

Jackson Hole, Wyoming:

A Summer Tradition Continues

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Jackson Hole, Wyoming

The grass is gently swaying in the rain-fresh air. The clouds, blending from pale yellow to gold, pink, lavender and, finally blue-grey, are drifting along the horizon. As the clouds continue their journey, the setting sun lightens the blue sky behind the silhouettes of the snow-capped purple peaks. The Tetons are all they say about them, but you may not appreciate them until you can stand on the valley floor a little over 6,000 feet in elevation and gaze up to the top of the Grand Teton. The grandeur overtakes you when you realize you're looking at 7,500 feet of vertical rock, with no intervening foothills to distract you. The view is peaceful but the valley's recent history is steeped with controversy.

Before 1800, Jackson Hole belonged to the Indians. Up to 1,800 Indians held undisputed sway over the country dominated by the towering granite sentinels. Jackson Hole was truly a happy hunting ground. Severe winter precluded permanent habitation, but during the summer bands of Indians came across the passes into the basins on hunting expeditions.

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In 1807, John Colter was probably the first white man to pass through the valley. Within a few years, many hunting and trapping parties of white men began to work through the region. It is believed that a group of French-Canadian trappers gave the mountains their name in 1819. As they saw these conspicuous peaks on the skyline from the west, they called them "Les Trois Tetons" (The Three Breasts). Today these peaks are called Grand, Middle, and South Teton.

The decades that followed are frequently referred to as the "Fur Trade Era" because the Teton region became the scene of intensive exploration and trapping activities by both British and American interests. You have heard many references to the "mountain men" of the Rockies. They were hardy characters who, over a period of about two decades, in one way or another, contributed to the opening of the western frontier, including Jackson Hole. Among them were Jedediah Smith, Jim Bridger, and David Jackson. In 1829, William Sublette named the valley "Jackson's Hole" because it was Jackson's favorite hunting "hole" or valley.

By 1845 the romantic trapper of the "Fur Trade Era" vanished from the Rockies. During the next few decades the valleys near the Tetons were largely deserted, but the frontier was relentlessly closing in and one Government expedition after another passed through the Teton country





A Wyoming moose enjoys a meal from the fringe of a mountain pond. Moose are common throughout western Wyoming and can often be seen in mountain meadows during the hours after sunrise and before sunset. (all photos from Wyoming Travel Commission)

or near it.

One controversy of the Hole had its roots in the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in 1872. It was hinted from that time that Jackson Hole and the Tetons would be a part of Yellowstone or a separate park. In 1891 a forest preserve was established which included part of the Teton range. In 1919 an ill-fated bill was introduced into Congress to extend the boundaries of Yellowstone south into Jackson Hole. The battle was on. The residents of the Hole were strong, independent people. They did not want the Hole settled, they distrusted government officials, and they hated Eastern money.

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., visited Jackson Hole in 1926 and was disgusted with the commercial development along the Forest Service road north of the town of Jackson. He began to buy up land secretly, which was his usual business practice. Although most residents of the valley were against the establishment of a national preserve, some desired it and worked for the preserve. In February 1929, Congress established Grand Teton National Park but the Rockefeller lands were not included in the Park. The controversy heated up. There was even a 1939 House of Representatives bill to abolish the park. President Franklin Roosevelt established the Rockefeller land as a national monument in March 1943. It seemed as if the battle was over, but then "all hell broke loose." The battle spilled into the national media. One example is an October 1943 article in *The Living Wilderness* which carried the title "Jackson

Hole National Monument Borrows Its Grandeur From Surrounding Mountains—Created Without Knowledge of the People, It Includes a Reclamation Reservoir Posing as a Lake." The fight continued until 1950 when President Truman signed a bill expanding the Grand Teton National Park with the inclusion of the Rockefeller land.

Today Jackson Hole calls itself "the last of the old West and the best of the new West". The resident population is about 5,000. The scenery is still magnificent. But, controversy remains. Today the battles concern elk management in the park and the effect of air traffic from the Jackson Airport on the adjacent Grant Teton National Park.

People concerned about the elk on the National Elk Refuge argue not only on whether to feed native hay or alfalfa pellets, but when to start feeding and how much to feed. Hunting of the elk herd is also a matter of controversy. Some people don't want hunting in Grand Teton National Park or on the Elk Refuge. The problem is compounded by overlapping political jurisdictions. Elk habitat is managed by the owner of land, i.e.: National Park Service, Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, private land owners, and Wyoming Game and Fish. Elk outside Grand Teton National Park are managed as a state resource by the Game and Fish. Elk management is a cooperative venture with the federal officials and the Wyoming Game and Fish on federal lands.

Another controversy is with the airport in Jackson Hole, which is within the Park. Airport activity increases annually. A comprehensive landing noise compatibility study is continuing. The access plan discourages large, noisy transport plants and encourages the use of less noisy aircraft of all sizes.

The Summer Tradition

Summer Board meetings of the Society for Range Management were held twice in Salt Lake City and 5 times in Denver from 1950 to 1956. "At the general business meeting of the Society, expression was given to the possibility of holding annual meetings at other seasons of the year;..." (*Journal of Range Management*, *JRM*, 9:152, 1956 Society Business). This anonymous quote is the beginning of our summer tradition. The March 1957 *JRM* contains an invitation from the Wyoming Section to Society members to attend the summer field meeting of the Section, which would be scheduled with the Society Officers and Directors meeting. The meeting in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, in July of 1957 is the first Society summer meeting (*JRM* 10:145-146, 1957; *Rangeman's Journal* 3:121, 1976). At this summer meeting, the tour was the summer meeting. There were no committee meetings as we have today. All business was taken care of in the Officers and Directors Meeting.

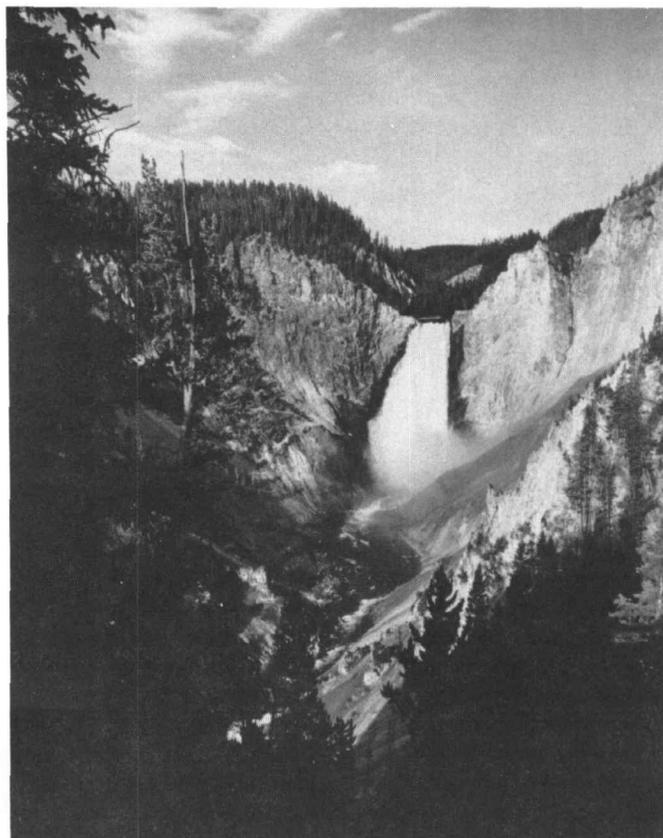
Dr. Alan A. Beetle describes the reasoning behind the decision to have the tour at Jackson Hole: "...Jackson Hole was chosen because we were actively doing range research in the area and would be able to give an in-depth tour. Dixie Smith was engaged in his Ph.D. research there, William Laycock had finished an M.S. thesis in the area, and there were backup people at the Elk Refuge, the Teton Forest, Wyoming Game and Fish, and Grand Teton N.P."

Clifford Hansen was master of ceremony of the tour. He was (and still is) a resident of the Hole and was then Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University of Wyoming. Later he became Wyoming's Governor and then U.S. Senator. The first day field tour was scheduled to give a cross section of the various areas of Teton County which receive the heaviest utilization and show the strongest conflicts between game and cattle. The tour crossed the elk refuge on a road long since closed to the public. Many of the 35 cars on the tour were Cadillacs, but the tour relentlessly followed the back roads through the refuge and the Gros Ventre (Grō vónt) and not a Cadillac dropped out. There was a rather strong directive issued from the Range Management Department that beer would not be carried in University vehicles. Students in those days sold pop and beer to make money for the Section's scholarship fund. One of the University pickups was full of ice-downed beer. Cliff Hansen came to the rescue. At one of the stops, he, as master of ceremonies, said, "We'll not go one step farther until this drought is broken," and he helped the students sell the beer. The second day of the tour was a half day trip south of Jackson. The trip was designed to give a cross section of the remnant of private land in Teton County.

List of SRM Summer Meetings

1957	Jackson Hole, Wyoming
1958	Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada
1959	Gunnison, Colorado
1960	Custer, South Dakota
1961	Calgary, Alberta, Canada
1962	Santa Fe, New Mexico
1963	North Platte, Nebraska
1964	Chihuahua, Chihuahua, Mexico
1965	Laramie, Wyoming
1966	Logan, Utah
1967	Santa Barbara, California
1968	Stanely (Boise), Idaho
1969	Tucson, Arizona
1970	Laramie, Wyoming
1971	Black Hills, South Dakota
1972	Ephraim, Utah
1973	Durango, Colorado
1974	Calgary, Alberta
1975	Santa Fe, New Mexico
1976	Black Hills, South Dakota
1977	Elko, Nevada
1978	Denver, Colorado
1979	Pocatello, Idaho
1980	Las Cruces, New Mexico
1981	Bismarck, North Dakota
1982	Flagstaff, Arizona
1983	Long Beach, Mississippi
1984	Wenatchee, Washington
1985	Amarillo, Texas

The Utah Section invited the Board on a field trip in July of 1952 when the Board met in Salt Lake City, but the Directors didn't have time. Past President Ed McKinnon claims the International Mountain Section gave up their Summer Tour dates for the Society's Summer Meeting. The 1958 meeting in Kamloops, B.C., was the first time the Society met outside the United States. The Colorado meet-



The waters of the Yellowstone River thunder 308 feet into the canyon below in Wyoming's Yellowstone National Park. Visitors to this favorite spot in the nation's first national park will feel as well as hear the awesome power of the spectacular waterfall.

ing in 1959 was in conjunction with the "Rush to the Rockies Centennial." Two summer meetings were cosponsored by SRM and other Societies. The 1969 meeting was in conjunction with the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the 1970 meeting was in conjunction with the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS). In 1972, the Society helped the Utah Section celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Great Basin Experiment Station. In the same year, all standing committees were *formally* requested to meet and report to the Board. The 1973 tour was a joint venture of the Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah Sections. The First International Rangeland Congress included the 1978 summer tour in its program.

The Tradition Continues

The Wyoming Section cordially invites you to attend the 30th Summer Meeting of the Society for Range Management in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, July 20-24, 1986. President Fee Busby is proud to bring you to his 'home' state and says: "It is great to host the 1986 SRM summer meeting and tour in Wyoming—particularly in Jackson Hole, the site of the first such summer meeting in 1957. Jackson has been and remains a political hot spot for natural resource management. It is a place to learn about unique range management problems *and solutions*, as well as a great, scenic vacation site. I look forward to welcoming

SRM members and friends to Jackson Hole, Wyoming. See you July 20-24!"

Jackson is a very popular summer tourist town. Make your lodging reservations now. See additional lodging information below. As it was in 1957, the Wort Hotel will be the Headquarters for the meeting. The Wort was established in 1941 by John and Jess Wort on the same site where their livery stable once stood. The Wort is now under the ownership of the Spring Creek Ranch. The Wort's Silver Dollar Bar and Lounge is a tourist attraction because of the two thousand thirty-two 1921 silver dollars inlaid in the bar and the burnt-leather murals which depict Jackson Hole History.

Summer Meeting Chairman Chuck Birkemeyer has, of course, ordered perfect weather for the occasion, but please plan for less. The following facts were obtained from the Weather Bureau. The July statistics (°F) are as follows: daily mean 61, average maximum 82, average minimum 40, extreme high 101, and extreme low 24. July averages 3 days with minimum temperatures of 32 or lower. "Because of cold air outbreaks from Canada, cold air drainage from surrounding mountains, rapid nighttime radiation cooling, and high elevation, a dependable freeze-free period is not noted for the valley. Winds are generally not strong as compared with much of the state. However, occasional storms can bring brief periods of quite high winds...." Precipitation averages 0.75 inches in July, which is the driest month. Please come prepared for warm days and cool nights.

The technical workshop (symposium) will be led by Dr. Alan A. Beetle. It will take place on Monday, July 21, and be field oriented with stops at some of the exclosures which were visited during the 1957 summer tour. Technical discussions will involve the use of fire, aspen ecology, and elk management. Beetle and Dr. Dixie Smith, a member of Beetle's committee, were present at the 1957 tour.

The summer tour will be held on Tuesday, July 22. The tour will try to answer the question "Is There A Place for Range Management in Jackson Hole?" The objective of the tour will be to describe the pressures affecting the range resources in Jackson Hole. Some of these pressures

are: subdivision development; internal and external economic pressures on the ranching industry; reduction of wildlife habitat; changing federal land status; and the current and future economic outlook for agriculture in general. The tentative tour schedule includes a visit to a ranch which was visited on the 1957 tour. Other tour stops will highlight elk feeding management on the National Elk Refuge, resource management in Grand Teton National Park, and wildlife management in Jackson Hole. The end of the day will feature a B-B-Q and entertainment by an SRM member portraying President Theodore Roosevelt.

The town of Jackson, the Jackson Hole area, Grand Teton National Park, Yellowstone National Park, and the nearby National Forests offer visitors of all ages a multitude of opportunities for diverse activities. The brochures list the great outdoors: river trips from smooth to white-water; hikes from easy to technical climbs; and rides on an aerial tram, helicopter, glider, or hot air balloon. 'Old West' activities include dude ranches, outdoor chuckwagon dinners, horseback riding, rodeos, stagecoach rides, square dances, and shootouts. Other listings include Park Service campfire programs, nightly concerts, tennis, polo, swimming, barrel racing, outdoor seminars, and art workshops.

My favorite activity is observing the water in Yellowstone National Park. The water may explode up, crash down, become spray, make steam, heat up, cool down, be any color from a beautiful, clear blue to a muddy pink, be calm or bubbling, and to stimulate your olfactory sense, stink. There is even a pond on top of the continental divide from which the water leaves the east end of the pond for the Pacific Ocean and west end of the pond for the Gulf of Mexico (Yes, you read correctly, it really does that.) Come see it for yourself. Take a few extra days from work, pack an extra, warm jacket, bring your family, and join us in Jackson this summer. If you are traveling through the southeast corner of Wyoming to and/or from the summer meeting, don't count on staying in Cheyenne or nearby towns (Laramie, Wheatland, Fort Collins, or Greeley) unless you have reservations. Cheyenne Frontier Days, which draws a large crowd, is the same week.

Make Your Reservations for the 1986 Summer Meeting NOW!

Wort Hotel, Box 69, Jackson, WY 83001, 1-800-322-2727	1 person not quoted	2 people \$80 - 140
Antler Motel*, Box 575, Jackson, WY 83001 307-733-2535	\$50	\$54
49'er INN*, Box 1948, Jackson, WY 83001, 307-733-7550	\$50	\$54

SRM has 100* rooms blocks at the Antler Motel and 49'er Inn. Please indicate you are with SRM. These two are within walking distance of the Wort. All three are downtown. There are many other accommodations of all kinds (ranches, campgrounds, etc.) listed in the Jackson Hole brochure you may have picked up at Salt Lake City or Orlando. For a copy of the brochure write to Jackson Hole Area Chamber of Commerce, Box E, Jackson Hole, Wyoming 83001.

*Reservation deadline is **July 1, 1986.**