and, these are assessed as meaningful channels for public input. These evaluations suggest the need to use multiple methods to reach diverse constituents.

Residents also expressed desire for other changes in agency interactions with communities and individuals in the two counties. They wish to have more information from the USFS about plans, management decisions, and natural resource issues. They also desire more leadership from the agency to identify and resolve natural resource conflicts as well as more leadership to address community problems and issues. There is also a strong desire for the agency to explain the scientific basis for decision making about forest plans and management decisions. There is also sentiment that local input should have more weight and value because it is based in local knowledge about ecological processes and conditions.

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DATA APPENDIX

**Table 23: Decennial Total Population 1910-2000 for
Montana, Lincoln County, Sanders County and Incorporated Places**

Census Region	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
MONTANA										
TOTAL	376,053	548,889	537,606	559,456	591,024	674,767	694,409	786,690	799,065	902,195
% Change		46.0%	-2.1%	4.1%	5.6%	14.2%	2.9%	13.3%	1.6%	12.9%
LINCOLN										
COUNTY	3,638	7,797	7,089	7,882	8,693	12,537	18,063	17,752	17,481	18,837
% Change		114.3%	-9.1%	11.2%	10.3%	44.2%	44.1%	-1.7%	-1.5%	7.8%
Eureka	603		680	912	929	1,229	1,195	1,119	1,043	1,017
% Change				34.1%	1.9%	32.3%	-2.8%	-6.4%	-6.8%	-2.5%
Libby	630		1,752	1,837	2,401	2,828	3,286	2,748	2,532	2,626
% Change				4.9%	30.7%	17.8%	16.2%	-16.4%	-7.9%	3.7%
Rexford	no record		329	274	248	no record	243	130	132	151
% Change				-16.7%	-9.5%			-46.5%	1.5%	14.4%
Troy	483		498	796	770	855	1,046	1,088	953	957
% Change				59.8%	-3.3%	11.0%	22.3%	4.0%	-12.4%	0.4%
SANDERS										
COUNTY	3,713	4,903	5,692	6,926	6,983	6,880	7,093	8,675	8,669	10,227
% Change		32.0%	16.1%	21.7%	0.8%	-1.5%	3.1%	22.3%	-0.1%	18.0%
Hot Springs	no record		447	663	733	585	664	601	411	531
% Change				48.3%	10.6%	-20.2%	13.5%	-9.5%	-31.6%	29.2%
Plains	481		522	624	714	769	1,046	1,116	992	1,126
% Change				19.5%	14.4%	7.7%	36.0%	6.7%	-11.1%	13.5%
Thompson Falls	325		468	736	851	1,274	1,356	1,478	1,319	1,321
% Change				57.3%	15.6%	49.7%	6.4%	9.0%	-10.8%	0.2%

SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of the Census. Decennial Censuses of Population (title varies by census), 1890-2000.

Blank cells indicate missing or non-available data, or not an incorporated place when census was conducted.

Processed by the Census and Economic Information Center, Montana Department of Commerce, March 21, 2001

**Table 24: Total Population and Rural Character of
U.S., Montana, Lincoln County, and Sanders County 1990 & 2000**

Characteristic	U.S. Total		Montana Total				Lincoln County				Sanders County			
	1990	2000	1990	1990%	2000	2000%	1990	1990%	2000	2000%	1990	1990%	2000	2000%
Total Population	248,709,873	281,421,906	799,065	100%	902,195	100%	17,481	100%	18,837	100%	8,669	100%	10,227	100%
Urban Population	187,053,487	222,360,539	419,826	52.5%	487,878	54.1%	2,644	15.1%	4,248	22.6%	0	0%	0	0.0%
Rural Population	61,656,386	59,061,367	379,239	47.5%	414,317	45.9%	14,837	84.9%	14,589	77.4%	8,669	100%	10,227	100%

1990 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, Summary Tape File 1A

2000 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Censes, 2000, Summary File 1 (SF1) 100 Percent Data

Urban population refers only to civilian non-institutionalized population

Table 25: Area of Counties and Incorporated Communities and Population Change 1980 - 2000

Community	Area	Population Change (%) 1980 to 1990	Population Change (%) 1990 to 2000
Montana	145,556 sq. land mi. 1,489 sq. water mi.	1.6	12.9
LINCOLN COUNTY	3,613 sq. land mi. 62 sq. water mi.	(1.5)	7.8
Libby	1.11 sq. land mi.	(7.9)	3.7
Eureka	1.01 sq. land mi.	(6.8)	(2.5)
Rexford	.10 sq. land mi.	1.5	14.4
Troy	.55 sq. land mi.	(12.4)	0.4
SANDERS COUNTY	2762 sq. land mi. 27.89 sq. water mi.	(0.1)	18.0
Thompson Falls	1.24 sq. land mi.	(10.8)	0.2
Plains	.57 sq. land mi.	(11.1)	13.5
Hot Springs	.30 sq. land mi.	(31.6)	29.2

1980 & 1990 Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 and 1990 Censuses of Population and Housing, Population and Housing Units Counts, Summary Tape File 1, and Public Law 94-171.

2000 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Censes, 2000, Summary File 1 (SF1) 100 Percent Data
Data were processed by the Montana Department of Commerce, Census and Economic
Information Center, 1993, and presented in Tables 1.1 and 1.4 of the County Statistical Reports.

Table 26: Gender, Age and Ethnic Distribution of Study Area Population 1990 - 2000

Characteristic	U.S. Total		Montana Total				Lincoln County				Sanders County			
	1990	2000	1990	1990%	200000%	2000%	1990	1990%	2000	2000%	1990	1990%	2000	2000%
Total Population	248,709,873	281,421,906	799,065	100%	902,195	100%	17,481	100%	18,837	100%	8,669	100%	10,227	100%
Males	121,239,418	138,053,563	395,769	49.5%	449,480	49.8%	8,777	50.20%	9,542	50.7%	4,377	50.50%	5,166	50.5%
Females	127,470,455	143,368,343	403,296	50.5%	452,715	50.2%	8,704	49.80%	9,295	49.3%	4,292	49.50%	5,061	49.5%
Age < 5	18,354,443	19,175,798	59,257	7.4%	54,869	6.1%	1,250	7.20%	937	5.0%	602	6.90%	482	4.7%
Age 5-17	45,249,989	53,118,014	162,847	20.4%	175,193	19.4%	3,979	22.80%	3,835	20.4%	1,882	21.70%	1,951	19.1%
Age 18-24	26,737,766	27,143,454	70,011	8.8%	85,757	9.5%	1,105	6.30%	1,045	5.5%	488	5.60%	564	5.5%
Age 25-34	43,175,932	39,891,724	123,070	15.4%	103,279	11.4%	2,479	14.20%	1,644	8.7%	1,074	12.40%	842	8.2%
Age 35-44	37,578,903	45,148,527	126,756	15.9%	141,941	15.7%	2,862	16.40%	2,915	15.5%	1,381	15.90%	1,415	13.8%
Age 45-54	25,223,086	37,677,952	82,306	10.3%	135,088	15.0%	2,074	11.90%	3,143	16.7%	971	11.20%	1,809	17.7%
Age 55-64	21,147,923	24,274,684	68,321	8.6%	85,119	9.4%	1,590	9.10%	2,459	13.1%	873	10.10%	1,440	14.1%
Age 65-74	18,106,558	18,390,986	60,884	7.6%	62,519	6.9%	1,346	7.70%	1,675	8.9%	792	9.10%	994	9.7%
Age 75 +	13,135,273	16,600,767	45,613	5.7%	58,430	6.5%	796	4.60%	1,184	6.3%	606	7.00%	730	7.1%
Median Age	32.9	35.3	33.8	na	37.5	na	34.7	na	42.1	na	37	na	44.2	na
White	199,686,070	211,460,626	741,111	92.7%	817,229	90.6%	17,103	97.8%	18,100	96.1%	8,135	93.8%	9,400	91.9%
Black	29,986,060	34,658,190	2,381	0.3%	2,692	0.3%	11	0.1%	21	0.1%	12	0.1%	13	0.1%
American Indian	1,959,234	2,475,956	47,679	6.0%	56,068	6.2%	282	1.6%	226	1.2%	471	5.4%	485	4.7%
Asian/Pacific														
Islander	7,273,662	10,641,833	4,259	0.5%	5,161	0.6%	54	0.3%	66	0.4%	37	0.4%	32	0.3%
Other Ethnicity	9,804,847	15,359,073	3,635	0.5%	5,315	0.6%	31	0.2%	74	0.4%	14	0.2%	27	0.3%
Two or More														
Races		6,826,228			15,730	1.7%			350	1.9%			270	2.6%
Hispanic Origin														
(any race)	22,234,059	35,305,818	12,174	1.5%	18,081	2.0%	197	1.1%	271	1.4%	104	1.2%	159	1.6%

1990 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, Summary Tape File 1A & 3A

2000 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Censes, 2000, Summary File 1 (SF1) 100 Percent Data

American Indian also includes Eskimo and Aleut population. Percentages describe each category as it relates to the total population.

Table 27: Educational Attainment of Montana, Lincoln County & Sanders County 1990 & 2000

Characteristic	Montana				Lincoln County				Sanders County			
	1990	1990%	2000	2000%	1990	1990%	2000	2000%	1990	1990%	2000	2000%
Total Persons >18 years of age	578,268	100%	672,251	100%	12,307	100%	14,086	100%	6,184	100%	7,801	100%
Less than 9th grade	42,416	7.3%	26,492	3.9%	1,340	10.9	893	6.3%	586	9.5	376	4.8%
Some high school, no diploma	68,971	11.9%	67,224	10%	2,037	16.6	2,071	15%	1,012	16.4	1,205	15%
High school diploma	190,896	33.0%	208,632	31.0%	4,913	39.9	5,410	38.4%	2,546	41.2	2,910	37.3%
Some college, no degree	138,693	24.0%	183,928	27.4%	2,086	17	3,211	22.8%	960	15.5	1,752	22.5%
Associate degree	31,337	5.4%	37,475	5.6%	507	4.1	703	5.0%	232	3.8	415	5.3%
Bachelor's degree	74,900	13.0%	105,908	15.8%	1,035	8.4	1,237	8.8%	615	9.9	809	10.4%
Graduate degree	29,065	5.0%	42,592	6.3%	389	3.2	561	4.0%	233	3.8	334	4.3%

1990 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary Tape File 3C.

2000 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Censes, 2000, Summary File 3 (SF3) Sample Data

Percentage totals may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Percentages describe each category as it relates to the total number of person over 18 years of age.

Table 28: Nativity of Lincoln County and Sanders County 1990 & 2000

Characteristic	Lincoln County				Sanders County			
	1990	1990%	2000	2000%	1990	1990%	2000	2000%
Born In Montana	8496	48.6%	8,098	43.0%	3935	45.39%	3,914	38.3%
Born in another state	8659	49.5%	10,401	55.2%	4543	52.41%	6,047	59.1%
Born Outside US	80	0.5%	72	0.4%	72	0.83%	63	0.6%
Foreign Born	246	1.4%	266	1.4%	119	1.37%	203	2.0%
Total Persons	17,481	100.0%	18,837	100.0%	8,669	100.00%	10,227	100.0%

1990 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary Tape File 3C.

2000 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Censes, 2000, Summary File 3 (SF3) Sample Data

Born Outside U.S. includes: Puerto Rico, U.S. Outlying Areas, and Abroad or at Sea of American Parents.

**Table 29: Marital Status of Montana, Lincoln County & Sanders County Residents
Over 15 Years of Age, 1990 & 2000**

Characteristic	Montana				Lincoln County				Sanders County			
	1990	1990%	2000	2000%	1990	1990%	2000	2000%	1990	1990%	2000	2000%
Total Persons > 15 years of Age	611,539	100%	715,915	100%	13,110	100%	15,092	100%	6,611	100%	8,331	100%
Never Married	134,010	21.9%	171,715	24.0%	2,265	17.30%	2,614	17.3%	1,170	17.70%	1,432	17.2%
Now Married	358,831	58.7%	391,531	54.7%	8,604	65.60%	9,059	60.0%	4,293	64.90%	4,967	59.6%
Separated	18,939	3.1%	27,860	3.9%	218	1.70%	477	3.2%	85	1.30%	265	3.2%
Widowed	44,156	7.2%	46,730	6.5%	1,117	8.50%	1,184	7.8%	534	8.10%	691	8.3%
Divorced	55,603	9.1%	78,079	10.9%	846	6.50%	1,758	11.6%	529	8.00%	976	11.7%

1990 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary Tape File 3C.

2000 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Censes, 2000, Summary File 3 (SF3) Sample Data

Percentages may not add to 100.0 due to rounding.

Percentages describe each category as it relates to the total number of persons over 15 years of age.

Table 30: Household Characteristics of U.S., Montana, Lincoln County & Sanders County, 1990 & 2000

Characteristic	U.S. Total		Montana				Lincoln County				Sanders County			
	1990	2000	1990	1990%	2000	2000%	1990	1990%	2000	2000%	1990	1990%	2000	2000%
Total Households	91,947,410	105,480,101	306,163	100%	358,667	100%	6,668	100%	7,764	100%	3,397	100%	4,273	100%
Family Households	64,517,947	71,787,347	211,666	69.1%	237,407	66.2%	4,905	73.6%	5,335	68.7%	2,377	70.0%	2,897	67.8%
Married Couple Families	50,708,322	54,493,232	176,526	57.7%	192,067	53.6%	4,202	63.0%	4,434	57.1%	2,098	61.8%	2,450	57.3%
Other Family, Male Householder	3,143,582	4,394,012	8,743	2.9%	13,324	3.7%	223	3.3%	298	3.8%	91	2.7%	145	3.4%
Other Fam. Female Householder	10,666,043	12,900,103	26,397	8.6%	32,016	8.9%	480	7.2%	603	7.8%	188	5.5%	302	7.1%
Non-Family Households	27,429,463	6,462,679	94,497	30.9%	22,838	6.4%	1,763	26.4%	357	4.6%	1020	30.0%	181	4.2%
Householder living alone	22,580,420	27,230,075	80,491	26.3%	98,422	27.4%	1,554	23.3%	2,072	26.7%	921	27.1%	1,195	28.0%
Householder age>65	8,824,845	22,140,754	32,208	10.5%	78,758	22.0%	607	9.1%	1,886	24.3%	450	13.2%	1,137	26.6%
Total Housing Units	102,263,678	115,904,641	361,155	100%	412,633	100%	8,002	100%	9,319	100%	4,335	100%	5,271	100%
Occupied Housing Units	91,947,410	105,480,101	306,163	84.8%	358,667	86.9%	6,668	83.3%	7,764	83.3%	3,397	78.4%	4,273	81.1%
Total Persons Living in Households	242,012,129	273,643,273	775,273	na	877,433	na	17,353	na	18,646	na	8,594	na	10,033	na
Average Persons Per Household	2.63	2.59	2.53	na	2.45	na	2.6	na	2.4	na	2.53	na	2.35	na
Median Value of Owner-Occupied Homes	\$79,100	\$111,800	\$56,100	na	95,800	na	\$48,900	na	79,000	na	\$42,000	na	89,800	na

1990 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990, Summary Tape File 1A & 3A

2000 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Censes, 2000, Summary File 1 (SF1) 100 Percent Data & Summary File 3 (SF3) Sample Data

Percentages describe each category as it relates to the total number of households, with the exception of owner-occupied housing units, which is a proportion of total housing units.

Household statistics include sub-sets of previously included numbers.

**Table 31: Occupation of Employed Civilian Persons 16 Years and Older for
Lincoln County & Sanders County 1990 & 2000**

Occupation Categories	Lincoln County				Sanders County			
	1990	%	2000	%	1990	%	2000	%
Management, professional, and related occupations	1,676	25.8%	1,844	27.1%	923	30.2%	1,190	30.1%
Service occupations	1,105	17.0%	1,241	18.2%	489	16.0%	623	15.8%
Sales and office occupations	1,419	21.8%	1,520	22.3%	564	18.4%	666	16.9%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	140	2.2%	300	4.4%	141	4.6%	208	5.3%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	698	10.7%	725	10.6%	272	8.9%	574	14.5%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	1,462	22.5%	1,184	17.4%	672	22.0%	691	17.5%
Total	6,500	100.0%	6,814	100.0%	3,061	100.0%	3,952	100.0%

1990 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary Tape File 3A.

Occupation Categories between 1990 and 2000 were changed

1990 Occupation Categories were normalized using the Occupation Table Crosswalk provided by the U.S. Census Bureau

2000 Source: U. S. Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data

**Table 32: Labor and Income Characteristics for
Montana, Lincoln County & Sanders County 1990 & 2000**

Characteristic	State Total		Lincoln County		Sanders County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Persons 16 years and older	599,765	701,168	12,890	14,798	6,469	8,178
Persons in labor force	381,860	458,306	7,756	7,916	3,382	4,383
Civilian labor force	376,940	454,687	7,749	7,907	3,382	4,379
Employed Persons	350,723	425,977	6,500	6,814	3,061	3,952
Unemployed Persons	26,217	28,710	1,249	1,093	321	427
Percent Unemployed	6.9%	6.3%	16.1%	13.8%	9.5%	9.7%
Armed Forces	4,920	3,619	7	9	0	4
Persons not in labor force	217,905	242,862	5,134	6,882	3,087	3,795
Percent of Males (16 or over) in labor force (as % of total male labor force)	71.9%	71.0%	70.8%	57.6%	61.0%	59.9%
Percent of Females (16 or over) in labor force (as % of total female labor force)	55.8%	59.9%	49.8%	49.4%	43.5%	47.2%
Percent of Males Unemployed (as % of total male labor force)	7.7%	7.1%	17.7%	16.9%	9.4%	10.3%
Percent of Females Unemployed (as % of total female labor force)	6.1%	5.2%	13.9%	10.2%	9.6%	9.1%
Median Household Income *	\$22,988	\$33,024	\$20,898	\$26,754	\$18,616	\$26,852
Median Family Income *	\$28,044	\$40,487	\$25,084	\$31,784	\$21,320	\$31,340
Median Nonfamily Household Income *	\$12,502	\$19,484	\$10,920	\$14,315	\$10,863	\$14,564
Per capita income *	\$11,213	\$17,151	\$9,813	\$13,923	\$9,459	\$14,593
Persons below poverty level *	124,853	128,355	2,450	3,558	1,680	1,737
Percent of persons below poverty level	16.1%	14.6%	14.1%	19.2%	19.6%	17.2%

1990 Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Summary Tape File 3C.
Note: 1990 numbers are from 1989 and 2000 numbers are from 1999

**Table 33: Average Annual Labor Force for
Lincoln County, Sanders County & Montana 1971 - 2002**

Year	Lincoln Co.		Sanders Co.		Montana	
	Civilian Labor Force	Unemployment Rate	Civilian Labor Force	Unemployment Rate	Civilian Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
1970	7,275	8.9%	2,686	6.0%	273,021	4.3%
1971	7,176	9.1%	2,993	5.5%	278,513	4.8%
1972	7,282	9.0%	3,126	5.2%	291,152	4.8%
1973	6,872	9.2%	3,215	5.0%	303,186	4.8%
1974	6,552	12.1%	3,372	6.6%	318,602	5.2%
1975	6,315	14.3%	3,644	8.7%	322,575	6.4%
1976	6,505	13.1%	3,934	7.4%	335,000	6.1%
1977	6,788	12.8%	4,071	8.5%	348,000	6.4%
1978	7,291	12.4%	3,939	8.5%	368,000	6.2%
1979	7,202	10.3%	3,887	7.9%	371,000	5.1%
1980	6,992	15.3%	3,972	9.6%	370,000	6.1%
1981	7,558	15.0%	4,005	11.6%	385,000	6.9%
1982	7,788	19.4%	4,062	16.0%	394,000	8.6%
1983	8,497	13.4%	4,262	12.6%	395,000	8.8%
1984	8,847	12.8%	3,875	12.4%	404,000	7.4%
1985	8,691	11.6%	3,280	16.5%	405,000	7.7%
1986	8,816	11.4%	3,265	15.5%	407,000	8.1%
1987	8,712	10.9%	3,282	12.8%	403,000	7.4%
1988	8,879	11.7%	3,231	12.8%	402,000	6.8%
1989	8,431	10.2%	3,129	12.4%	405,000	5.9%
1990	8,272	11.2%	3,734	10.2%	401,087	6.0%
1991	8,273	14.9%	3,666	14.0%	406,533	7.1%
1992	8,050	13.0%	3,782	12.1%	421,525	6.9%
1993	8,296	14.0%	3,817	11.9%	426,482	6.1%
1994	8,065	13.6%	3,855	10.7%	439,502	5.1%
1995	7,398	14.9%	4,097	14.2%	437,098	5.9%
1996	7,136	11.7%	4,057	12.5%	445,910	5.3%

Year	Lincoln Co.		Sanders Co.		Montana	
	Civilian Labor Force	Unemployment Rate	Civilian Labor Force	Unemployment Rate	Civilian Labor Force	Unemployment Rate
1997	7,244	12.1%	4,079	10.7%	454,614	5.4%
1998	7,457	10.5%	4,089	10.5%	466,450	5.6%
1999	7,110	12.4%	4,324	9.2%	474,006	5.2%
2000	6,974	11.8%	4,293	8.2%	476,508	5.0%
2001	6,740	11.3%	4,323	8.2%	463,479	4.6%
2002	6,776	11.5%	4,315	8.4%	463,859	4.6%

Source: Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Research & Analysis Bureau, Local Area Unemployment Statistics

**Table 34: Percentage Annual Average Employment by Industry
in Montana, Lincoln County, and Sanders County 1988-2000**

Industry	Montana													
	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Agr/ Forestry/ Fishing	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
Mining	2.3%	2.2%	2.1%	2.0%	1.9%	1.8%	1.7%	1.6%	1.5%	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%	1.3%	1.4%
Construction	3.3%	3.5%	3.5%	3.9%	4.2%	4.3%	4.6%	4.7%	4.9%	5.0%	5.2%	5.3%	5.2%	5.4%
Manufacturing	7.9%	7.9%	7.6%	7.4%	7.3%	7.3%	7.0%	6.9%	6.8%	6.8%	6.6%	6.6%	6.5%	6.2%
Transportatn/Comm/Utilities	6.0%	5.9%	5.7%	5.8%	5.5%	5.4%	5.3%	5.2%	5.0%	5.1%	5.1%	5.1%	5.0%	4.9%
Wholesale Trade	5.5%	5.6%	5.4%	5.5%	5.4%	5.4%	5.4%	5.3%	5.2%	5.2%	5.2%	5.0%	4.8%	4.7%
Retail Trade	22.0%	22.1%	21.3%	22.3%	22.4%	22.5%	22.8%	22.9%	22.9%	22.7%	22.3%	22.1%	22.1%	22.0%
Finance, Ins., Real Estate	4.8%	4.6%	4.5%	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%	4.6%	4.7%	4.6%	4.6%
Service	23.9%	24.6%	24.2%	25.2%	25.7%	26.5%	26.7%	27.5%	28.0%	28.3%	28.9%	29.5%	29.8%	29.3%
Government	23.0%	22.5%	24.5%	21.9%	21.8%	21.1%	20.7%	20.2%	19.8%	19.6%	19.3%	19.0%	19.2%	20.1%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Industry	Lincoln County													
	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997		1999	2000	2001
Agr/ Forestry/ Fishing	1.4%	1.9%	2.2%	2.2%	1.0%	1.0%	1.2%	1.4%	1.7%	1.5%	1.6%	1.4%	1.1%	1.0%
Mining	8.8%	8.5%	8.0%	7.4%	6.6%	2.9%	0.7%	0.7%	0.5%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%
Construction	4.3%	2.2%	3.0%	3.2%	2.1%	2.3%	2.6%	3.0%	3.4%	3.2%	3.5%	3.4%	3.4%	3.9%
Manufacturing	25.8%	28.0%	26.0%	23.9%	24.5%	25.3%	26.8%	19.9%	19.3%	19.8%	19.2%	19.4%	18.6%	17.5%
Transportatn/Comm/Utilities	4.2%	3.7%	3.4%	2.9%	2.9%	3.1%	3.3%	3.1%	3.0%	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	3.3%
Wholesale Trade	1.0%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.1%	1.1%	1.3%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.2%	1.0%
Retail Trade	15.9%	16.7%	16.5%	17.8%	18.5%	18.2%	18.3%	20.4%	20.8%	19.8%	19.2%	19.3%	19.6%	19.1%
Finance, Ins., Real Estate	2.2%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%	2.4%	2.4%	2.8%	2.8%	2.8%	3.5%	3.9%	3.8%	3.9%
Service	12.2%	11.7%	13.6%	14.1%	14.7%	16.3%	16.9%	18.8%	19.7%	20.2%	21.1%	21.4%	22.0%	22.6%
Government	24.2%	23.7%	23.6%	24.9%	26.2%	27.3%	26.8%	28.5%	27.6%	28.2%	27.4%	26.7%	27.1%	27.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

	Sanders County													
Industry	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	
Agr/ Forestry/ Fishing	4.9%	5.2%	5.0%	5.2%	5.3%	5.5%	5.4%	4.8%	4.4%	3.8%	4.2%	3.8%	3.8%	3.5%
Mining	1.6%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	1.3%	1.7%
Construction	1.7%	2.3%	2.6%	2.6%	2.0%	2.5%	3.1%	3.6%	4.3%	4.4%	3.4%	3.8%	3.7%	3.5%
Manufacturing	23.3%	21.7%	21.0%	19.8%	20.6%	20.3%	15.1%	18.9%	15.4%	14.5%	14.8%	14.1%	13.9%	12.6%
Transportatn/Comm/Utilities	5.0%	6.0%	5.5%	5.3%	5.4%	5.3%	6.5%	5.7%	5.3%	4.8%	5.2%	5.4%	5.3%	5.5%
Wholesale Trade	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.4%	1.4%	1.6%	1.5%	1.9%	1.8%	2.0%	2.2%	2.6%	2.2%
Retail Trade	13.8%	14.5%	15.3%	16.6%	15.6%	14.9%	15.2%	15.7%	15.1%	16.2%	16.1%	15.6%	15.6%	15.9%
Finance, Ins., Real Estate	2.5%	2.5%	2.3%	2.6%	2.6%	2.7%	2.9%	2.8%	2.9%	3.1%	3.4%	3.5%	3.6%	3.6%
Service	17.1%	18.1%	17.4%	16.5%	17.6%	18.5%	19.5%	18.9%	21.8%	23.1%	23.4%	25.5%	25.0%	26.5%
Government	28.7%	27.5%	28.5%	29.0%	28.6%	27.9%	29.7%	27.1%	27.9%	26.9%	26.2%	24.8%	25.0%	24.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Montana Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Bureau, Annual Average Employment and Wages 1986-2001 (Covered employment data, ES-202). Note: 0% indicates either no employment or disclosure suppression. Also, there is considerable timber-related employment in jobs categorized as "manufacturing." Consequently, overall timber-related employment is more than that indicated only by the Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing category in this table.

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

**Table 35: Annual Average Employment by Industry
in Montana, Lincoln County, and Sanders County 1988-2001**

Industry	Montana													
	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Agriculture/ Forestry/ Fishing	3,095	3,117	3,482	3,568	3,572	3,822	3,996	4,115	4,306	4,397	4,716	4,745	4,853	5,026
Mining	6,265	6,220	6,280	5,901	5,740	5,508	5,451	5,283	5,419	5,364	5,161	5,078	4,976	5,542
Construction	9,011	9,726	10,367	11,519	12,675	13,428	14,984	16,106	17,151	17,799	18,858	19,498	19,698	20,653
Manufacturing	21,425	22,162	22,232	21,835	22,416	23,046	23,004	23,391	23,871	24,112	24,197	24,463	24,709	23,826
Transportatn/Comm/Utilities	16,360	16,370	16,627	16,924	16,694	16,881	17,502	17,587	17,531	17,909	18,615	18,926	19,038	18,942
Wholesale Trade	14,835	15,643	15,731	16,112	16,425	16,967	17,574	17,947	18,056	18,262	18,773	18,672	18,359	17,944
Retail Trade	59,534	61,755	62,636	65,443	68,457	70,515	74,879	77,718	79,928	80,288	81,344	82,100	83,621	84,292
Finance, Ins., Real Estate	13,143	12,768	13,085	13,577	14,021	14,506	15,170	15,292	15,862	16,107	16,838	17,286	17,607	17,613
Service	64,845	68,803	71,085	73,963	78,496	83,126	87,755	93,231	98,046	100,426	105,182	109,405	113,048	112,560
Government	62,220	62,975	71,981	64,294	66,611	66,138	67,905	68,495	69,418	69,607	70,477	70,646	72,600	77,212
Total	271,013	279,778	293,506	293,190	305,148	313,997	328,258	339,247	349,730	354,444	364,401	371,193	379,046	383,996
Industry	Lincoln County													
	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Agr/ Forestry/ Fishing	76	104	122	119	55	53	65	71	90	75	86	75	54	51
Mining	462	457	443	399	360	156	41	37	25	17	15	11	-	15
Construction	224	119	166	174	116	123	144	156	176	165	182	177	176	196
Manufacturing	1,353	1,511	1,447	1,295	1,334	1,358	1,496	1,021	1,003	1,021	1,010	1,010	954	889
Transportatn/Comm/Utilities	218	201	191	160	156	164	183	160	155	152	154	150	146	166
Wholesale Trade	51	64	68	67	64	58	60	65	58	62	65	65	61	49

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Retail Trade	833	904	918	964	1,008	976	1,023	1,045	1,077	1,023	1,011	1,003	1,005	971
Finance, Ins., Real Estate	115	124	128	127	128	129	132	144	145	146	183	204	194	199
Service	638	634	758	765	800	873	943	967	1,024	1,042	1,113	1,110	1,125	1,145
Government	1,269	1,280	1,309	1,350	1,427	1,466	1,499	1,460	1,432	1,457	1,446	1,386	1,388	1,391
Total	5,243	5,403	5,557	5,425	5,452	5,361	5,590	5,130	5,189	5,165	5,269	5,197	5,117	5,077

Sanders County														
Industry	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Agr/ Forestry/ Fishing	100	113	107	106	115	124	122	117	107	97	107	103	103	96
Mining	33	18	17	17	0	0	-	-	-	-	-	34	36	46
Construction	34	49	56	54	44	57	71	88	106	112	87	104	100	98
Manufacturing	480	468	448	407	448	454	340	458	376	369	378	383	379	350
Transportatn/Comm/Utilities	103	129	118	109	117	119	146	139	130	122	133	147	144	154
Wholesale Trade	25	26	28	27	31	31	37	36	46	47	52	60	72	61
Retail Trade	284	312	325	340	338	334	343	380	368	413	412	425	427	441
Finance, Ins., Real Estate	52	54	50	53	57	61	66	68	71	79	86	94	98	101
Service	352	391	370	339	382	414	440	457	534	586	599	693	684	736
Government	591	594	606	595	621	624	670	658	682	683	669	674	684	694
Total	2,058	2,157	2,129	2,051	2,172	2,237	2,257	2,424	2,445	2,542	2,557	2,721	2,732	2,782

Source: Montana Department of Labor, Research & Analysis Bureau, Annual Average Employment and Wages 1986-2001 (Covered employment data, ES-202). Note: "-" indicates either no employment or disclosure suppression. Also, there is considerable timber-related employment in jobs categorized as "manufacturing." Consequently, overall timber-related employment is more than that indicated only by the Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing category in this table.

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

Table 36: Detail of Forestry Employment and Wages 1988 – 2001

Lincoln County															
Characteristic		1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Establishments	a	10	13	15	15	13	15	19	16	14	15	12	11	11	11
	b	50.00%	54.17%	57.69%	62.50%	61.90%	62.50%	67.86%	64.00%	60.87%	60.00%	54.55%	50.00%	52.38%	50.00%
	c	1.83	2.34%	2.63%	2.61%	2.32%	2.67%	3.17%	2.62%	2.25%	2.32%	1.80%	1.64%	1.65%	1.58%
Average Annual Employment	a	29	45	61	55	38	32	44	38	49	36	38	29	19	21
	b	38.16%	43.27%	50.00%	46.22%	69.09%	60.38%	67.69%	53.52%	54.44%	48.00%	44.19%	38.67%	35.19%	41.18%
	c	0.55%	0.83%	1.10%	1.01%	0.70%	0.60%	0.79%	0.74%	0.94%	0.70%	0.72%	0.56%	0.37%	0.41%
Annual Wages Paid	a	400,591	541,410	774,216	803,727	641,478	550,743	908,646	983,465	1,202,774	942,361	1,034,304	724,228	368,810	319,685
	b	39.97%	38.20%	43.00%	41.72%	78.35%	66.92%	77.16%	70.04%	70.49%	70.98%	67.87%	61.01%	49.05%	45.98%
	c	0.43%	0.54%	0.73%	0.76%	0.58%	0.50%	0.78%	0.99%	1.16%	0.88%	0.94%	0.66%	0.32%	0.28%
Average Annual Wage Per Worker	a	13,813	12,031	12,692	14,613	16,881	17,210	20,651	25,880	24,546	26,176	27,218	24,973	19,411	15,223
	b	104.76%	88.28%	86.00%	90.26%	113.40%	110.82%	113.99%	130.87%	129.47%	147.86%	153.61%	157.80%	139.41%	111.67%
	c	78.45%	64.78%	66.09%	75.08%	83.69%	83.37%	98.78%	133.70%	122.68%	126.66%	130.14%	117.75%	86.24%	67.34%
Sanders County															
Characteristic		1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Establishments	a	4	-	-	3	-	-	3	3	3	3	3	0	-	-
	b	36.36%	-	-	33.33%	-	-	25.00%	25.00%	33.33%	37.50%	37.50%	0%	-	-
	c	1.56%	-	-	1.09%	-	-	0.95%	0.90%	0.85%	0.77%	0.76%	0%	-	-
Average Annual Employment	a	9	-	-	11	-	-	10	11	10	4	3	0	-	-
	b	9.00%	-	-	10.38%	-	-	8.20%	9.40%	9.35%	4.12%	2.80%	0%	-	-
	c	0.44%	-	-	0.54%	-	-	0.44%	0.45%	0.41%	0.16%	0.12%	0%	-	-
Annual Wages Paid	a	94,366	-	-	147,206	-	-	132,694	132,279	94,258	69,119	66,390	0	-	-
	b	9.62%	-	-	10.46%	-	-	7.28%	7.52%	5.71%	4.15%	2.71%	0%	-	-
	c	0.31%	-	-	0.46%	-	-	0.35%	0.31%	0.22%	0.15%	0.14%	0%	-	-
Average Annual Wage Per Worker	a	10,485	-	-	13,382	-	-	13,269	12,025	9,425	17,279	22,130	0	-	-
	b	106.85%	-	-	100.78%	-	-	88.84%	79.97%	61.07%	100.62%	96.62%	0%	-	-
	c	71.85%	-	-	86.08%	-	-	78.18%	69.26%	53.86%	97.02%	116.97%	0%	-	-

Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, ES-202 Program Data.

Employment and Wages covered by Montana Unemployment Insurance Laws

a= actual number; b = percent of industry sector (Agriculture/ Forestry/ Fishing) accounted for by forestry subsector; c= percent of total county industry accounted for by individual industry (forestry) subsector

"-" indicates disclosure suppression.

Note that this table addresses Forestry-related employment and not all of the timber-related jobs.

Table 37: Detail of Lumber & Wood Products Manufacturing Employment & Wages 1988 - 2001

Lincoln County														
Characteristic	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Establishments	a	75	79	78	74	67	64	63	66	69	71	67	70	73
	b	84.27%	86.81%	86.67%	84.09%	80.72%	81.01%	76.83%	76.74%	79.31%	78.89%	76.14%	76.09%	78.49%
	c	13.71%	14.21%	13.66%	12.89%	11.96%	11.41%	10.50%	10.82%	11.11%	10.99%	10.06%	10.45%	10.93%
Average Annual Employment	a	1291	1449	1383	1218	1229	1257	1385	906	895	903	893	919	889
	b	95.42%	95.90%	95.58%	94.05%	92.13%	92.56%	92.58%	88.74%	89.23%	88.44%	88.42%	90.99%	93.19%
	c	24.62%	26.82%	24.89%	22.45%	22.54%	23.42%	24.78%	17.66%	17.25%	17.48%	16.95%	17.68%	17.37%
Annual Wages Paid	a	28,853,003	36,310,601	36,226,117	31,338,145	34,614,743	38,026,025	41,224,929	24,906,842	25,861,933	27,009,207	26,381,558	27,985,037	27,497,352
	b	97.57%	97.98%	97.76%	96.38%	95.84%	96.34%	96.08%	92.67%	93.89%	93.39%	93.13%	94.45%	95.90%
	c	31.25%	36.18%	33.94%	29.68%	31.48%	34.31%	35.27%	25.08%	24.91%	25.30%	23.94%	25.39%	23.87%
Average Annual Wage Per Worker	a	22,349	25,059	26,193	25,729	28,164	30,251	29,765	27,490	28,896	29,910	29,542	30,452	30,931
	b	102.25%	102.17%	102.28%	102.48%	104.03%	104.08%	103.78%	104.43%	105.22%	105.59%	105.33%	103.81%	102.91%
	c	126.93%	134.92%	136.39%	132.20%	139.63%	146.54%	142.37%	142.02%	144.42%	144.72%	141.25%	143.58%	137.43%
Sanders County														
Characteristic	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Establishments	a	35	32	31	32	30	30	30	32	29	35	40	39	39
	b	87.50%	84.21%	79.49%	78.05%	76.92%	76.92%	75.00%	72.73%	70.73%	72.92%	75.47%	69.64%	67.24%
	c	13.62%	12.40%	11.70%	11.64%	10.53%	12.20%	9.46%	9.55%	8.17%	9.02%	10.10%	9.56%	9.54%
Average Annual Employment	a	465	448	426	375	414	410	284	394	312	293	302	305	276
	b	96.88%	95.73%	95.09%	92.14%	92.41%	90.31%	83.53%	86.03%	82.98%	79.40%	79.89%	79.63%	72.82%
	c	22.59%	20.77%	20.01%	18.28%	19.06%	18.33%	12.58%	16.25%	12.76%	11.53%	11.81%	11.21%	10.10%
Annual Wages Paid	a	8,274,565	8,352,697	8,580,805	7,656,008	8,664,396	8,806,948	5,474,656	8,587,780	6,319,253	5,817,476	6,182,212	6,746,747	6,370,733
	b	97.74%	97.37%	96.82%	95.76%	95.63%	94.09%	87.87%	90.72%	85.97%	82.14%	82.02%	81.87%	76.00%
	c	27.55%	26.75%	26.65%	24.01%	24.56%	23.59%	14.29%	20.41%	14.77%	12.85%	12.78%	12.88%	11.70%
Average Annual Wage Per Worker	a	17,871	18,644	20,142	20,416	20,928	21,480	19,276	21,796	20,254	19,854	20,470	22,120	23,082
	b	101.32%	101.72%	101.81%	103.93%	103.49%	104.19%	105.19%	105.46%	103.61%	103.44%	102.65%	102.81%	104.36%
	c	122.46%	128.81%	133.17%	131.33%	128.84%	128.72%	113.57%	125.54%	115.74%	111.48%	108.19%	114.89%	115.79%

Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, ES-202 Program Data.

Employment and Wages covered by Montana Unemployment Insurance Laws

a= actual number; b = percent of industry sector (Manufacturing) accounted for by subsector (lumber product manufacturing); c= percent of total county industry accounted for by individual industry subsector

Table 38: Detail of Mining Employment & Wages 1988 - 2001

		Lincoln County													
Characteristic		1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Establishments	a	3	4	4	4	5	6	5	5	4	3	3	4	-	3
	b	0.55%	0.72%	0.70%	0.70%	0.89%	1.07%	0.83%	0.82%	0.64%	0.46%	0.45%	0.60%	-	0.43%
Average Annual Employment	a	462	457	443	399	360	156	41	37	25	17	15	11	-	15
	b	8.81%	8.46%	7.97%	7.35%	6.60%	2.91%	0.73%	0.72%	0.48%	0.33%	0.28%	0.21%	-	0.30%
Annual Wages Paid	a	11,744,701	12,489,385	13,384,505	11,887,386	11,578,482	6,458,324	2,378,093	1,389,971	1,058,521	724,829	688,444	671,545	-	218,752
	b	12.72%	12.45%	12.54%	11.26%	10.53%	5.83%	2.03%	1.40%	1.02%	0.68%	0.62%	0.61%	-	0.19%
Average Annual Wage Per Worker	a	25,421	27,329	30,213	29,793	32,162	41,400	58,002	37,567	42,341	42,637	45,896	61,049	-	14,583
	b	144.37%	147.14%	157.32%	153.08%	159.45%	200.54%	277.43%	194.07%	211.62%	206.30%	219.44%	287.84%	-	64.51%
		Sanders County													
Characteristic		1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Establishments	a	3	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	5
	b	1.17%	1.16%	1.13%	1.09%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.74%	0.98%	1.17%
Average Annual Employment	a	33	18	17	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	34	36	46
	b	1.60%	0.83%	0.80%	0.83%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.25%	1.32%	1.65%
Annual Wages Paid	a	669,287	213,279	283,886	210,632	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	721,910	786,669	975,916
	b	2.23%	0.68%	0.88%	0.66%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.38%	1.44%	1.75%
Average Annual Wage Per Worker	a	20,281	11,849	16,699	12,390	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	21,232	21,851	21,215
	b	138.98%	81.86%	110.41%	79.70%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	110.28%	109.61%	105.79%

Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, ES-202 Program Data.
Employment and Wages covered by Montana Unemployment Insurance Laws
a= actual number; b = percent of total county industry accounted for by individual industry sector

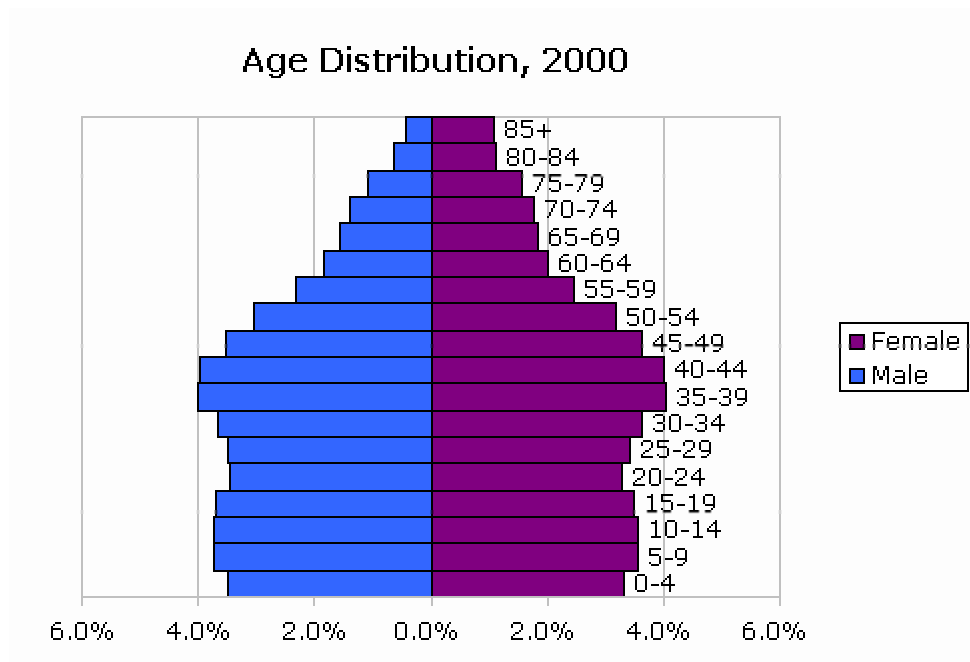


Figure 5: United States Age Distribution 2000

Source: Social Science Data Analysis Network (SSDAN) <http://www.censusscope.org/index.html>

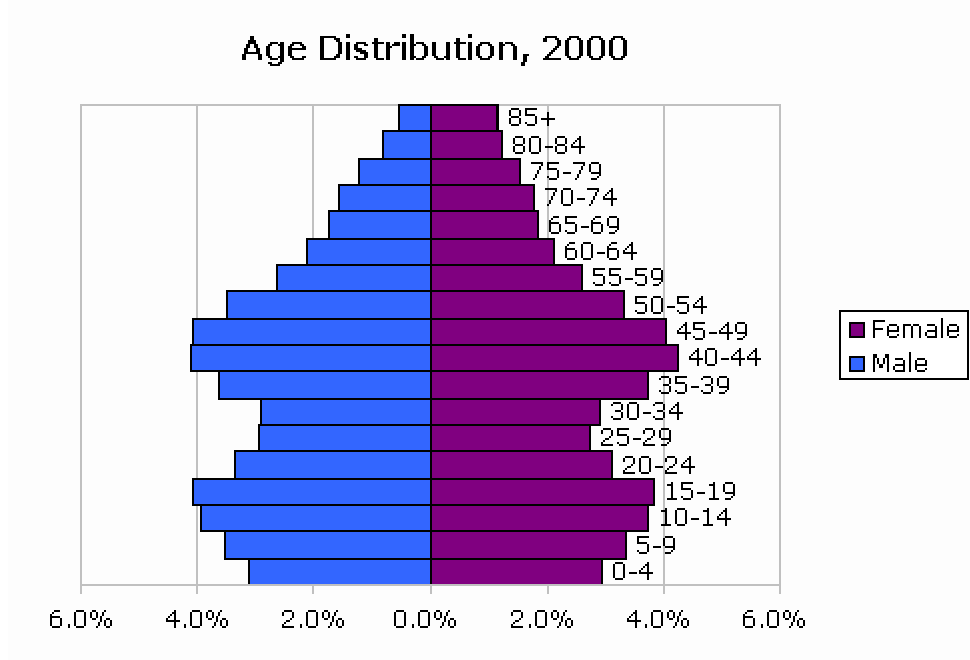


Figure 6: Montana Age Distribution 2000

Source: Social Science Data Analysis Network (SSDAN) <http://www.censusscope.org/index.html>

Age Distribution, 2000

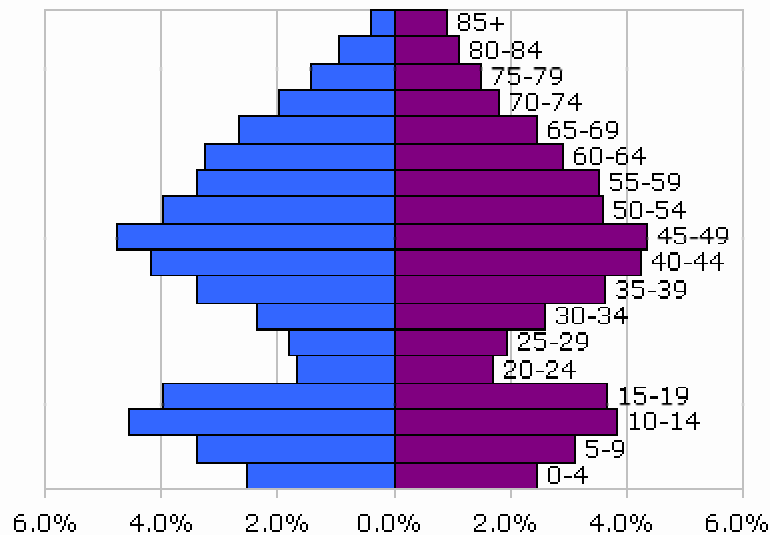


Figure 7: Lincoln County Age Distribution 2000

Source: Social Science Data Analysis Network (SSDAN) <http://www.censusscope.org/index.html>

Age Distribution, 2000

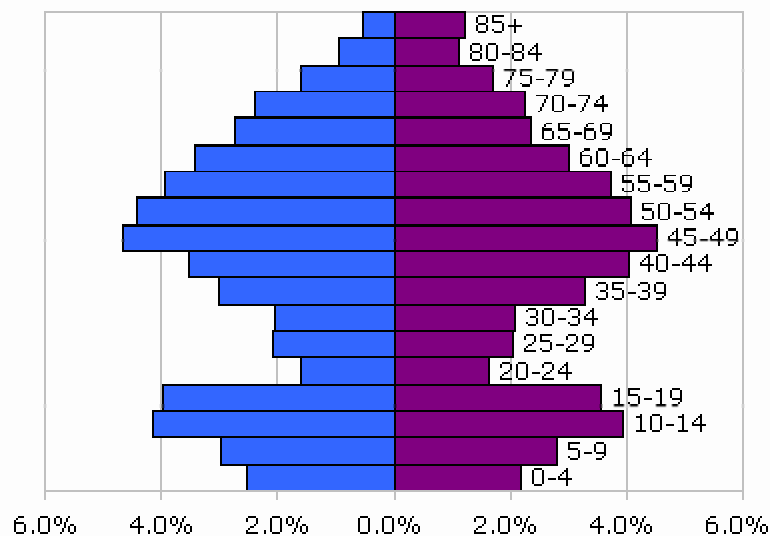


Figure 8: Sanders County Age Distribution 2000

Source: Social Science Data Analysis Network (SSDAN) <http://www.censusscope.org/index.html>

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