

Project Summary

Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

Project Title: Socio-Economic Study of Historic Ranching at Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, with Application to Current Park Business Plans

Discipline: Social Science

Type of Project: Research

Funding Agency: National Park Service

Other Partners/Cooperators: Washington State University

Effective Dates: 9/25/2007 - 12/31/2009

Funding Amount: \$10,000

Investigators and Agency Representative:

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Project Abstract: Through this project, Washington State University will work cooperatively with the National Park Service to prepare a historical study of changes in economic and natural resource management at GRKO in southwest Montana, focusing on its first half-century of operation. Historical information on the first ranch owners, Johnny Grant and Conrad Kohrs, along with numerous primary sources on-file at GRKO provide frequent entries during this period. Archived local and regional newspapers provide further stories of daily life, management practices, and transactions at the ranch. As part of the project, Brandon Chapman, a Washington State University doctorate student, will perform archival research on-site and at libraries over an 18-month period. The student and PI will then edit and co-author a report together with the NPS. This work serves two purposes. It will provide current GRKO staff a synthesis of previously used natural resource management techniques. Historical interpretation and current management practices can be aided through increased understanding of the earliest ranchers and their adaptations to changing markets, institutions, and ecosystems. Also, it will give the visiting public an opportunity to read about how the ranch was historically managed. Romantic and analytic histories of the open range are popular among western enthusiasts, but there are few recent works addressing the issues of management changes from a cross-scale perspective. This work complements previous ethnographic inventories and an administrative history of the ranch done in the late 1970s that provide more recent accounts of GRKO management after it was designated a National Historic Site.

Outcomes with Completion Dates:

Final report due by 12/31/2009

Keywords: Ranching history, management methods, Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS, Washington State University

For Administrative Use Only:

Date Annual Report Received:

Date Final Report Received:

Publications, etc. on file: