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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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1067

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

___X___ New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing
Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Development of Automobile Roads in Wyoming, 1913-1975
Development of Tourism in Wyoming, 1913-1975
Development of Automobile-Oriented Lodging in Wyoming, 1913-1975

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

Mary M. Hopkins WY SHPO 3/14/17
Signature of certifying official Title Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Barbara Wyatt 12-7-17
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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E. Statement of Historic Context

DEVELOPMENT OF AUTOMOBILE ROADS IN WYOMING, 1913 TO 1975

Wyoming has been a destination for tourists since the completion of the First Transcontinental, or Union Pacific, Railroad in 1869. In addition to its primary purpose of transporting goods and passengers cross-country, the Union Pacific offered leisure travel via its route across the southern portion of Wyoming. When additional rail lines were completed in the state, railroads delivered tourists to locations near the sites they had come to see – such as Yellowstone National Park or the national forests – where they would then proceed by stagecoach or on horseback to their destinations. At the turn of the twentieth century the most convenient way to access Yellowstone National Park, which had been established in 1872, was via the Northern Pacific Railroad's Yellowstone Branch Line that ran between Livingston and Gardiner, Montana, on the north edge of the park near Mammoth Hot Springs.[1] For this reason travel to Yellowstone National Park did not strongly influence travel through Wyoming prior to the construction of the first named highways in the state.

In the early twentieth century, despite growing national interest in auto tourism, the Department of the Interior maintained that automobiles would not be allowed in the national parks. When questioned as to the feasibility of allowing automobiles in Yellowstone, superintendent Maj. Harry Benson replied, "The character of the roads, the nature of the country, and conditions of the transportation in this park render the use of automobiles not only inadvisable and dangerous, but to my mind it would be practically criminal to permit their use." Benson was writing in 1909, when between fifteen hundred and eighteen hundred head of horses pulled stagecoaches over the recently-completed, narrow, often one-way Grand Loop Road during the tourist season, and he feared that horses and automobiles could not safely share the roads.[2] Yellowstone was not the only national park to resist private automobiles, but it had a special reason for doing so. Early legislation regarding the park had forbidden the use of steam vehicles within park boundaries. This legislation was intended to keep railroads from crossing the park, but the law was thereafter interpreted to cover all power vehicles, including automobiles.[3]

Despite the reluctance of park administrators, nascent automobile clubs were determined to gain access to Yellowstone and other national parks in the West. These clubs had an exceedingly strong influence on park service policy. By 1911 the National Park Service had

[1] Hal K. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 45-47. Rothman notes that the Yellowstone Branch Line was the first rail line in the western United States to convey passengers specifically to a tourist destination.
[2] Laura E. Soulliere, "Historic Roads in the National Park System: Special History Study" (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1995), https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/roads/index.htm (accessed January 3, 2017).
[3] "Automobiles for the Park," *Basin Republican* (Basin, WY), January 10, 1908, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.

concluded that the biggest obstacle to increasing park visitation, a major concern at the time, was limited automobile access. In 1915 Yellowstone was opened to automobiles for the first time, a major victory for automobile clubs. Yellowstone's concessioner phased out horse-drawn stagecoaches during the 1917 season, replacing them with touring cars and motor buses. By 1920 the National Park-to-Park Highway connected twelve national parks in the western United States, including Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado to Yellowstone and Yellowstone to Glacier National Park in Montana.[4]

Automobile clubs had earlier roots in the Good Roads Movement, which originated among rural Americans in the 1870s. Organizers argued that road construction and maintenance should be supported by national and local government as it was in Europe. Road building in rural areas would allow rural residents to gain social and economic benefits enjoyed by urban citizens with access to railroads, trolleys, and paved streets. Farmers in particular could benefit from reliable roads to transport crops to market. During the bicycle craze of the late nineteenth century, cyclists joined the cause, reasoning bicycles could be more fully enjoyed on good country roads.[5]

Bicycles declined in popularity after the turn of the twentieth century as interest in automobiles grew, but there was considerable overlap between cyclists and early automobile owners and mechanics at the turn of the century. Elmer Lovejoy, a Laramie bicycle shop owner, was the first man to own an automobile in Wyoming. He assembled the machine between 1897 and 1898 from parts he ordered from Chicago. Lovejoy took his horseless carriage for what is likely the first car ride in Wyoming on May 7, 1898.[6] Other early automobile owners included physicians and sheep ranchers, relatively high-status members of their communities. Rancher J.B. Okie purchased a 1906 Great Smith – reportedly central Wyoming's first car – and had it shipped to his home in Lost Cabin via rail and freight wagon. Okie was a major employer in command of a large estate and soon had his men building roads to and through Lost Cabin.[7]

In 1908 the Great Auto Race between New York City and Paris crossed Wyoming along a route that roughly followed the Union Pacific Railroad and that would set precedent for the route of the Lincoln Highway, the nation's first transcontinental highway, a few years later.

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[4] Soulliere, "Historic Roads in the National Park System"; Lee Whiteley, *The Yellowstone Highway: Denver to the Park, Past and Present* (Boulder, CO: Johnson Printing Company, 2001), 9-15. For a discussion of the influence of automobiles on the character of the national parks, see David Louter, "Glaciers and Gasoline: The Making of a Windshield Wilderness, 1900-1915," in *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West*, ed. David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001).

[5] Isaac B. Potter, *The Gospel of Good Roads: A Letter to the American Farmer* (New York: The League of American Wheelmen, 1891).

[6] Phil Roberts, "Lovejoy's Toy: Wyoming's First Car," *Buffalo Bones: Stories of Wyoming's Past*, http://www.uwyo.edu/robertshistory/buffalo_bones_lovejoys_toy.htm (accessed January 3, 2017).

[7] Tom Rea, "J.B. Okie, Sheep King of Central Wyoming," WyoHistory.org, http://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/j-b-okie-sheep-king-central-wyoming (accessed January 3, 2017); Editorial, *Natrona County Tribune* (Casper, WY), March 22, 1906, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.

The 1909 Cheyenne Frontier Days included a two hundred-mile auto race, where a world record for speed was set, among the usual rodeo events. By 1910 automobiles had become relatively common in Wyoming, creating needs for new legislation. In 1913 a law set the speed limit at twelve miles per hour in towns. In 1914 the State of Wyoming required that all automobiles should be licensed, and in 1917 the Wyoming Legislature created the Wyoming Highway Department, in part so that the state would qualify for federal funding for road projects. The legislature authorized the acceptance of federal aid on a matching basis. The matching funds were raised through a bond issue of $2.8 million, approved overwhelmingly by popular vote in April 1919. A second bond issue of $1.8 million passed in 1921. Thereafter, the Oil and Gas Leasing Act of 1920 and the gasoline tax of 1923 poured royalties into Wyoming's matching fund. By 1918, 15,900 automobiles were registered in Wyoming, ten times as many as five years before. By 1920 twenty-four thousand automobiles had been registered, and in 1930 there were sixty-two thousand registered autos in the state.[8]

Not only did automobiles bring profound social change to Wyoming, but also widespread changes to the physical characteristics of towns and other small communities. Historic commercial centers, often thought of as "downtowns," had not been developed with automobiles in mind and lacked convenient and safe places to park these treasured vehicles. Storefronts were designed to appeal to traffic on foot or conveyed by horses. The new speed made possible by automobiles rendered much signage and many window displays ineffective. Within a matter of years a vast network of improved roads allowed Wyomingites and visitors to the state to travel with unparalleled freedom, shortening distances in a temporal sense and connecting isolated communities to the larger world.

The first links in the growing network of roads were the named highways of the 1910s. Despite the efforts of the Good Roads Movement, national and local governments had yet to take interest in constructing and maintaining roads. Instead, boosters – often including businessmen who stood to gain from increased sales of auto parts or gasoline – led a grassroots movement on behalf of automobile enthusiasts. Boosters selected a route over existing roads, often networks of varying quality that included city streets, freight and wagon roads, and abandoned railroad grades. The route was given an evocative name echoed in the name of the trail association formed to promote the route. The trail association collected dues from businesses in towns along the way, published trail guides and newsletters, held conventions, and advocated for improvement and use of the route. Association goals included

[8] Emmett D. Chisum, "Crossing Wyoming by Car in 1908 – New York to Paris Automobile Race," *Annals of Wyoming* 52, no. 1 (1980): 34-39; Phil Roberts, "The 'Cheyenne 200': The 1909 Auto Race Rival to Indianapolis," *Buffalo Bones: Stories of Wyoming's Past*, http://www.uwyo.edu/robertshistory/cheyenne_200_auto_race.htm (accessed January 3, 2017); Phil Roberts, "The Oil Business in Wyoming," WyoHistory.org, http://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/oil-business-wyoming (accessed January 3, 2017); T.A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 2nd Ed., Revised (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 407-408, 424; Julie Francis, "Historic Context and Evaluation of Automobile Roads in Wyoming," Draft (Cheyenne, 1994). On file at the Wyoming Department of Transportation.

the promotion of the named route, of the Good Roads Movement, and of cities and businesses along the route.[9]

In 1912 an Indiana entrepreneur and former auto racer named Carl Fisher began promoting his idea for a transcontinental highway to stretch from New York City to San Francisco. At the time there were over two million miles of rural roads in the United States, and between 8 and 9 percent of those roads were "improved," meaning they were constructed of gravel, brick, oiled earth, or other ephemeral materials. Maintenance fell to those who lived along the roads and had the greatest need for them. Many states had constitutional prohibitions against funding internal improvements, and the Federal Government had not yet seen fit to provide money toward road construction and maintenance.

Fisher formed the Lincoln Highway Association (LHA) in 1913. He was a manufacturer of Prest-O-Lite compressed carbide-gas headlights and an effective fundraiser among his associates in the auto industry. Many manufacturers and oilmen saw public highways as a way to encourage Americans to buy cars and automobile accessories and services. An important exception was Henry Ford, who told Fisher as long as private citizens were willing to fund public infrastructure, the Federal Government would not be motivated to allocate funds to roadbuilding.

Most of the money raised from private donors was spent in advertising the Lincoln Highway rather than improving it. The LHA sponsored seedling miles in several states, including Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska, though none were constructed in Wyoming. Seedling miles were short concrete sections constructed through donations from the Portland Cement Association and were intended to demonstrate the desirability of permanent roads. In general, though, the LHA never succeeded in raising the amount of money necessary for coast-to-coast improvements. Instead the highway relied on existing roads. In Wyoming the Lincoln Highway traversed the corridor established by the Overland Trail and the First Transcontinental railroad and telegraph line. Between Rawlins and Rock Springs the highway utilized an abandoned Union Pacific railroad grade. In western Sweetwater County and Uinta County the highway followed the mid-nineteenth century route of the Mormon pioneers. To compensate for the lack of improved roads, the LHA and other trail associations marked their routes with painted signs or insignia on telephone poles, rocks, buildings, and other surfaces within easy sight of the roads.[10]

[9] Richard F. Weingroff, "From Names to Numbers: The Origins of the U.S. Numbered Highway System" (U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration), http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/numbers.cfm (accessed January 3, 2017).
[10] Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 407; Richard F. Weingroff, "The Lincoln Highway" (U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration), https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/lincoln.cfm (accessed January 4, 2017).

Because the named highways were not planned, designed, and constructed in the sense that modern interstate highways are, the "official" route also changed over time. For example, the route described in the *Official Road Guide to the Lincoln Highway* in 1915, the first year it was published, differs at several points in significant ways from the route published in the 1924 fifth (and final) edition of the road guide, reflecting road improvements that happened within the intervening nine years that caused different sections of road to be preferable to the original recommendations.[11] Additionally, road guides provided a recommended route, but conditions might make some stretches impassable at certain times, and so motorists had to be prepared to detour as needed.

The Black and Yellow Trail, the total length of which stretched from Chicago to Yellowstone National Park via the Black Hills of South Dakota, ran from Sundance to Moorcroft, then to Gillette, Sussex, and Buffalo before crossing the Bighorn Mountains to join with the Yellowstone Highway, another auto trail, at Worland. The inaugural drive of the Black and Yellow Trail, referred to as the "Pathfinder Tour," took place in August of 1913. The booster chairman made the following report:

> [The trail] is a prairie road. It goes through a most interesting country. Evidences of considerable improvements were found along the line. In Crook county the road was undergoing a change in many places to avoid steep grades, etc. New culverts and bridges were being installed. . . . There is only one criticism which the committee can offer, viz: these counties have neglected to give as much attention as they should to the markings [i.e., insignias identifying the highway and its route]. If this department is looked after the road will be under all of the circumstances meritorious.[12]

In 1914 the *Converse County Review* reported that the Black and Yellow Trail "would be very good except for chuck holes."

> Chuck holes that reduce the running time of tourists by half. Chuck holes that must be damaging to loaded wagons or light vehicles as well as automobiles. Chuck holes that can be eliminated at very little expense but which will not be because there is not a county commissioner in the world who can be made to see how uncalled

[11] The modern Lincoln Highway Association, a historical society, provides an excellent map demonstrating the way the route changed during the 1910s and 1920s and offering a good comparison between the route of the Lincoln Highway, U.S. Highway 30, and modern Interstate 80. https://www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/map/ (accessed January 4, 2017).
[12] "Black and Yellow Trail Meritorious," *Crook County Monitor* (Sundance, WY), October 16, 1913, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.

> for they are. One can easily imagine that all commissioners are in league with the manufacturers of springs.[13]

The Yellowstone Highway, which opened in 1915, was another major named highway in Wyoming. It was organized at a meeting of the Douglas Good Roads Club several years before, but did not open until 1915 because that was the year automobiles were first admitted into Yellowstone, as well as the year Rocky Mountain National Park northwest of Denver, Colorado, was established. The Yellowstone Highway was intended to link the two national parks. In Wyoming it originally spanned from Cheyenne to Wheatland, then to Douglas, Glenrock, Casper, Lost Cabin, Thermopolis, and Worland, where it joined the Black and Yellow Trail, and then to Basin, Burlington, and Cody before terminating at the east entrance to Yellowstone National Park. By 1924, the year the Wyoming Highway Department opened an auto road through the Wind River Canyon, the route changed between Casper and Thermopolis to include Shoshoni rather than Lost Cabin. The highway as described in the *Official Route Book of the Yellowstone Highway Association* utilized part of the Bridger Trail and required navigating a pass through the Bridger Mountains before emerging at Buffalo Creek south of Thermopolis. J.B. Okie, one of the first car owners in the state and the owner of the Oasis Hotel in Lost Cabin, was the Yellowstone Highway Association commissioner representing Fremont County.[14] This is likely the reason the route book favors the road through Lost Cabin rather than a similar route that utilized Birdseye Pass, an alternate means of reaching Thermopolis. By 1920 the Yellowstone Highway had been joined with other named highways in the Rocky Mountains and Pacific West to form a grand loop connecting twelve national parks called the National Park-to-Park Highway, and it is often referred to under this name in the 1920s. The Yellowstone Highway was the first segment of this larger road to be completed.

Like the LHA, the Yellowstone Highway Association published an official route guide, though it appears that it was not revised or reissued after its initial 1916 publication. No similar publication is known to exist for the Black and Yellow Trail in Wyoming. In general, South Dakota seems to have been more diligent about promoting their section of this road than Wyoming was. The road guides were full of advice to both seasoned and novice motorists of the West, such as “West of Cheyenne, Wyoming, always fill your gas tank at every point gasoline can be secured, no matter how little you have used from your previous supply. This costs nothing but a little time and it may save a lot of trouble.” The guides also included advertisements for tourist services in major towns along the routes, and some of the buildings

[13] “Automobile Trip to Buffalo Through Powder River Valley,” *Bill Barlow’s Budget and Converse County Review* (Douglas, WY), August 20, 1914, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.
[14] *Official Route Book of the Yellowstone Highway Association in Wyoming and Colorado* (Cody, WY: Gus Holm, 1916); Robert G. and Elizabeth L. Rosenberg, “Moneta Divide EIS Project: Class III Inventory of Six Historic Linear Resources in Fremont and Natrona Counties, Wyoming” (Longmont, CO, 2014), 202-209. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.

that housed these services still stand. The Plains Hotel in Cheyenne, for example, is advertised in both the Lincoln and Yellowstone highway road guides.[15]

In 1919 the Custer Battlefield Highway was organized between Des Moines, Iowa, and Glacier National Park in northwest Montana. In Wyoming it utilized the same route as the Black and Yellow Trail between the South Dakota-Wyoming border and Gillette, then left the trail to run north through Sheridan, Ranchester, and Dayton before crossing into Montana.[16] The Custer Battlefield Highway was a significant part of the Sheridan County tourist economy but had little or no social or economic impact on the rest of Wyoming. It is considered of secondary importance to the Lincoln and Yellowstone highways and the Black and Yellow Trail in this respect. Several other named highways were promoted in Wyoming but all mirrored the route of auto trails previously discussed. One exception is the Rocky Mountain Highway, which entered Wyoming below Laramie, connected Laramie to Woods Landing, Encampment, and Saratoga, then ran northwest to Rawlins, Lander, and Dubois and terminated at Moran Junction, the southeast entrance to Grand Teton National Park. Similarly, the Atlantic Yellowstone Pacific Highway and the Grant Highway followed the Yellowstone Highway until they diverged at Shoshoni, leading instead to Riverton, Dubois, and Moran Junction.[17]

Newspaper accounts of the 1910s suggest that booster clubs leaned heavily on county governments to make improvements to the highways, emphasizing the economic benefit of encouraging tourists to travel through local communities.[18] Boosters also petitioned state legislatures for road improvements and lobbied for federal involvement in highway construction. Because of a lack of reliable funding for road improvement, construction and maintenance of roads tended to happen in a piecemeal fashion. For example, in 1919 or 1920 the Wyoming Highway Department tractor-graded a seventeen-mile-long segment of the Black and Yellow Trail.[19] Some portions of the road that crossed Bighorn National Forest were constructed using federal money, sometimes with matching funds from the State.[20] Other sections of the road received little or no improvement. In 1924 the LHA reported that the highway department had embarked upon an “ambitious” program of highway improvement concentrated on the primary roads of the state, including five hundred thousand dollars spent on the improvement of seventy-seven miles of the Lincoln Highway in 1923. Moreover,

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[15] *Official Route Book of the Yellowstone Highway Association*, 29; *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 5th Ed. (Detroit: The Lincoln Highway Association, 1924), 41, 412.
[16] Cynde Georgen, *In the Shadow of the Bighorns: A History of Early Sheridan and the Goose Creek Valley of Northern Wyoming* (Sheridan, WY: Sheridan County Historical Society, 2010), 80-81.
[17] Whiteley, *The Yellowstone Highway*, 32-33.
[18] The Wyoming Newspaper Project, part of the Wyoming State Library Digital Collections, is an excellent source of information regarding the activities of local boosters, how they operated, and how their actions affected road development and improvement in the 1910s and 1920s. http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.
[19] Intermountain Antiquities Computer System Site Form, Site 48CA2785, the Black and Yellow Trail. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.
[20] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, Site 48JO1479, the Black and Yellow Trail. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.

> From Cheyenne west to Evanston, Wyoming, the Lincoln Highway tourist will encounter less than 40 miles of poor road and when it can be truthfully said that six or eight years ago the entire drive across the state was one very difficult to negotiate and likely, at times, to be almost impassable, some idea of the improvements accomplished will be gained.[21]

Trail associations and other local boosters provided a valuable service to early motorists; however, the named highway system had a number of problems. For one, motorists could not be assured that the road advertised to them was truly the shortest, easiest, or best maintained road, especially if there was a competing route. As illustrated above, road improvement and maintenance were inconsistent and concentrated in some sections to the detriment of others. Between 1910 and 1920 the number of registered motor vehicles in the United States increased from five hundred thousand to nearly ten million, and increased again to twenty-six million by 1930. As the number of car owners and drivers continued to swell, it became clear the Federal Government would need to assist local and state governments in the creation of reliable routes and the construction of uniform highways.

The Federal Aid Highway Program commenced in 1916 with the passage of the Federal Aid Road Act. This landmark act was the first time the Federal Government provided assistance for state highway costs by granting funds for any rural road over which the U.S. mail was carried. The act required states to have a highway department capable of designing, constructing, and maintaining these roads in order to be eligible to share in the appropriation. The Federal Highway Act of 1921 refined the scope of federal funding, limiting the amount of money that could be spent on local roads and emphasizing the importance of building roads that were “interstate in character.” As the Federal Government assumed greater responsibility for establishing a national network of roads, the need for auto trail boosters diminished.

In 1925 the Federal Government formed the Joint Board on Interstate Highways, which was charged with selecting a system of routes from among the named highways and designing a national system of signs and markers. Among other things, the board determined that the new system would have numbered routes rather than named – east-west routes were given even numbers and north-south routes odd. The standard U.S. route marker, which replaced the trail association insignias, became the shield and number system used today. During 1926 over one thousand U.S. markers were placed on 2,806 miles of U.S. Routes in Wyoming.[22]

The basic routes of the three major named highways through Wyoming were all retained under the new numbered system and were designated as follows. The Lincoln Highway

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[21] *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 407-408.
[22] Weingroff, “From Names to Numbers”; Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report, 1924-1926* (Cheyenne, 1926), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 39-41.

became U.S. Highway 30, dividing into north and south routes near Granger. US 30 North ran to Kemmerer and on to Pocatello, Idaho. US 30 South followed the path of the Lincoln Highway to Salt Lake City, Utah. The Black and Yellow Trail became U.S. Highway 16, running north from Gillette to Ucross rather than south to Sussex. The Yellowstone Highway became U.S. Highway 87 between Cheyenne and Orin Junction and U.S. Highway 20 thereafter. In the 1920s the Wyoming Highway Department maintained roads by grading, providing drainage, and adding gravel surfacing to dirt roads. In 1924 the department began to experiment with oiling gravel roads. This oil-aggregate mixture was an early form of "blacktop." Because of the budding oil industry centered in Casper, black oil was abundant and cheap in Wyoming. By 1929 there were eighty-seven miles of oiled roads in Albany, Carbon, Goshen, and Natrona counties. Ten years later, every major road in Wyoming had received this treatment.[23]

In the 1920s most of the U.S. Routes consisted of dirt roads lacking a constructed base or grade, with very little cut and fill. Minor cuts lowered some hills, and a few drainages were filled. Road profiles were slightly crowned to facilitate drainage. Road beds were about twenty-four feet wide, and right-of-way width was typically between sixty-six and eighty feet. Along the Lincoln Highway, horizontal realignments straightened short curves. As late as 1924, the LHA asserted that, "Trans-state travel in Wyoming has not yet reached the density requiring permanent paving work and the fine, decomposed granite gravel grades constructed, provide all-weather conditions more than adequate to take care of the traffic volume of the present and immediate future."[24]

During the Great Depression the Civilian Conservation Corps undertook several road projects in Wyoming, building the Snake River Canyon Road in today's Bridger-Teton National Forest and the roads through Guernsey State Park. Federal aid highway projects boomed during the same period. The Wyoming Highway Department began major construction projects such as the realignment of U.S. Highway 30 between Medicine Bow and Walcott Junction, where nearly five miles were eliminated from the 1922 iteration of the Lincoln Highway. Reconstruction of the Yellowstone Highway between Cody and the east gate of the park took place between 1924 and 1938. Surfacing consisted of crushed gravel saturated with black oil.

At this time roads began to approach modern engineering standards in order to accommodate traffic speeds up to seventy or eighty miles per hour and increased truck traffic. Accordingly, new rights-of-way were as much as two hundred feet wide. Subgrades as wide as thirty-six feet and composed of gravel fill were constructed to support heavier automobiles. Compacted road beds began to replace the dirt roads constructed in the 1920s. Many existing pipes, culverts, headwalls, guardrails, and fences were removed. Masonry was often used for

[23] Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Sixth Biennial Report, 1926-1928* (Cheyenne, 1928), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 19-21; Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 424-425.
[24] Francis, "Historic Context and Evaluation of Automobile Roads in Wyoming"; *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 408.

retaining walls and culvert facings during new construction. Traveling surfaces were around sixteen to twenty-four feet wide for two lanes of traffic. Shoulders consisted of gravel or earth and sloped steeply to the bottom of borrow ditches. Increased speeds combined with these dramatic drop-offs likely contributed to the over one hundred traffic fatalities recorded in 1934.

Very little domestic road building took place during World War II while national resources were diverted to the war effort. After the war, highway construction responded to changes in the automobile industry, new federal standards, and a greater concern for safety. Horizontal line changes straightened curves for smoother travel and to allow improved sight distance for passing. Improvements to vertical alignments also increased sight distances. Passing lanes were added to many two-lane roads during the 1940s and 1950s, widening roads to forty-eight feet in these locations. Subgrades widened considerably: earth bases were often as wide as fifty-six feet and topped with gravel subgrades about forty-four feet wide. Fill slopes were significantly lessened. Asphalt, or "hot plant mix," was introduced as a surfacing material. By the late 1940s and early 1950s a typical highway consisted of a paved, two-lane road having gentle gravel shoulders and a moderately steep embankment sloping to a borrow ditch.[25]

World War II had deferred federal spending from infrastructure projects to the war effort; however, General and later President Dwight D. Eisenhower's experiences in Germany during the war, specifically with the Autobahn, helped him to recognize that highways were a necessary component of a national defense system. As a young Lt. Colonel, Eisenhower had participated in a 1919 transcontinental motor convoy undertaken by the U.S. Army and promoted by the LHA. The convoy left the White House on July 7 and headed for Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, where it merged onto the Lincoln Highway and followed it to San Francisco, arriving on September 5. The convoy demonstrated that existing bridges and roads across the nation were entirely inadequate to sustain a large number of heavy vehicles, and thus a threat to national defense. Eisenhower recalled the experience in his autobiography *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*, writing: "The old convoy had started me thinking about good, two-lane highways, but Germany had made me see the wisdom of broader ribbons across the land." President Eisenhower announced a "Grand Plan" for highways in 1954. During his administration the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 authorized a new Interstate Highway System of superhighways that in many places replaced the U.S. Routes.[26]

In Wyoming Interstate 80 followed basically the same route as the Lincoln Highway and U.S. Highway 30 South, the major difference being the route between Laramie and Rawlins. Interstate 80 was constructed between 1956 and 1976 and was routed close enough to US 30 that many towns along the older corridor were not entirely left behind. Exceptions include Bosler, Rock River, and Medicine Bow north of Laramie, and the original site of Little America, which in 1952 moved south to the future interstate corridor and was eventually given its own

[25] Francis, "Historic Context and Evaluation of Automobile Roads in Wyoming."
[26] Weingroff, "The Lincoln Highway"; Dwight D. Eisenhower, *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), 166-167.

interstate interchange. Little America was originally sited near the town of Granger along a portion of the Mormon pioneer trail to Salt Lake City. Interstate 25 superseded U.S. Highway 87 and the Yellowstone Highway between Cheyenne and Casper, and Interstate 90 covered a similar route to the Black and Yellow Trail to Buffalo and the Custer Battlefield Highway.

In the early 1960s the completion of Interstate 90 across the northeast corner of Wyoming helped to maintain a direct route to the national parks through Wyoming, even though it only conveyed tourists as far as Sheridan or Buffalo.[27] Travel routes through north central Wyoming were hotly contested as the tourist economy was recognized to be a significant contributor to the economic vitality of communities on the main leisure travel routes. Two U.S. Routes crossed the Bighorn Mountains, U.S. Highway 14, the northern route west from Sheridan, and U.S. Highway 16, which crossed the mountains southwest of Buffalo. These U.S Routes divided at Ucross at a point where Sheridan and Buffalo competed vigorously for the tourist trade. During the late 1950s US 16 was improved to eliminate a narrow stretch of road through Tensleep Canyon, shortening the travel time between Buffalo and Worland and enhancing the route's appeal to tourists. As the interstate highway system developed, residents of Sheridan protested a plan to construct a route west from Gillette to Buffalo to connect with US 16. Governor Milward Simpson was called upon to settle the issue. Ultimately it was decided that routing Interstate 90 from Gillette to Buffalo would keep most of the traffic to the national parks in Wyoming, rather than lose much of it to a parallel route in Montana. The section of Interstate 90 between Gillette and Buffalo officially opened in 1962, though work continued for a few additional years.[28]

Interstate 25 funneled travelers driving north on the east side of the Rocky Mountains to U.S. Highways 20/26, Cody, and the east entrance of Yellowstone National Park, while Interstate 80 brought transcontinental or regional travelers to routes heading north to Jackson Hole, Grand Teton National Park, and Yellowstone. Towns and communities along these routes experienced a continued increase in travelers and in demand for lodging. Interstate highways reinforced existing travel patterns in Wyoming in the 1960s and 1970s, rather than introduced significantly different ones. This relates to a long-standing pattern in Wyoming in which infrastructure tends to develop within transportation corridors, where multiple routes share essentially the same space. The most compelling reason for this phenomenon seems to be that there are only a few safe, efficient ways to cross the challenging mountainous terrain and arid basins within the state. Nationally, the rise of interstate travel had the effect of concentrating tourist lodging in larger cities at the expense of small town businesses. While

[27] The completion of I-90 also appears to have had a significant effect on visitation to Devils Tower National Monument. Visitation to the monument increased notably from 2,159 visitors (at the time, a record number) in 1963 to around 127,500 visitors in 1965. These numbers were reported in *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (January 1966): 10.

[28] Frank Hicks, "Interstate Route Means Great Deal to Buffalo," *Wyoming State Tribune and Wyoming Eagle* (Cheyenne, WY), July 22-25, 1958; Robert W. Fenwick, "The Second Battle of the Little Big Horn," *Denver Post Empire Magazine*, July 21, 1957. Both articles clipped in Highways vertical file, Wyoming State Archives.

this was likely true in Wyoming in a limited sense, the state has only a small number of large towns spaced over long distances, meaning that lodging properties in smaller towns remained the only convenient options along many routes.

A traffic flow map prepared by the Wyoming Highway Department for 1957 indicates that US 30 was by far the most heavily traveled route in Wyoming. The differentiation of in-state and out-state automobiles indicates that roughly one-half of the traffic was "transcontinental" or out-of-state in origin. US 87, at the time the major north-south route between Cheyenne and Sheridan, was the second-most busy road in Wyoming. During the late 1950s the volume of traffic entering Yellowstone National Park through the east and south gates was approximately the same.

The traffic flow map of 1966 indicated that Interstate 80 was the most heavily traveled route in the state, just as US 30 had been. Between 1956 and 1966 the number of visitors to Yellowstone National Park increased steadily year by year, adding nearly 700,000 additional visitors at the end of ten years. Many of these tourists drove through Wyoming. Traffic over US 16 nearly doubled after Interstate 90 was opened between Gillette and Buffalo. The volume of traffic on the adjacent US 14 also increased noticeably. The number of vehicles on the road between Cheyenne and Casper along Interstate 25 also grew significantly between 1958 and 1966. Traffic between Jackson and the south entrance to Yellowstone was heavier than that on the highway between Cody and the east entrance to the park and seems to reflect growing numbers of visitors to Grand Teton National Park.[29]

Because the interstate system was designed for maximum speed and efficiency, it does not run through communities, but near them. Interstates eliminate head-on traffic and limit traffic movement to the right, enhancing free flow. A system of highway interchanges allows drivers to enter and exit at defined points. This is in contrast to the moderate speeds of the named and numbered highways, where drivers could enter and exit the road at almost any point with relative ease and safety. The named and numbered highways allowed business owners to erect roadside services wherever they owned land or where it was for sale. The abundance of land on either side of the named highways and U.S. Routes meant that land was fairly cheap. As a result, roadside businesses were often generously spaced from one another and could be sprawling in sparsely populated states like Wyoming. The defined entrance and exit points mandated by interstate interchanges, however, concentrate roadside services in certain locations, driving up the value of land at these locations and encouraging business owners to build up rather than out. In particular, the interstate interchange system has had a direct effect nationwide on how lodging properties are constructed.

[29] Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Twenty-First Biennial Report, 1956-1958* (Cheyenne,1958), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 50-51; Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Twenty-Fifth Biennial Report, 1964-1966* (Cheyenne,1966), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 69.

DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN WYOMING, 1913-1975

Tourists have had an economic presence in Wyoming since the late nineteenth century, first as leisure travelers arriving by train and then, beginning in the early twentieth century, by car. Particularly in the northwest portion of the state, automobile travel ensured that tourists were spending money in Wyoming communities, whereas rail travel had primarily funneled visitors to Yellowstone National Park through Montana. Newspaper accounts from the 1910s and 1920s reveal that auto trail associations and other local boosters of the named highways constantly reinforced the importance of capturing the tourist dollar of visitors in route to Yellowstone, or on a coast-to-coast tour crossing southern Wyoming. For example, a leader in the trail association for the Chicago, Black Hills, and Yellowstone Park Highway (i.e., the Black and Yellow Trail) argued that the trail association should be diligent in giving wide publicity to the merits of the route, claiming, "By so doing the association can attract over its highway the great bulk of the vast automobile touring traffic. Procuring this traffic will render returns to the association and the cities and municipalities making up the association, beyond prediction."[30]

Historian Marguerite S. Shaffer describes early motorists along the first national highways as "a relatively homogenous community of upper- and middle-class, urban, white Americans," explaining, "Although occasionally auto tourists met up with traveling salesmen, migrant workers, and tramps, automobile touring took time and money. During the late teens and the early twenties it was a pastime enjoyed by a select few of the upper and upper-middle class." Shaffer estimates that in 1921 twenty thousand motorists, or 0.02 percent of the American population, made transcontinental auto tours, far less than the 294 thousand Americans who are estimated to have traveled abroad that year. The cost of purchasing an automobile and needed supplies for the journey was certainly an obstacle for many Americans. Once in route, a month-long tour could conceivably cost one hundred and fifty dollars per person, or roughly 10 percent of a clerical worker's annual salary of fifteen hundred dollars. [31] An equally significant obstacle was the rarity of paid vacation leave for both salaried workers and wage earners in the early twentieth century.

Before the final years of the Great Depression, the majority of American workers had neither the discretionary income nor the leisure time to be tourists. Until the 1920s the idea of vacation was of little concern to middle- or working-class Americans, for whom extended periods of time off connoted unemployment rather than earned leisure. During the late nineteenth century industrial wage earners began to advocate for better working conditions, focusing on obtaining eight-hour workdays, five-day work weeks, and higher wages. At this

[30] "Black and Yellow Trail Meritorious," *Crook County Monitor* (Sundance, WY), October 16, 1913, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.
[31] Marguerite S. Shaffer, "Seeing America First: The Search for Identity in the Tourist Landscape," in *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West*, ed. David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001), 174-175, 190.

time white-collar employees and wage earners were rarely given paid vacation, which was reserved for high-level executives and managers. An additional one-third of Americans were engaged in agricultural work that tied them to a farm or ranch and limited their ability to travel.

In the early twentieth century progressive management experts began to suggest that leisure, and especially vacation, was essential to restoring the vitality of those salaried, white-collar workers depleted by the unnatural stresses of desk work in the industrial age. While physical work was considered healthy and appropriate to a man's nature, the mental labor undertaken by a growing number of white-collar workers taxed the brain beyond what was natural. Yearly vacations with pay, the experts argued, would allow white-collar workers to engage in physical activity and recuperate from mental strain, thus enhancing their productivity throughout the remainder of the year. Ultimately, the cumulative effect of vacations taken by individual workers would improve the social health of the entire American middle class. By 1920 nearly 40 percent of all white-collar workers received annual vacations with pay, a statistic that would more than double to 80 percent within the decade.

During the early twentieth century employers and management experts alike considered manual labor to be far less taxing than mental labor, and working-class employees, by extension, were thought to have less need for vacations to revitalize their productivity. In 1920 fewer than 5 percent of non-salaried employees received vacation time with pay. Advocates for extended time off for wage earners argued that vacations increased productivity, efficiency, and health, but also noted that vacations would enhance company loyalty among workers, decrease labor turnover, diminish workplace conflict, and lessen worker interest in unions. Although very little change occurred in the prosperous 1920s, the financial and social crises of the 1930s reinforced managements' desire to win employee loyalty in an attempt to forestall union organization. By the eve of World War II a majority of American wage earners, as well as 95 percent of salaried workers, had achieved yearly vacations with pay. Twenty-five million workers received paid leave, and sixty million Americans enjoyed at least a week's vacation away from home.[32]

A number of factors, both practical and ideological, combined to create significant social changes in the average American's approach to leisure and vacation in the late 1930s and after World War II. The phenomenon of mass tourism is most often associated with unprecedented prosperity in postwar America; however, historian Michael Berkowitz notes that vacation expenditures rose steadily not only during the boom years of the 1920s, but also over the first six years of the Great Depression.[33] This suggests that material prosperity was not the only factor, or even the most significant factor, in establishing regular vacations as an important element of twentieth-century American culture. Practical considerations include not

[32] Michael Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure: Making Mass Tourism during the Great Depression," in *Being Elsewhere: Tourism, Consumer Culture, and Identity in Modern Europe and North America*, ed. Shelley Baranowski and Ellen Furlough (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 187-193.
[33] Ibid, 185.

only higher wages and paid vacation leave, but also the development of a system of improved national highways and the affordability of mass-produced automobiles. The American Industrial Revolution, beginning around 1880, created a demographic shift that reshaped the character of the nation from a largely agrarian population to an increasingly urban population having the capacity to step away from industrial labor for one or two weeks of leisure in a way that agricultural workers could not. During World War II a large segment of the American population traveled away from home, often overseas, as part of the war effort. Many of these Americans found travel to be a profound experience that shaped their enthusiasm to see different parts of the world.[34]

Tourism became part of the American character. Berkowitz notes that by the end of the New Deal, "mass consumption of leisure, especially in the form of vacations and tourism, was [perceived to be] a necessity for the social, cultural, and economic health of the nation." The policies of the New Deal promoted new consumer practices, including tourism, in an effort to revitalize the national economy. Business leaders and government officials at national and local levels increasingly boosted the benefits of tourism and the attractions available in specific states and regions of the country, ultimately creating national interest in travel that extended beyond the upper- and upper-middle class Americans who had been the leisure passengers on the railroads and the early motorists. Nascent tourism promotion organizations had the task of educating Americans about the desirability of travel away from home. Employers saw little benefit in paying vacation leave only to have workers to sit at home for a week or more, as the rejuvenative effect of vacation time was believed to be tied to travel. As auto roads proliferated across the nation, opening more corners of America to outsiders, local boosters promoted the attributes that made their communities worthy destinations. Berkowitz writes,

> Wherever a literate person turned during the 1930s, he or she was bombarded with professionally designed images and copy promoting the advantages of two-week vacation opportunities, vacation bargains, and all-in-one destinations. Although no one image or cleverly phrased slogan brought a tourist to a particular region, the aggregate effect of such advertising had created a cultural climate in which tourism could become increasingly accepted as a psychic necessity. More than advertising a particular product, community tourism had advertised a particular way of life.[35]

Nationwide, millions of Americans began to consider tourism definitive of the American character. While widespread changes in employee compensation and developments in infrastructure and technology made travel possible, decades of intensive advertising and

[34] Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 193-194; Karen Dubinsky, "'Everybody Likes Canadians': Canadians, Americans, and the Post-World War II Travel Boom," in *Being Elsewhere*, 324-325.
[35] Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 187, 193-194, 200.

consumer education by tourism promotion organizations made travel desirable. Slogans like "See America First" contributed to evolving ideas about American identity and nationhood. Tourism promoters cast travel as a patriotic ritual of citizenship, transforming an increasingly diverse nation into a unified group of consumers in search of a shared sacred landscape. The prevailing attitude of the time was that Americans were made better citizens through travel that revealed new aspects of their own country.[36]

While reshaping the cultural life of Americans, tourism promotion organizations simultaneously created a commercialized, profit-driven industry of enormous economic power. On the eve of World War II, tourism was one of the largest industries in the nation, as large as automobiles, petroleum, and lumber combined, and 50 percent larger than iron and steel production. More than five million Americans were employed in the tourist industry. Capital investment in travel had reached thirty billion dollars, and travel expenditures of over six billion dollars a year accounted for close to 8 percent of national purchasing power. Nationally, tourism promoters spent $6.5 million a year on advertising.[37] In Wyoming, tourism promotion efforts were centralized in Cheyenne within a state agency called the Department of Commerce and Industry.[38] The character of Wyoming was particularly well-suited to the consumer desires of the day. Shaffer notes that tourists were looking for the "real" America often encapsulated in idealized images of the West: "The West became the antithesis of the northeastern industrial core. Tourists associated it with democracy, freedom, friendliness, and community. They saw only a land of farmers, ranchers, cowboys, and friendly Indians – people who lived close to the land."[39] Accordingly, Wyoming experienced an incredible influx of tourists during the mid-twentieth century whose needs and demands shaped the commercial landscape along the major named and numbered highways in the state.

In 1927 the Wyoming State Legislature established the Department of Commerce and Industry. This department oversaw tourism as part of its responsibility to publicize Wyoming and its products in addition to what was then the department's main concern of colonizing the Riverton and Willwood Federal Irrigation Projects.[40] An early department publication promoted the natural resources, markets, crop yields, weather, highways, and schools of Wyoming before concluding with this section on recreation:

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[36] Shaffer, "Seeing America First."
[37] Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 194, 205-206.
[38] The railroads, and later the Federal Government in various partnerships, heavily promoted tourism to Yellowstone National Park but did not include the wider state. For more information on the promotion of Yellowstone and other parks, see Peter Blodgett, "Selling the Scenery: Advertising and the National Parks, 1916-1933," in *Seeing and Being Seen* and Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 200-205.
[39] Shaffer, "Seeing America First," 175.
[40] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Second Regular Legislative Session, April 1, 1931 to January 1, 1933* (Cheyenne, 1933), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.

Wyoming offers you:
Good roads and wonderful mountain scenery.
Vast forests and beautiful valleys.
Wild flowers in great profusion (only two states have a greater variety).
Thousands of miles of fine trout streams.
The greatest big game country in the United States.
The largest hot springs in the world (Thermopolis) – temperature 135° Fahrenheit – flow, 20 million gallons daily.
Yellowstone National Park (2,142,720 acres), the most marvelous of Uncle Sam's many National Parks. 187,807 tourists visited the Park in 1926.
Splendid hotels, summer resorts and ranches throughout the State.[41]

Although this list of offerings was doubtless intended to promote settlement in the sparsely populated state as well as tourism, it established many of the images and destinations that the Department of Commerce and Industry and its successor agencies would continue to market to tourists throughout the historic period covered in this context, and that the Wyoming Office of Tourism continues to use today.

In 1933 the Department of Commerce and Industry prepared its first biennial report for the Wyoming Legislature. Executive Manager Charles B. Stafford reported that the department responded to around twelve thousand personal letters from people seeking information about travel in Wyoming. The department maintained a repository of photographs suitable for publication in national magazines and newspapers and a library of 16mm films that it distributed nationally. Using the tag line "Wyoming – Worth Knowing" it produced and distributed twenty-five thousand folders, fifty thousand automobile window stickers, and ten thousand brochures, as well as distributed around twenty-five thousand official highway maps. The department also made available a gummed sticker suitable to affix to envelopes or letterhead advertising "Wonderful Wyoming, The Vacationist's Paradise, Smooth, Resilient Oiled Gravel Roads."[42]

By the beginning of the 1930s the Department of Commerce and Industry had already assumed many of the functions carried out by the State's tourism arm through the end of the period covered by this context. The biennial reports prepared between 1931 and the onset of World War II indicate that department personnel responded to some seventy-five thousand personal letters from potential travelers seeking information about Wyoming, and because the data is incomplete for all years within the ten-year window, the actual number of requests and

[41] Department of Commerce and Industry, "Wyoming" (Cheyenne, 1927), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.
[42] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Second Regular Legislative Session*, 17-20.

responses is likely significantly higher. Many letter writers requested travel literature. In 1939 the most popular query was for the official highway map, followed in order of decreasing popularity by informational pamphlets on Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, camping in Wyoming's national forests, rodeos and other outdoor Western-themed shows, dude ranches and resorts, hot springs, and the Sun Dances of the Plains tribes.

Many Americans were prompted to write the Department of Commerce and Industry through national advertising campaigns in leading magazines and newspapers. In the 1930s and early 1940s the department purchased ad space in *Sports Afield*, *American Forests*, *Outdoor Life*, *Field & Stream*, *Spur*, *Newsweek*, *Travel*, *Life*, and *Rocky Mountain Motorist*, among others. In addition, newspapers in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Kansas City ran ads for travel in Wyoming. The department proactively mailed its literature to American Automobile Association (AAA) affiliates, independent auto clubs, commercial organizations that maintained a tourist bureau, tourist and travel bureaus operated by daily newspapers, and life insurance companies. In 1940 the department distributed sixty tons of travel literature to such organizations, including all public libraries in the nation serving urban populations of five thousand or more. It produced and circulated 16mm films of the state to a similar group of interested parties.

In the late 1930s the department launched several special campaigns and events. In addition to maintaining a repository of photographs of the state that were distributed on request to the media, the department provided twelve-foot enlargements of photographs of the Jackson Hole elk herd to go on permanent display in railroad stations in Chicago and New York City. It built sixteen "Wonderful Wyoming" signs strategically set between North Platte and Big Spring, Nebraska, on U.S. Highway 30. Fifty thousand "Wonderful Wyoming" windshield and baggage stickers were distributed in 1937, and in 1938 the department produced and distributed 435 thousand windshield stickers that commemorated the approaching fifty-year anniversary of Wyoming statehood. On May 30, 1938 Governor Leslie A. Miller welcomed the world to visit Wyoming via an international radio broadcast.[43]

The Department of Commerce and Industry claimed that in 1938 the average visitor to Wyoming stayed six-and-a-half days, an increase of four days over data from 1934. Increasing the average length of stay was one of the most important tasks of the department in order to reap the full benefit of the tourist dollar to the lodging, automotive, and food industries. The department asserted,

[43] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Second Regular Legislative Session*; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature, April 1, 1937 to January 1, 1939* (Cheyenne, 1939), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 3, 8-9, 18-21, 25-28; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1939-1940* (Cheyenne, 1940), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 2, 6-7.

> This substantial increase in the average length of stay of the motor tourist is largely due to the fact that in recent years we have obtained such broad distribution beyond our State borders of the pictorial tabloid, "Wonderful Wyoming," and of the official state highway map, together with other supplemental literature, that many tourists have studied these publications before coming into the State and have planned their trips through the State in such manner as to permit visiting a maximum number of the scenic beauty spots, recreational areas and places of historical interest, thus prolonging their stay.[44]

The department also claimed that the expenditures of travelers in Wyoming, both those for whom Wyoming was a destination and those who were traveling through the state, totaled more than fifteen million dollars in 1938, a value of $67 per capita to the residents of the state.

Transcontinental travel was found to have a value of six million dollars in Wyoming, more than four million of which was accrued along U.S. Highway 30. Wyoming hosted more than one million travelers – five times the population of the state – in 357 thousand automobiles during this year, and nearly 60 percent of these autos crossed US 30. At Yellowstone National Park, long considered a bellwether for tourism in Wyoming,[45] visitation increased from just over two hundred thousand in 1927 to 466 thousand in 1938. During this decade 3.2 million tourists, or more than fourteen times the population of Wyoming, visited the park. By 1938, 90 percent of automobiles in Yellowstone either entered or exited through a Wyoming gate, and the average tourist car using one of the Wyoming gates traveled seven hundred miles in Wyoming. Yellowstone tourists spent an estimated one million dollars on gasoline and five million dollars on food and lodging in Wyoming.[46]

In 1940 nearly 193 thousand out-of-state cars were counted at Wyoming ports of entry between June and September, beating the 1939 record of around 185 thousand cars during the same four months. The Department of Commerce and Industry extolled the value of "new money" from out-of-state visitors, pointing out that tourism "does not deplete any resources of the State. We can use our scenery over and over again." During the height of the 1940 tourist season Wyoming collected $1.6 million in taxes on gasoline and $231 thousand in sales tax on $16.5 million spent on meals, lodging, and incidentals. The department conducted a survey of visitors, to which two hundred automobile parties responded. The survey found that 76 percent of respondents patronized tourist camps, 17 percent hotels, resorts, and lodges, 4

[44] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature*, 13.
[45] Wyoming's national forests have also played an important role in attracting tourists to the state; however, because the national forests were frequently used by residents, often for day trips, usage data for the national forests is not as revealing of revenue generated from long-distance visitors in need of lodging and other roadside services.
[46] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature*, 15-18.

percent national forest campgrounds, and 3 percent dude ranches. Visitation to Yellowstone increased 8 percent from 1939 and broke the half-million mark for the first time in park history.[47]

The entry of the United States into World War II sharply curtailed what had been a dramatic increase in tourism to Wyoming from the late 1920s to the early 1940s. The Department of Industry and Commerce's data report for 1942 states, "The tourist industry was all but given up because of war restrictions on transportation. Tourists visiting the state, as indicated by the Yellowstone National Park 'yardstick', dropped off as much as 70 per cent." The department's 1944 report of activities noted that the department had served as "a sort of a clearinghouse for many war activities," while 1943 was the "smallest" travel year since 1929. In 1944 – prior to the conclusion of the war – Yellowstone's visitation data and returns on the gas tax indicated that travel to the park had increased by a third. Nearly eleven thousand servicemen visited Yellowstone, almost 13 percent of the park's total visitation. During the war Yellowstone suspended its bus service and offered only minimal accommodations. The park could not be accessed by air, bus, or rail, but more than twenty-four thousand automobiles entered the park in 1944.[48]

In 1946 the AAA stated, "The most significant reflection of post-war prosperity, will be in a tremendous increase in tourist traffic." The editors of *Holiday* echoed this sentiment, writing,

> In that yesterday before World War Two, vacations, with pay, for those who were so fortunate, usually meant a week or two away from job and housework. Only the minority could afford the time or the cost of going beyond a three or four hundred mile radius from home. But this is the post-war world, for which great sacrifices were made. This is the new world, in which vacations are the rule instead of the exception.[49]

At the conclusion of the war the AAA predicted nearly half of American car owners would visit the West. A postwar increase in tourist-related traffic was clearly evident in Wyoming. The Department of Commerce and Industry's 1946 *Report of Activities* concluded, "You could not have kept the tourists and visitors out of Wyoming this past year with a stone wall."[50] The tourism industry in Wyoming benefited from America's spirit of celebration following the war, but more specifically from a fascination in American popular culture with the West. Western

[47] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1939-1940*, 5, 12, 14.
[48] Department of Commerce and Industry, "Wyoming's Industries, 1942" (Cheyenne, 1942), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1943-1944* (Cheyenne, 1944), RG 0286, Wyoming State Library, 2-4.
[49] Both quotations in Dubinsky, "'Everybody Likes Canadians',"322-324.
[50] Wyoming Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1945-1946* (Cheyenne, 1946), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 6.

films had been popular during the silent era before falling out of favor with the advent of sound. Westerns were relegated to pulp status for over a decade before several major studio productions in 1939 reinstated the genre's popularity, which would not peak until the 1950s. Western radio dramas such as *The Lone Ranger* were also very popular between the 1930s and 1960s. When Americans began purchasing televisions in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Western programs quickly became audience favorites. In 1959 twenty-six Westerns aired during primetime, and Westerns comprised almost one-quarter of television programming. Among the top ten television shows of the late 1950s were eight Westerns.[51]

Around 1947 the Department of Commerce and Industry was reorganized as the Commerce and Industry Commission. The commission produced literature and national advertisements that relied more and more on popular ideas about the West. Whereas earlier tourism publications had featured dramatic photographs of mountains and other impressive vistas, thermal features, and big game animals, publications from the 1950s emphasized Wyoming's suitability for family vacations, generally depicting a father, mother, and two children being entertained and educated on vacation in the state.[52] Prior to 1955 Western television programs and many radio programs and films of this genre were geared toward children, suggesting that parents considered children's interests when planning family vacations. In 1952 and again in 1954 the commission released comic books that depicted typical families of four touring the state. In the 1954 publication the family is magically transported to Wyoming by "Wyoming Joe," a mounted cowboy who leaps from their television screen and offers to show them the "New West."[53]

Both comic books were well received within the tourism industry. The commission noted in 1952,

> This year, a brand new and strikingly different publicity idea was used, utilizing one of the most popular mediums in existence today, the "comic book" type of magazine. This novel 16-page, full color publication on Wyoming has created much interest in Wyoming

[51] Susan Sessions Rugh, *Are We There Yet: The Golden Age of American Family Vacations* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2008), 92-93; Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor, eds., *Hollywood's West: The American Frontier in Film, Television, and History* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009).

[52] Historian Hal K. Rothman notes that recreation tourism, travel involving physical experiences with the outdoors, was the dominant form of tourism between the 1920s and mid-1940s. Following World War II marketing strategies for western tourism shifted to entertainment tourism, which characterized the West as "a playground, the American dreamscape, historic, mythic, and actual . . ." and more closely approximated the West of popular culture. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 23-24.

[53] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report, 1947-1948* (Cheyenne, 1948), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Commerce and Industry Commission, "Wonderful Wyoming" (Cheyenne, 1952), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Commerce and Industry Commission, "Wyoming: The Cowboy State" (Cheyenne, 1954), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.

> vacations and, in addition, has brought our state much publicity because of its uniqueness. The publication was written up in newspapers all over the country as well as in several national magazines, including Time.[54]

This version of the comic won the Midwest Writers Association national award in 1953, influencing the commission's decision to issue another "larger and more attractive" comic the following biennium.[55] In addition to the comics, other commission publications from this era often relied on line drawings and other illustrations to convey popular ideas and conjure exotic destinations that had earlier been depicted through photographs. Concerned that Wyoming advertisements had no cohesive theme, in 1955 the commission approved the creation and use of "Cowpony Joe," an anthropomorphic horse the agency hoped would aid readers in remembering the ad copy they had seen about Wyoming. Cowpony Joe, a "fiery-eyed waddie," was intended to be a "modern-day version of Wyoming's famed license plate bucking horse" who enjoyed Wyoming the way visitors would, fishing, taking photographs, and even riding another horse.[56] Cowpony Joe's lifespan appears to have been limited, as he is absent from the commission's publications after 1958.

The daily activities of the Commerce and Industry Commission closely mirrored those of the prewar years. According to biennial reports from this era, commission staff received and responded to a large volume of personal letters requesting information about Wyoming. Many of these requests were accompanied by clippings from national magazines or newspapers in wide circulation. In the late 1940s and 1950s advertisements were frequently placed in magazines like *National Geographic*, *Field & Stream*, *Holiday*, *Newsweek*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Sunset*, and others. In a departure from prewar trends, advertisements were also purchased in women's magazines such as *Mademoiselle*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, and *House Beautiful*, perhaps indicating the increasing importance of family vacations to Wyoming.[57] Magazine campaigns seem to have been very successful. The May 17, 1948 edition of *Time*, which included an ad for Wyoming vacations, hit newsstands on Friday, May 14. By Monday morning the commission had already received 273 inquiries based on this ad, while regular subscribers had yet to receive their copies of the magazine in the mail.[58]

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[54] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report, 1951-1952* (Cheyenne, 1952), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.
[55] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Fourth Biennial Report, 1953-1954* (Cheyenne, 1954), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 11.
[56] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report, 1955-1956* (Cheyenne, 1956), RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.
[57] Karen Dubinsky has commented on the broader trend of advertising vacations to women during this time period, writing, "It was commonly held that, within families, women made the decision about where to travel." Quoted from "Everybody Likes Canadians," 323.
[58] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*.

During the postwar years commission staff began attending travel shows on a regular basis. These shows were typically located within the markets from which Wyoming was drawing the most visitors, the West Coast and Midwest, particularly the greater Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles metropolitan areas. States like Iowa, Ohio, Missouri, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota were also large markets for Wyoming tourism. In the 1950s a greater emphasis was placed on drawing Texans to the state. Ad placement in newspapers also followed these lucrative markets.[59] The commission continued to produce photographs and 16mm film for distribution on request. Radio advertisements were aired in key markets such as Chicago. In 1953 the first "TV films" were produced. By 1956 nine Wyoming films had aired on television stations in Los Angeles, Detroit, and Cleveland, and two others were aired nationally by the National Broadcasting Company.[60]

The commission published a variety of literature during the postwar years. The "Paint-Brush Map," which had first appeared in the late 1930s, was very popular in the 1940s and in distribution at least through the early 1950s. This stylized state map presented a cartoon version of historic and cultural offerings around Wyoming. The tag line "Wonderful Wyoming" continued to be used on general informational material, as well as "Wyoming, Frontier for Fun" and "Wyoming, Wonderland of the West." The commission also published directories for dude ranches, campgrounds, and motels in the state. 1950 saw the release of "Ski Wyoming," a new publication describing fifteen downhill ski areas in the state, many of which were in the national forests. The 1939-1940 biennial report had been the first to identify winter sports as a promising tourist opportunity for Wyoming, but World War II caused a setback in winter tourism development that only began to reverse in the 1950s.[61]

In 1948 the commission estimated that 1.3 million visitors left seventy-five million dollars in the state through the purchase of gas, oil, lodging, meals, and other items. Yellowstone alone attracted one million visitors, doubling the record of five hundred thousand visitors set in 1940. In 1947 and 1948, 283 thousand cars and 305 thousand cars entered the park, respectively. It seems likely that Yellowstone was not prepared to deal with this dramatic increase in visitation, because the park's numbers slumped by fifteen thousand in 1949 following complaints from the public regarding the condition of housing, eating, and sanitary facilities at the park. Despite the temporary decline at Yellowstone, Wyoming's highway officials

[59] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report, 1949-1950* (Cheyenne, 1950) RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 6; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report*.
[60] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report*, 6; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Fourth Biennial Report*, 7; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report*.
[61] Department of Commerce and Industry, "Paint-Brush Map" (Cheyenne, 1938), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report*, 6; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1939-1940*, 21.

anticipated a 10 to 15 percent increase in traffic in 1950. The commission claimed that Wyoming received over one hundred million dollars in interstate travel in 1951.[62] From 1950 to 1954 Wyoming hosted between two-and-a-half and three million visitors each year, with a rate of expenditures ranging from $85.9 million to $124.1 million. The average party spent around five days in the state. Yellowstone saw a little more than one million visitors each year. By the end of this five-year period Grand Teton National Park was also hosting one million visitors. The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission began reporting an increase in out-of-state hunting and fishing licenses in the late 1940s. Between 1950 and 1954 out-of-state applications for antelope licenses more than tripled, deer licenses were in excess of five times the prior demand, and bear licenses nearly doubled. In 1956 three million tourists generated $136 million for Wyoming, including $33.9 million spent on food and beverages, $26.2 million spent on gas, and $35.5 million spent on accommodations.[63]

During the biennium of 1957 and 1958, 6.8 million tourists visited Wyoming, twenty times the resident population of the state. Ninety-seven percent of these visitors traveled by car, staying on average between five and six days. During these two years approximately one out of every twenty-five Americans visited Wyoming. Wyoming residents enjoyed the largest per capita return on tourism in the nation, as the $296.6 million spent by tourists yielded around nine hundred dollars per resident. Tourists spent $80 million on food, $62.2 million on lodging, and $65.2 million on gas.[64]

Steady growth in tourism during the 1950s proved that the travel boom predicted at the conclusion of World War II was realistic. Nationally, expenditures for all travel – both pleasure and business – more than doubled between 1950 and 1960. The travel industry in Wyoming was the third largest income producer in 1960. Studies of the tourist industry in Wyoming completed during the late 1950s and early 1960s highlighted significant trends. One was the importance of the state's motels in the tourism economy. The 534 motels in Wyoming in 1961 offered 8,691 units. These businesses were concentrated in ten of the state's twenty-three counties. Over 25 percent of the motels were along U.S. Highway 30 and 34.5 percent of these businesses were located in the counties adjacent to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. Motels accounted for more than 50 percent of the tourism industry's gross receipts in 1958. During the previous four years motel lodging sales had increased by over 58 percent. Motor courts and motels were mainly small, owner-operated businesses. As a group, they were estimated to be the fourth largest employer and third largest industry in Wyoming. Out-of-state travelers preferred a roadside motel to a downtown hotel: over 80 percent of the motel business was from non-resident travelers, in contrast to only 65 percent

[62] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report*, 7; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*.
[63] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Fourth Biennial Report*, 6; Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*.
[64] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Biennial Report, 1957-1958* (Cheyenne, 1958).

of the state's hotel clientele. The Wyoming lodging industry was in line with broader trends. Nationally motels experienced an 86 percent gain between 1954 and 1958.[65]

Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks were top destinations for vacation travelers. A study of the out-of-state tourist market listed eight different travel routes through Wyoming, and most of them included the national parks. In fact, 40 percent of Wyoming's tourists saw very little of the state other than the routes in and out of the two parks. A large proportion of tourists took a direct route to Yellowstone and Grand Teton, spent several days there, and then departed by the most direct route. Nearly 65 percent of the visitors to Wyoming spent at least one night in Yellowstone; 40 percent also spent the night in the Grand Teton and Bighorn regions. A third of the state's visitors traveled more widely over more than eight days. The draw of Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks was paradoxical – it brought visitors to the state, but they traveled primarily on beelines to the parks. The challenge of getting tourists to stay longer in Wyoming remained a dominant one.[66]

In contrast to the rapid growth of tourism following World War II, the 1960s and 1970s saw steady visitation numbers and maturation in the tourism industry. In the early 1960s the recently renamed and restructured Wyoming Travel Commission adopted a new slogan – "This is Big Wyoming," or simply "Big Wyoming" – that would remain in use at least until 1990. The "Big Wyoming" campaign marked a return to emphasizing the natural wonders of Wyoming through photographs of the state's famous landmarks. Popular ideas about the West and Western history were less important during this period than awe-inspiring scenery and outdoor experiences. In the early 1960s the travel commission began offering tourist clinics for towns in Wyoming that served a large number of tourists. These clinics educated business owners on visitor expectations and coached them in how to meet customer demands.[67]

The Wyoming Travel Commission maintained many of the daily activities of its predecessors. It purchased advertisements in *National Geographic*, *Life*, *Sports Afield*, *Sunset*, *Holiday*, *Field & Stream*, and numerous others, as well as newspapers and radio stations within its major markets in the West and Midwest. In April 1966 *National Geographic* carried "Wyoming: High, Wide, and Windy," a forty-one-page article on the state. During the 1963-1964 biennium the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) aired three Wyoming events on network television. The travel commission began producing television commercials in 1970. Wyoming

[65] Robert F. Gwinner Jr., "An Analysis of the Travel Industry in the State of Wyoming," (PhD diss., University of Arkansas, 1963), 105, 107, 110 and 112.
[66] Robert F. Gwinner Jr., *A Study of Wyoming's Out-of-State Tourist Market* (Laramie: University of Wyoming College of Commerce and Industry, Division of Business and Economic Research, 1962), 27-33, 54-55.
[67] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1963-1964* (Cheyenne, 1964), RG 0221, Wyoming State Library; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1965-1967* (Cheyenne, 1967) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.

native Curt Gowdy featured outdoor recreation in the state on his ABC program *American Sportsman* in the early 1970s.[68]

The commission continued to receive and respond to a voluminous correspondence, to maintain a library of photographs and 16mm film, and to attend travel shows in its major markets. Promotional literature during this period included a full-color vacation guide titled "This is Big Wyoming," an accommodations directory, a camping directory, and a ski directory. The growing importance of winter tourism is evident in editorials published in *Wyoming Motel News* from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s. The lodging community was hopeful about the possibility of turning communities like Jackson into year-round destinations. In 1970 the south entrance to Yellowstone National Park opened to snowmobiles for the first time. Other winter offerings included fourteen ski areas, snowmobiling in seven national forests, ice fishing, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and viewing the elk herd at the National Elk Refuge near Jackson. [69] The growing importance of snow sports merited a new travel commission publication, "Winter Sports in Big Wyoming." Another new publication was "Family Water Sports Guide to Big Wyoming." In 1975 the commission began publishing "Afoot," a guide to climbing and backpacking.[70]

The pattern of steady numbers of tourists was altered by gasoline shortages and high prices as well as an inflation crisis and recession during 1973 and 1974. The cost of travel rose 15 percent in 1974 over the previous year. [71] Vacation travel was on the cusp of change throughout the United States by this time due to social factors. The children of the postwar baby boom were growing up and were not as willing to pack the family station wagon for a vacation. Road trips with friends began to supplant the family vacation as the idealized way to travel. Those who continued to take driving vacations were more likely to travel to a specific destination, one close to home, and stay, in contrast to the long, constantly on the move, meandering car trips of the previous decades. While some families continued the tradition of a car trip to a national park, others chose to spend their time at a single destination resort. Travel advertising began to focus on niche marketing. While motels continued to serve recreational travelers, they increasingly relied on business travelers to be profitable.[72]

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[68] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1963-1964*, *1965-1967*; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1969-1971* (Cheyenne, 1971) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1971-1973* (Cheyenne, 1973) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.

[69] *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (December 1965): 8, 12; *WMN* 5 (May 1966): 9; *WMN* 6 (February 1967): 1; *WMN* 7 (May 1967): 1; *WMN* 7 (April 1968): 1, 5; *WMN* 8 (May 1968): 1; *WMN* 8 (January 1969): 7; *WMN* 9 (December 1969): 6; *WMN* 10 (December 1970): 7.

[70] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1963-1964*, *1965-1967*, *1969-1971*, *1971-1973*; Wyoming Travel Commission, "Afoot: Backpacking, Climbing Big Wyoming" (Cheyenne, 1975) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.

[71] *Wyoming Motel News* 14 (February 1974): 5; *WMN* 15 (February 1975): 9.

[72] Rugh, *Are We There Yet*, 180-181; *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (September 1965): 8; *WMN* 15 (February 1975): 9.

DEVELOPMENT OF AUTOMOBILE-ORIENTED LODGING IN WYOMING, 1913-1975

At the beginning of the twentieth century hotels were the only type of overnight lodging available to travelers in most of the United States. These properties were typically found in larger towns, and almost always within reasonable proximity to a railroad, which was still the dominant means of travel. By the 1930s Wyoming's larger towns had at least one hotel. Business collectives and local chambers of commerce collaborated in building and promoting hotels, which were seen as essential to prosperous business communities. Local newspapers promoted the hotels, and these buildings became landmarks of economic energy. When the automobile became part of the tourist economy, hotel owners marketed their properties to motorists.

The status of hotels could not overcome the disadvantages they held for motorists. Hotels were inconveniently located in crowded downtown areas. They lacked parking for cars and were oriented to serve train travelers and pedestrians. Hotels built after 1920 were located at the edge of business districts and so were harder to locate, especially when travelers were exhausted from a day's drive. Motorists were tired and also dirty, unlike train passengers, and were embarrassed by their appearance upon arrival in grand hotel lobbies. Because the ground floors of many hotels contained restaurants, coffee shops, and rented meeting rooms – which many times were the spaces generating the most profit for the hotel – travelers were obliged to pass through crowded public areas devoid of the privacy they later came to enjoy in lodging oriented toward automobile travel.[73]

Camping was an alternative to lodging at a hotel. Motorists had the freedom to stop anywhere at any time, unlike train travelers. Motoring itself was a form of recreation, affording tourists a sense of adventure and a chance to interact with the scenery they had come to enjoy. Camping without explicit permission on private land also saved travelers money, not only on hotel rates, but also on tips, parking fees, and other small charges. Money saved on lodging left more for gasoline, and thus led to longer trips. Motor companies began selling products such as the "Auto-Camp Comfort Outfit," which consisted of a collapsible folding tent, bed, chair, table, and settee. The idea of free accommodations was popular in the 1910s and 1920s, but destruction of private property and litter caused landowners to post "no trespassing" signs and fence off popular camping spots.[74] In 1927 T. A. Shaw, a rancher near Wheatland, offered a one hundred-dollar reward for the arrest and conviction of tourists who started a fire that destroyed three buildings on his property.[75] Wyomingites also had cause to

[73] Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995): 169-170; John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996): 23-29; Heyward D. Schrock, "A Room for the Night: Evolution of Roadside Lodging in Wyoming," in *Annals of Wyoming* 75 (2003): 31-33.
[74] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 170; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 31-33; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 33-34.
[75] Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 34.

complain about hitchhikers who lined the highways, abandoned automobiles at the edges of towns, and "obnoxious" advertisements painted on rock features along the Lincoln Highway.[76]

The increase in automobile traffic in the 1920s resulted in the emergence of municipal campgrounds. These facilities were located along principal roadways in city parks or near downtown businesses. Campgrounds channeled auto traffic to spaces that were convenient and affordable for visiting motorists and that could subvert irritation and inconvenience to local landowners. Amenities included parking, camp sites, and sanitary facilities, and later expanded to electricity, picnic tables, and recreation areas. The footprints of several of these municipal campgrounds survive in places like Lions Park in Cheyenne, Hamblin Park in Evanston, and Hot Springs State Park in Thermopolis. In the summer of 1920 approximately forty thousand people camped at the municipal campground in Cheyenne. Although these places are important landmarks in the evolution of motorists' lodging across Wyoming, none are thought to retain sufficient integrity to be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places in this context, as modern municipal park amenities have replaced the landscape features motorists of the 1920s would have recognized as belonging to auto camps. Local businesses considered auto tourists a boon to the economic community. In 1920 the businessmen of Thermopolis estimated that auto campers contributed "approximately $30,000" to the local economy through the purchase of groceries and automobile supplies and services.

The downside to municipal car camps was that these inexpensive (often free) campgrounds attracted undesired transients and other long-term squatters as well as tourists who truly intended to move on after a night or two. As cars became cheaper, more budget travelers began using the campgrounds, discouraging the affluent travelers who had been the first to own automobiles from staying there. To discourage extended stays, by the mid-1920s municipalities were increasingly charging entrance fees and added costs for amenities such as telephones, firewood, and showers and other sanitary facilities. Time limits on stays also were imposed. In 1923 Cheyenne began charging fifty cents a night for its best facilities, though it also maintained some free camping. Once the idea of monetizing car camps was introduced, municipal campgrounds were quickly replaced by private business owners eager to capitalize on the new market.

Private campgrounds offered travelers the ability to purchase groceries, cook meals in a communal kitchen, wash clothes in a laundry, use a telephone, and receive basic automobile services, all on site. Competition grew between private enterprises, and campground owners sought new ways to improve their offerings over nearby businesses. By the late 1920s cabins rather than tents were a common feature of private commercial campgrounds; by the end of decade tent sites had been largely phased out in favor of standalone cabins, and the earliest motor courts were born. At first many cabins were bare, but soon owners began to furnish them with tables, chairs, beds, and stoves, and to supply them with electricity. Rather than encouraging a communal, neighborly experience focused on the outdoors, cabins increasingly

[76] T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 2nd Ed., Revised (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 423.

encouraged privacy and socialization among one's traveling companions within indoor accommodations accessible for longer periods of the year and in inclement weather.[77]

Motor courts emerged in cities and small towns along the major named highways in Wyoming. At least one enterprise, the Big Horn Camps, Inc., was formed to unite several shareholders in Sheridan, Cody, Cheyenne, Shoshoni, and perhaps other Wyoming towns in constructing "rustic cabin camps" – that is, log cabin motor courts – "in 14 Wyoming towns and scenic localities," including Sheridan, Buffalo, Muddy Pass, Gillette, Devil's Tower [sic], Lusk, Cheyenne, Wheatland, Douglas, Casper, Thermopolis, Basin, and Cody, as well as Spearfish, South Dakota. Construction was slated to begin in the spring of 1928 at a cost estimate of seventy-five hundred dollars.[78]

Haphazard site dispersal had been typical of tent camping, but the greater permanence of individual cabins within emerging motor courts lent itself to increasing formalization of the overall landscape of the lodging property. Standard layouts included rows of freestanding cabins, or more often U- or L-shaped configurations around a central open space. Parking spaces were clearly assigned, and communal green space was emphasized with lawn furniture. Often resembling tiny villages, cabins were placed close enough to the road to be visible to passing motorists but far enough from the road to appear private. In the 1930s subtle linguistic changes began to inform the lodging industry. "Court" became more common than "camp" and "cottage" began to replace "cabin." Physically, lodging became more homey with additions like closets, rugs, dressing tables, chairs, mirrors, curtains, radios, and bathrooms complete with bathing facilities. Many individual units were heated and insulated for use over longer periods of the year. Attached covered parking became very popular in the 1930s. In addition to the groceries and communal kitchens that had been available in the 1920s, many motor court operators chose to add coffee shops or restaurants to the premises. Just as in the 1920s most motor courts offered branded (i.e., Sinclair, Standard Oil, Pennzoil, etc.) gasoline and other oil-based products for sale on site.[79]

In Wyoming motor court units, often called cabins or cottages, typically took the form of small gable-roofed buildings constructed of frame or log. Along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30, cabins were typically frame. Numerous examples of these spare, simple buildings are seen in postcards.[80] Perhaps the best surviving example is the Black and Orange Cabins at

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[77] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 171-174; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 33-34; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 34-35; Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 408, 423.

[78] "Chain of Log Cabin Camping Grounds is Planned for Wyoming," *Shoshoni Enterprise* (Shoshoni, WY), November 4, 1927, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 35. It remains unclear if this chain of camp grounds was constructed. No evidence has been found to suggest the business venture was successful.

[79] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 174-177; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 38; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 35-36.

[80] For example, the Minnehaha Camp in Cheyenne, the Silver Cabins in Hanna, the Sunset Camp in Medicine Bow, and the Ideal Motel in Rawlins. Postcard, Minnehaha Camp, 1928, box 713; Postcard, Silver Cabins, 1942, box 716; Postcard, Sunset Camp, 1940, box 718; Postcard, Ideal Motel, n.d., box 720. All in Coll. 10674, James

Fort Bridger. These cabins were constructed in 1925 and operated until 1936 near historic Fort Bridger, an important site in Western history that served as a tourist draw for those making a cross-country journey on the Lincoln Highway. These cabins were constructed simply: the side-gable roofs consist of 2" x 4" lumber joined at the peak without cross braces, ridge boards, or trusses, and the roofs sit atop a wall structure composed of 2" x 4" lumber covered in weatherboards. The interior walls are composed of fiberboards; otherwise the cabins are not insulated. The interior of each unit, eight in total, measures 13'11" x 10'2". Covered parking provided by the gabled roofs measures 14' x 7'7". These cabins are also representative of many, if not most, frame motor courts that existed during this period in Wyoming, in that they are devoid of any overt nationally-popular architectural style. The property is distinct from other similar lodging properties in the state in its historic use of orange paint with black trim to catch the eyes of passing motorists.[81]

Highways giving access to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks seem more likely to have offered lodging properties constructed of log. Two possible explanations for the prevalence of log motor courts in the northern part of Wyoming are: (1) log architecture more closely matched the theme of a journey to Wyoming's famous parks and through the surrounding national forests, and appealed to travelers' expectations and (2) logs were more readily available near the state's national forests. In contrast, many of the towns along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30 did not have a local source for finished logs. Fieldwork and archival research have produced only one late 1950s log motor court along US 30,[82] while several log motor courts have been documented in towns like Buffalo, Jackson, and Pinedale. Camp O' the Pines in Pinedale was constructed one block from U.S. Highway 191, which was originally planned as a scenic byway that diverged from the Lincoln Highway at Rock Springs and connected motorists to Jackson Hole, Grand Teton National Park, and the south entrance to Yellowstone. The history of Camp O' the Pines illustrates an important but often overlooked aspect of motor courts: although built primarily to serve as tourist lodging, cabins sometimes served other purposes in their communities. They might act as short-term rentals for workmen or, as at Camp O' the Pines, as temporary lodging for ranching women who were soon to deliver a baby and wanted to be near a doctor when they went into labor. Particularly in winter, when tourists were few, repurposing tourist lodging in this way must have been very attractive to business owners.

Camp O' the Pines has been remodeled and renamed several times since initial construction; however, the oldest, circa 1929 cabins are constructed of saddle-notched logs that originally projected beyond the gable-roofed eaves and decreased in length as the logs ascended toward the roof. (Water damage necessitated shortening the exaggerated log corners in the 1960s.) The cabins are approximately 25' x 14' and were originally designed so that each

L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

[81] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, Site 48UT2648, Black and Orange Cabin Complex. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.

[82] The Longhorn Lodge in Rock River dates to circa 1957 and includes several log cabins in addition to a log motel unit, a log restaurant, and a large freestanding neon sign.

cabin contained two lodging units. Much like the Black and Orange Cabins and other motor courts of the era, a freestanding outhouse served all cabins.[83] Unlike frame motor courts, which often carry no overt national style, Camp O' the Pines and other log motor courts displayed elements of the Rustic Revival style. The Rustic Revival emerged in the early twentieth century and was greatly influenced by the architecture of federal land management agencies that were creating buildings intended to harmonize with the natural world. Among the hallmarks of Rustic Revival style are rejection of the regularity and symmetry of the industrial world and reliance on native wood and stone materials.

A small number of motor courts in Wyoming used elements of picturesque or romantic styles such as the Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The remaining portion of the Sunset Motor Court in Evanston incorporates elements of Mission Revival style, including stucco walls, tile awnings, and a shaped parapet. The Indian Village Motor Lodge of Cheyenne meshed several popular images of the West into a single lodging property. A concrete teepee resembling the traditional housing of Northern Plains tribes housed the motor court's office, while the lodging units reflected the Mission Revival style through the use of concrete or stucco construction, non-structural vigas, and a shaped parapet. Covered parking was integrated into the flat roof and separated individual lodging units from one another.[84]

In the 1930s the lodging industry began to embrace a national shift away from romantic visual metaphors embodied in the picturesque architectural styles toward modern, clean design. Commenting on this new aesthetic, E. H. Lightfoot, consulting architect with *Tourist Court Journal*, wrote, "Regardless of where a court is erected it should be built of stucco with a sand finish, using modern architecture with its attractive simplicity and simple lines, and be painted pure white." Widely known as the Streamline Moderne, the style was applied often enough to lodging properties that it was sometimes called "Motor Court Moderne." The Branding Iron Auto Lodge in Laramie referenced the Streamline Moderne style through its curving form, stucco exterior, and continuous bands of horizontal lines that followed the perimeter of its flat roof.[85]

The Great Depression affected all aspects of the American economy, yet the rise of tourism during the Depression and the continued sale of automobiles and dependent products such as gasoline ensured that middle-class vacationing Americans still needed overnight lodging. Few motor courts in Wyoming appear to have failed as a result of the Depression, and, as mentioned above, many improvements were made to lodging properties during this time. Nationally, the Federal Housing Administration's decision to permit financing of cottages under two thousand dollars without a down payment allowed more lodging businesses to open. In 1933 the American Automobile Association (AAA) estimated that thirty thousand "tourist cottage and camp establishments" lined American highways. Many of these lodging

[83] Rheba Massey, "Log Cabin Motel," National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form (Cheyenne, 1992).
[84] Postcard, Indian Village Motor Lodge, Postcards-Motels-Wyoming, P98-19/1, Wyoming State Archives.
[85] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-179. Photograph of Branding Iron, 178. Lightfoot quoted, 179.

properties were constructed and assembled by the business owner or local craftsmen. Kits of prefabricated lumber could be purchased from local lumberyards or traveling salesmen. Many other outfits were likely based on plans available in popular magazines, or were constructed based on what a business owner had observed at another site. Still other buildings were adaptively reused and retrofitted to meet tourists' needs.[86]

As the Great Depression worsened, out-of-work architects began to look to the still-growing lodging industry for new commissions. Similarly, manufacturers of domestic wares discovered the motor court's potential as a showroom for stylish new products in a sluggish economy. As a result, lodging properties and their interiors underwent a period of greater standardization as architects and designers realized that growth in this market remained steady despite the state of the national economy. In addition, lodging properties became disseminators of modernism to middle-class Americans spending the night in these "tiny, roadside exhibition centers." The motor court had transformed from a "home away from home" to an aspirational space more modern and luxurious than many homes.[87]

The onset of World War II, however, and especially the diversion of automobile production to war machines and the rationing of gas, introduced a period of economic hardship for automobile-oriented lodging properties. Although hotels benefited from the resulting increase in train travel, many motor courts did not survive the war years. Following the conclusion of the war in 1945, the automobile industry not only regained but quickly exceeded prewar manufacturing numbers. Nationwide, there were sixty thousand motor courts or motels by 1956. The lodging industry enjoyed a construction boom starting in the postwar years and continuing through the late 1960s, a period of upward mobility during which many Americans also purchased houses and cars. The Federal Interstate Highway Program of 1956 improved transportation across the nation and increased the ease of traveling from one part of the country to another. While Wyoming had contained 375 automobile-oriented accommodations in 1938, by 1958 the Wyoming Travel Commission was reporting a total of 570 properties.[88]

The postwar construction boom in automobile-oriented lodging loosely marks the transition from motor courts to motels, as defined as property types in this document. While the hospitality industry as whole began to embrace the term "motel" during the late 1940s, many business owners in Wyoming retained use of "motor court" or "court" until the late 1950s. As such, the use of "motor court" or "motel" by individual lodging businesses should not be considered definitive of the property type; instead, a comparison must be made between the physical characteristics of the property and the registration requirements outlined in this document. There may be a short window in which motor courts and motels were being constructed simultaneously, most likely during the late 1940s and/or early 1950s, but in general motor courts were far less likely to be newly constructed after World War II. There

[86] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-180; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 38-39; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 36.
[87] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 180-181.
[88] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 181-182; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 36.

were, however, many existing motor courts that continued to operate after the war, some of which remain viable businesses today. Over time, some lodging properties that existed as motor courts prior to the war were expanded with the addition of linear multi-room units in keeping with motel construction. Because lodging properties are commercial enterprises that must meet consumer demand to survive, many motor courts, motels, and hybrid properties will demonstrate an evolution in form that reflects changing industry standards and customer expectations.

After World War II motor hotels, or "motels," emerged in a consistent form. Instead of individual cabins, a string of private rooms, each sharing a partition wall or walls with the next, were integrated into a single building under a shared roof. Whereas hotels typically contained interior corridors from which access to individual rooms was gained, motel rooms opened directly from parking lots found in the center of the complex or, less commonly, to the rear of the building. Initially, motels were single-story buildings. Toward the end of the period covered by this context, some two-story units were constructed. Similar to the motor courts, newly constructed motels often had a U- or L-shaped footprint, or consisted of two freestanding parallel buildings. In all cases individual units opened to the center of the property, which most often contained parking and sometimes also a shared green space. The rear elevations of early motels were typically devoid of architectural expression and may even have consisted of blank walls, unless a small window in each unit was present. Later, however, some motels chose to site parking behind the individual units. In these cases, a rear door within the motel room gave access to assigned parking.

Many motels of the 1950s and 1960s were not overtly stylish and were recognizable chiefly according to their function as modern lodging properties. Whereas many motor court units had been constructed of log or frame, most motels used one or a combination of the following materials: brick, concrete block, stone, and stucco. A smaller number were constructed of frame. Roofs were typically flat or gabled, often with a wide overhang that sheltered the entrance to a motel room and the open trunk of a car in the event of inclement weather. In these ways, many motels reflected the design of nationally-popular American ranch houses, the dominant domestic form of the mid-twentieth century. Unlike most ranch houses, motels typically contained steel casement windows, fixed multi-pane windows, or glass blocks. Toward the end of period covered by this context, large single-pane fixed windows came to dominate new construction. Lodging units were typically articulated with details emphasizing that many travelers were on holiday. For example, cheery color was often applied to doors, to panels beneath windows, or to the balcony of two-story buildings. Windows might also be enlivened with awnings, valences, or other special treatments to the surrounds. Sometimes decorative concrete curtain walls drew attention to a particular aspect of the property.

Because of the uniformity of many motel buildings, and because of the need to attract motorists in moving vehicles, most lodging properties distinguished themselves from other businesses through large, often freestanding neon signs. These signs existed in a great variety of forms, sizes, and shapes, but many were designed with a great deal of whimsicality

and imagination. Sadly, many older neon signs have been replaced with graphic, backlit signs in an effort to reassure the public that older motels remain viable lodging options. The neon signs that remain should be considered important features that can convey integrity to historic motels. Names of motels were also important ways to appeal to travelers specifically in search of the West they had seen in popular television shows and movies. Although some lodging properties were named pragmatically – for example, Bower Court operated by Lawrence and Esther Bower in Lander and the Rawlins Motel in Rawlins – many other motels evoked romantic ideas. The Covered Wagon Motel in Lusk, the Firebird Motor Hotel in Cheyenne, the Sage and Sand Motel in Saratoga, and the Ranger Motel in Laramie are only a few of the many motels in Wyoming in which a name and perhaps some aspects of a neon sign suggested an exotic destination, while the motel buildings were interchangeable with those found all across America.

Those Wyoming motels that distinguished themselves through overt references to nationally-popular styles seem to have done so in a limited number of ways. First, like the motor courts, there were a small number of motels that used elements of Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The Wyoming Motel in Cheyenne is one of these, chiefly because of its tiled roofs and stucco exterior. Second, another small group of motels exhibited a late use of Streamline Moderne, such as the El Rancho Motel (now the Federal Inn) in Riverton. The most common nod to popular national styles, however, came in the form of exaggerated modern rooflines, including hyperbolic canopies and barrel-vaulted walkways. The Ideal Motel in Rawlins was updated sometime in the mid- to late-1950s to include an on-site Standard Oil station under an exaggerated shed roof. The Bel Air Inn, also of Rawlins, used barrel-vaulted roofs to emphasize its restaurant, bar, and covered walkways between buildings.[89] Often the component of the motel property with the most overt nod to the Exaggerated Modern style was the motel office, as at the Sands Motel in Cheyenne. While the U-shaped motel does little to distinguish individual rooms, the office is sheltered by a multi-pitched canopy that dominates the principal facade.

In contrast to low-budget exteriors, many motel owners emphasized comfortable interiors and expended funds to furnish them. Amenities included air conditioning, telephones, and radios, some of which were advertised prominently on neon signs. Brand name mattresses were frequently listed in the description on the back of complimentary motel postcards. In 1949 *Hotel Management* (which also published on the motel trade) offered the following list of items that should be included in a typical motel guest room:

> Innerspring mattresses and box springs, – woolen blankets; Heavy Chenille bed spreads; Percale sheets. – Dresser with large mirror; Writing desk (all furniture is of oak). – Two large easy chairs; One or two straight back chairs. – Luggage rack. – One or more smoking stands and at least three ash trays. – Large floor lamp,

[89] Postcard, Ideal Motel, 1964, box 720; Postcard, Bel Air Inn, 1970, box 720. Both in Coll. 10674, James L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

> bed lamp, desk lamp and ceiling light (all with 100-watt bulbs, including bath). – Wall to wall carpeting. – Rubber mat outside door. – 12 by 16-inch original water color picture; Several prints – some in groups – giving the room a homey lived-in look. – Cross ventilation – two large windows. – Venetian blinds and either sheer curtains or colorful draperies. – Window air conditioners; Ceiling fans; gas heaters. – Coin-operated radio on night stand. – Closets and drawers lined with quilted satin paper. – Closets have many coat hangers and a laundry bag.
>
> Writing desk contains 10 sheets of writing paper; 7 envelopes; scratch pad; several post cards; blotter; business cards; sewing kit with buttons, thread and needle, pins, rubber bands, paper clips. – Telegram blanks; laundry and dry cleaning list; sample coffee shop menu; calendar and house directory. Bathrooms have: Tile shower; Plastic shower curtain; Bath mat; Facial tissue in chrome container; Two 12-oz. drinking glasses; Three bars of soap; Four face towels, four bath towels, two wash cloths.[90]

Nationally, the swimming pool became an important amenity at many lodging properties during the 1950s; however, motels in Wyoming responded in a limited way to this trend. Very few locally-owned "mom-and-pop" motels appear to have added swimming pools. The Frontier Motel of Cheyenne is one exception – owners claimed to have "Wyoming's Largest and most Luxurious" pool, which was heated and filtered and measured fifty by one hundred feet.[91] The relative unpopularity of swimming pools in Wyoming likely relates to the short summer season. Many years an outdoor pool would not be attractive until mid-June and might close again as early as mid-September, rendering it unusable for as much as three-quarters of the year. Motel owners noted that swimming pools were expensive and time-consuming to maintain, and a relatively small number of guests used them.[92] Lodging properties such as the Mansion House Motel and Mountain View Motel, both in Buffalo, pointed travelers to the municipal pool in the absence of having one on site.[93] Other ancillary buildings and structures found at motels in Wyoming might include laundry facilities and eateries like dining rooms, lounges, and/or coffee shops. Landscape features included shared green spaces in the form of picnic areas or playgrounds. Shade, if it was available, was often explicitly advertised as an amenity.

By the early 1950s a number of problems were becoming apparent in mom-and-pop motels. Because of significant growth in the motel industry, many older motor courts and the more unsophisticated motels faced stiff competition from newer and better-managed properties within their local markets and lacked the financial resources and management skills to improve

[90] Quoted in Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 183.
[91] Postcard in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.
[92] *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (September 1965): 6.
[93] Postcards in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.

their offerings. Additionally, families that managed lodging properties were trapped in twenty-four-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week businesses in a country where the majority of workers enjoyed paid vacation time. Worst of all, new interstate highways bypassed some of the earlier named and numbered highways, isolating small businesses such as motor courts and motels from the main stream of traffic, drastically reducing their potential market.

As some mom-and-pop motor courts and motels began to falter, the first chain motels arrived to fulfill the changes in demand for overnight lodging. While some small businesses struggled due to the challenges listed above, the concept of overnight lodging still held great potential for investors on a large scale. Though motel chains existed from the 1920s onward, the earliest franchised chains did not appear in Wyoming until the 1960s. By the mid-1960s both Cheyenne and Casper had acquired a Holiday Inn. Ramada Inn, Imperial 400 Motel, and Downtowner Motor Inn also appeared in the 1960s. Having greater financial resources, chain motels could afford trained professional management and could compete with other roadside businesses – such as gas and service stations and emerging fast food chains – for prime real estate conveniently located at interstate highway interchanges.[94]

Chain motels brought brand-name recognition and corporate regimentation to an in-state market dominated by mom-and-pop motels. Chain motels also introduced a new building plan previously unknown in Wyoming. Based on a low-cost World War II building technique, "center-core construction" included one or more stories of rooms arranged back to back along a utility core. The bathrooms of every four units were grouped at the intersecting corners. Doors and windows faced outside, and circumferential walkways served the rooms.[95] By the late 1950s other chain motels relied on mid-rise construction, enclosing central corridors and adding elevators for access to upper floors. Unlike the long stretches of early highways, land at interchanges came at a premium price, and building up rather than sprawling out was expedient.

Chain motels rarely branded themselves architecturally; in contrast, many fast-food chains of the day began to adopt specialized rooflines and other structural characteristics that have become obvious parts of brand identity, often recognizable even when a former restaurant building is vacant. Instead, the corporate logo, such as the golden crown of Best Western or "Holiday Inn" in the chain's distinctive script, came to signal standardized, reliable guest rooms and a positive experience that could be replicated across the country. Ultimately, the power of brand identity would give chain motels a considerable advantage over small lodging businesses in Wyoming as in the rest of the nation.[96]

Many of the first chain motel properties in Wyoming have been demolished, or have been altered over time in such a way that they do not retain integrity to their date of construction. The Downtowner Motor Inn, built in 1963 in Cheyenne, was the first of the Downtowner chain

[94] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 183-186; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 37.
[95] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 186.
[96] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 186-187; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 37-38.

to be constructed in Wyoming and possesses relatively high integrity. Unlike most automobile-oriented lodging in Wyoming, the Downtowner Motor Inn was constructed in the heart of the historic commercial district rather than at the periphery. The motel included four floors of rooms (eighty-eight rooms in total) atop a substantial ground floor level that housed a coffee shop, dining room, cocktail lounge, and meeting rooms. A Village Inn Pancake House and enclosed swimming pool were part of the site. Because of its location downtown, the motel relied on a basement garage.[97]

Little America is a regional chain of motels and hotels with roots in Wyoming. In 1934 the original Little America began as a small gas station, a motor court of twelve cabins, and a café. Little America was located near the town of Granger on U.S. Highway 30. When the property burned in 1950, owner S. M. Covey decided to rebuild closer to the eventual location of Interstate 80.[98] Today, Little America is the largest "travelers' oasis" in Wyoming and boasts its own zip code and its own interstate highway interchange.

Referral chains became an important factor in the Wyoming lodging industry. Referral chains consisted of small groups of motel owners that cooperated in upgrading properties. Ultimately, individual owners intended to create networks of lodging properties maintained to prescribed standards that would allow an owner in one locality to recommend lodging in another town along a traveler's route with confidence. Each member of a referral chain pledged to maintain mutual standards and display the group's identifying emblem. An early referral chain member in Wyoming was the Indian Village Motor Lodge in Cheyenne, which belonged to the United Motor Courts chain. United Motor Courts was organized in California in 1933 and became the most successful of the early chains. In 1936 the group claimed,

> You will find in United Motor Courts a new and unparalleled achievement in combining comfort and economical luxury with the convenience of first floor accommodations made necessary by our present mode of automobile travel. United Motor Courts is a group of independent owners, comprising only those motor courts which come up to the highest standards in comfort, quiet atmosphere, and courteous service.

Members retained their own name but identified themselves through a shield logo that mimicked the new shield markers used throughout the federal highway system. United Motor Courts remained a strong presence in the lodging industry until after World War II.[99]

Best Western, formed in 1946 in Long Beach, California, became the dominant referral chain in Wyoming by the 1960s. Unlike earlier referral chains, Best Western was incorporated (as Western Motels, Inc.). Promotors drove major western highways soliciting membership from

[97] Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 38.
[98] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, 48SW3979, Little America. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.
[99] Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 139-142.

existing mom-and-pop motor courts and motels. In the early 1960s membership in Best Western offered many benefits. The company printed and distributed travel guides that listed the proximity of member lodging properties to the nearest major highway. They also purchased advertising in publications priced beyond the reach of many small business owners, including national magazines, major newspapers, and AAA directories. Best Western allowed travelers to pay in advance for reservations. It also made group purchasing of furnishings and supplies available to small business owners, allowing individual lodging properties to enjoy discounted prices like the national chains. Best Western provided its members with insurance, affiliated with several major credit-card companies, and offered design and accounting expertise through its national headquarters to property owners who likely lacked education in these areas.

Each motel affiliated with Best Western operated under its own name but prominently displayed the company logo. Members were also required to purchase products such as soap bars and shower curtains branded with the Best Western crown. The chain reinforced strict standards. Each year two salaried field representatives inspected motels within the system. In addition, each member was required to inspect three other member motels. In 1963 members paid dues of two hundred and fifty dollars for the first twelve units and fifteen dollars for each additional unit up to forty-nine units. A sliding scale determined dues for larger motels. At an annual convention members elected officers, drafted changes to the constitution, and shared information. The chain developed marketing programs and decreased the operating costs of small businesses through bulk purchasing, shared-risk insurance, credit-card discounts, and training programs.[100]

The Holiday Lodge in Lander is one of the best preserved of the Best Western members, though it is no longer affiliated with the company. On the back of a postcard marked “Spring 1967,” the motel claims to have “Lander’s Finest Accommodations” and lists among its amenities “T.V. – Phones, Attractively Spacious Units in a New Motel, Kitchenettes Available for Sportsmen.” The Best Western and AAA logos are included.[101]

OVERARCHING TRENDS, COMMON PATTERNS IN WYOMING

Each motor court or motel property has its distinct history but is likely to be tied to one or more of the following broad patterns.

Prominent travel patterns drove motor court and motel construction.
The development of motor courts and motels in Wyoming was concentrated on the main roads and highways through the state. These routes included first the three major named highways, second the U.S. Highway Routes, and third interstates 80, 25, and 90. Communities along these routes developed lodging services in proportion to changes in demand over time.

[100] Ibid, 142-146.
[101] Postcard, “Holiday Lodge,” Postcards-Lodges-Wyoming, PC02-610, Wyoming State Archives.

Communities that were not located directly on the principal routes used by tourists had fewer lodging properties.

Automobile-oriented accommodations were located on highways, typically clustered at the peripheries of historic commercial centers.
“Commercial strips" contained clusters of businesses, including lodging properties, on the peripheries of towns along main highways. These strips are the typical locations of motor courts and motels. Because of the rural nature of Wyoming, lodging properties, particularly motor courts, are also found in relatively isolated locations having a rural rather than industrial setting.

Properties were expanded, modernized, and renamed over time.
Many commercial properties were continuously updated to meet consumer expectations, and many of these changes are likely to have happened during the period of significance for any given property.

Many automobile-oriented accommodations were locally-owned and operated in Wyoming.
Roadside accommodations were typically owned and operated locally and were not part of a local or national chain or franchise group. During the 1960s affiliation with the Best Western referral chain became increasingly popular among mom-and-pop motel owners. The first chain motels began to appear in Wyoming in the 1960s but were concentrated in the largest towns like Cheyenne, Casper, and Laramie and did not dominate the market during the period covered by this context.

F. Associated Property Types

MOTOR COURTS AND MOTELS

Introduction

Motor courts and motels survive as some of the most visible reminders of the importance of auto tourism in local and state economies in Wyoming between 1913 and 1975. Several other property types associated with overnight accommodation are found in Wyoming but are not included in this context. The first property type not included in this context is hotels. Hotels are here defined as large, multistory lodging buildings typically located in a historic commercial center or rural resort community. Generally, hotels contain formal space on the ground floor for lobbies, restaurants and/or dining rooms, ballrooms, and small retail enterprises, all of which are typically available to consumers not lodging at the hotel as well as hotel patrons. Hotels include shared interior corridors from which individual rooms on the upper floors are accessed. Hotels are not included in this context because the majority of those constructed in Wyoming predate the era of automobile travel. Instead, hotels were most typically sited and constructed to accommodate railroad travelers. While some automobile tourists chose to lodge in hotels, this property type was inconvenient for motorists in several ways and gradually fell out of favor over the period of significance, as will be discussed below.[102]

The second type of overnight accommodation not addressed in this context is the dude ranch. Dude ranches have an important place in Wyoming's tourism industry; however, a dude ranch is typically a destination for travelers rather than a service travelers use out of necessity while away from home. Dude ranches provided not only overnight lodging, but also meals and entertainment as part of an immersive experience. In contrast, most motor court and motel patrons needed a convenient place to rest before continuing on a trip or enjoying the attractions they had come to see in that area. Motor courts and motels are not generally considered to be destinations in and of themselves.

Two broad categories of lodging properties – motor courts and motels – are described below. In this document, motor courts are defined as those lodging properties consisting of individual units that are visibly distinct from one another. Motor courts include properties consisting of freestanding cabins, cabins connected because of non-integral "lean-to" covered parking, and lodging units integrated beneath a shared roof but still independent from one another, most often because units do not share partition walls. In contrast, motels are considered to be those properties composed of lodging units arranged in a continuous line or lines, sharing partition walls, and presenting a one-dimensional primary façade. Other typical characteristics of both property types will be discussed below.

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[102] John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 19, 23-31; Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 169-170, 180-181.

The period of significance identified in this document is 1913 to 1975. The beginning date corresponds to the first highways in Wyoming: the Lincoln Highway and the Black and Yellow Trail opened in 1913, and the Yellowstone Highway in 1915. These highways unlocked the state to motorists, allowing them to access the natural wonders of northwest Wyoming, or to cross the state on the first transcontinental highway. Motorists were a new kind of consumer that required new kinds of services, such as overnight lodging convenient to automobile travel. The end of the period of significance reflects changes in the fabric of individual lodging properties in Wyoming, as well as in the overall landscape of services catering to travelers and tourists. In 1956 the Federal Aid Highway Act ordered the construction of interstate highways that rendered many of the U.S. Routes obsolete for long-distance travel. By the mid-1970s the changes wrought by the interstate highways had significantly altered the landscape of travel in Wyoming, and newly constructed lodging reflected these changes.

The post-World War II construction boom in lodging properties loosely marks the temporal transition from motor courts to motels, as defined as property types in this document. While the hospitality industry as whole began to embrace the term “motel” during the late 1940s, many business owners in Wyoming retained use of “motor court” or “court” until the late 1950s. As such, the use of “motor court” or “motel” by individual lodging businesses should not be considered definitive of the property type; instead, a comparison must be made between the physical characteristics of the property and the registration requirements outlined in this document. There may be a short window in which motor courts and motels were being constructed simultaneously, most likely during the late 1940s and/or early 1950s, but in general motor courts were less likely to be newly constructed after World War II. There were, however, many existing motor courts that continued to operate after the war, some of which remain viable businesses today. Over time, some lodging properties that existed as motor courts prior to the war were expanded with the addition of linear multi-room units in keeping with motel construction. Because lodging properties are commercial enterprises that must meet consumer demand to survive, many motor courts, motels, and hybrid properties will demonstrate an evolution in form that reflects changing industry standards and customer expectations.

MOTOR COURTS

Historically, motor courts as a property type defined in this document were referred to using a variety of trade names, including motor court, tourist court, auto court, motel court, hotel court, cottage court, or cottages. Motor courts are defined as those lodging properties consisting of individual units that are visibly distinct from one another. Motor courts include properties consisting of freestanding cabins, cabins connected because of non-integral “lean-to” covered parking, and lodging units integrated beneath a shared roof but still independent from one another, most often because units do not share partition walls. The earliest motor court properties included shared bathhouses or outhouses. Over time, many property owners added bathrooms to individual units or constructed new units complete with private baths. Often, individual units were independently heated and/or cooled. Crucially, these properties

provided travelers with parking for automobiles, typically immediately adjacent to their unit for convenience and security. In contrast to motels, the architecture of motor courts is more likely to express elements of picturesque or romantic revival styles.

Motor courts emerged as a direct outgrowth of private campgrounds established to service long-distance motorists who most often carried camping equipment in their cars. In the early 1920s, in an effort to keep increasing numbers of auto tourists from camping on private property, many municipalities across the nation established auto campgrounds to funnel motorists to locations appropriate for camping. By the mid-1920s privately-owned campgrounds had largely replaced those operated by municipalities. Small business owners realized they could charge patrons more for a cabin or cottage rather than a tent site, and by the late 1920s many tent sites had been phased out in favor of freestanding cabins. Thus, the motor court was born.

Haphazard site dispersal had been typical of tent camping, but the greater permanence of individual cabins within emerging motor courts lent itself to a formalization of the overall landscape of the lodging property. Standard layouts included rows of freestanding cabins, or more often U- or L-shaped configurations and a central open space. Parking spaces were clearly assigned, and communal green space was emphasized with lawn furniture. Often resembling tiny villages, cabins were placed close enough to the road to be visible to passing motorists but far enough from the road to appear private and quiet.

By the 1930s it was more common to refer to properties of this type as “courts” rather than “camps,” and “cottage” was used interchangeably with “cabin.” The first cabins were bare – motorists were responsible still to bring their own bedding – but owners soon began to furnish them sparingly with beds, tables, chairs, and stoves, and to supply them with electricity. In the 1930s cabins became more homey with additions like closets, rugs, dressing tables, chairs, mirrors, curtains, radios, and bathrooms complete with bathing facilities. Many individual units were heated and insulated for use over longer periods of the year. Non-integral, “lean-to” covered parking between cabins became very popular in the 1930s. In addition to the grocery stores and communal kitchens that had been available at municipal and then private campgrounds in the 1920s, many motor court operators added coffee shops or restaurants to their premises. Just as at the campgrounds, most motor courts offered branded (i.e., Sinclair, Standard Oil, Pennzoil, etc.) gasoline and other oil-based products for sale on site.[103]

In Wyoming, motor court units, often called cabins or cottages, typically took the form of small gable-roofed buildings of frame or log construction. Along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30, cabins were typically frame. Several examples of these spare, simple buildings are seen in postcards.[104] Perhaps the best surviving example is the Black and Orange Cabins at Fort

[103] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 170-175; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 31-34, 36-45.
[104] For example, the Minnehaha Camp in Cheyenne, the Silver Cabins in Hanna, the Sunset Camp in Medicine Bow, and the Ideal Motel in Rawlins. Postcard, Minnehaha Camp, 1928, box 713; Postcard, Silver Cabins, 1942,

Bridger. These cabins were constructed in 1925 and operated until 1936 near historic Fort Bridger, an important site in Western history that served as a tourist draw for those making a cross-country journey on the Lincoln Highway. These cabins were constructed simply: the side-gable roofs consist of 2" x 4" lumber joined at the peak without cross braces, ridge boards, or trusses, and the roofs sit atop a wall structure composed of 2" x 4" lumber covered in weatherboards. The interior walls are composed of fiberboards; otherwise the cabins are not insulated. The interior of each unit, eight in total, measures 13'11" x 10'2". Covered parking provided by the gabled roofs measures 14' x 7'7". These cabins are also representative of many, if not most, frame motor courts that existed during this period in Wyoming, in that they are devoid of any overt nationally-popular architectural style. The property is distinct from other similar lodging properties in the state in its historic use of orange paint with black trim to draw the attention of passing motorists.[105]

Highways giving access to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks seem more likely to have offered lodging properties constructed of log. Two possible explanations for the prevalence of log motor courts in the northern part of Wyoming are: (1) log architecture more closely matched the theme of a journey to Wyoming's famous parks and through the surrounding national forests, and appealed to travelers' expectations and (2) logs were more readily available near the state's national forests. In contrast, many of the towns along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30 did not have a local source for finished logs. Fieldwork and archival research have produced only one late 1950s log motor court along US 30,[106] while several log motor courts have been documented in towns like Buffalo, Jackson, and Pinedale. Camp O' the Pines in Pinedale was constructed one block from U.S. Highway 191, which was originally planned as a scenic byway that diverged from the Lincoln Highway at Rock Springs and connected motorists to Jackson Hole, Grand Teton National Park, and the south entrance of Yellowstone. The history of Camp O' the Pines illustrates an important but often overlooked aspect of motor courts; although built primarily to serve as tourist lodging, cabins sometimes served other purposes in their communities. They might act as short-term rentals for workmen or, as at Camp O' the Pines, as temporary lodging for ranching women who were soon to deliver a baby and wanted to be near a doctor when they went into labor.[107] Particularly in winter, when tourists were few, repurposing tourist lodging in this way must have been very attractive to business owners.

Camp O' the Pines has been remodeled and renamed several times since initial construction; however, the oldest, circa 1929 cabins are constructed of saddle-notched log that originally

box 716; Postcard, Sunset Camp, 1940, box 718; Postcard, Ideal Motel, n.d., box 720. All in Coll. 10674, James L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

[105] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, Site 48UT2648, Black and Orange Cabin Complex. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.

[106] The Longhorn Lodge in Rock River dates to circa 1957 and includes several log cabins in addition to a log motel unit, a log restaurant, and a large freestanding neon sign.

[107] Rheba Massey, Log Cabin Motel, National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form (Cheyenne, 1993).

projected beyond the gable-roofed eaves and decreased in length as the logs ascended toward the roof. (Water damage necessitated shortening the exaggerated log corners in the 1960s.) The cabins are approximately 25' x 14' and were originally designed so that each cabin contained two lodging units. Much like the Black and Orange Cabins and other motor courts of the era, a freestanding outhouse served all cabins.[108] Unlike frame motor courts, which often carry no overt national style, Camp O' the Pines and other log motor courts displayed elements of the Rustic Revival style. The Rustic Revival emerged in the early twentieth century and was greatly influenced by the architecture of federal land management agencies that were creating buildings intended to harmonize with the natural world. Among the hallmarks of Rustic Revival style are rejection of the regularity and symmetry of the industrial world and reliance on native wood and stone materials.

A small number of motor courts in Wyoming used elements of picturesque or romantic styles such as the Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The Indian Village Motor Lodge of Cheyenne meshed several popular images of the West into a single lodging property. A concrete teepee resembling the traditional housing of Northern Plains tribes housed the motor court's office, while the lodging units reflected the Mission Revival style through the use of concrete or stucco construction, non-structural vigas, and a shaped parapet. Covered parking was integrated into the flat roof and separated individual lodging units from one another.[109]

In the 1930s the lodging industry began to embrace a national shift away from romantic visual metaphors embodied in the picturesque architectural styles toward modern, clean design. Commenting on this new aesthetic, E. H. Lightfoot, consulting architect with *Tourist Court Journal*, wrote, "Regardless of where a court is erected it should be built of stucco with a sand finish, using modern architecture with its attractive simplicity and simple lines, and be painted pure white." Widely known as the Streamline Moderne, the style was applied often enough to lodging properties that it was sometimes called "Motor Court Moderne." The Branding Iron Auto Lodge in Laramie referenced the Streamline Moderne style through its curving form, stucco exterior, and continuous bands of horizontal lines that followed the perimeter of its flat roof.[110]

The Great Depression affected all aspects of the American economy, yet the rise of tourism during the Depression and the continued sale of automobiles and dependent products such as gasoline ensured that middle-class vacationing Americans still needed overnight lodging. Few motor courts in Wyoming appear to have failed as a result of the Depression, and, as mentioned above, many improvements were made to lodging properties during this time. Nationally, the Federal Housing Administration's decision to permit financing of cottages under two thousand dollars without a down payment allowed more lodging businesses to open. In 1933 the American Automobile Association (AAA) estimated that thirty thousand "tourist

[108] Ibid.
[109] Postcard, "Indian Village Motor Lodge," Postcards-Motels-Wyoming, P98-19/1, Wyoming State Archives.
[110] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-179. Photograph of Branding Iron, 178. Lightfoot quoted, 179.

cottage and camp establishments" lined American highways. Many of these lodging properties were constructed and assembled by the business owner or local craftsmen. Kits of prefabricated lumber could be purchased from local lumberyards or traveling salesmen. Many other outfits were likely based on plans available in popular magazines, or were constructed based on what a business owner had observed at another site. Still other buildings were adaptively reused and retrofitted to meet tourists' needs.

As the Great Depression worsened, out-of-work architects began to look to the still-growing lodging industry for new commissions. Similarly, manufacturers of domestic wares discovered the motor court's potential as a showroom for stylish new products in a sluggish economy. As a result, lodging properties and their interiors underwent a period of greater standardization as architects and designers realized that growth in this market remained steady despite the state of the national economy. In addition, lodging properties became disseminators of modernism to average Americans spending the night in these "tiny, roadside exhibition centers." The motor court had transformed from a "home away from home" to an aspirational space more modern and luxurious than many homes.[111]

Historic Significance in Wyoming, Criterion A
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Commerce, Community Planning and Development, and Transportation
Period of Significance: Based on the period it operated in its current configuration during the broader period of significance

Motor courts may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for their association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad historical patterns. These properties should demonstrate an important role in the areas of commerce and/or community planning and development. Motor courts were operated as businesses that provided an essential service to customers in need of overnight lodging. The emergence of motor courts as the dominant method of lodging automobile tourists during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s demonstrates the way in which many Wyoming communities developed beyond the historic commercial centers that had been planned and constructed before the invention of automobiles. The development of "commercial strips" at some distance from the older commercial district, or "downtown," demonstrates the way community development responded to the invention and increasing popularity of new transportation technology. Most of the motels and motor courts in Wyoming developed outside the core downtown areas reflecting a shift in commercial development that focused more and more on transportation corridors and needs related to automobile travelers.

A motor court removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it can be demonstrated that it is the surviving structure most importantly associated with an event (Criteria Consideration B), or if it has achieved significance in its new location under Criterion

[111] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-180; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 38-39.

A. In Wyoming, it is not unusual for cabins to be moved and used for lodging purposes. While this is most commonly seen on dude ranches, it also likely happened in the development and growth of motor courts. A building moved onto a motor court property that was used in the development or continued use of the property as lodging will be considered eligible for listing. Properties that are less than fifty years old or have achieved significance within the past fifty years will not be considered eligible under this MPDF.

Motor Court Architecture in Wyoming, Criterion C
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Architecture
Period of Significance: Based on the period of design and construction

Motor courts may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. These properties should demonstrate their significance in the area of architecture. Motor courts having individual units constructed of log will most likely display elements of the Rustic Revival style. Other motor courts might reflect the Spanish Colonial Revival styles or the Streamline Moderne. Properties consisting of simple frame cabins or cottages should not be dismissed based on the absence of an overt national style. This type of motor court was likely one of the most numerically popular during the period of significance and thus may be able to demonstrate the architecture motorists commonly encountered in Wyoming during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. In all cases, motor court properties should be complete; that is, enough of the original buildings and structures should be extant that the overall configuration of the property within the period of significance remains evident. In general, one or several remaining buildings will not be considered eligible if the majority of the property is no longer extant.

A motor court removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it is significant primarily for its architectural value (Criteria Consideration B). Properties that are less than fifty years old or that have achieved significance within the past fifty years will not be considered eligible under this MPDF.

MOTELS

Motels are defined as those lodging properties composed of lodging units arranged in a continuous line or lines, sharing partition walls, and presenting a one-dimensional primary façade. Construction of this property type quickly outpaced the construction of motor courts following World War II; however, motels were constructed prior to the war, and new motor courts were constructed in small numbers at least into the 1950s. In contrast to the romantic or picturesque architectural styles sometimes used in the construction of motor courts, many motels display the contours of the Modern style with an emphasis on horizontality. In general, motel buildings tend to express their commercial function first, and a subdued modernism

secondarily. Perhaps because the majority of motel buildings lack distinction from one another, many motel properties include a large, whimsical neon sign sited for maximum visibility from the nearby highway. Most motels have an office, also sited near the highway, that is at once integrated with, yet visually distinct from, the lodging units. Motel properties are more likely than motor courts to include "luxury" amenities, the most common of which is the swimming pool.

The post-World War II construction boom in roadside lodging properties loosely marks the temporal transition from motor courts to motels. After the war motor hotels, or "motels," emerged in a consistent form. Instead of individual cabins, a string of private rooms, each sharing a partition wall or walls with the next, were integrated into a single building under a shared roof. Whereas hotels typically contained interior corridors from which access to individual rooms was gained, motel rooms opened directly from parking lots found in the center of the complex or, less commonly, to the rear of the building. Initially, motels were single-story buildings. Toward the end of the period covered by this context, some two-story units were constructed. Similar to the motor courts, newly constructed motels often had a U- or L-shaped footprint, or consisted of two freestanding parallel buildings.[112] In all cases, individual units opened to the center of the property, which most often contained parking and sometimes also a shared green space. Later, some motels chose to site parking behind the individual units. In these cases, a rear door within the motel room gave access to assigned parking.

Many motels of the 1950s and 1960s were not overtly stylish and were recognizable chiefly according to their function as modern lodging properties. Whereas many motor court units had been constructed of log or frame, most motels used one or a combination of the following materials: brick, concrete block, stone, and stucco. A smaller number were constructed of frame. Roofs were typically flat or gabled, often with a wide overhang that sheltered the entrance to a motel room and the open trunk of a car in the event of inclement weather. In these ways, many motels reflected the design of nationally-popular American ranch houses, the dominant domestic form of the mid-twentieth century. Unlike most ranch houses, motels typically contained steel casement windows, fixed multi-pane windows, or glass blocks. Toward the end of period covered by this context, large single-pane fixed windows came to dominate new construction. Lodging units were typically articulated with details emphasizing that many travelers were on holiday. For example, cheery color was often applied to doors, to panels beneath windows, or to the balcony of two-story buildings. Windows might also be enlivened with awnings, valences, or other special treatments to the surrounds. Sometimes decorative concrete curtain walls drew attention to a particular aspect of the property.

Perhaps because of the uniformity of many motel buildings, and because of the need to attract motorists in moving vehicles, most lodging properties distinguished themselves from other businesses through large, often freestanding neon signs. These signs existed in a great

[112] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 182-183.

variety of forms, sizes, and shapes, but many were designed with a great deal of whimsicality and imagination. Names of motels were also important ways to appeal to travelers specifically in search of the West they had seen in popular television shows and movies. Although some lodging properties were named pragmatically – for example, Bower Court operated by Lawrence and Esther Bower in Lander and the Rawlins Motel in Rawlins – many other motels evoked romantic ideas. The Covered Wagon Motel in Lusk, the Firebird Motor Hotel in Cheyenne, the Sage and Sand Motel in Saratoga, and the Ranger Motel in Laramie are only a few of the many motels in Wyoming in which a name and perhaps some aspects of a neon sign suggested an exotic destination, while the motel buildings were interchangeable with those found all across America.

Those Wyoming motels that distinguished themselves through overt references to nationally-popular styles seem to have done so in a limited number of ways. First, like the motor courts, there were a small number of motels that used elements of Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The Wyoming Motel in Cheyenne is one of these, chiefly because of its tiled roofs and stucco exterior. Second, another small group of motels exhibited a late use of Streamline Moderne, such as the El Rancho Motel (now the Federal Inn) in Riverton. The most common nod to popular national styles, however, came in the form of exaggerated modern rooflines, including hyperbolic canopies and barrel-vaulted walkways. The Ideal Motel in Rawlins was updated sometime in the mid- to late-1950s to include an on-site Standard Oil station under an exaggerated shed roof. The Bel Air Inn, also of Rawlins, used barrel-vaulted roofs to emphasize its restaurant, bar, and covered walkways between buildings.[113] Often the component of the motel property with the most overt nod to the Exaggerated Modern style was the motel office, as at the Sands Motel in Cheyenne. While the U-shaped motel does little to distinguish individual rooms, the office is sheltered by a multi-pitched canopy that dominates the principal facade.

In contrast to low-budget exteriors, many motel owners emphasized comfortable interiors and expended funds to furnish them. Amenities included air conditioning, telephones, and radios, some of which were advertised prominently on neon signs. Brand name mattresses were frequently listed in the description on the back of complimentary motel postcards. In 1949 *Hotel Management* (which also published on the motel trade) offered the following list of items that should be included in a typical motel guest room:

> Innerspring mattresses and box springs, – woolen blankets; Heavy Chenille bed spreads; Percale sheets. – Dresser with large mirror; Writing desk (all furniture is of oak). – Two large easy chairs; One or two straight back chairs. – Luggage rack. – One or more smoking stands and at least three ash trays. – Large floor lamp, bed lamp, desk lamp and ceiling light (all with 100-watt bulbs,

[113] Postcard, Ideal Motel, 1964, box 720; Postcard, Bel Air Inn, 1970, box 720. Both in Coll. 10674, James L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

> including bath). – Wall to wall carpeting. – Rubber mat outside door. – 12 by 16-inch original water color picture; Several prints – some in groups – giving the room a homey lived-in look. – Cross ventilation – two large windows. – Venetian blinds and either sheer curtains or colorful draperies. – Window air conditioners; Ceiling fans; gas heaters. – Coin-operated radio on night stand. – Closets and drawers lined with quilted satin paper. – Closets have many coat hangers and a laundry bag.
>
> Writing desk contains 10 sheets of writing paper; 7 envelopes; scratch pad; several post cards; blotter; business cards; sewing kit with buttons, thread and needle, pins, rubber bands, paper clips. – Telegram blanks; laundry and dry cleaning list; sample coffee shop menu; calendar and house directory. Bathrooms have: Tile shower; Plastic shower curtain; Bath mat; Facial tissue in chrome container; Two 12-oz. drinking glasses; Three bars of soap; Four face towels, four bath towels, two wash cloths.[114]

Nationally, the swimming pool became an important amenity at many lodging properties during the 1950s; however, motels in Wyoming responded in a limited way to this trend. Very few locally-owned "mom-and-pop" motels appear to have added swimming pools. The Frontier Motel of Cheyenne is one exception – owners claimed to have "Wyoming's Largest and most Luxurious" pool, which was heated and filtered and measured fifty by one hundred feet.[115] The relative unpopularity of swimming pools in Wyoming likely relates to the short summer season. Many years an outdoor pool would not be attractive until mid-June and might close again as early as mid-September, rendering it unusable for as much as three-quarters of the year. Motel owners noted that swimming pools were expensive and time-consuming to maintain, and a relatively small number of guests used them.[116] Lodging properties such as the Mansion House Motel and Mountain View Motel, both in Buffalo, pointed travelers to the municipal pool in the absence of having one on site.[117] Other ancillary buildings and structures found at motels in Wyoming might include laundry facilities and eateries like dining rooms, lounges, and/or coffee shops. Landscape features included shared green spaces in the form of picnic areas or playgrounds. Shade, if it was available, was often explicitly advertised as an amenity.

Toward the end of the period of significance, the first national chain motels began to appear in Wyoming. Many of the original chain properties in the state are no longer extant, or have been altered to the extent that they no longer possess integrity to the period of significance.

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[114] Quoted in Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 183.
[115] Postcard in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.
[116] *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (September 1965): 6.
[117] Postcards in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.

At least three chain motels remain in a recognizable state: the Imperial 400 Motel of Casper (now the Royal Inn) and two Travelodges, now the Travel Inn of Laramie and the Budget Inn of Rawlins, respectively. These chain motel properties have many of the characteristics associated with locally-owned motels of the same time period. The most notable difference is the corporate preference for two-story lodging units, whereas most mom-and-pop motels in Wyoming were only a single-story in height.

A true anomaly among the motels considered in this document is the Downtowner Motor Inn in Cheyenne (now the Central Plaza Hotel). Unlike most automobile-oriented lodging in Wyoming, the Downtowner Motor Inn was constructed in the heart of the historic commercial district rather than at the periphery. The motel included four floors of rooms (eighty-eight rooms in total) atop a substantial ground floor level that housed a coffee shop, dining room, cocktail lounge, and meeting rooms. A Village Inn Pancake House and enclosed swimming pool were part of the site. Because of its location downtown, the motel relied on a basement garage. In many ways, this motel has more in common with the center-core and high-rise constructed motels clustered at new interstate highway interchanges than the sprawling motel properties found along the U.S. Routes that crossed Wyoming.

Far more prevalent in Wyoming than franchised chain motels were referral chain properties, particularly those affiliated with Best Western. The referral chain phenomenon has been discussed elsewhere in this document. Notably, Best Western-affiliated properties were locally-owned motels designed and constructed prior to becoming associated with the referral chain. As such, these motels do not share physical characteristics that branded them as Best Western properties; instead, the Best Western logo was an addition to existing motel signage. It was far more common, however, for a Best Western affiliate property to include a swimming pool, as compared to those motels that remained wholly independent.

Historic Significance in Wyoming, Criterion A
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Commerce and Community Planning and Development
Period of Significance: Based on the period it operated in its current configuration during the broader period of significance

Motels may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for their association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad historical patterns. These properties should demonstrate an important role in the areas of commerce and/or community planning and development. Motels were operated as businesses that provided an essential service to customers in need of overnight lodging. The emergence of motels as the dominant method of lodging motorists following World War II demonstrates the way in which many Wyoming communities responded to a continued preference for obtaining goods and services in “commercial strips” at some distance from the older commercial district, or “downtown.”

A motel removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it can be demonstrated that it is the surviving structure most importantly associated with an event (Criteria Consideration B), or if it has achieved significance in its new location under Criterion A. Properties that are less than fifty years old or that have achieved significance within the past fifty years will not be considered eligible under this MPDF.

Motel Architecture in Wyoming, Criterion C
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Architecture
Period of Significance: Based on the period of design and construction and/or when it operated in its current form during the broader period of significance

Motels may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. These properties should demonstrate their significance in the area of architecture. Motel buildings will typically be stylistically restrained and will primarily express their commercial function. Some will embody elements of the Spanish Colonial Revival styles, or late expressions of the Streamline Moderne. Many more will recall the architecture of nationally-popular ranch houses.

In all cases, motel properties should be complete; that is, enough of the original buildings and structures should be extant that the overall configuration of the property within the period of significance remains evident. In general, one or several remaining buildings will not be considered eligible if the majority of the property is no longer extant.

A motel removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it is significant primarily for its architectural value (Criteria Consideration B). Properties that are less than fifty years old or that have achieved significance within the past fifty years will not be considered eligible under this MPDF.

MOTOR COURTS AND MOTELS: HISTORIC INTEGRITY

To be considered eligible for listing in the National Register, a motor court or motel must be able to convey all or most of the seven aspects of integrity to its period of significance. Historic integrity is evaluated in the following ways.

Location: Location is the place where a historic lodging property was built and occupied during its period of significance. In general, motor courts, particularly those consisting of freestanding cabins, are the most likely property type to have been moved from their original location, or rearranged on the same site. Movement of a lodging property or an element thereof prior to or during the period of significance does not diminish integrity of location. It is

possible that movement might play a significant role in the property's continued use, especially if an associated road or highway was being realigned and the property followed. If the removal of a lodging property took place after its period of significance, the property cannot be said to retain integrity of location.

Design: Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a lodging property. It is not necessarily important that a lodging property express a nationally-popular style; instead, lodging properties should be assessed as to their authenticity relative to their historic appearance. Many lodging properties in Wyoming may be judged "plain" from a purely aesthetic perspective but still retain integrity of design. Alterations made within the period of significance are acceptable as long as they are in keeping with the building or site's original design. Alterations to the lodging property after its period of significance generally detract from integrity of design.

It is important that motor courts and motels should be complete; that is, enough of the original buildings and structures should be extant that the overall configuration of the property within the period of significance remains evident. In general, one or several remaining buildings will not be considered adequate to retain integrity of design if the majority of the property is no longer extant.

Setting: The setting is the area or environment in which a historic lodging property is or was found. To retain integrity of setting, a lodging property must be found in the same or very similar physical environment as during its period of significance. Many historic lodging properties were found alongside other commercial buildings, often within commercial strips at some distance from Wyoming's historic downtowns. A smaller number of lodging properties were found in rural locales. In all cases the landscape during the period of significance must be compared to modern conditions. The less contrast between the historic and modern landscape, the greater the integrity of setting. Lodging properties that remain part of an identifiable commercial strip have a high chance of retaining integrity of setting.

Materials: Materials refer to the component parts of a motor court or motel. Like most commercial buildings, successful lodging businesses underwent frequent maintenance and modernization cycles. If a lodging property fell into disrepair or became outmoded, it would likely have ceased to operate in its historic capacity. In general, materials replaced during the period of significance reflect the evolution of a commercial property over time based on consumer expectations. Materials replaced following the period of significance typically detract from integrity of materials, except in cases of restoration and in-kind replacement. Replacement with non-historic materials, such as modern windows, constitutes a loss of integrity. The degree of this loss depends on the overall impact to the building and the importance of the replaced elements to the building's significance.

The interiors of most motor courts and motels contained few finishes (moldings, built-ins, etc.) so that units or rooms could be cheaply and quickly constructed, would be easy to clean quickly, and would not become outmoded. Furnishings were relied upon to carry popular aesthetics rather than architectural elements of the interior. As such, the interiors of many lodging properties are likely to retain integrity of materials. One interior space that will likely have experienced frequent changes, however, is the bathroom. This document recognizes that bathrooms within historic lodging properties must undergo frequent updates to meet customer expectations, particularly in those lodging properties still functioning in their historic capacity.

Workmanship: Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history, including technology and aesthetic principles, and their local applications. Workmanship will be most evident in lodging properties that retain integrity of materials. Where historic material has been removed, integrity of workmanship will be diminished.

Feeling: Feeling pertains to the qualities that historic motor courts or motels have in evoking the aesthetic or historic sense of a past period of time. These qualities are intangible, yet depend on the significant physical characteristics of these lodging properties. Evidence of integrity of feeling might be found in the glow of a historic neon sign at twilight, the smell of chlorine from a motel pool, or the experience of checking in with the owners at the small motel office before parking a car directly in front of the room.

Association: Association is the direct link between a property and the event for which the property is significant. The other aspects of integrity often combine to convey integrity of association. With respect to lodging properties, the motor court or motel should retain proximity to the route that produced it (e.g., an iteration of the Lincoln Highway or U.S. Highway 30, depending on the property's period of significance).

When considering the physical integrity of a motor court or motel, care must be taken to differentiate between integrity and condition. The concept of integrity addresses the accumulation of man-made alterations and changes to a property that have happened over time. Condition, on the other hand, reflects changes to a property that may include natural causes, most commonly weathering. Damage to or loss of historic fabric due to weathering does not necessarily entail a loss of integrity, and those properties damaged by natural causes are generally considered to retain a higher degree of integrity than those where non-historic fabric replaces historic.

G. Geographical Information

This context covers motor courts and motels across the state of Wyoming.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Historic Context Development

Historic lodging properties in Wyoming were investigated through archival research and fieldwork. Historic postcards and photographs housed in the Wyoming State Archives and the American Heritage Center (AHC) at the University of Wyoming were major sources of information. The AHC's James L. Ehernberger Collection contains a particularly extensive group of postcards from around the state. In addition, the private postcard collections of Russell Rein of Ypsilanti, Michigan, and Heyward D. Schrock of Cheyenne were consulted. The Wyoming State Library contains records for the forerunners of the Wyoming Office of Tourism – which has existed in several different incarnations over the years – including biennial reports and promotional brochures. The state library also houses the Wyoming State Highway Commission biennial reports and other transportation records.

Fieldwork consisted of a buildings and landscapes survey conducted along the Interstate 80 corridor between July 2013 and October 2016. The purpose of this survey was to identify roadside resources associated with the Lincoln Highway, U.S. Highway 30, and the early years of Interstate 80. The survey was conducted in-house by State Historic Preservation Office staff, notably Beth King and Richard Collier, with fieldwork assistance from intern Erin Dorbin. Beth King and Richard Collier have also completed a reconnaissance-level survey of roadside resources throughout Wyoming. This fieldwork was invaluable in understanding the development of tourist accommodations in Wyoming.

Property Type Development and Registration Requirements

State Historic Preservation Office staff Beth King and Brian Beadles developed the two property types based on an examination of national-level publications by leading authors, notably Chester Liebs (*Main Street to Miracle Mile*) and John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers (*The Motel in America*), as well as archival research and fieldwork conducted at the state level.

Period of Significance

The period of significance identified in this document is 1913 to 1975. The beginning date corresponds to the first highways in Wyoming: the Lincoln Highway and the Black and Yellow Trail opened in 1913, and the Yellowstone Highway in 1915. These highways unlocked the state to motorists, allowing them to access the natural wonders of northwest Wyoming, or to cross the state on the first transcontinental highway. Motorists were a new kind of consumer that required new kinds of services, such as overnight lodging convenient to automobile travel. The end of the period of significance reflects changes in the fabric of individual lodging properties in Wyoming, as well as in the overall landscape of services catering to travelers and

tourists. In 1956, the Federal Aid Highway Act ordered the construction of interstate highways that rendered many of the U.S. Routes obsolete for long-distance travel. By the mid-1970s, the changes wrought by the interstate highways had significantly altered the landscape of travel in Wyoming, and newly constructed lodging reflected these changes.

Historic Integrity
There are many motor courts and motels in Wyoming that were constructed during the period of significance. The historic integrity of these properties ranges from poor to excellent. The most common issues leading to loss of integrity include the loss of historic portions of the property and the addition of non-historic materials. A small number of the surveyed properties will retain sufficient integrity to be listed in the National Register in association with this MPDF.

Survey
The Lincoln Highway Buildings and Landscapes Survey and other reconnaissance-level survey of roadside resources was conducted by SHPO staff between 2013 and 2016. At the request of the Teton County Preservation Board (TCPB), historian Michael Cassity conducted a 2004-2005 survey of historic resources in Teton County that included some historic lodging properties. In 2013-2014 the TCPB hired Korral Broschinsky to research and document historic motels in the county. This fieldwork resulted in the documentation of twenty historic lodging properties and informed the completion of the Historic Tourist Accommodations in Teton County, Wyoming, Multiple Property Documentation Form and the individual listing of the Alpenhof Lodge in the National Register.

In addition, the Camp O' the Pines in Pinedale, the Blue Gables Motel in Buffalo, and the Twin Pines Cabin Camp in Dubois, all log motor courts, have been previously listed in the National Register.

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National Register of Historic Places
Memo to File

Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.
Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: COVER DOCUMENTATION

Multiple Name: Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975 MPS

State & County: ,

Date Received: 11/15/2017
Date of 45th Day: 5/1/2017

Reference number: MC100001967

Reason For Review:

__ Appeal	__ PDIL	__ Text/Data Issue
__ SHPO Request	__ Landscape	__ Photo
__ Waiver	__ National	__ Map/Boundary
__ Resubmission	__ Mobile Resource	__ Period
__ Other	__ TCP	__ Less than 50 years
	__ CLG	

__X__ Accept _____ Return _____ Reject _____ Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: Please see the return comments for this multiple property documentation form.

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Barbara Wyatt Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2252 Date

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments: No see attached SLR: No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

ARTS. PARKS. HISTORY.
Wyoming State Parks & Cultural Resources

State Historic Preservation Office
2301 Central Ave., Barrett Bldg. 3rd Floor
Cheyenne, WY 82002
307-777-8594
FAX: 307-777-6421
http://wyoshpo.state.wy.us

March 14, 2017

Paul Loether
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: Submission of the Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975 MPDF

Dear Mr. Loether:

The Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office is submitting the Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975 MPDF for National Park Service review. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the Historic Motor Courts and Motels MPDF. The State Review Board reviewed and approved the form. Mary Hopkins, the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Officer, has approved and signed the nomination.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Brian Beadles
Historic Preservation Specialist

NPS Form 10-900-b
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

OMB No. 1024-0018

MC-950

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

___X___ New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing
Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Development of Automobile Roads in Wyoming, 1913-1975
Development of Tourism in Wyoming, 1913-1975
Development of Automobile-Oriented Lodging in Wyoming, 1913-1975

C. Form Prepared by:
name/title Elizabeth C. King, Historic Preservation Specialist
organization Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office
street & number 2301 Central Avenue, Barrett Bldg., Third Floor
city or town Cheyenne state WY zip code 82002
e-mail beth.king@wyo.gov
telephone 307-777-6179 date February 2, 2017

D. Certification
As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

Mary M. Hopkins Wy SHPO 3/14/17
Signature of certifying official Title Date

State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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National Park Service

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E. Statement of Historic Context

DEVELOPMENT OF AUTOMOBILE ROADS IN WYOMING, 1913 TO 1975

Wyoming has been a destination for tourists since the completion of the First Transcontinental, or Union Pacific, Railroad in 1869. In addition to its primary purpose of transporting goods and passengers cross-country, the Union Pacific offered leisure travel via its route across the southern portion of Wyoming. When additional rail lines were completed in the state, railroads delivered tourists to locations near the sites they had come to see – such as Yellowstone National Park or the national forests – where they would then proceed by stagecoach or on horseback to their destinations. At the turn of the twentieth century the most convenient way to access Yellowstone National Park, which had been established in 1872, was via the Northern Pacific Railroad's Yellowstone Branch Line that ran between Livingston and Gardiner, Montana, on the north edge of the park near Mammoth Hot Springs.[1] For this reason travel to Yellowstone National Park did not strongly influence travel through Wyoming prior to the construction of the first named highways in the state.

In the early twentieth century, despite growing national interest in auto tourism, the Department of the Interior maintained that automobiles would not be allowed in the national parks. When questioned as to the feasibility of allowing automobiles in Yellowstone, superintendent Maj. Harry Benson replied, "The character of the roads, the nature of the country, and conditions of the transportation in this park render the use of automobiles not only inadvisable and dangerous, but to my mind it would be practically criminal to permit their use." Benson was writing in 1909, when between fifteen hundred and eighteen hundred head of horses pulled stagecoaches over the recently-completed, narrow, often one-way Grand Loop Road during the tourist season, and he feared that horses and automobiles could not safely share the roads.[2] Yellowstone was not the only national park to resist private automobiles, but it had a special reason for doing so. Early legislation regarding the park had forbidden the use of steam vehicles within park boundaries. This legislation was intended to keep railroads from crossing the park, but the law was thereafter interpreted to cover all power vehicles, including automobiles.[3]

Despite the reluctance of park administrators, nascent automobile clubs were determined to gain access to Yellowstone and other national parks in the West. These clubs had an exceedingly strong influence on park service policy. By 1911 the National Park Service had

[1] Hal K. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 45-47. Rothman notes that the Yellowstone Branch Line was the first rail line in the western United States to convey passengers specifically to a tourist destination.
[2] Laura E. Soulliere, "Historic Roads in the National Park System: Special History Study" (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1995), https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/roads/index.htm (accessed January 3, 2017).
[3] "Automobiles for the Park," *Basin Republican* (Basin, WY), January 10, 1908, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.

concluded that the biggest obstacle to increasing park visitation, a major concern at the time, was limited automobile access. In 1915 Yellowstone was opened to automobiles for the first time, a major victory for automobile clubs. Yellowstone's concessioner phased out horse-drawn stagecoaches during the 1917 season, replacing them with touring cars and motor buses. By 1920 the National Park-to-Park Highway connected twelve national parks in the western United States, including Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado to Yellowstone and Yellowstone to Glacier National Park in Montana.[4]

Automobile clubs had earlier roots in the Good Roads Movement, which originated among rural Americans in the 1870s. Organizers argued that road construction and maintenance should be supported by national and local government as it was in Europe. Road building in rural areas would allow rural residents to gain social and economic benefits enjoyed by urban citizens with access to railroads, trolleys, and paved streets. Farmers in particular could benefit from reliable roads to transport crops to market. During the bicycle craze of the late nineteenth century, cyclists joined the cause, reasoning bicycles could be more fully enjoyed on good country roads.[5]

Bicycles declined in popularity after the turn of the twentieth century as interest in automobiles grew, but there was considerable overlap between cyclists and early automobile owners and mechanics at the turn of the century. Elmer Lovejoy, a Laramie bicycle shop owner, was the first man to own an automobile in Wyoming. He assembled the machine between 1897 and 1898 from parts he ordered from Chicago. Lovejoy took his horseless carriage for what is likely the first car ride in Wyoming on May 7, 1898.[6] Other early automobile owners included physicians and sheep ranchers, relatively high-status members of their communities. Rancher J.B. Okie purchased a 1906 Great Smith – reportedly central Wyoming's first car – and had it shipped to his home in Lost Cabin via rail and freight wagon. Okie was a major employer in command of a large estate and soon had his men building roads to and through Lost Cabin.[7]

In 1908 the Great Auto Race between New York City and Paris crossed Wyoming along a route that roughly followed the Union Pacific Railroad and that would set precedent for the route of the Lincoln Highway, the nation's first transcontinental highway, a few years later.

[4] Soulliere, "Historic Roads in the National Park System"; Lee Whiteley, *The Yellowstone Highway: Denver to the Park, Past and Present* (Boulder, CO: Johnson Printing Company, 2001), 9-15. For a discussion of the influence of automobiles on the character of the national parks, see David Louter, "Glaciers and Gasoline: The Making of a Windshield Wilderness, 1900-1915," in *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West*, ed. David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001).
[5] Isaac B. Potter, *The Gospel of Good Roads: A Letter to the American Farmer* (New York: The League of American Wheelmen, 1891).
[6] Phil Roberts, "Lovejoy's Toy: Wyoming's First Car," *Buffalo Bones: Stories of Wyoming's Past*, http://www.uwyo.edu/robertshistory/buffalo_bones_lovejoys_toy.htm (accessed January 3, 2017).
[7] Tom Rea, "J.B. Okie, Sheep King of Central Wyoming," WyoHistory.org, http://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/j-b-okie-sheep-king-central-wyoming (accessed January 3, 2017); Editorial, *Natrona County Tribune* (Casper, WY), March 22, 1906, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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The 1909 Cheyenne Frontier Days included a two hundred-mile auto race, where a world record for speed was set, among the usual rodeo events. By 1910 automobiles had become relatively common in Wyoming, creating needs for new legislation. In 1913 a law set the speed limit at twelve miles per hour in towns. In 1914 the State of Wyoming required that all automobiles should be licensed, and in 1917 the Wyoming Legislature created the Wyoming Highway Department, in part so that the state would qualify for federal funding for road projects. The legislature authorized the acceptance of federal aid on a matching basis. The matching funds were raised through a bond issue of $2.8 million, approved overwhelmingly by popular vote in April 1919. A second bond issue of $1.8 million passed in 1921. Thereafter, the Oil and Gas Leasing Act of 1920 and the gasoline tax of 1923 poured royalties into Wyoming's matching fund. By 1918, 15,900 automobiles were registered in Wyoming, ten times as many as five years before. By 1920 twenty-four thousand automobiles had been registered, and in 1930 there were sixty-two thousand registered autos in the state.[8]

Not only did automobiles bring profound social change to Wyoming, but also widespread changes to the physical characteristics of towns and other small communities. Historic commercial centers, often thought of as "downtowns," had not been developed with automobiles in mind and lacked convenient and safe places to park these treasured vehicles. Storefronts were designed to appeal to traffic on foot or conveyed by horses. The new speed made possible by automobiles rendered much signage and many window displays ineffective. Within a matter of years a vast network of improved roads allowed Wyomingites and visitors to the state to travel with unparalleled freedom, shortening distances in a temporal sense and connecting isolated communities to the larger world.

The first links in the growing network of roads were the named highways of the 1910s. Despite the efforts of the Good Roads Movement, national and local governments had yet to take interest in constructing and maintaining roads. Instead, boosters – often including businessmen who stood to gain from increased sales of auto parts or gasoline – led a grassroots movement on behalf of automobile enthusiasts. Boosters selected a route over existing roads, often networks of varying quality that included city streets, freight and wagon roads, and abandoned railroad grades. The route was given an evocative name echoed in the name of the trail association formed to promote the route. The trail association collected dues from businesses in towns along the way, published trail guides and newsletters, held conventions, and advocated for improvement and use of the route. Association goals included

[8] Emmett D. Chisum, "Crossing Wyoming by Car in 1908 – New York to Paris Automobile Race," *Annals of Wyoming* 52, no. 1 (1980): 34-39; Phil Roberts, "The 'Cheyenne 200': The 1909 Auto Race Rival to Indianapolis," *Buffalo Bones: Stories of Wyoming's Past*, http://www.uwyo.edu/robertshistory/cheyenne_200_auto_race.htm (accessed January 3, 2017); Phil Roberts, "The Oil Business in Wyoming," WyoHistory.org, http://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/oil-business-wyoming (accessed January 3, 2017); T.A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 2nd Ed., Revised (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 407-408, 424; Julie Francis, "Historic Context and Evaluation of Automobile Roads in Wyoming," Draft (Cheyenne, 1994). On file at the Wyoming Department of Transportation.

the promotion of the named route, of the Good Roads Movement, and of cities and businesses along the route.[9]

In 1912 an Indiana entrepreneur and former auto racer named Carl Fisher began promoting his idea for a transcontinental highway to stretch from New York City to San Francisco. At the time there were over two million miles of rural roads in the United States, and between 8 and 9 percent of those roads were "improved," meaning they were constructed of gravel, brick, oiled earth, or other ephemeral materials. Maintenance fell to those who lived along the roads and had the greatest need for them. Many states had constitutional prohibitions against funding internal improvements, and the Federal Government had not yet seen fit to provide money toward road construction and maintenance.

Fisher formed the Lincoln Highway Association (LHA) in 1913. He was a manufacturer of Prest-O-Lite compressed carbide-gas headlights and an effective fundraiser among his associates in the auto industry. Many manufacturers and oilmen saw public highways as a way to encourage Americans to buy cars and automobile accessories and services. An important exception was Henry Ford, who told Fisher as long as private citizens were willing to fund public infrastructure, the Federal Government would not be motivated to allocate funds to roadbuilding.

Most of the money raised from private donors was spent on advertising the Lincoln Highway rather than improving it. The LHA sponsored seedling miles in several states, including Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska, though none were constructed in Wyoming. Seedling miles were short concrete sections constructed through donations from the Portland Cement Association and were intended to demonstrate the desirability of permanent roads. In general, though, the LHA never succeeded in raising the amount of money necessary for coast-to-coast improvements. Instead the highway relied on existing roads. In Wyoming the Lincoln Highway traversed the corridor established by the Overland Trail and the First Transcontinental railroad and telegraph line. Between Rawlins and Rock Springs the highway utilized an abandoned Union Pacific railroad grade. In western Sweetwater County and Uinta County the highway followed the mid-nineteenth century route of the Mormon pioneers. To compensate for the lack of improved roads, the LHA and other trail associations marked their routes with painted signs or insignia on telephone poles, rocks, buildings, and other surfaces within easy sight of the roads.[10]

[9] Richard F. Weingroff, "From Names to Numbers: The Origins of the U.S. Numbered Highway System" (U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration), http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/numbers.cfm (accessed January 3, 2017).
[10] Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 407; Richard F. Weingroff, "The Lincoln Highway" (U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration), https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/lincoln.cfm (accessed January 4, 2017).

Because the named highways were not planned, designed, and constructed in the sense that modern interstate highways are, the "official" route also changed over time. For example, the route described in the *Official Road Guide to the Lincoln Highway* in 1915, the first year it was published, differs at several points in significant ways from the route published in the 1924 fifth (and final) edition of the road guide, reflecting road improvements that happened within the intervening nine years that caused different sections of road to be preferable to the original recommendations.[11] Additionally, road guides provided a recommended route, but conditions might make some stretches impassable at certain times, and so motorists had to be prepared to detour as needed.

The Black and Yellow Trail, the total length of which stretched from Chicago to Yellowstone National Park via the Black Hills of South Dakota, ran from Sundance to Moorcroft, then to Gillette, Sussex, and Buffalo before crossing the Bighorn Mountains to join with the Yellowstone Highway, another auto trail, at Worland. The inaugural drive of the Black and Yellow Trail, referred to as the "Pathfinder Tour," took place in August of 1913. The booster chairman made the following report:

> [The trail] is a prairie road. It passes through a most interesting country. Evidences of considerable improvements were found along the line. In Crook county the road was undergoing a change in many places to avoid steep grades, etc. New culverts and bridges were being installed. . . . There is only one criticism which the committee can offer, viz: these counties have neglected to give as much attention as they should to the markings [i.e., insignias identifying the highway and its route]. If this department is looked after the road will be under all of the circumstances meritorious.[12]

In 1914 the *Converse County Review* reported that the Black and Yellow Trail "would be very good except for chuck holes."

> Chuck holes that reduce the running time of tourists by half. Chuck holes that must be damaging to loaded wagons or light vehicles as well as automobiles. Chuck holes that can be eliminated at very little expense but which will not be because there is not a county commissioner in the world who can be made to see how uncalled

[11] The modern Lincoln Highway Association, a historical society, provides an excellent map demonstrating the way the route changed during the 1910s and 1920s and offering a good comparison between the route of the Lincoln Highway, U.S. Highway 30, and modern Interstate 80. https://www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/map/ (accessed January 4, 2017).

[12] "Black and Yellow Trail Meritorious," *Crook County Monitor* (Sundance, WY), October 16, 1913, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.

> for they are. One can easily imagine that all commissioners are in league with the manufacturers of springs.[13]

The Yellowstone Highway, which opened in 1915, was another major named highway in Wyoming. It was organized at a meeting of the Douglas Good Roads Club several years before, but did not open until 1915 because that was the year automobiles were first admitted into Yellowstone, as well as the year Rocky Mountain National Park northwest of Denver, Colorado, was established. The Yellowstone Highway was intended to link the two national parks. In Wyoming it originally spanned from Cheyenne to Wheatland, then to Douglas, Glenrock, Casper, Lost Cabin, Thermopolis, and Worland, where it joined the Black and Yellow Trail, and then to Basin, Burlington, and Cody before terminating at the east entrance to Yellowstone National Park. By 1924, the year the Wyoming Highway Department opened an auto road through the Wind River Canyon, the route changed between Casper and Thermopolis to include Shoshoni rather than Lost Cabin. The highway as described in the *Official Route Book of the Yellowstone Highway Association* utilized part of the Bridger Trail and required navigating a pass through the Bridger Mountains before emerging at Buffalo Creek south of Thermopolis. J.B. Okie, one of the first car owners in the state and the owner of the Oasis Hotel in Lost Cabin, was the Yellowstone Highway Association commissioner representing Fremont County.[14] This is likely the reason the route book favors the road through Lost Cabin rather than a similar route that utilized Birdseye Pass, an alternate means of reaching Thermopolis. By 1920 the Yellowstone Highway had been joined with other named highways in the Rocky Mountains and Pacific West to form a grand loop connecting twelve national parks called the National Park-to-Park Highway and it is often referred to under this name in the 1920s. The Yellowstone Highway was the first segment of this larger road to be completed.

Like the LHA, the Yellowstone Highway Association published an official route guide, though it appears that it was not revised or reissued after its initial 1916 publication. No similar publication is known to exist for the Black and Yellow Trail in Wyoming. In general, South Dakota seems to have been more diligent about promoting their section of this road than Wyoming was. The road guides were full of advice to both seasoned and novice motorists of the West, such as "West of Cheyenne, Wyoming, always fill your gas tank at every point gasoline can be secured, no matter how little you have used from your previous supply. This costs nothing but a little time and it may save a lot of trouble." The guides also included advertisements for tourist services in major towns along the routes, and some of the buildings

[13] "Automobile Trip to Buffalo Through Powder River Valley," *Bill Barlow's Budget and Converse County Review* (Douglas, WY), August 20, 1914, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.
[14] *Official Route Book of the Yellowstone Highway Association in Wyoming and Colorado* (Cody, WY: Gus Holm, 1916); Robert G. and Elizabeth L. Rosenberg, "Moneta Divide EIS Project: Class III Inventory of Six Historic Linear Resources in Fremont and Natrona Counties, Wyoming" (Longmont, CO, 2014), 202-209. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.

that housed these services still stand. The Plains Hotel in Cheyenne, for example, is advertised in both the Lincoln and Yellowstone highway road guides.[15]

In 1919 the Custer Battlefield Highway was organized between Des Moines, Iowa, and Glacier National Park in northwest Montana. In Wyoming it utilized the same route as the Black and Yellow Trail between the South Dakota-Wyoming border and Gillette, then left the trail to run north through Sheridan, Ranchester, and Dayton before crossing into Montana.[16] The Custer Battlefield Highway was a significant part of the Sheridan County tourist economy but had little or no social or economic impact on the rest of Wyoming. It is considered of secondary importance to the Lincoln and Yellowstone highways and the Black and Yellow Trail in this respect. Several other named highways were promoted in Wyoming but all mirrored the route of auto trails previously discussed. One exception is the Rocky Mountain Highway, which entered Wyoming below Laramie, connected Laramie to Woods Landing, Encampment, and Saratoga, then ran northwest to Rawlins, Lander, and Dubois and terminated at Moran Junction, the southeast entrance to Grand Teton National Park. Similarly, the Atlantic Yellowstone Pacific Highway and the Grand Highway followed the Yellowstone Highway until they diverged at Shoshoni, leading instead to Riverton, Dubois, and Moran Junction.[17]

Newspaper accounts of the 1910s suggest that booster clubs leaned heavily on county governments to make improvements to the highways, emphasizing the economic benefit of encouraging tourists to travel through local communities.[18] Boosters also petitioned state legislatures for road improvements and lobbied for federal involvement in highway construction. Because of a lack of reliable funding for road improvement, construction and maintenance of roads tended to happen in a piecemeal fashion. For example, in 1919 or 1920 the Wyoming Highway Department tractor-graded a seventeen-mile-long segment of the Black and Yellow Trail.[19] Some portions of the road that crossed Bighorn National Forest were constructed using federal money, sometimes with matching funds from the State.[20] Other sections of the road received little or no improvement. In 1924 the LHA reported that the highway department had embarked upon an "ambitious" program of highway improvement concentrated on the primary roads of the state, including five hundred thousand dollars spent on the improvement of seventy-seven miles of the Lincoln Highway in 1923. Moreover,

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[15] *Official Route Book of the Yellowstone Highway Association*, 29; *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 5th Ed. (Detroit: The Lincoln Highway Association, 1924), 41, 412.
[16] Cynde Georgen, *In the Shadow of the Bighorns: A History of Early Sheridan and the Goose Creek Valley of Northern Wyoming* (Sheridan, WY: Sheridan County Historical Society, 2010), 80-81.
[17] Whiteley, *The Yellowstone Highway*, 32-33.
[18] The Wyoming Newspaper Project, part of the Wyoming State Library Digital Collections, is an excellent source of information regarding the activities of local boosters, how they operated, and how their actions affected road development and improvement in the 1910s and 1920s. http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.
[19] Intermountain Antiquities Computer System Site Form, Site 48CA2785, the Black and Yellow Trail. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.
[20] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, Site 48JO1479, the Black and Yellow Trail. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.

> From Cheyenne west to Evanston, Wyoming, the Lincoln Highway tourist will encounter less than 40 miles of poor road and when it can be truthfully said that six or eight years ago the entire drive across the state was one very difficult to negotiate and likely, at times, to be almost impassable, some idea of the improvements accomplished will be gained.[21]

Trail associations and other local boosters provided a valuable service to early motorists; however, the named highway system had a number of problems. For one, motorists could not be assured that the road advertised to them was truly the shortest, easiest, or best maintained road, especially if there was a competing route. As illustrated above, road improvement and maintenance were inconsistent and concentrated in some sections to the detriment of others. Between 1910 and 1920 the number of registered motor vehicles in the United States increased from five hundred thousand to nearly ten million, and increased again to twenty-six million by 1930. As the number of car owners and drivers continued to swell, it became clear the Federal Government would need to assist local and state governments in the creation of reliable routes and the construction of uniform highways.

The Federal Aid Highway Program commenced in 1916 with the passage of the Federal Aid Road Act. This landmark act was the first time the Federal Government provided assistance for state highway costs by granting funds for any rural road over which the U.S. mail was carried. The act required states to have a highway department capable of designing, constructing, and maintaining these roads in order to be eligible to share in the appropriation. The Federal Highway Act of 1921 refined the scope of federal funding, limiting the amount of money that could be spent on local roads and emphasizing the importance of building roads that were "interstate in character." As the Federal Government assumed greater responsibility for establishing a national network of roads, the need for auto trail boosters diminished.

In 1925 the Federal Government formed the Joint Board on Interstate Highways, which was charged with selecting a system of routes from among the named highways and designing a national system of signs and markers. Among other things, the board determined that the new system would have numbered routes rather than named – east-west routes were given even numbers and north-south routes odd. The standard U.S. route marker, which replaced the trail association insignias, became the shield and number system used today. During 1926 over one thousand U.S. markers were placed on 2,806 miles of U.S. Routes in Wyoming.[22]

The basic routes of the three major named highways through Wyoming were all retained under the new numbered system and were designated as follows. The Lincoln Highway

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[21] *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 407-408.
[22] Weingroff, "From Names to Numbers"; Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report, 1924-1926* (Cheyenne, 1926), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 39-41.

became U.S. Highway 30, dividing into north and south routes near Granger. US 30 North ran to Kemmerer and on to Pocatello, Idaho. US 30 South followed the path of the Lincoln Highway to Salt Lake City, Utah. The Black and Yellow Trail became U.S. Highway 16, running north from Gillette to Ucross rather than south to Sussex. The Yellowstone Highway became U.S. Highway 87 between Cheyenne and Orin Junction and U.S. Highway 20 thereafter. In the 1920s the Wyoming Highway Department maintained roads by grading, providing drainage, and adding gravel surfacing to dirt roads. In 1924 the department began to experiment with oiling gravel roads. This oil-aggregate mixture was an early form of "blacktop." Because of the budding oil industry centered in Casper, black oil was abundant and cheap in Wyoming. By 1929 there were eighty-seven miles of oiled roads in Albany, Carbon, Goshen, and Natrona counties. Ten years later, every major road in Wyoming had received this treatment.[23]

In the 1920s most of the U.S. Routes consisted of dirt roads lacking a constructed base or grade, with very little cut and fill. Minor cuts lowered some hills, and a few drainages were filled. Road profiles were slightly crowned to facilitate drainage. Road beds were about twenty-four feet wide, and right-of-way width was typically between sixty-six and eighty feet. Along the Lincoln Highway, horizontal realignments straightened short curves. As late as 1924, the LHA asserted that, "Trans-state travel in Wyoming has not yet reached the density requiring permanent paving work and the fine, decomposed granite gravel grades constructed, provide all-weather conditions more than adequate to take care of the traffic volume of the present and immediate future."[24]

During the Great Depression the Civilian Conservation Corps undertook several road projects in Wyoming, building the Snake River Canyon Road in today's Bridger-Teton National Forest and the roads through Guernsey State Park. Federal aid highway projects boomed during the same period. The Wyoming Highway Department began major construction projects such as the realignment of U.S. Highway 30 between Medicine Bow and Walcott Junction, where nearly five miles were eliminated from the 1922 iteration of the Lincoln Highway. Reconstruction of the Yellowstone Highway between Cody and the east gate of the park took place between 1924 and 1938. Surfacing consisted of crushed gravel saturated with black oil.

At this time roads began to approach modern engineering standards in order to accommodate traffic speeds up to seventy or eighty miles per hour and increased truck traffic. Accordingly, new rights-of-way were as much as two hundred feet wide. Subgrades as wide as thirty-six feet and composed of gravel fill were constructed to support heavier automobiles. Compacted road beds began to replace the dirt roads constructed in the 1920s. Many existing pipes, culverts, headwalls, guardrails, and fences were removed. Masonry was often used for

[23] Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Sixth Biennial Report, 1926-1928* (Cheyenne, 1928), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 19-21; Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 424-425.
[24] Francis, "Historic Context and Evaluation of Automobile Roads in Wyoming"; *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 408.

retaining walls and culvert facings during new construction. Traveling surfaces were around sixteen to twenty-four feet wide for two lanes of traffic. Shoulders consisted of gravel or earth and sloped steeply to the bottom of borrow ditches. Increased speeds combined with these dramatic drop-offs likely contributed to the over one hundred traffic fatalities recorded in 1934.

Very little domestic road building took place during World War II while national resources were diverted to the war effort. After the war, highway construction responded to changes in the automobile industry, new federal standards, and a greater concern for safety. Horizontal line changes straightened curves for smoother travel and to allow improved sight distance for passing. Improvements to vertical alignments also increased sight distances. Passing lanes were added to many two-lane roads during the 1940s and 1950s, widening roads to forty-eight feet in these locations. Sub-grades widened considerably: earth bases were often as wide as fifty-six feet and topped with gravel sub-grades about forty-four feet wide. Fill slopes were significantly lessened. Asphalt, or "hot plant mix," was introduced as a surfacing material. By the late 1940s and early 1950s a typical highway consisted of a paved, two-lane road having gentle gravel shoulders and a moderately steep embankment sloping to a borrow ditch.[25]

World War II had deferred federal spending from infrastructure projects to the war effort; however, General and later President Dwight D. Eisenhower's experiences in Germany during the war, specifically with the Autobahn, helped him to recognize that highways were a necessary component of a national defense system. As a young Lt. Colonel, Eisenhower had participated in a 1919 transcontinental motor convoy undertaken by the U.S. Army and promoted by the LHA. The convoy left the White House on July 7 and headed for Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, where it merged onto the Lincoln Highway and followed it to San Francisco, arriving on September 5. The convoy demonstrated that existing bridges and roads across the nation were entirely inadequate to sustain a large number of heavy vehicles, and thus a threat to national defense. Eisenhower recalled the experience in his autobiography *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*, writing: "The old convoy had started me thinking about good, two-lane highways, but Germany had made me see the wisdom of broader ribbons across the land." President Eisenhower announced a "Grand Plan" for highways in 1954. During his administration the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 authorized a new Interstate Highway System of superhighways that in many places replaced the U.S. Routes.[26]

In Wyoming Interstate 80 followed basically the same route as the Lincoln Highway and U.S. Highway 30 South, the major difference being the route between Laramie and Rawlins. Interstate 80 was constructed between 1956 and 1976 and was routed close enough to US 30 that many towns along the older corridor were not entirely left behind. Exceptions include Bosler, Rock River, and Medicine Bow north of Laramie, and the original site of Little America, which in 1952 moved south to the future interstate corridor and was eventually given its own

[25] Francis, "Historic Context and Evaluation of Automobile Roads in Wyoming."
[26] Weingroff, "The Lincoln Highway"; Dwight D. Eisenhower, *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), 166-167.

interstate interchange. Little America was originally sited near the town of Granger along a portion of the Mormon pioneer trail to Salt Lake City. Interstate 25 superseded U.S. Highway 87 and the Yellowstone Highway between Cheyenne and Casper, and Interstate 90 covered a similar route to the Black and Yellow Trail to Buffalo and the Custer Battlefield Highway.

In the early 1960s the completion of Interstate 90 across the northeast corner of Wyoming helped to maintain a direct route to the national parks through Wyoming, even though it only conveyed tourists as far as Sheridan or Buffalo.[27] Travel routes through north central Wyoming were hotly contested as the tourist economy was recognized to be a significant contributor to the economic vitality of communities on the main leisure travel routes. Two U.S. Routes crossed the Bighorn Mountains, U.S. Highway 14, the northern route west from Sheridan, and U.S. Highway 16, which crossed the mountains southwest of Buffalo. These U.S Routes divided at Ucross a viewpoint where Sheridan and Buffalo competed vigorously for the tourist trade. During the late 1950s US 16 was improved to eliminate a narrow stretch of road through Tensleep Canyon, shortening the travel time between Buffalo and Worland and enhancing the route's appeal to tourists. As the interstate highway system developed, residents of Sheridan protested a plan to construct a route west from Gillette to Buffalo to connect with US 16. Governor Milward Simpson was called upon to settle the issue. Ultimately it was decided that routing Interstate 90 from Gillette to Buffalo would keep most of the traffic to the national parks in Wyoming, rather than lose much of it to a parallel route in Montana. The section of Interstate 90 between Gillette and Buffalo officially opened in 1962, though work continued for a few additional years.[28]

Interstate 25 funneled travelers driving north on the east side of the Rocky Mountains to U.S. Highways 20/26, Cody, and the east entrance of Yellowstone National Park, while Interstate 80 brought transcontinental or regional travelers to routes heading north to Jackson Hole, Grand Teton National Park, and Yellowstone. Towns and communities along these routes experienced a continued increase in travelers and in demand for lodging. Interstate highways reinforced existing travel patterns in Wyoming in the 1960s and 1970s, rather than introduced significantly different ones. This relates to a long-standing pattern in Wyoming in which infrastructure tends to develop within transportation corridors, where multiple routes share essentially the same space. The most compelling reason for this phenomenon seems to be that there are only a few safe, efficient ways to cross the challenging mountainous terrain and arid basins within the state. Nationally, the rise of interstate travel had the effect of concentrating tourist lodging in larger cities at the expense of small town businesses. While

[27] The completion of I-90 also appears to have had a significant effect on visitation to Devils Tower National Monument. Visitation to the monument increased notably from 2,159 visitors (at the time, a record number) in 1963 to around 127,500 visitors in 1965. These numbers were reported in *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (January 1966): 10.

[28] Frank Hicks, "Interstate Route Means Great Deal to Buffalo," *Wyoming State Tribune and Wyoming Eagle* (Cheyenne, WY), July 22-25, 1958; Robert W. Fenwick, "The Second Battle of the Little Big Horn," *Denver Post Empire Magazine*, July 21, 1957. Both articles clipped in Highways vertical file, Wyoming State Archives.

this was likely true in Wyoming in a limited sense, the state has only a small number of large towns spaced over long distances, meaning that lodging properties in smaller towns remained the only convenient options along many routes.

A traffic flow map prepared by the Wyoming Highway Department for 1957 indicates that US 30 was by far the most heavily traveled route in Wyoming. The differentiation of in-state and out-state automobiles indicates that roughly one-half of the traffic was "transcontinental" or out-of-state in origin. US 87, at the time the major north-south route between Cheyenne and Sheridan, was the second most busy road in Wyoming. During the late 1950s the volume of traffic entering Yellowstone National Park through the east and south gates was approximately the same.

The traffic flow map of 1966 indicated that Interstate 80 was the most heavily traveled route in the state, just as US 30 had been. Between 1956 and 1966 the number of visitors to Yellowstone National Park increased steadily year by year, adding nearly 700,000 additional visitors at the end of ten years. Many of these tourists drove through Wyoming. Traffic over US 16 nearly doubled after Interstate 90 was opened between Gillette and Buffalo. The volume of traffic on the adjacent US 14 also increased noticeably. The number of vehicles on the road between Cheyenne and Casper along Interstate 25 also grew significantly between 1958 and 1966. Traffic between Jackson and the south entrance to Yellowstone was heavier than that on the highway between Cody and the east entrance to the park and seems to reflect growing numbers of visitors to Grand Teton National Park.[29]

Because the interstate system was designed for maximum speed and efficiency, it does not run through communities, but near them. Interstates eliminate head-on traffic and limit traffic movement to the right, enhancing free flow. A system of highway interchanges allows drivers to enter and exit at defined points. This is in contrast to the moderate speeds of the named and numbered highways, where drivers could enter and exit the road at almost any point with relative ease and safety. The named and numbered highways allowed business owners to erect roadside services wherever they owned land or where it was for sale. The abundance of land on either side of the named highways and U.S. Routes meant that land was fairly cheap. As a result, roadside businesses were often generously spaced from one another and could be sprawling in sparsely populated states like Wyoming. The defined entrance and exit points mandated by interstate interchanges, however, concentrate roadside services in certain locations, driving up the value of land at these locations and encouraging business owners to build up rather than out. In particular, the interstate interchange system has had a direct effect nationwide on how lodging properties are constructed.

[29] Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Twenty-First Biennial Report, 1956-1958* (Cheyenne,1958), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 50-51; Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Twenty-Fifth Biennial Report, 1964-1966* (Cheyenne,1966), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 69.

DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN WYOMING, 1913-1975

Tourists have had an economic presence in Wyoming since the late nineteenth century, first as leisure travelers arriving by train and then, beginning in the early twentieth century, by car. Particularly in the northwest portion of the state, automobile travel ensured that tourists were spending money in Wyoming communities, whereas rail travel had primarily funneled visitors to Yellowstone National Park through Montana. Newspaper accounts from the 1910s and 1920s reveal that auto trail associations and other local boosters of the named highways constantly reinforced the importance of capturing the tourist dollar of visitors in route to Yellowstone, or on a coast-to-coast tour crossing southern Wyoming. For example, a leader in the trail association for the Chicago, Black Hills, and Yellowstone Park Highway (i.e., the Black and Yellow Trail) argued that the trail association should be diligent in giving wide publicity to the merits of the route, claiming, "By so doing the association can attract over its highway the great bulk of the vast automobile touring traffic. Procuring this traffic will render returns to the association and the cities and municipalities making up the association, beyond prediction."[30]

Historian Marguerite S. Shaffer describes early motorists along the first national highways as "a relatively homogenous community of upper- and middle-class, urban, white Americans," explaining, "Although occasionally auto tourists met up with traveling salesmen, migrant workers, and tramps, automobile touring took time and money. During the late teens and the early twenties it was a pastime enjoyed by a select few of the upper and upper-middle class." Shaffer estimates that in 1921 twenty thousand motorists, or 0.02 percent of the American population, made transcontinental auto tours, far less than the 294 thousand Americans who are estimated to have traveled abroad that year. The cost of purchasing an automobile and needed supplies for the journey was certainly an obstacle for many Americans. Once in route, a month-long tour could conceivably cost one hundred and fifty dollars per person, or roughly 10 percent of a clerical worker's annual salary of fifteen hundred dollars. [31] An equally significant obstacle was the rarity of paid vacation leave for both salaried workers and wage earners in the early twentieth century.

Before the final years of the Great Depression, the majority of American workers had neither the discretionary income nor the leisure time to be tourists. Until the 1920s the idea of vacation was of little concern to middle- or working-class Americans, for whom extended periods of time off connoted unemployment rather than earned leisure. During the late nineteenth century industrial wage earners began to advocate for better working conditions, focusing on obtaining eight-hour workdays, five-day work weeks, and higher wages. At this

[30] "Black and Yellow Trail Meritorious," *Crook County Monitor* (Sundance, WY), October 16, 1913, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.
[31] Marguerite S. Shaffer, "Seeing America First: The Search for Identity in the Tourist Landscape," in *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West*, ed. David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001), 174-175, 190.

time white-collar employees and wage earners were rarely given paid vacation, which was reserved for high-level executives and managers. An additional one-third of Americans were engaged in agricultural work that tied them to a farm or ranch and limited their ability to travel.

In the early twentieth century progressive management experts began to suggest that leisure, and especially vacation, was essential to restoring the vitality of those salaried, white-collar workers depleted by the unnatural stresses of desk work in the industrial age. While physical work was considered healthy and appropriate to a man's nature, the mental labor undertaken by a growing number of white-collar workers taxed the brain beyond what was natural. Yearly vacations with pay, the experts argued, would allow white-collar workers to engage in physical activity and recuperate from mental strain, thus enhancing their productivity throughout the remainder of the year. Ultimately, the cumulative effect of vacations taken by individual workers would improve the social health of the entire American middle class. By 1920 nearly 40 percent of all white-collar workers received annual vacations with pay, a statistic that would more than double to 80 percent within the decade.

During the early twentieth century employers and management experts alike considered manual labor to be far less taxing than mental labor, and working-class employees, by extension, were thought to have less need for vacations to revitalize their productivity. In 1920 fewer than 5 percent of non-salaried employees received vacation time with pay. Advocates for extended time off for wage earners argued that vacations increased productivity, efficiency, and health, but also noted that vacations would enhance company loyalty among workers, decrease labor turnover, diminish workplace conflict, and lessen worker interest in unions. Although very little change occurred in the prosperous 1920s, the financial and social crises of the 1930s reinforced managements' desire to win employee loyalty in an attempt to forestall union organization. By the eve of World War II a majority of American wage earners, as well as 95 percent of salaried workers, had achieved yearly vacations with pay. Twenty-five million workers received paid leave, and sixty million Americans enjoyed at least a week's vacation away from home.[32]

A number of factors, both practical and ideological, combined to create significant social changes in the average American's approach to leisure and vacation in the late 1930s and after World War II. The phenomenon of mass tourism is most often associated with unprecedented prosperity in postwar America; however, historian Michael Berkowitz notes that vacation expenditures rose steadily not only during the boom years of the 1920s, but also over the first six years of the Great Depression.[33] This suggests that material prosperity was not the only factor, or even the most significant factor, in establishing regular vacations as an important element of twentieth-century American culture. Practical considerations include not

[32] Michael Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure: Making Mass Tourism during the Great Depression," in *Being Elsewhere: Tourism, Consumer Culture, and Identity in Modern Europe and North America*, ed. Shelley Baranowski and Ellen Furlough (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 187-193.
[33] Ibid, 185.

only higher wages and paid vacation leave, but also the development of a system of improved national highways and the affordability of mass-produced automobiles. The American Industrial Revolution, beginning around 1880, created a demographic shift that reshaped the character of the nation from a largely agrarian population to an increasingly urban population having the capacity to step away from industrial labor for one or two weeks of leisure in a way that agricultural workers could not. During World War II a large segment of the American population traveled away from home, often overseas, as part of the war effort. Many of these Americans found travel to be a profound experience that shaped their enthusiasm to see different parts of the world.[34]

Tourism became part of the American character. Berkowitz notes that by the end of the New Deal, "mass consumption of leisure, especially in the form of vacations and tourism, was [perceived to be] a necessity for the social, cultural, and economic health of the nation." The policies of the New Deal promoted new consumer practices, including tourism, in an effort to revitalize the national economy. Business leaders and government officials at national and local levels increasingly boosted the benefits of tourism and the attractions available in specific states and regions of the country, ultimately creating national interest in travel that extended beyond the upper- and upper-middle class Americans who had been the leisure passengers on the railroads and the early motorists. Nascent tourism promotion organizations had the task of educating Americans about the desirability of travel away from home. Employers saw little benefit in paying vacation leave only to have workers to sit at home for a week or more, as the rejuvenative effect of vacation time was believed to be tied to travel. As auto roads proliferated across the nation, opening more corners of America to outsiders, local boosters promoted the attributes that made their communities worthy destinations. Berkowitz writes,

> Wherever a literate person turned during the 1930s, he or she was bombarded with professionally designed images and copy promoting the advantages of two-week vacation opportunities, vacation bargains, and all-in-one destinations. Although no one image or cleverly phrased slogan brought a tourist to a particular region, the aggregate effect of such advertising had created a cultural climate in which tourism could become increasingly accepted as a psychic necessity. More than advertising a particular product, community tourism had advertised a particular way of life.[35]

Nationwide, millions of Americans began to consider tourism definitive of the American character. While widespread changes in employee compensation and developments in infrastructure and technology made travel possible, decades of intensive advertising and

[34] Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 193-194; Karen Dubinsky, "'Everybody Likes Canadians': Canadians, Americans, and the Post-World War II Travel Boom," in *Being Elsewhere*, 324-325.
[35] Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 187, 193-194, 200.

consumer education by tourism promotion organizations made travel desirable. Slogans like "See America First" contributed to evolving ideas about American identity and nationhood. Tourism promoters cast travel as a patriotic ritual of citizenship, transforming an increasingly diverse nation into a unified group of consumers in search of a shared sacred landscape. The prevailing attitude of the time was that Americans were made better citizens through travel that revealed new aspects of their own country.[36]

While reshaping the cultural life of Americans, tourism promotion organizations simultaneously created a commercialized profit-driven industry of enormous economic power. On the eve of World War II, tourism was one of the largest industries in the nation, as large as automobiles, petroleum, and lumber combined, and 50 percent larger than iron and steel production. More than five million Americans were employed in the tourist industry. Capital investment in travel had reached thirty billion dollars, and travel expenditures of over six billion dollars a year accounted for close to 8 percent of national purchasing power. Nationally, tourism promoters spent $6.5 million a year on advertising.[37] In Wyoming, tourism promotion efforts were centralized in Cheyenne within a state agency called the Department of Commerce and Industry.[38] The character of Wyoming was particularly well-suited to the consumer desires of the day. Shaffer notes that tourists were hoping for the "real" America often encapsulated in idealized images of the West: "The West became the antithesis of the northeastern industrial core. Tourists associated it with democracy, freedom, friendliness, and community. They saw only a land of farmers, ranchers, cowboys, and friendly Indians – people who lived close to the land."[39] Accordingly, Wyoming experienced an incredible influx of tourists during the mid-twentieth century whose needs and demands shaped the commercial landscape along the major named and numbered highways in the state.

In 1927 the Wyoming State Legislature established the Department of Commerce and Industry. This department oversaw tourism as part of its responsibility to publicize Wyoming and its products in addition to what was then the department's main concern of colonizing the Riverton and Willwood Federal Irrigation Projects.[40] An early department publication promoted the natural resources, markets, crop yields, weather, highways, and schools of Wyoming before concluding with this section on recreation:

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[36] Shaffer, "Seeing America First."
[37] Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 194, 205-206.
[38] The railroads, and later the Federal Government in various partnerships, heavily promoted tourism to Yellowstone National Park but did not include the wider state. For more information on the promotion of Yellowstone and other parks, see Peter Blodgett, "Selling the Scenery: Advertising and the National Parks, 1916-1933," in *Seeing and Being Seen* and Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 200-205.
[39] Shaffer, "Seeing America First," 175.
[40] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Second Regular Legislative Session, April 1, 1931 to January 1, 1933* (Cheyenne, 1933), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.

Wyoming offers you:
Good roads and wonderful mountain scenery.
Vast forests and beautiful valleys.
Wild flowers in great profusion (only two states have a greater variety).
Thousands of miles of fine trout streams.
The greatest big game country in the United States.
The largest hot springs in the world (Thermopolis) – temperature 135° Fahrenheit – flow, 20 million gallons daily.
Yellowstone National Park (2,142,720 acres), the most marvelous of Uncle Sam's nearly National Parks. 187,807 tourists visited the Park in 1926.
Splendid hotels, summer resorts and ranches throughout the State.[41]

Although this list of offerings was doubtless intended to promote settlement in the sparsely populated state as well as tourism, it established many of the images and destinations that the Department of Commerce and Industry and its successor agencies would continue to market to tourists throughout the historic period covered in this context, and that the Wyoming Office of Tourism continues to use today.

In 1933 the Department of Commerce and Industry prepared its first biennial report for the Wyoming Legislature. Executive Manager Charles B. Stafford reported that the department responded to around twelve thousand personal letters from people seeking information about travel in Wyoming. The department maintained a repository of photographs suitable for publication in national magazines and newspapers and a library of 16mm films that it distributed nationally. Using the tag line "Wyoming – Worth Knowing" it produced and distributed twenty-five thousand folders, fifty thousand automobile window stickers, and ten thousand brochures, as well as distributed around twenty-five thousand official highway maps. The department also made available a gummed sticker suitable to affix to envelopes or letterhead advertising "Wonderful Wyoming, The Vacationist's Paradise, Smooth, Resilient Oiled Gravel Roads."[42]

By the beginning of the 1930s the Department of Commerce and Industry had already assumed many of the functions carried out by the State's tourism arm through the end of the period covered by this context. The biennial reports prepared between 1931 and the onset of World War II indicate that department personnel responded to some seventy-five thousand personal letters from potential travelers seeking information about Wyoming, and because the data is incomplete for all years within the ten-year window, the actual number of requests and

[41] Department of Commerce and Industry, "Wyoming" (Cheyenne, 1927), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.
[42] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Second Regular Legislative Session*, 17-20.

responses is likely significantly higher. Many letter writers requested travel literature. In 1939 the most popular query was for the official highway map, followed in order of decreasing popularity by informational pamphlets on Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, camping in Wyoming's national forests, rodeos and other outdoor Western-themed shows, dude ranches and resorts, hot springs, and the Sun Dances of the Plains tribes.

Many Americans were prompted to write the Department of Commerce and Industry through national advertising campaigns in leading magazines and newspapers. In the 1930s and early 1940s the department purchased ad space in *Sports Afield*, *American Forests*, *Outdoor Life*, *Field & Stream*, *Spur*, *Newsweek*, *Travel*, *Life*, and *Rocky Mountain Motorist*, among others. In addition, newspapers in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Kansas City ran ads for travel in Wyoming. The department proactively mailed its literature to American Automobile Association (AAA) affiliates, independent auto clubs, commercial organizations that maintained a tourist bureau, tourist and travel bureaus operated by daily newspapers, and life insurance companies. In 1940 the department distributed sixty tons of travel literature to such organizations including all public libraries in the nation serving urban populations of five thousand or more. It produced and circulated 16mm films of the state to a similar group of interested parties.

In the late 1930s the department launched several special campaigns and events. In addition to maintaining a repository of photographs of the state that were distributed on request to the media, the department provided twelve-foot enlargements of photographs of the Jackson Hole elk herd to go on permanent display in railroad stations in Chicago and New York City. It built sixteen "Wonderful Wyoming" signs strategically set between North Platte and Big Spring, Nebraska, on U.S. Highway 30. Fifty thousand "Wonderful Wyoming" windshield and baggage stickers were distributed in 1937, and in 1938 the department produced and distributed 435 thousand windshield stickers that commemorated the approaching fifty-year anniversary of Wyoming statehood. On May 30, 1938 Governor Leslie A. Miller welcomed the world to visit Wyoming via an international radio broadcast.[43]

The Department of Commerce and Industry claimed that in 1938 the average visitor to Wyoming stayed six-and-a-half days, an increase of four days over data from 1934. Increasing the average length of stay was one of the most important tasks of the department in order to reap the full benefit of the tourist dollar to the lodging, automotive, and food industries. The department asserted,

[43] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Second Regular Legislative Session*; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature, April 1, 1937 to January 1, 1939* (Cheyenne, 1939), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 3, 8-9, 18-21, 25-28; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1939-1940* (Cheyenne, 1940), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 2, 6-7.

> This substantial increase in the average length of stay of the motor tourist is largely due to the fact that in recent years we have obtained such broad distribution beyond our State borders of the pictorial tabloid, "Wonderful Wyoming," and of the official state highway map, together with other supplemental literature, that many tourists have studied these publications before coming into the State and have planned their trips through the State in such manner as to permit visiting a maximum number of the scenic beauty spots, recreational areas and places of historical interest, thus prolonging their stay.[44]

The department also claimed that the expenditures of travelers in Wyoming, both those for whom Wyoming was a destination and those who were traveling through the state, totaled more than fifteen million dollars in 1938, a value of $67 per capita to the residents of the state.

Transcontinental travel was found to have a value of six million dollars in Wyoming, more than four million of which was accrued along U.S. Highway 30. Wyoming hosted more than one million travelers – five times the population of the state – in 357 thousand automobiles during this year, and nearly 60 percent of these autos crossed US 30. At Yellowstone National Park, long considered a bellwether for tourism in Wyoming,[45] visitation increased from just over two hundred thousand in 1927 to 466 thousand in 1938. During this decade 3.2 million tourists, or more than fourteen times the population of Wyoming, visited the park. By 1938, 90 percent of automobiles in Yellowstone either entered or exited through a Wyoming gate, and the average tourist car using one of the Wyoming gates traveled seven hundred miles in Wyoming. Yellowstone tourists spent an estimated one million dollars on gasoline and five million dollars on food and lodging in Wyoming.[46]

In 1940 nearly 193 thousand out-of-state cars were counted at Wyoming ports of entry between June and September, beating the 1939 record of around 185 thousand cars during the same four months. The Department of Commerce and Industry extolled the value of "new money" from out-of-state visitors, pointing out that tourism "does not deplete any resources of the State. We can use our scenery over and over again." During the height of the 1940 tourist season Wyoming collected $1.6 million in taxes on gasoline and $231 thousand in sales tax on $16.5 million spent on meals, lodging, and incidentals. The department conducted a survey of visitors, to which two hundred automobile parties responded. The survey found that 76 percent of respondents patronized tourist camps, 17 percent hotels, resorts, and lodges, 4

[44] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature*, 13.
[45] Wyoming's national forests have also played an important role in attracting tourists to the state; however, because the national forests were frequently used by residents, often for day trips, usage data for the national forests is not as revealing of revenue generated from long-distance visitors in need of lodging and other roadside services.
[46] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature*, 15-18.

percent national forest campgrounds, and 3 percent dude ranches. Visitation to Yellowstone increased 8 percent from 1939 and broke the half-million mark for the first time in park history.[47]

The entry of the United States into World War II sharply curtailed what had been a dramatic increase in tourism to Wyoming from the late 1920s to the early 1940s. The Department of Industry and Commerce's data report for 1942 states, "The tourist industry was all but given up because of war restrictions on transportation. Tourists visiting the state, as indicated by the Yellowstone National Park 'yardstick', dropped off as much as 70 per cent." The department's 1944 report of activities noted that the department had served as "a sort of a clearinghouse for many war activities," while 1944 was the "smallest" travel year since 1929. In 1944 – prior to the conclusion of the war – Yellowstone's visitation data and returns on the gas tax indicated that travel to the park had increased by a third. Nearly eleven thousand servicemen visited Yellowstone, almost 13 percent of the park's total visitation. During the war Yellowstone suspended its bus service and offered only minimal accommodations. The park could not be accessed by air, bus, or rail, but more than twenty-four thousand automobiles entered the park in 1944.[48]

In 1946 the AAA stated, "The most significant reflection of post-war prosperity, will be in a tremendous increase in tourist traffic." The editors of *Holiday* echoed this sentiment, writing,

> In that yesterday before World War Two vacations, with pay, for those who were so fortunate, usually meant a week or two away from job and housework. Only the minority could afford the time or the cost of going beyond a three or four hundred mile radius from home. But this is the post-war world, for which great sacrifices were made. This is the new world, in which vacations are the rule instead of the exception.[49]

At the conclusion of the war the AAA predicted nearly half of American car owners would visit the West. A postwar increase in tourist-related traffic was clearly evident in Wyoming. The Department of Commerce and Industry's 1946 *Report of Activities* concluded, "You could not have kept the tourists and visitors out of Wyoming this past year with a stone wall."[50] The tourism industry in Wyoming benefited from America's spirit of celebration following the war, but more specifically from a fascination in American popular culture with the West. Western

[47] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1939-1940*, 5, 12, 14.
[48] Department of Commerce and Industry, "Wyoming's Industries, 1942" (Cheyenne, 1942), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1943-1944* (Cheyenne, 1944), RG 0286, Wyoming State Library, 2-4.
[49] Both quotations in Dubinsky, "'Everybody Likes Canadians',"322-324.
[50] Wyoming Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1945-1946* (Cheyenne, 1946), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 6.

films had been popular during the silent era before falling out of favor with the advent of sound. Westerns were relegated to pulp status for over a decade before several major studio productions in 1939 reinstated the genre's popularity, which would not peak until the 1950s. Western radio dramas such as *The Lone Ranger* were also very popular between the 1930s and 1960s. When Americans began purchasing televisions in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Western programs quickly became audience favorites. In 1959 twenty-six Westerns aired during primetime, and Westerns comprised almost one-quarter of television programming. Among the top ten television shows of the late 1950s were eight Westerns.[51]

Around 1947 the Department of Commerce and Industry was reorganized as the Commerce and Industry Commission. The commission produced literature and national advertisements that relied more and more on popular ideas about the West. Whereas earlier tourism publications had featured dramatic photographs of mountains and other impressive vistas, thermal features, and big game animals, publications from the 1950s emphasized Wyoming's suitability for family vacations, generally depicting a father, mother, and two children being entertained and educated on vacation in the state.[52] Prior to 1955 Western television programs and many radio programs and films of this genre were geared toward children, suggesting that parents considered children's interests when planning family vacations. In 1952 and again in 1954 the commission released comic books that depicted typical families of four touring the state. In the 1954 publication the family is magically transported to Wyoming by "Wyoming Joe," a mounted cowboy who leaps from their television screen and offers to show them the "New West."[53]

Both comic books were well received within the tourism industry. The commission noted in 1952,

> This year, a brand new and strikingly different publicity idea was used, utilizing one of the most popular mediums in existence today, the "comic book" type of magazine. This novel 16-page, full color publication on Wyoming has created much interest in Wyoming

[51] Susan Sessions Rugh, *Are We There Yet: The Golden Age of American Family Vacations* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2008), 92-93; Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor, eds., *Hollywood's West: The American Frontier in Film, Television, and History* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009).

[52] Historian Hal K. Rothman notes that recreation tourism, travel involving physical experiences with the outdoors, was the dominant form of tourism between the 1920s and mid-1940s. Following World War II marketing strategies for western tourism shifted to entertainment tourism, which characterized the West as "a playground, the American dreamscape, historic, mythic, and actual . . ." and more closely approximated the West of popular culture. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 23-24.

[53] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report, 1947-1948* (Cheyenne, 1948), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Commerce and Industry Commission, "Wonderful Wyoming" (Cheyenne, 1952), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Commerce and Industry Commission, "Wyoming: The Cowboy State" (Cheyenne, 1954), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.

> vacations and, in addition, has brought our state much publicity because of its uniqueness. The publication was written up in newspapers all over the country as well as in several national magazines, including Time.[54]

This version of the comic won the Midwest Writers Association national award in 1953, influencing the commission's decision to issue another "larger and more attractive" comic the following biennium.[55] In addition to the comics, other commission publications from this era often relied on line drawings and other illustrations to convey popular ideas and conjure exotic destinations that had earlier been depicted through photographs. Concerned that Wyoming advertisements had no cohesive theme, in 1955 the commission approved the creation and use of "Cowpony Joe," an anthropomorphic horse the agency hoped would aid readers in remembering the ad copy they had seen about Wyoming. Cowpony Joe, a "fiery-eyed waddie," was intended to be a "modern-day version of Wyoming's famed license plate bucking horse" who enjoyed Wyoming the way visitors would, fishing, taking photographs, and even riding another horse.[56] Cowpony Joe's lifespan appears to have been limited, as he is absent from the commission's publications after 1958.

The daily activities of the Commerce and Industry Commission closely mirrored those of the prewar years. According to biennial reports from this era, commission staff received and responded to a large volume of personal letters requesting information about Wyoming. Many of these requests were accompanied by clippings from national magazines or newspapers in wide circulation. In the late 1940s and 1950s advertisements were frequently placed in magazines like *National Geographic*, *Field & Stream*, *Holiday*, *Newsweek*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Sunset*, and others. In a departure from prewar trends, advertisements were also purchased in women's magazines such as *Mademoiselle*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, and *House Beautiful*, perhaps indicating the increasing importance of family vacations to Wyoming.[57] Magazine campaigns seem to have been very successful. The May 17, 1948 edition of *Time*, which included an ad for Wyoming vacations, hit newsstands on Friday, May 14. By Monday morning the commission had already received 273 inquiries based on this ad, while regular subscribers had yet to receive their copies of the magazine in the mail.[58]

[54] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report, 1951-1952* (Cheyenne, 1952), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.
[55] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Fourth Biennial Report, 1953-1954* (Cheyenne, 1954), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 11.
[56] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report, 1955-1956* (Cheyenne, 1956), RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.
[57] Karen Dubinsky has commented on the broader trend of advertising vacations to women during this time period, writing, "It was commonly held that, within families, women made the decision about where to travel." Quoted from "Everybody Likes Canadians," 323.
[58] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*.

During the postwar years commission staff began attending travel shows on a regular basis. These shows were typically located within the markets from which Wyoming was drawing the most visitors, the West Coast and Midwest, particularly the greater Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles metropolitan areas. States like Iowa, Ohio, Missouri, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota were also large markets for Wyoming tourism. In the 1950s a greater emphasis was placed on drawing Texans to the state. Ad placement in newspapers also followed these lucrative markets.[59] The commission continued to produce photographs and 16mm film for distribution on request. Radio advertisements were aired in key markets such as Chicago. In 1953 the first "TV films" were produced. By 1956 nine Wyoming films had aired on television stations in Los Angeles, Detroit, and Cleveland, and two others were aired nationally by the National Broadcasting Company.[60]

The commission published a variety of literature during the postwar years. The "Paint-Brush Map," which had first appeared in the late 1930s, was very popular in the 1940s and in distribution at least through the early 1950s. This stylized state map presented a cartoon version of historic and cultural offerings around Wyoming. The tag line "Wonderful Wyoming" continued to be used on general informational material, as well as "Wyoming, Frontier for Fun" and "Wyoming, Wonderland of the West." The commission also published directories for dude ranches, campgrounds, and motels in the state. 1950 saw the release of "Ski Wyoming," a new publication describing fifteen downhill ski areas in the state, many of which were in the national forests. The 1939-1940 biennial report had been the first to identify winter sports as a promising tourist opportunity for Wyoming, but World War II caused a setback in winter tourism development that only began to reverse in the 1950s.[61]

In 1948 the commission estimated that 1.3 million visitors left seventy-five million dollars in the state through the purchase of gas, oil, lodging, meals, and other items. Yellowstone alone attracted one million visitors, doubling the record of five hundred thousand visitors set in 1940. In 1947 and 1948, 283 thousand cars and 305 thousand cars entered the park, respectively. It seems likely that Yellowstone was not prepared to deal with this dramatic increase in visitation, because the park's numbers slumped by fifteen thousand in 1949 following complaints from the public regarding the condition of housing, eating, and sanitary facilities at the park. Despite the temporary decline at Yellowstone, Wyoming's highway officials

[59] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report, 1949-1950* (Cheyenne, 1950) RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 6; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report*.
[60] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report*, 6; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Fourth Biennial Report*, 7; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report*.
[61] Department of Commerce and Industry, "Paint-Brush Map" (Cheyenne, 1938), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report*, 6; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1939-1940*, 21.

anticipated a 10 to 15 percent increase in traffic in 1950. The commission claimed that Wyoming received over one hundred million dollars in interstate travel in 1951.[62] From 1950 to 1954 Wyoming hosted between two-and-a-half and three million visitors each year, with a rate of expenditures ranging from $85.9 million to $124.1 million. The average party spent around five days in the state. Yellowstone saw a little more than one million visitors each year. By the end of this five-year period Grand Teton National Park was also hosting one million visitors. The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission began reporting an increase in out-of-state hunting and fishing licenses in the late 1940s. Between 1950 and 1954 out-of-state applications for antelope licenses more than tripled, deer licenses were in excess of five times the initial demand, and bear licenses nearly doubled. In 1956 three million tourists generated $136 million for Wyoming, including $33.9 million spent on food and beverages, $26.2 million spent on gas, and $35.5 million spent on accommodations.[63]

During the biennium of 1957 and 1958, 6[illegible] million tourists visited Wyoming, twenty times the resident population of the state. Ninety-seven percent of these visitors traveled by car, staying on average between five and six days. During these two years approximately one out of every twenty-five Americans visited Wyoming. Wyoming residents enjoyed the largest per capita return on tourism in the nation, as the $2[illegible] million spent by tourists yielded around nine hundred dollars per resident. Tourists spent $[illegible] million on food, $62.2 million on lodging, and $65.2 million on gas.[64]

Steady growth in tourism during the 1950s proved that the travel boom predicted at the conclusion of World War II was realistic. Nationally, expenditures for all travel – both pleasure and business – more than doubled between 1950 and 1960. The travel industry in Wyoming was the third largest income producer in 1960. Studies of the tourist industry in Wyoming completed during the late 1950s and early 1960s highlighted significant trends. One was the importance of the state's motels in the tourism economy. The 53[illegible] motels in Wyoming in 1961 offered 8,691 units. These businesses were concentrated in ten of the state's twenty-three counties. Over 25 percent of the motels were along U.S. Highway 30 and 34.5 percent of these businesses were located in the counties adjacent to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. Motels accounted for more than 50 percent of the tourism industry's gross receipts in 1958. During the previous four years motel lodging sales had increased by over 58 percent. Motor courts and motels were mainly small, owner-operated businesses. As a group, they were estimated to be the fourth largest employer and third largest industry in Wyoming. Out-of-state travelers preferred a roadside motel to a downtown hotel: over 80 percent of the motel business was from non-resident travelers, in contrast to only 65 percent

[62] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report*, 7; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*.
[63] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Fourth Biennial Report*, 6; Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*.
[64] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Biennial Report, 1957-1958* (Cheyenne, 1958).

of the state's hotel clientele. The Wyoming lodging industry was in line with broader trends. Nationally motels experienced an 86 percent gain between 1954 and 1958.[65]

Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks were top destinations for vacation travelers. A study of the out-of-state tourist market listed eight different travel routes through Wyoming, and most of them included the national parks. In fact, 40 percent of Wyoming's tourists saw very little of the state other than the routes in and out of the two parks. A large proportion of tourists took a direct route to Yellowstone and Grand Teton, spent several days there, and then departed by the most direct route. Nearly 65 percent of the visitors to Wyoming spent at least one night in Yellowstone; 40 percent also spent the night in the Grand Teton and Bighorn regions. A third of the state's visitors traveled more widely over more than eight days. The draw of Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks was paradoxical – it brought visitors to the state, but they traveled primarily on beelines to the parks. The challenge of getting tourists to stay longer in Wyoming remained a dominant one.[66]

In contrast to the rapid growth of tourism following World War II, the 1960s and 1970s saw steady visitation numbers and maturation in the tourism industry. In the early 1960s the recently renamed and restructured Wyoming Travel Commission adopted a new slogan – "This is Big Wyoming," or simply "Big Wyoming" – that would remain in use at least until 1990. The "Big Wyoming" campaign marked a return to emphasizing the natural wonders of Wyoming through photographs of the state's famous landmarks. Popular ideas about the West and Western history were less important during this period than awe-inspiring scenery and outdoor experiences. In the early 1960s the travel commission began offering tourist clinics for towns in Wyoming that served a large number of tourists. These clinics educated business owners on visitor expectations and coached them in how to meet customer demands.[67]

The Wyoming Travel Commission maintained many of the daily activities of its predecessors. It purchased advertisements in *National Geographic*, *Life*, *Sports Afield*, *Sunset*, *Holiday*, *Field & Stream*, and numerous others, as well as newspapers and radio stations within its major markets in the West and Midwest. In April 1966 *National Geographic* carried "Wyoming: High, Wide, and Windy," a forty-one-page article on the state. During the 1963-1964 biennium the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) aired three Wyoming events on network television. The travel commission began producing television commercials in 1970. Wyoming

[65] Robert F. Gwinner Jr., "An Analysis of the Travel Industry in the State of Wyoming," (PhD diss., University of Arkansas, 1963), 105, 107, 110 and 112.
[66] Robert F. Gwinner Jr., *A Study of Wyoming's Out-of-State Tourist Market* (Laramie: University of Wyoming College of Commerce and Industry, Division of Business and Economic Research, 1962), 27-33, 54-55.
[67] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1963-1964* (Cheyenne, 1964), RG 0221, Wyoming State Library; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1965-1967* (Cheyenne, 1967) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.

native Curt Gowdy featured outdoor recreation in the state on his ABC program *American Sportsman* in the early 1970s.[68]

The commission continued to receive and respond to a voluminous correspondence, to maintain a library of photographs and 16mm film, and to attend travel shows in its major markets. Promotional literature during this period included a full-color vacation guide titled "This is Big Wyoming," an accommodations directory, a camping directory, and a ski directory. The growing importance of winter tourism is evident in editorials published in *Wyoming Motel News* from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s. The lodging community was hopeful about the possibility of turning communities like Jackson into year-round destinations. In 1970 the south entrance to Yellowstone National Park opened to snowmobiles for the first time. Other winter offerings included fourteen ski areas, snowmobiling in seven national forests, ice fishing, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and viewing the elk herd at the National Elk Refuge near Jackson.[69] The growing importance of snow sports merited a new travel commission publication, "Winter Sports in Big Wyoming." Another new publication was "Family Water Sports Guide to Big Wyoming." In 1975 the commission began publishing "Afoot," a guide to climbing and backpacking.[70]

The pattern of steady numbers of tourists was altered by gasoline shortages and high prices as well as an inflation crisis and recession during 1973 and 1974. The cost of travel rose 15 percent in 1974 over the previous year.[71] Vacation travel was on the cusp of change throughout the United States by this time due to social factors. The children of the postwar baby boom were growing up and were not as willing to pack the family station wagon for a vacation. Road trips with friends began to supplant the family vacation as the idealized way to travel. Those who continued to take driving vacations were more likely to travel to a specific destination, one close to home, and stay, in contrast to the long, constantly on the move, meandering car trips of the previous decades. While some families continued the tradition of a car trip to a national park, others chose to spend their time at a single destination resort. Travel advertising began to focus on niche marketing. While motels continued to serve recreational travelers, they increasingly relied on business travelers to be profitable.[72]

[68] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1963-1964*, *1965-1967*; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1969-1971* (Cheyenne, 1971) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1971-1973* (Cheyenne, 1973) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.
[69] *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (December 1965): 8, 12; *WMN* 5 (May 1966): 9; *WMN* 6 (February 1967): 1; *WMN* 7 (May 1967): 1; *WMN* 7 (April 1968): 1, 5; *WMN* 8 (May 1968): 1; *WMN* 8 (January 1969): 7; *WMN* 9 (December 1969): 6; *WMN* 10 (December 1970): 7.
[70] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1963-1964*, *1965-1967*, *1969-1971*, *1971-1973*; Wyoming Travel Commission, "Afoot: Backpacking, Climbing Big Wyoming" (Cheyenne, 1975) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.
[71] *Wyoming Motel News* 14 (February 1974): 5; *WMN* 15 (February 1975): 9.
[72] Rugh, *Are We There Yet*, 180-181; *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (September 1965): 8; *WMN* 15 (February 1975): 9.

DEVELOPMENT OF AUTOMOBILE-ORIENTED LODGING IN WYOMING, 1913-1975

At the beginning of the twentieth century hotels were the only type of overnight lodging available to travelers in most of the United States. These properties were typically found in larger towns, and almost always within reasonable proximity to a railroad, which was still the dominant means of travel. By the 1930s Wyoming's larger towns had at least one hotel. Business collectives and local chambers of commerce collaborated in building and promoting hotels, which were seen as essential to prosperous business communities. Local newspapers promoted the hotels, and these buildings became landmarks of economic energy. When the automobile became part of the tourist economy, hotel owners marketed their properties to motorists.

The status of hotels could not overcome the disadvantages they held for motorists. Hotels were inconveniently located in crowded downtown areas. They lacked parking for cars and were oriented to serve train travelers and pedestrians. Hotels built after 1920 were located at the edge of business districts and so were harder to locate, especially when travelers were exhausted from a day's drive. Motorists were tired and also dirty, unlike train passengers, and were embarrassed by their appearance upon arrival in grand hotel lobbies. Because the ground floors of many hotels contained restaurants, coffee shops, and rented meeting rooms – which many times were the spaces generating the most profit for the hotel – travelers were obliged to pass through crowded public areas devoid of the privacy they later came to enjoy in lodging oriented toward automobile travel.[73]

Camping was an alternative to lodging at a hotel. Motorists had the freedom to stop anywhere at any time, unlike train travelers. Motoring itself was a form of recreation, affording tourists a sense of adventure and a chance to interact with the scenery they had come to enjoy. Camping without explicit permission on private land also saved travelers money, not only on hotel rates, but also on tips, parking fees, and other small charges. Money saved on lodging left more for gasoline, and thus led to longer trips. Motor companies began selling products such as the "Auto-Camp Comfort Outfit," which consisted of a collapsible folding tent, bed, chair, table, and settee. The idea of free accommodations was popular in the 1910s and 1920s, but destruction of private property and litter caused landowners to post "no trespassing" signs and fence off popular camping spots.[74] In 1927 T. A. Shaw, a rancher near Wheatland, offered a one hundred-dollar reward for the arrest and conviction of tourists who started a fire that destroyed three buildings on his property.[75] Wyomingites also had cause to

[73] Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995): 169-170; John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996): 23-29; Heyward D. Schrock, "A Room for the Night: Evolution of Roadside Lodging in Wyoming," in *Annals of Wyoming* 75 (2003): 31-33.
[74] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 170; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 31-33; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 33-34.
[75] Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 34.

complain about hitchhikers who lined the highways, abandoned automobiles at the edges of towns, and "obnoxious" advertisements painted on rock features along the Lincoln Highway.[76]

The increase in automobile traffic in the 1920s resulted in the emergence of municipal campgrounds. These facilities were located along principal roadways in city parks or near downtown businesses. Campgrounds channeled auto traffic to spaces that were convenient and affordable for visiting motorists and that could subvert irritation and inconvenience to local landowners. Amenities included parking, camp sites, and sanitary facilities, and later expanded to electricity, picnic tables, and recreation areas. The footprints of several of these municipal campgrounds survive in places like Lions Park in Cheyenne, Hamblin Park in Evanston, and Hot Springs State Park in Thermopolis. In the summer of 1920 approximately forty thousand people camped at the municipal campground in Cheyenne. Although these places are important landmarks in the evolution of motorists' lodging across Wyoming, none are thought to retain sufficient integrity to be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places in this context, as modern municipal park amenities have replaced the landscape features motorists of the 1920s would have recognized as belonging to auto camps. Local businesses considered auto tourists a boon to the economic community. In 1920 the businessmen of Thermopolis estimated that auto campers contributed "approximately $30,000" to the local economy through the purchase of groceries and automobile supplies and services.

The downside to municipal car camps was that these inexpensive (often free) campgrounds attracted undesired transients and other long-term squatters as well as tourists who truly intended to move on after a night or two. As cars became cheaper, more budget travelers began using the campgrounds, discouraging the affluent travelers who had been the first to own automobiles from staying there. To discourage extended stays, by the mid-1920s municipalities were increasingly charging entrance fees and added costs for amenities such as telephones, firewood, and showers and other sanitary facilities. Time limits on stays also were imposed. In 1923 Cheyenne began charging fifty cents a night for its best facilities, though it also maintained some free camping. Once the idea of monetizing car camps was introduced, municipal campgrounds were quickly replaced by private business owners eager to capitalize on the new market.

Private campgrounds offered travelers the ability to purchase groceries, cook meals in a communal kitchen, wash clothes in a laundry, use a telephone, and receive basic automobile services, all on site. Competition grew between private enterprises, and campground owners sought new ways to improve their offerings over nearby businesses. By the late 1920s cabins rather than tents were a common feature of private commercial campgrounds; by the end of decade tent sites had been largely phased out in favor of standalone cabins, and the earliest motor courts were born. At first many cabins were bare, but soon owners began to furnish them with tables, chairs, beds, and stoves, and to supply them with electricity. Rather than encouraging a communal, neighborly experience focused on the outdoors, cabins increasingly

[76] T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 2nd Ed., Revised (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 423.

encouraged privacy and socialization among one's traveling companions within indoor accommodations accessible for longer periods of the year and in inclement weather.[77]

Motor courts emerged in cities and small towns along the major named highways in Wyoming. At least one enterprise, the Big Horn Camps, Inc., was formed to unite several shareholders in Sheridan, Cody, Cheyenne, Shoshoni, and perhaps other Wyoming towns in constructing "rustic cabin camps" – that is, log cabin motor courts – "in 14 Wyoming towns and scenic localities," including Sheridan, Buffalo, Muddy Pass, Gillette, Devil's Tower [sic], Lusk, Cheyenne, Wheatland, Douglas, Casper, Thermopolis, Basin, and Cody, as well as Spearfish, South Dakota. Construction was slated to begin in the spring of 1928 at a cost estimate of seventy-five hundred dollars.[78]

Haphazard site dispersal had been typical of tent camping, but the greater permanence of individual cabins within emerging motor courts lent itself to increasing formalization of the overall landscape of the lodging property. Standard layouts included rows of freestanding cabins, or more often U- or L-shaped configurations around a central open space. Parking spaces were clearly assigned, and communal green space was emphasized with lawn furniture. Often resembling tiny villages, cabins were placed close enough to the road to be visible to passing motorists but far enough from the road to appear private. In the 1930s subtle linguistic changes began to inform the lodging industry. "Court" became more common than "camp" and "cottage" began to replace "cabin." Physically, lodging became more homey with additions like closets, rugs, dressing tables, chairs, mirrors, curtains, radios, and bathrooms complete with bathing facilities. Many individual units were heated and insulated for use over longer periods of the year. Attached covered parking became very popular in the 1930s. In addition to the groceries and communal kitchens that had been available in the 1920s, many motor court operators chose to add coffee shops or restaurants to the premises. Just as in the 1920s most motor courts offered branded (i.e., Sinclair, Standard Oil, Pennzoil, etc.) gasoline and other oil-based products for sale on site.[79]

In Wyoming motor court units, often called cabins or cottages, typically took the form of small gable-roofed buildings constructed of frame or log. Along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30, cabins were typically frame. Numerous examples of these spare, simple buildings are seen in postcards.[80] Perhaps the best surviving example is the Black and Orange Cabins at

[77] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 171-174; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 33-34; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 34-35; Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 408, 423.
[78] "Chain of Log Cabin Camping Grounds is Planned for Wyoming," *Shoshoni Enterprise* (Shoshoni, WY), November 4, 1927, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 35. It remains unclear if this chain of camp grounds was constructed. No evidence has been found to suggest the business venture was successful.
[79] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 174-177; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 38; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 35-36.
[80] For example, the Minnehaha Camp in Cheyenne, the Silver Cabins in Hanna, the Sunset Camp in Medicine Bow, and the Ideal Motel in Rawlins. Postcard, Minnehaha Camp, 1928, box 713; Postcard, Silver Cabins, 1942, box 716; Postcard, Sunset Camp, 1940, box 718; Postcard, Ideal Motel, n.d., box 720. All in Coll. 10674, James

Fort Bridger. These cabins were constructed in 1925 and operated until 1936 near historic Fort Bridger, an important site in Western history that served as a tourist draw for those making a cross-country journey on the Lincoln Highway. These cabins were constructed simply: the side-gable roofs consist of 2" x 4" lumber joined at the peak without cross braces, ridge boards, or trusses, and the roofs sit atop a wall structure composed of 2" x 4" lumber covered in weatherboards. The interior walls are composed of fiberboards; otherwise the cabins are not insulated. The interior of each unit, eight in total, measures 13'11" x 10'2". Covered parking provided by the gabled roofs measures 14' x 7'7". These cabins are also representative of many, if not most, frame motor courts that existed during this period in Wyoming, in that they are devoid of any overt nationally-popular architectural style. The property is distinct from other similar lodging properties in the state in its historic use of orange paint with black trim to catch the eyes of passing motorists.[81]

Highways giving access to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks seem more likely to have offered lodging properties constructed of log. Two possible explanations for the prevalence of log motor courts in the northern part of Wyoming are: (1) log architecture more closely matched the theme of a journey to Wyoming's famous parks and through the surrounding national forests, and appealed to travelers' expectations and (2) logs were more readily available near the state's national forests. In contrast, many of the towns along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30 did not have a local source for finished logs. Fieldwork and archival research have produced only one late 1930s log motor court along US 30,[82] while several log motor courts have been documented in towns like Buffalo, Jackson, and Pinedale. Camp O' the Pines in Pinedale was constructed one block from U.S. Highway 191, which was originally planned as a scenic byway that diverged from the Lincoln Highway at Rock Springs and connected motorists to Jackson Hole, Grand Teton National Park, and the south entrance to Yellowstone. The history of Camp O' the Pines illustrates an important but often overlooked aspect of motor courts: although built primarily to serve as tourist lodging, cabins sometimes served other purposes in their communities. They might act as short-term rentals for workmen or, as at Camp O' the Pines, as temporary lodging for ranching women who were soon to deliver a baby and wanted to be near a doctor when they went into labor. Particularly in winter, when tourists were few, repurposing tourist lodging in this way must have been very attractive to business owners.

Camp O' the Pines has been remodeled and renamed several times since initial construction; however, the oldest, circa 1929 cabins are constructed of saddle-notched logs that originally projected beyond the gable-roofed eaves and decreased in length as the logs ascended toward the roof. (Water damage necessitated shortening the exaggerated log corners in the 1960s.) The cabins are approximately 25' x 14' and were originally designed so that each

L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

[81] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, Site 48UT2648, Black and Orange Cabin Complex. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.

[82] The Longhorn Lodge in Rock River dates to circa 1957 and includes several log cabins in addition to a log motel unit, a log restaurant, and a large freestanding neon sign.

cabin contained two lodging units. Much like the Black and Orange Cabins and other motor courts of the era, a freestanding outhouse served all cabins.[83] Unlike frame motor courts, which often carry no overt national style, Camp O' the Pines and other log motor courts displayed elements of the Rustic Revival style. The Rustic Revival emerged in the early twentieth century and was greatly influenced by the architecture of federal land management agencies that were creating buildings intended to harmonize with the natural world. Among the hallmarks of Rustic Revival style are rejection of the regularity and symmetry of the industrial world and reliance on native wood and stone materials.

A small number of motor courts in Wyoming used elements of picturesque or romantic styles such as the Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The remaining portion of the Sunset Motor Court in Evanston incorporates elements of Mission Revival style, including stucco walls, tile awnings, and a shaped parapet. The Indian Village Motor Lodge of Cheyenne meshed several popular images of the West into a single lodging property. A concrete teepee resembling the traditional housing of Northern Plains tribes housed the motor court's office, while the lodging units reflected the Mission Revival style through the use of concrete or stucco construction, non-structural vigas, and a shaped parapet. Covered parking was integrated into the flat roof and separated individual lodging units from one another.[84]

In the 1930s the lodging industry began to embrace a national shift away from romantic visual metaphors embodied in the picturesque architectural styles toward modern, clean design. Commenting on this new aesthetic, E. H. Lightfoot, consulting architect with *Tourist Court Journal*, wrote, "Regardless of where a court is erected it should be built of stucco with a sand finish, using modern architecture with its attractive simplicity and simple lines, and be painted pure white." Widely known as the Streamline Moderne, the style was applied often enough to lodging properties that it was sometimes called "Motor Court Modern." The Branding Iron Auto Lodge in Laramie referenced the Streamline Moderne style through its curving form, stucco exterior, and continuous bands of horizontal lines that followed the perimeter of its flat roof.[85]

The Great Depression affected all aspects of the American economy, yet the rise of tourism during the Depression and the continued sale of automobiles and dependent products such as gasoline ensured that middle-class vacationing Americans still needed overnight lodging. Few motor courts in Wyoming appear to have failed as a result of the Depression, and, as mentioned above, many improvements were made to lodging properties during this time. Nationally, the Federal Housing Administration's decision to permit financing of cottages under two thousand dollars without a down payment allowed more lodging businesses to open. In 1933 the American Automobile Association (AAA) estimated that thirty thousand "tourist cottage and camp establishments" lined American highways. Many of these lodging

[83] Rheba Massey, "Log Cabin Motel," National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form (Cheyenne, 1992).
[84] Postcard, Indian Village Motor Lodge, Postcards-Motels-Wyoming, P98-19/1, Wyoming State Archives.
[85] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-179. Photograph of Branding Iron, 178. Lightfoot quoted, 179.

properties were constructed and assembled by the business owner or local craftsmen. Kits of prefabricated lumber could be purchased from local lumberyards or traveling salesmen. Many other outfits were likely based on plans available in popular magazines, or were constructed based on what a business owner had observed at another site. Still other buildings were adaptively reused and retrofitted to meet tourists' needs.[86]

As the Great Depression worsened, out-of-work architects began to look to the still-growing lodging industry for new commissions. Similarly, manufacturers of domestic wares discovered the motor court's potential as a showroom for stylish new products in a sluggish economy. As a result, lodging properties and their interiors underwent a period of greater standardization as architects and designers realized that growth in this market remained steady despite the state of the national economy. In addition, lodging properties became disseminators of modernism to middle-class Americans spending the night in these "tiny, roadside exhibition centers." The motor court had transformed from a "home away from home" to an aspirational space more modern and luxurious than many homes.

The onset of World War II, however, and especially the diversion of automobile production to war machines and the rationing of gas, introduced a period of economic hardship for automobile-oriented lodging properties. Although hotels benefited from the resulting increase in train travel, many motor courts did not survive the war years. Following the conclusion of the war in 1945, the automobile industry not only regained but quickly exceeded prewar manufacturing numbers. Nationwide, there were sixty thousand motor courts or motels by 1956. The lodging industry enjoyed a construction boom starting in the postwar years and continuing through the late 1960s, a period of upward mobility during which many Americans also purchased houses and cars. The Federal Interstate Highway Program of 1956 improved transportation across the nation and increased the ease of traveling from one part of the country to another. While Wyoming had contained 375 automobile-oriented accommodations in 1938, by 1958 the Wyoming Travel Commission was reporting a total of 570 properties.[88]

The postwar construction boom in automobile-oriented lodging loosely marks the transition from motor courts to motels, as defined as property types in this document. While the hospitality industry as whole began to embrace the term "motel" during the late 1940s, many business owners in Wyoming retained use of "motor court" or "court" until the late 1950s. As such, the use of "motor court" or "motel" by individual lodging businesses should not be considered definitive of the property type; instead, a comparison must be made between the physical characteristics of the property and the registration requirements outlined in this document. There may be a short window in which motor courts and motels were being constructed simultaneously, most likely during the late 1940s and/or early 1950s, but in general motor courts were far less likely to be newly constructed after World War II. There

[86] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-180; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 38-39; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 36.
[87] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 180-181.
[88] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 181-182; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 36.

were, however, many existing motor courts that continued to operate after the war, some of which remain viable businesses today. Over time, some lodging properties that existed as motor courts prior to the war were expanded with the addition of linear multi-room units in keeping with motel construction. Because lodging properties are commercial enterprises that must meet consumer demand to survive, many motor courts, motels, and hybrid properties will demonstrate an evolution in form that reflects changing industry standards and customer expectations.

After World War II motor hotels, or "motels," emerged in a consistent form. Instead of individual cabins, a string of private rooms, each sharing a partition wall or walls with the next, were integrated into a single building under a shared roof. Whereas hotels typically contained interior corridors from which access to individual rooms was gained, motel rooms opened directly from parking lots found in the center of the complex or, less commonly, to the rear of the building. Initially, motels were single-story buildings. Toward the end of the period covered by this context, some two-story units were constructed. Similar to the motor courts, newly constructed motels often had a U- or L-shaped footprint, or consisted of two freestanding parallel buildings. In all cases individual units opened to the center of the property, which most often contained parking and sometimes also a shared green space. The rear elevations of early motels were typically devoid of architectural expression and may even have consisted of blank walls, unless a small window in each unit was present. Later, however, some motels chose to site parking behind the individual units. In these cases, a rear door within the motel room gave access to assigned parking.

Many motels of the 1950s and 1960s were not overtly stylish and were recognizable chiefly according to their function as modern lodging properties. Whereas many motor court units had been constructed of log or frame, most motels used one or a combination of the following materials: brick, concrete block, stone, and stucco. A smaller number were constructed of frame. Roofs were typically flat or gabled, often with a wide overhang that sheltered the entrance to a motel room and the open trunk of a car in the event of inclement weather. In these ways, many motels reflected the design of nationally-popular American ranch houses, the dominant domestic form of the mid-twentieth century. Unlike most ranch houses, motels typically contained steel casement windows, fixed multi-pane windows, or glass blocks. Toward the end of period covered by this context, large single-pane fixed windows came to dominate new construction. Lodging units were typically articulated with details emphasizing that many travelers were on holiday. For example, cheery color was often applied to doors, to panels beneath windows, or to the balcony of two-story buildings. Windows might also be enlivened with awnings, valences, or other special treatments to the surrounds. Sometimes decorative concrete curtain walls drew attention to a particular aspect of the property.

Because of the uniformity of many motel buildings, and because of the need to attract motorists in moving vehicles, most lodging properties distinguished themselves from other businesses through large, often freestanding neon signs. These signs existed in a great variety of forms, sizes, and shapes, but many were designed with a great deal of whimsicality

and imagination. Sadly, many older neon signs have been replaced with graphic, backlit signs in an effort to reassure the public that older motels remain viable lodging options. The neon signs that remain should be considered important features that can convey integrity to historic motels. Names of motels were also important ways to appeal to travelers specifically in search of the West they had seen in popular television shows and movies. Although some lodging properties were named pragmatically – for example, Bower Court operated by Lawrence and Esther Bower in Lander and the Rawlins Motel in Rawlins – many other motels evoked romantic ideas. The Covered Wagon Motel in Lusk, the Firebird Motor Hotel in Cheyenne, the Sage and Sand Motel in Saratoga, and the Ranger Motel in Laramie are only a few of the many motels in Wyoming in which a name and perhaps some aspects of a neon sign suggested an exotic destination, while the motel buildings were interchangeable with those found all across America.

Those Wyoming motels that distinguished themselves through overt references to nationally-popular styles seem to have done so in a limited number of ways. First, like the motor courts, there were a small number of motels that used elements of Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The Wyoming Motel in Cheyenne is one of these, chiefly because of its tiled roofs and stucco exterior. Second, another small group of motels exhibited a late use of Streamline Moderne, such as the El Rancho Motel (now the Federal Inn) in Riverton. The most common nod to popular national styles, however, came in the form of exaggerated modern rooflines, including hyperbolic canopies and barrel-vaulted walkways. The Ideal Motel in Rawlins was updated sometime in the mid- to late-1950s to include an on-site Standard Oil station under an exaggerated shed roof. The Bel Air Inn, also of Rawlins, used barrel-vaulted roofs to emphasize its restaurant, bar, and covered walkways between buildings.[89] Often the component of the motel property with the most overt nod to the Exaggerated Modern style was the motel office, as at the Sands Motel in Cheyenne. While the U-shaped motel does little to distinguish individual rooms, the office is sheltered by a multi-pitched canopy that dominates the principal facade.

In contrast to low-budget exteriors, many motel owners emphasized comfortable interiors and expended funds to furnish them. Amenities included air conditioning, telephones, and radios, some of which were advertised prominently on neon signs. Brand name mattresses were frequently listed in the description on the back of complimentary motel postcards. In 1949 *Hotel Management* (which also published on the motel trade) offered the following list of items that should be included in a typical motel guest room:

> Innerspring mattresses and box springs, – woolen blankets; Heavy Chenille bed spreads; Percale sheets. – Dresser with large mirror; Writing desk (all furniture is of oak). – Two large easy chairs; One or two straight back chairs. – Luggage rack. – One or more smoking stands and at least three ash trays. – Large floor lamp,

[89] Postcard, Ideal Motel, 1964, box 720; Postcard, Bel Air Inn, 1970, box 720. Both in Coll. 10674, James L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

bed lamp, desk lamp and ceiling light (all with 100-watt bulbs, including bath). – Wall to wall carpeting. – Rubber mat outside door. – 12 by 16-inch original water color picture; Several prints – some in groups – giving the room a homey lived-in look. – Cross ventilation – two large windows. – Venetian blinds and either sheer curtains or colorful draperies. – Window air conditioners; Ceiling fans; gas heaters. – Coin-operated radio on night stand. – Closets and drawers lined with quilted satin paper. – Closets have many coat hangers and a laundry bag.

Writing desk contains 10 sheets of writing paper; 7 envelopes; scratch pad; several post cards; blotter; business cards; sewing kit with buttons, thread and needle, pins, rubber bands, paper clips. – Telegram blanks; laundry and dry cleaning list; sample coffee shop menu; calendar and house directory. Bathrooms have: Tile shower; Plastic shower curtain; Bath mat; Facial tissue in chrome container; Two 12-oz. drinking glasses; Three bars of soap; Four face towels, four bath towels, two wash cloths.[90]

Nationally, the swimming pool became an important amenity at many lodging properties during the 1950s; however, motels in Wyoming responded in a limited way to this trend. Very few locally-owned "mom-and-pop" motels appear to have added swimming pools. The Frontier Motel of Cheyenne is one exception – owners claimed to have "Wyoming's Largest and most Luxurious" pool, which was heated and filtered and measured fifty by one hundred feet.[91] The relative unpopularity of swimming pools in Wyoming likely related to the short summer season. Many years an outdoor pool would not be attractive until mid-June and might close again as early as mid-September, rendering it unusable for as much as three-quarters of the year. Motel owners noted that swimming pools were expensive and time-consuming to maintain, and a relatively small number of guests used them.[92] Lodging properties such as the Mansion House Motel and Mountain View Motel, both in Buffalo, pointed travelers to the municipal pool in the absence of having one on site.[93] Other ancillary buildings and structures found at motels in Wyoming might include laundry facilities and eateries like dining rooms, lounges, and/or coffee shops. Landscape features included shared green spaces in the form of picnic areas or playgrounds. Shade, if it was available, was often explicitly advertised as an amenity.

By the early 1950s a number of problems were becoming apparent in mom-and-pop motels. Because of significant growth in the motel industry, many older motor courts and the more unsophisticated motels faced stiff competition from newer and better-managed properties within their local markets and lacked the financial resources and management skills to improve

[90] Quoted in Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 183.
[91] Postcard in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.
[92] *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (September 1965): 6.
[93] Postcards in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.

their offerings. Additionally, families that managed lodging properties were trapped in twenty-four-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week businesses in a country where the majority of workers enjoyed paid vacation time. Worst of all, new interstate highways bypassed some of the earlier named and numbered highways, isolating small businesses such as motor courts and motels from the main stream of traffic, drastically reducing their potential market.

As some mom-and-pop motor courts and motels began to falter, the first chain motels arrived to fulfill the changes in demand for overnight lodging. While some small businesses struggled due to the challenges listed above, the concept of overnight lodging still held great potential for investors on a large scale. Though motel chains existed from the 1920s onward, the earliest franchised chains did not appear in Wyoming until the 1960s. By the mid-1960s both Cheyenne and Casper had acquired a Holiday Inn. Ramada Inn, Imperial 400 Motel, and Downtowner Motor Inn also appeared in the 1960s. Having greater financial resources, chain motels could afford trained professional management and could compete with other roadside businesses – such as gas and service stations and emerging fast food chains – for prime real estate conveniently located at interstate highway interchanges.[94]

Chain motels brought brand-name recognition and corporate regimentation to an in-state market dominated by mom-and-pop motels. Chain motels also introduced a new building plan previously unknown in Wyoming. Based on a low-cost World War II building technique, "center-core construction" included one or more stories of rooms arranged back to back along a utility core. The bathrooms of every four units were grouped at the intersecting corners. Doors and windows faced outside, and circumferential walkways served the rooms.[95] By the late 1950s other chain motels relied on mid-rise construction, enclosing central corridors and adding elevators for access to upper floors. Unlike the long stretches of early highways, land at interchanges came at a premium price, and building up rather than sprawling out was expedient.

Chain motels rarely branded themselves architecturally; in contrast, many fast-food chains of the day began to adopt specialized rooflines and other structural characteristics that have become obvious parts of brand identity, often recognizable even when a former restaurant building is vacant. Instead, the corporate logo, such as the golden crown of Best Western or "Holiday Inn" in the chain's distinctive script, came to signal standardized, reliable guest rooms and a positive experience that could be replicated across the country. Ultimately, the power of brand identity would give chain motels a considerable advantage over small lodging businesses in Wyoming as in the rest of the nation.[96]

Many of the first chain motel properties in Wyoming have been demolished, or have been altered over time in such a way that they do not retain integrity to their date of construction. The Downtowner Motor Inn, built in 1963 in Cheyenne, was the first of the Downtowner chain

[94] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 183-186; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 37.
[95] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 186.
[96] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 186-187; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 37-38.

to be constructed in Wyoming and possesses relatively high integrity. Unlike most automobile-oriented lodging in Wyoming, the Downtowner Motor Inn was constructed in the heart of the historic commercial district rather than at the periphery. The motel included four floors of rooms (eighty-eight rooms in total) atop a substantial ground floor level that housed a coffee shop, dining room, cocktail lounge, and meeting rooms. A Village Inn Pancake House and enclosed swimming pool were part of the site. Because of its location downtown, the motel relied on a basement garage.[97]

Little America is a regional chain of motels and hotels with roots in Wyoming. In 1934 the original Little America began as a small gas station, a motor court of twelve cabins, and a café. Little America was located near the town of Granger on U.S. Highway 30. When the property burned in 1950, owner S. M. Covey decided to rebuild closer to the eventual location of Interstate 80.[98] Today, Little America is the largest "travelers' oasis" in Wyoming and boasts its own zip code and its own interstate highway interchange.

Referral chains became an important factor in the Wyoming lodging industry. Referral chains consisted of small groups of motel owners that cooperated in upgrading properties. Ultimately, individual owners intended to create networks of lodging properties maintained to prescribed standards that would allow an owner in one locality to recommend lodging in another town along a traveler's route with confidence. Each member of a referral chain pledged to maintain mutual standards and display the group's identifying emblem. An early referral chain member in Wyoming was the Indian Village Motor Lodge in Cheyenne, which belonged to the United Motor Courts chain. United Motor Courts was organized in California in 1933 and became the most successful of the early chains. In 1936 the group claimed,

> You will find in United Motor Courts a new and unparalleled achievement in combining comfort and economical luxury with the convenience of first floor accommodations made necessary by our present mode of automobile travel. United Motor Courts is a group of independent owners, comprising only those motor courts which come up to the highest standards in comfort, quiet atmosphere, and courteous service.

Members retained their own name but identified themselves through a shield logo that mimicked the new shield markers used throughout the federal highway system. United Motor Courts remained a strong presence in the lodging industry until after World War II.[99]

Best Western, formed in 1946 in Long Beach, California, became the dominant referral chain in Wyoming by the 1960s. Unlike earlier referral chains, Best Western was incorporated (as Western Motels, Inc.). Promotors drove major western highways soliciting membership from

[97] Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 38.
[98] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, 48SW3979, Little America. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.
[99] Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 139-142.

existing mom-and-pop motor courts and motels. In the early 1960s membership in Best Western offered many benefits. The company printed and distributed travel guides that listed the proximity of member lodging properties to the nearest major highway. They also purchased advertising in publications priced beyond the reach of many small business owners, including national magazines, major newspapers, and AAA directories. Best Western allowed travelers to pay in advance for reservations. It also made group purchasing of furnishings and supplies available to small business owners, allowing individual lodging properties to enjoy discounted prices like the national chains. Best Western provided its members with insurance, affiliated with several major credit-card companies, and offered design and accounting expertise through its national headquarters to property owners who likely lacked education in these areas.

Each motel affiliated with Best Western operated under its own name but prominently displayed the company logo. Members were also required to purchase products such as soap bars and shower curtains branded with the Best Western crown. The chain reinforced strict standards. Each year two salaried field representatives inspected motels within the system. In addition, each member was required to inspect three other member motels. In 1963 members paid dues of two hundred and fifty dollars for the first twelve units and fifteen dollars for each additional unit up to forty-nine units. A sliding scale determined dues for larger motels. At an annual convention members elected officers, drafted changes to the constitution, and shared information. The chain developed marketing programs and decreased the operating costs of small businesses through bulk purchasing, shared-risk insurance, credit-card discounts, and training programs.[100]

The Holiday Lodge in Lander is one of the best preserved of the Best Western members, though it is no longer affiliated with the company. On the back of a postcard marked "Spring 1967," the motel claims to have "Lander's Finest Accommodations" and lists among its amenities "T.V. – Phones, Attractively Spacious Units in a New Motel, Kitchenettes Available for Sportsmen." The Best Western and AAA logos are included.[101]

OVERARCHING TRENDS, COMMON PATTERNS IN WYOMING

Each motor court or motel property has its distinct history but is likely to be tied to one or more of the following broad patterns.

Prominent travel patterns drove motor court and motel construction.
The development of motor courts and motels in Wyoming was concentrated on the main roads and highways through the state. These routes included first the three major named highways, second the U.S. Highway Routes, and third interstates 80, 25, and 90. Communities along these routes developed lodging services in proportion to changes in demand over time.

[100] Ibid, 142-146.
[101] Postcard, "Holiday Lodge," Postcards-Lodges-Wyoming, PC02-610, Wyoming State Archives.

Communities that were not located directly on the principal routes used by tourists had fewer lodging properties.

Automobile-oriented accommodations were located on highways, typically clustered at the peripheries of historic commercial centers.
“Commercial strips" contained clusters of businesses, including lodging properties, on the peripheries of towns along main highways. These strips are the typical locations of motor courts and motels. Because of the rural nature of Wyoming, lodging properties, particularly motor courts, are also found in relatively isolated locations having a rural rather than industrial setting.

Properties were expanded, modernized, and renamed over time.
Many commercial properties were continuously updated to meet consumer expectations, and many of these changes are likely to have happened during the period of significance for any given property.

Many automobile-oriented accommodations were locally-owned and operated in Wyoming.
Roadside accommodations were typically owned and operated locally and were not part of a local or national chain or franchise group. During the 1950s affiliation with the Best Western referral chain became increasingly popular among mom-and-pop motel owners. The first chain motels began to appear in Wyoming in the 1960s but were concentrated in the largest towns like Cheyenne, Casper, and Laramie and did not dominate the market during the period covered by this context.

F. Associated Property Types

MOTOR COURTS AND MOTELS

Introduction

Motor courts and motels survive as some of the most visible reminders of the importance of auto tourism in local and state economies in Wyoming between 1913 and 1975. Several other property types associated with overnight accommodation are found in Wyoming but are not included in this context. The first property type not included in this context is hotels. Hotels are here defined as large, multistory lodging buildings typically located in a historic commercial center or rural resort community. Generally, hotels contain formal space on the ground floor for lobbies, restaurants and/or dining rooms, ballrooms, and small retail enterprises, all of which are typically available to consumers not lodging at the hotel as well as hotel patrons. Hotels include shared interior corridors from which individual rooms on the upper floors are accessed. Hotels are not included in this context because the majority of those constructed in Wyoming predate the era of automobile travel. Instead, hotels were most typically sited and constructed to accommodate railroad travelers. While some automobile tourists chose to lodge in hotels, this property type was inconvenient for motorists in several ways and gradually fell out of favor over the period of significance, as will be discussed below.[102]

The second type of overnight accommodation not addressed in this context is the dude ranch. Dude ranches have an important place in Wyoming's tourism industry; however, a dude ranch is typically a destination for travelers rather than a service travelers use out of necessity while away from home. Dude ranches provided not only overnight lodging, but also meals and entertainment as part of an immersive experience. In contrast, most motor court and motel patrons needed a convenient place to rest before continuing on a trip or enjoying the attractions they had come to see in that area. Motor courts and motels are not generally considered to be destinations in and of themselves.

Two broad categories of lodging properties – motor courts and motels – are described below. In this document, motor courts are defined as those lodging properties consisting of individual units that are visibly distinct from one another. Motor courts include properties consisting of freestanding cabins, cabins connected because of non-integral "lean-to" covered parking, and lodging units integrated beneath a shared roof but still independent from one another, most often because units do not share partition walls. In contrast, motels are considered to be those properties composed of lodging units arranged in a continuous line or lines, sharing partition walls, and presenting a one-dimensional primary façade. Other typical characteristics of both property types will be discussed below.

[102] John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 19, 23-31; Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 169-170, 180-181.

The period of significance identified in this document is 1913 to 1975. The beginning date corresponds to the first highways in Wyoming: the Lincoln Highway and the Black and Yellow Trail opened in 1913, and the Yellowstone Highway in 1915. These highways unlocked the state to motorists, allowing them to access the natural wonders of northwest Wyoming, or to cross the state on the first transcontinental highway. Motorists were a new kind of consumer that required new kinds of services, such as overnight lodging convenient to automobile travel. The end of the period of significance reflects changes in the fabric of individual lodging properties in Wyoming, as well as in the overall landscape of services catering to travelers and tourists. In 1956 the Federal Aid Highway Act ordered the construction of interstate highways that rendered many of the U.S. Routes obsolete for long-distance travel. By the mid-1970s the changes wrought by the interstate highways had significantly altered the landscape of travel in Wyoming, and newly constructed lodging reflected these changes.

The post-World War II construction boom in lodging properties loosely marks the temporal transition from motor courts to motels, as defined as property types in this document. While the hospitality industry as whole began to embrace the term "motel" during the late 1940s, many business owners in Wyoming retained use of "motor court" or "court" until the late 1950s. As such, the use of "motor court" or "motel" by individual lodging businesses should not be considered definitive of the property type; instead, a comparison must be made between the physical characteristics of the property and the registration requirements outlined in this document. There may be a short window in which motor courts and motels were being constructed simultaneously, most likely during the late 1940s and/or early 1950s, but in general motor courts were less likely to be newly constructed after World War II. There were, however, many existing motor courts that continued to operate after the war, some of which remain viable businesses today. Over time, some lodging properties that existed as motor courts prior to the war were expanded with the addition of linear multi-room units in keeping with motel construction. Because lodging properties are commercial enterprises that must meet consumer demand to survive, many motor courts, motels, and hybrid properties will demonstrate an evolution in form that reflects changing industry standards and customer expectations.

MOTOR COURTS

Historically, motor courts as a property type defined in this document were referred to using a variety of trade names, including motor court, tourist court, auto court, motel court, hotel court, cottage court, or cottages. Motor courts are defined as those lodging properties consisting of individual units that are visibly distinct from one another. Motor courts include properties consisting of freestanding cabins, cabins connected because of non-integral "lean-to" covered parking, and lodging units integrated beneath a shared roof but still independent from one another, most often because units do not share partition walls. The earliest motor court properties included shared bathhouses or outhouses. Over time, many property owners added bathrooms to individual units or constructed new units complete with private baths. Often, individual units were independently heated and/or cooled. Crucially, these properties

provided travelers with parking for automobiles, typically immediately adjacent to their unit for convenience and security. In contrast to motels, the architecture of motor courts is more likely to express elements of picturesque or romantic revival styles.

Motor courts emerged as a direct outgrowth of private campgrounds established to service long-distance motorists who most often carried camping equipment in their cars. In the early 1920s, in an effort to keep increasing numbers of auto tourists from camping on private property, many municipalities across the nation established auto campgrounds to funnel motorists to locations appropriate for camping. By the mid-1920s privately-owned campgrounds had largely replaced those operated by municipalities. Small business owners realized they could charge patrons more for a cabin or cottage rather than a tent site, and by the late 1920s many tent sites had been phased out in favor of freestanding cabins. Thus, the motor court was born.

Haphazard site dispersal had been typical of tent camping, but the greater permanence of individual cabins within emerging motor courts lent itself to a formalization of the overall landscape of the lodging property. Standard layouts included rows of freestanding cabins, or more often U- or L-shaped configurations around a central open space. Parking spaces were clearly assigned, and communal green space was emphasized with lawn furniture. Often resembling tiny villages, cabins were placed close enough to the road to be visible to passing motorists but far enough from the road to appear private and quiet.

By the 1930s it was more common to refer to properties of this type as "courts" rather than "camps," and "cottage" was used interchangeably with "cabin." The first cabins were bare – motorists were responsible still to bring their own bedding – but owners soon began to furnish them sparingly with beds, tables, chairs, and stoves, and to supply them with electricity. In the 1930s cabins became more homey with additions like closets, rugs, dressing tables, chairs, mirrors, curtains, radios, and bathrooms complete with bathing facilities. Many individual units were heated and insulated for use over longer periods of the year. Non-integral, "lean-to" covered parking between cabins became very popular in the 1930s. In addition to the grocery stores and communal kitchens that had been available at municipal and then private campgrounds in the 1920s, many motor court operators added coffee shops or restaurants to their premises. Just as at the campgrounds, most motor courts offered branded (i.e., Sinclair, Standard Oil, Pennzoil, etc.) gasoline and other oil-based products for sale on site.[103]

In Wyoming, motor court units, often called cabins or cottages, typically took the form of small gable-roofed buildings of frame or log construction. Along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30, cabins were typically frame. Several examples of these spare, simple buildings are seen in postcards.[104] Perhaps the best surviving example is the Black and Orange Cabins at Fort

[103] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 170-175; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 31-34, 36-45.
[104] For example, the Minnehaha Camp in Cheyenne, the Silver Cabins in Hanna, the Sunset Camp in Medicine Bow, and the Ideal Motel in Rawlins. Postcard, Minnehaha Camp, 1928, box 713; Postcard, Silver Cabins, 1942,

Bridger. These cabins were constructed in 1925 and operated until 1936 near historic Fort Bridger, an important site in Western history that served as a tourist draw for those making a cross-country journey on the Lincoln Highway. These cabins were constructed simply: the side-gable roofs consist of 2" x 4" lumber joined at the peak without cross braces, ridge boards, or trusses, and the roofs sit atop a wall structure composed of 2" x 4" lumber covered in weatherboards. The interior walls are composed of fiberboards; otherwise the cabins are not insulated. The interior of each unit, eight in total, measures 13'11" x 10'2". Covered parking provided by the gabled roofs measures 14' x 7'7". These cabins are also representative of many, if not most, frame motor courts that existed during this period in Wyoming, in that they are devoid of any overt nationally-popular architectural style. The property is distinct from other similar lodging properties in the state in its historic use of orange paint with black trim to draw the attention of passing motorists.[105]

Highways giving access to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks seem more likely to have offered lodging properties constructed of log. Two possible explanations for the prevalence of log motor courts in the northern part of Wyoming are: (1) log architecture more closely matched the theme of a journey to Wyoming's famous parks and through the surrounding national forests, and appealed to travelers' expectations and (2) logs were more readily available near the state's national forests. In contrast, many of the towns along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30 did not have a local source for finished logs. Fieldwork and archival research have produced only one late 1950s log motor court along US 30,[106] while several log motor courts have been documented in towns like Buffalo, Jackson, and Pinedale. Camp O' the Pines in Pinedale was constructed one block from U.S. Highway 191, which was originally planned as a scenic byway that diverged from the Lincoln Highway at Rock Springs and connected motorists to Jackson Hole, Grand Teton National Park, and the south entrance of Yellowstone. The history of Camp O' the Pines illustrates an important but often overlooked aspect of motor courts; although built primarily to serve as tourist lodging, cabins sometimes served other purposes in their communities. They might act as short-term rentals for workmen or, as at Camp O' the Pines, as temporary lodging for ranching women who were soon to deliver a baby and wanted to be near a doctor when they went into labor.[107] Particularly in winter, when tourists were few, repurposing tourist lodging in this way must have been very attractive to business owners.

Camp O' the Pines has been remodeled and renamed several times since initial construction; however, the oldest, circa 1929 cabins are constructed of saddle-notched log that originally

box 716; Postcard, Sunset Camp, 1940, box 718; Postcard, Ideal Motel, n.d., box 720. All in Coll. 10674, James L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

[105] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, Site 48UT2648, Black and Orange Cabin Complex. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.

[106] The Longhorn Lodge in Rock River dates to circa 1957 and includes several log cabins in addition to a log motel unit, a log restaurant, and a large freestanding neon sign.

[107] Rheba Massey, Log Cabin Motel, National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form (Cheyenne, 1993).

projected beyond the gable-roofed eaves and decreased in length as the logs ascended toward the roof. (Water damage necessitated shortening the exaggerated log corners in the 1960s.) The cabins are approximately 25' x 14' and were originally designed so that each cabin contained two lodging units. Much like the Black and Orange Cabins and other motor courts of the era, a freestanding outhouse served all cabins.[108] Unlike frame motor courts, which often carry no overt national style, Camp O' the Pines and other log motor courts displayed elements of the Rustic Revival style. The Rustic Revival emerged in the early twentieth century and was greatly influenced by the architecture of federal land management agencies that were creating buildings intended to harmonize with the natural world. Among the hallmarks of Rustic Revival style are rejection of the regularity and symmetry of the industrial world and reliance on native wood and stone materials.

A small number of motor courts in Wyoming used elements of picturesque or romantic styles such as the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The Indian Village Motor Lodge of Cheyenne meshed several popular images of the West into a single lodging property. A concrete teepee resembling the traditional housing of Northern Plains tribes housed the motor court's office, while the lodging units reflected the Mission Revival style through the use of concrete or stucco construction, non-structural vigas, and a stepped parapet. Covered parking was integrated into the flat roof and separated individual lodging units from one another.[109]

In the 1930s the lodging industry began to embrace a national shift away from romantic visual metaphors embodied in the picturesque architectural styles toward modern, clean design. Commenting on this new aesthetic, E. H. Lightfoot, consulting architect with *Tourist Court Journal*, wrote, "Regardless of where a court is erected it should be built of stucco with a sand finish, using modern architecture with its attractive simplicity and simple lines, and be painted pure white." Widely known as the Streamline Moderne, the style was applied often enough to lodging properties that it was sometimes called "Motor Court Moderne." The Branding Iron Auto Lodge in Laramie referenced the Streamline Moderne style through its curving form, stucco exterior, and continuous bands of horizontal lines that followed the perimeter of its flat roof.[110]

The Great Depression affected all aspects of the American economy, yet the rise of tourism during the Depression and the continued sale of automobiles and dependent products such as gasoline ensured that middle-class vacationing Americans still needed overnight lodging. Few motor courts in Wyoming appear to have failed as a result of the Depression, and, as mentioned above, many improvements were made to lodging properties during this time. Nationally, the Federal Housing Administration's decision to permit financing of cottages under two thousand dollars without a down payment allowed more lodging businesses to open. In 1933 the American Automobile Association (AAA) estimated that thirty thousand "tourist

[108] Ibid.
[109] Postcard, "Indian Village Motor Lodge," Postcards-Motels-Wyoming, P98-19/1, Wyoming State Archives.
[110] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-179. Photograph of Branding Iron, 178. Lightfoot quoted, 179.

cottage and camp establishments" lined American highways. Many of these lodging properties were constructed and assembled by the business owner or local craftsmen. Kits of prefabricated lumber could be purchased from local lumberyards or traveling salesmen. Many other outfits were likely based on plans available in popular magazines, or were constructed based on what a business owner had observed at another site. Still other buildings were adaptively reused and retrofitted to meet tourists' needs.

As the Great Depression worsened, out-of-work architects began to look to the still-growing lodging industry for new commissions. Similarly, manufacturers of domestic wares discovered the motor court's potential as a showroom for stylish new products in a sluggish economy. As a result, lodging properties and their interiors underwent a period of greater standardization as architects and designers realized that growth in this market remained steady despite the state of the national economy. In addition, lodging properties became disseminators of modernism to average Americans spending the night in these "tiny, roadside exhibition centers." The motor court had transformed from a "home away from home" to an aspirational space more modern and luxurious than many homes.[111]

Historic Significance in Wyoming, Criterion A
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Commerce and Community Planning and Development
Period of Significance: Based on the period it operated in its current configuration during the broader period of significance

Motor courts may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for their association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad historical patterns. These properties should demonstrate an important role in the areas of commerce and/or community planning and development. Motor courts were operated as businesses that provided an essential service to customers in need of overnight lodging. The emergence of motor courts as the dominant method of lodging automobile tourists during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s demonstrates the way in which many Wyoming communities developed beyond the historic commercial centers that had been planned and constructed before the invention of automobiles. The development of "commercial strips" at some distance from the older commercial district, or "downtown," demonstrates the way community development responded to the invention and increasing popularity of new transportation technology.

A motor court removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it can be demonstrated that it is the surviving structure most importantly associated with an event (Criteria Consideration B), or if it has achieved significance in its new location under Criterion A. Properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years may be considered eligible if they are determined to be of exceptional importance (Criteria Consideration G).

[111] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-180; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 38-39.

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Motor Court Architecture in Wyoming, Criterion C
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Architecture
Period of Significance: Based on the period of design and construction

Motor courts may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. These properties should demonstrate their significance in the area of architecture. Motor courts having individual units constructed of log will most likely display elements of the Rustic Revival style. Other motor courts might reflect the Spanish Colonial Revival styles or the Streamline Moderne. Properties consisting of simple frame cabins or cottages should not be dismissed based on the absence of an overt national style. This type of motor court was likely one of the most numerically popular during the period of significance and thus may be able to demonstrate the architecture motorists commonly encountered in Wyoming during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. In all cases, motor court properties should be complete; that is, enough of the original buildings and structures should be extant that the overall configuration of the property within the period of significance remains evident. In general, one or several remaining buildings will not be considered eligible if the majority of the property is no longer extant.

A motor court removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it is significant primarily for its architectural value (Criteria Consideration B), or if it has achieved significance in its new location under Criterion C. Properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years may be considered eligible if they are determined to be of exceptional importance (Criteria Consideration G).

MOTELS

Motels are defined as those lodging properties composed of lodging units arranged in a continuous line or lines, sharing partition walls, and presenting a one-dimensional primary façade. Construction of this property type quickly outpaced the construction of motor courts following World War II; however, motels were constructed prior to the war, and new motor courts were constructed in small numbers at least into the 1950s. In contrast to the romantic or picturesque architectural styles sometimes used in the construction of motor courts, many motels display the contours of the Modern style with an emphasis on horizontality. In general, motel buildings tend to express their commercial function first, and a subdued modernism secondarily. Perhaps because the majority of motel buildings lack distinction from one another, many motel properties include a large, whimsical neon sign sited for maximum visibility from the nearby highway. Most motels have an office, also sited near the highway, that is at once integrated with, yet visually distinct from, the lodging units. Motel properties are more likely than motor courts to include “luxury” amenities, the most common of which is the swimming pool.

The post-World War II construction boom in roadside lodging properties loosely marks the temporal transition from motor courts to motels. After the war motor hotels, or "motels," emerged in a consistent form. Instead of individual cabins, a string of private rooms, each sharing a partition wall or walls with the next, were integrated into a single building under a shared roof. Whereas hotels typically contained interior corridors from which access to individual rooms was gained, motel rooms opened directly from parking lots found in the center of the complex or, less commonly, to the rear of the building. Initially, motels were single-story buildings. Toward the end of the period covered by this context, some two-story units were constructed. Similar to the motor courts, newly constructed motels often had a U- or L-shaped footprint, or consisted of two freestanding parallel buildings.[112] In all cases, individual units opened to the center of the property, which most often contained parking and sometimes also a shared green space. Later, some motels chose to site parking behind the individual units. In these cases, a rear door within the motel room gave access to assigned parking.

Many motels of the 1950s and 1960s were not overtly stylish and were recognizable chiefly according to their function as modern lodging properties. Whereas many motor court units had been constructed of log or frame, most motels used one or a combination of the following materials: brick, concrete block, stone, and stucco. A smaller number were constructed of frame. Roofs were typically flat or gabled, often with a wide overhang that sheltered the entrance to a motel room and the open trunk of a car in the event of inclement weather. In these ways, many motels reflected the design of nationally popular American ranch houses, the dominant domestic form of the mid-twentieth century. Unlike most ranch houses, motels typically contained steel casement windows, fixed multi-pane windows, or glass blocks. Toward the end of period covered by this context, large single-pane fixed windows came to dominate new construction. Lodging units were typically articulated with details emphasizing that many travelers were on holiday. For example, cheery color was often applied to doors, to panels beneath windows, or to the balcony of two-story buildings. Windows might also be enlivened with awnings, valences, or other special treatments to the surrounds. Sometimes decorative concrete curtain walls drew attention to a particular aspect of the property.

Perhaps because of the uniformity of many motel buildings, and because of the need to attract motorists in moving vehicles, most lodging properties distinguished themselves from other businesses through large, often freestanding neon signs. These signs existed in a great variety of forms, sizes, and shapes, but many were designed with a great deal of whimsicality and imagination. Names of motels were also important ways to appeal to travelers specifically in search of the West they had seen in popular television shows and movies. Although some lodging properties were named pragmatically – for example, Bower Court operated by Lawrence and Esther Bower in Lander and the Rawlins Motel in Rawlins – many other motels evoked romantic ideas. The Covered Wagon Motel in Lusk, the Firebird Motor Hotel in Cheyenne, the Sage and Sand Motel in Saratoga, and the Ranger Motel in Laramie are only a

[112] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 182-183.

few of the many motels in Wyoming in which a name and perhaps some aspects of a neon sign suggested an exotic destination, while the motel buildings were interchangeable with those found all across America.

Those Wyoming motels that distinguished themselves through overt references to nationally-popular styles seem to have done so in a limited number of ways. First, like the motor courts, there were a small number of motels that used elements of Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The Wyoming Motel in Cheyenne is one of these, chiefly because of its tiled roofs and stucco exterior. Second, another small group of motels exhibited a late use of Streamline Moderne, such as the El Rancho Motel (now the Federal Inn) in Riverton. The most common nod to popular national styles, however, came in the form of exaggerated modern rooflines, including hyperbolic canopies and barrel-vaulted walkways. The Ideal Motel in Rawlins was updated sometime in the mid- to late 1950s to include an on-site Standard Oil station under an exaggerated shed roof. The Bel Air Inn, also of Rawlins, used barrel-vaulted roofs to emphasize its restaurant, bar, and covered walkways between buildings.[113] Often the component of the motel property with the most overt nod to the Exaggerated Modern style was the motel office, as at the Sands Motel in Cheyenne. While the U-shaped motel does little to distinguish individual rooms, the office is sheltered by a multi-pitched canopy that dominates the principal facade.

In contrast to low-budget exteriors, many motel owners emphasized comfortable interiors and expended funds to furnish them. Amenities included air conditioning, telephones, and radios, some of which were advertised prominently on neon signs. Brand name mattresses were frequently listed in the description on the back of complimentary motel postcards. In 1949 *Hotel Management* (which also published on the motel trade) offered the following list of items that should be included in a typical motel guest room:

> Innerspring mattresses and box springs, – woolen blankets; Heavy Chenille bed spreads; Percale sheets. – Dresser with large mirror; Writing desk (all furniture is of oak). – Two large easy chairs; One or two straight back chairs. – Luggage rack. – One or more smoking stands and at least three ash trays. – Large floor lamp, bed lamp, desk lamp and ceiling light (all with 100-watt bulbs, including bath). – Wall to wall carpeting. – Rubber mat outside door. – 12 by 16-inch original water color picture; Several prints – some in groups – giving the room a homey lived-in look. – Cross ventilation – two large windows. – Venetian blinds and either sheer curtains or colorful draperies. – Window air conditioners; Ceiling fans; gas heaters. – Coin-operated radio on night stand. – Closets

[113] Postcard, Ideal Motel, 1964, box 720; Postcard, Bel Air Inn, 1970, box 720. Both in Coll. 10674, James L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

> and drawers lined with quilted satin paper. – Closets have many coat hangers and a laundry bag.
>
> Writing desk contains 10 sheets of writing paper; 7 envelopes; scratch pad; several post cards; blotter; business cards; sewing kit with buttons, thread and needle, pins, rubber bands, paper clips. – Telegram blanks; laundry and dry cleaning list; sample coffee shop menu; calendar and house directory. Bathrooms have: Tile shower; Plastic shower curtain; Bath mat; Facial tissue in chrome container; Two 12-oz. drinking glasses; Three bars of soap; Four face towels, four bath towels, two wash cloths.[114]

Nationally, the swimming pool became an important amenity at many lodging properties during the 1950s; however, motels in Wyoming responded in a limited way to this trend. Very few locally-owned "mom-and-pop" motels appear to have added swimming pools. The Frontier Motel of Cheyenne is one exception. Owners claimed to have "Wyoming's Largest and most Luxurious" pool, which was heated and filtered and measured fifty by one hundred feet.[115] The relative unpopularity of swimming pools in Wyoming likely relates to the short summer season. Many years an outdoor pool would not be attractive until mid-June and might close again as early as mid-September, rendering it unusable for as much as three-quarters of the year. Motel owners noted that swimming pools were expensive and time-consuming to maintain, and a relatively small number of guests used them.[116] Lodging properties such as the Mansion House Motel and Mountain View Motel, both in Buffalo, pointed travelers to the municipal pool in the absence of having one on site.[117] Other ancillary buildings and structures found at motels in Wyoming might include laundry facilities and eateries like dining rooms, lounges, and/or coffee shops. Landscape features included shared green spaces in the form of picnic areas or playgrounds. Shade, if it was available, was often explicitly advertised as an amenity.

Toward the end of the period of significance, the first national chain motels began to appear in Wyoming. Many of the original chain properties in the state are no longer extant, or have been altered to the extent that they no longer possess integrity to the period of significance. At least three chain motels remain in a recognizable state: the Imperial 400 Motel of Casper (now the Royal Inn) and two Travelodges, now the Travel Inn of Laramie and the Budget Inn of Rawlins, respectively. These chain motel properties have many of the characteristics associated with locally-owned motels of the same time period. The most notable difference is the corporate preference for two-story lodging units, whereas most mom-and-pop motels in Wyoming were only a single-story in height.

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[114] Quoted in Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 183.
[115] Postcard in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.
[116] *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (September 1965): 6.
[117] Postcards in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.

A true anomaly among the motels considered in this document is the Downtowner Motor Inn in Cheyenne (now the Central Plaza Hotel). Unlike most automobile-oriented lodging in Wyoming, the Downtowner Motor Inn was constructed in the heart of the historic commercial district rather than at the periphery. The motel included four floors of rooms (eighty-eight rooms in total) atop a substantial ground floor level that housed a coffee shop, dining room, cocktail lounge, and meeting rooms. A Village Inn Pancake House and enclosed swimming pool were part of the site. Because of its location downtown, the motel relied on a basement garage. In many ways, this motel has more in common with the center-core and high-rise constructed motels clustered at new interstate highway interchanges than the sprawling motel properties found along the U.S. Routes that crossed Wyoming.

Far more prevalent in Wyoming than franchised chain motels were referral chain properties, particularly those affiliated with Best Western. The referral chain phenomenon has been discussed elsewhere in this document. Notably, Best Western-affiliated properties were locally-owned motels designed and constructed prior to becoming associated with the referral chain. As such, these motels do not share physical characteristics that branded them as Best Western properties; instead, the Best Western logo was an addition to existing motel signage. It was far more common, however, for a Best Western affiliate property to include a swimming pool, as compared to those motels that remained wholly independent.

Historic Significance in Wyoming, Criterion A
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Commerce and Community Planning and Development
Period of Significance: Based on the period it operated in its current configuration during the broader period of significance

Motels may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for their association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad historical patterns. These properties should demonstrate an important role in the areas of commerce and/or community planning and development. Motels were operated as businesses that provided an essential service to customers in need of overnight lodging. The emergence of motels as the dominant method of lodging motorists following World War II demonstrates the way in which many Wyoming communities responded to a continued preference for obtaining goods and services in “commercial strips” at some distance from the older commercial district, or “downtown.”

A motel removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it can be demonstrated that it is the surviving structure most importantly associated with an event (Criteria Consideration B), or if it has achieved significance in its new location under Criterion A. Properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years may be considered eligible if they are determined to be of exceptional importance (Criteria Consideration G).

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Motel Architecture in Wyoming, Criterion C
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Architecture
Period of Significance: Based on the period of design and construction and/or when it operated in its current form during the broader period of significance
Motels may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. These properties should demonstrate their significance in the area of architecture. Motel buildings will typically be stylistically restrained and will primarily express their commercial function. Some will embody elements of the Spanish Colonial Revival styles, or late expressions of the Streamline Moderne. Many more will recall the architecture of nationally-popular ranch houses.

In all cases, motel properties should be complete; that is, enough of the original buildings and structures should be extant that the overall configuration of the property within the period of significance remains evident. In general, one of several remaining buildings will not be considered eligible if the majority of the property is no longer extant.

A motel removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it is significant primarily for its architectural value (Criteria Consideration B), or if it has achieved significance in its new location under Criterion C. Properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years may be considered eligible if they are determined to be of exceptional importance (Criteria Consideration G).

MOTOR COURTS AND MOTELS: HISTORIC INTEGRITY

To be considered eligible for listing in the National Register, a motor court or motel must be able to convey all or most of the seven aspects of integrity to its period of significance. Historic integrity is evaluated in the following ways.

Location: Location is the place where a historic lodging property was built and occupied during its period of significance. In general, motor courts, particularly those consisting of freestanding cabins, are the most likely property type to have been moved from their original location, or rearranged on the same site. Movement of a lodging property or an element thereof prior to or during the period of significance does not diminish integrity of location. It is possible that movement might play a significant role in the property's continued use, especially if an associated road or highway was being realigned and the property followed. If the removal of a lodging property took place after its period of significance, the property cannot be said to retain integrity of location.

Design: Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a lodging property. It is not necessarily important that a lodging property express a nationally-popular style; instead, lodging properties should be assessed as to their authenticity relative to their historic appearance. Many lodging properties in Wyoming may be judged "plain" from a purely aesthetic perspective but still retain integrity of design. Alterations made within the period of significance are acceptable as long as they are in keeping with the building or site's original design. Alterations to the lodging property after its period of significance generally detract from integrity of design.
It is important that motor courts and motels should be complete; that is, enough of the original buildings and structures should be extant that the overall configuration of the property within the period of significance remains evident. In general, one or several remaining buildings will not be considered adequate to retain integrity of design if the majority of the property is no longer extant.

Setting: The setting is the area or environment in which a historic lodging property is or was found. To retain integrity of setting, a lodging property must be found in the same or very similar physical environment as during its period of significance. Many historic lodging properties were found alongside other commercial buildings, often within commercial strips at some distance from Wyoming's historic downtowns. A smaller number of lodging properties were found in rural locales. In all cases the landscape during the period of significance must be compared to modern conditions. The less contrast between the historic and modern landscape, the greater the integrity of setting. Lodging properties that remain part of an identifiable commercial strip have a high chance of retaining integrity of setting.

Materials: Materials refer to the component parts of a motor court or motel. Like most commercial buildings, successful lodging businesses underwent frequent maintenance and modernization cycles. If a lodging property fell into disrepair or became outmoded, it would likely have ceased to operate in its historic capacity. In general, materials replaced during the period of significance reflect the evolution of a commercial property over time based on consumer expectations. Materials replaced following the period of significance typically detract from integrity of materials, except in cases of restoration and in-kind replacement. Replacement with non-historic materials, such as modern windows, constitutes a loss of integrity. The degree of this loss depends on the overall impact to the building and the importance of the replaced elements to the building's significance.

The interiors of most motor courts and motels contained few finishes (moldings, built-ins, etc.) so that units or rooms could be cheaply and quickly constructed, would be easy to clean quickly, and would not become outmoded. Furnishings were relied upon to carry popular aesthetics rather than architectural elements of the interior. As such, the interiors of many lodging properties are likely to retain integrity of materials. One interior space that will likely have experienced frequent changes, however, is the bathroom. This document recognizes that bathrooms within historic lodging properties must undergo frequent updates to meet

customer expectations, particularly in those lodging properties still functioning in their historic capacity.

Workmanship: Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history, including technology and aesthetic principles, and their local applications. Workmanship will be most evident in lodging properties that retain integrity of materials. Where historic material has been removed, integrity of workmanship will be diminished.

Feeling: Feeling pertains to the qualities that historic motor courts or motels have in evoking the aesthetic or historic sense of a past period of time. These qualities are intangible, yet depend on the significant physical characteristics of these lodging properties. Evidence of integrity of feeling might be found in the glow of a historic neon sign at twilight, the smell of chlorine from a motel pool, or the experience of checking in with the owners at the small motel office before parking a car directly in front of the room.

Association: Association is the direct link between a property and the event for which the property is significant. The other aspects of integrity often combine to convey integrity of association. With respect to lodging properties, the motor court or motel should retain proximity to the route that produced it (e.g., an iteration of the Lincoln Highway or U.S. Highway 30, depending on the property's period of significance).

When considering the physical integrity of a motor court or motel, care must be taken to differentiate between integrity and condition. The concept of integrity addresses the accumulation of man-made alterations and changes to a property that have happened over time. Condition, on the other hand, reflects changes to a property that may include natural causes, most commonly weathering. Damage to or loss of historic fabric due to weathering does not necessarily entail a loss of integrity, and those properties damaged by natural causes are generally considered to retain a higher degree of integrity than those where non-historic fabric replaces historic.

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G. Geographical Information

This context covers motor courts and motels across the state of Wyoming.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Historic Context Development

Historic lodging properties in Wyoming were investigated through archival research and fieldwork. Historic postcards and photographs housed in the Wyoming State Archives and the American Heritage Center (AHC) at the University of Wyoming were major sources of information. The AHC's Charles L. Ehernberger Collection contains a particularly extensive group of postcards from around the state. In addition, the private postcard collections of Russell Rein of Ypsilanti, Michigan, and Heyward D. Schrock of Cheyenne were consulted. The Wyoming State Library contains records for the forerunners of the Wyoming Office of Tourism – which has existed in several different incarnations over the years – including biennial reports and promotional brochures. The state library also houses the Wyoming State Highway Commission biennial reports and other transportation records.

Fieldwork consisted of a buildings and landscape survey conducted along the Interstate 80 corridor between July 2013 and October 2016. The purpose of this survey was to identify roadside resources associated with the Lincoln Highway, U.S. Highway 30, and the early years of Interstate 80. The survey was conducted in-house by State Historic Preservation Office staff, notably Beth King and Richard Collier, with fieldwork assistance from intern Erin Dorbin. Beth King and Richard Collier have also completed a reconnaissance-level survey of roadside resources throughout Wyoming. This fieldwork was invaluable in understanding the development of tourist accommodations in Wyoming.

Property Type Development and Registration Requirements

State Historic Preservation Office staff Beth King and Brian Beadles developed the two property types based on an examination of national-level publications by leading authors, notably Chester Liebs (*Main Street to Miracle Mile*) and John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers (*The Motel in America*), as well as archival research and fieldwork conducted at the state level.

Period of Significance

The period of significance identified in this document is 1913 to 1975. The beginning date corresponds to the first highways in Wyoming: the Lincoln Highway and the Black and Yellow Trail opened in 1913, and the Yellowstone Highway in 1915. These highways unlocked the state to motorists, allowing them to access the natural wonders of northwest Wyoming, or to cross the state on the first transcontinental highway. Motorists were a new kind of consumer that required new kinds of services, such as overnight lodging convenient to automobile travel. The end of the period of significance reflects changes in the fabric of individual lodging properties in Wyoming, as well as in the overall landscape of services catering to travelers and

tourists. In 1956, the Federal Aid Highway Act ordered the construction of interstate highways that rendered many of the U.S. Routes obsolete for long-distance travel. By the mid-1970s, the changes wrought by the interstate highways had significantly altered the landscape of travel in Wyoming, and newly constructed lodging reflected these changes.

Historic Integrity
There are many motor courts and motels in Wyoming that were constructed during the period of significance. The historic integrity of these properties ranges from poor to excellent. The most common issues leading to loss of integrity include the loss of historic portions of the property and the addition of non-historic materials. A small number of the surveyed properties will retain sufficient integrity to be listed in the National Register in association with this MPDF.

Survey
The Lincoln Highway Buildings and Landscapes Survey and other reconnaissance-level survey of roadside resources was conducted by SHPO staff between 2013 and 2016. At the request of the Teton County Preservation Board (TCPB), historian Michael Cassity conducted a 2004-2005 survey of historic resources in Teton County that included some historic lodging properties. In 2013-2014 the TCPB hired Kaval Paschinsky to research and document historic motels in the county. This fieldwork resulted in the documentation of twenty historic lodging properties and informed the completion of the Historic Tourist Accommodations in Teton County, Wyoming, Multiple Property Documentation Form and the individual listing of the Alpenhof Lodge in the National Register.

In addition, the Camp O' the Pines in Pinedale, the Blue Cables Motel in Buffalo, and the Twin Pines Cabin Camp in Dubois, all log motor courts, have been previously listed in the National Register.

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United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20240

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places

Comments
Evaluation/Return Sheet

Property Name:	Historic Motor Courts and Motels of Wyoming, 1913-1975
Property Location:	Statewide MPDF
Reference Number:	MC 10000950
Date of Return:	5-1-17

Reason for Return

The Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF cover) for the Historic Motor Courts and Motels of Wyoming, 1913-1975, is being returned for additional information. Please contact me so we can discuss any points that are not clear.

Issues to Resolve

Name of Multiple Property Listing. Please see comments about the inclusive dates of this context, below.

Associated Historic Contexts. Section B should be completed with the name given in Section A. As stated on page 5 of the National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form*, "Depending on the organization of the thematic group nomination, and the properties it encompasses, the name of the multiple property listing may be the same as the name of the associated historic context." On page 8 of the bulletin, the first example demonstrates this application. The topics listed in Section B are essentially chapters (or subcontexts) in the context related to motor courts and motels. A context for automobile roads would include roads as property types and a tourism context would include other types of resources related to tourist development. If it is anticipated that contexts by these titles will be prepared for other MPDF submissions, it can be added in parentheses "(to be completed)."

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Property Name:	Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975
Property Location:	Entire state of Wyoming
Reference Number:	10000950
Date of Return:	5-1-2017

Statement of Historic Context (and period of the context). The context presents a very good history of the development of travel infrastructure and accommodation in Wyoming. However, the context lacks a clear explanation of the 1913 beginning date and the 1975 end date. The beginning and end dates of the period of significance are pivotal to the definition of the context (theme, geographical area, and period define all contexts). The subcontexts in this theme do not have to be defined by distinct periods. For example, if Interstate construction was completed in Wyoming in 1985, technically that would seem to be the end of the period for the automobile roads subcontext. However, the Interstates in this context are related to aspects of the theme that did not necessarily extend that late—motor courts and motels.

The context suggests, but does not pointedly defend, the inclusive dates of the context. For example, the beginning date of the period may be related to the formation of the Lincoln Highway Association in 1913 (page E-4) or it may relate to the inaugural drive of the Black and Yellow Trail (page E-5). Likewise, the rationale for the end date may be presented on page E-26, with an explanation of the decline in vacation travel after the gasoline shortages of 1973-74. Events or developments that began and ended the context need to be much more pointedly explained.

It is also not clear if the end date of the period of the context relates equally to properties nominated under criteria A and C. This, of course, is related to the areas of significance applied. Only Commerce and Community Planning and Development are considered valid areas under Criterion A. The latter does not seem to be addressed, although the areas of Transportation and Entertainment/Recreation (Tourism) do seem to be addressed. Please consider re-working these portions to reflect these questions.

An end date of 1975 presents requirements for Section F that have not been addressed. It is stated on page F-46 that motor courts "that have achieved significance within the past fifty years may be considered eligible if they are determined to be of exceptional importance (Criteria Consideration G)," but exceptional importance is not explained. What are some attributes of exceptional importance? The registration requirements must address the application of the criteria and the criteria considerations as explicitly as possible.

This same paragraph presents something of a contradiction in regard to the application of moved properties (Criteria Consideration C). "If the removal of a lodging property took place after its period of significance, the property cannot be said to retain integrity of location" (page F-51). This point should be clarified on page F-46, where it states, "a motor court removed from its

Property Name:	Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975
Property Location:	Entire state of Wyoming
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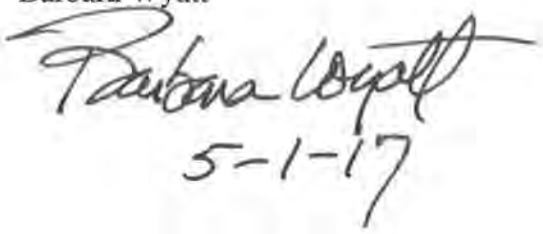
original location may be considered eligible if it is significant primarily for its architectural value **or if it has achieved significance in its new location under Criterion C.**" How might it achieve significance in its new location? Examples would help a great deal.

Submission of a nomination related to the cover. The National Register staff strongly recommends submitting a nomination when the cover is submitted so we can see how well the cover works. Some of the problems indicated above would become evident when the cover is applied to an evaluation. Please consider submitting a nomination when this cover is re-submitted.

Please call me at 202-354-2252 or send an email to barbara_wyatt@nps.gov if you have any questions.

Barbara Wyatt



ARTS. PARKS. HISTORY.
Wyoming State Parks & Cultural Resources

State Historic Preservation Office
2301 Central Ave., Barrett Bldg. 3rd Floor
Cheyenne, WY 82002
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http://wyoshpo.state.wy.us

July 19, 2017

Paul Loether
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW (2280)
Washington, D.C. 20005

Re: Submission of the Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975 MPDF

Dear Mr. Loether:

The Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office is submitting the Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975 MPDF for National Park Service review. The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the MPDF for Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975. The State Review Board reviewed and approved the document. Mary Hopkins, the Wyoming State Historic Preservation Officer, has approved and signed the form.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Brian Beadles
Historic Preservation Specialist

NPS Form 10-900-b
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

OMB No. 1024-0018

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (formerly 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information.

___ X____ New Submission _____ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Development of Automobile Roads in Wyoming, 1913-1975
Development of Tourism in Wyoming, 1913-1975
Development of Automobile Oriented Lodging in Wyoming, 1913-1975

C. Form Prepared by:

name/title Elizabeth C. King, Historic Preservation Specialist
organization Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office
street & number 2301 Central Avenue, Barrett Bldg., Third Floor
city or town Cheyenne state WY zip code 82002
e-mail beth.king@wyo.gov
telephone 307-777-6179 date February 2, 2017

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.

Mary M. Hopkins WySHPO 7/18/17
Signature of certifying official Title Date

Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

_____ _____
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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E. Statement of Historic Context

DEVELOPMENT OF AUTOMOBILE ROADS IN WYOMING, 1913 TO 1975

Wyoming has been a destination for tourists since the completion of the First Transcontinental, or Union Pacific, Railroad in 1869. In addition to its primary purpose of transporting goods and passengers cross-country, the Union Pacific offered leisure travel via its route across the southern portion of Wyoming. When additional rail lines were completed in the state, railroads delivered tourists to locations near the sites they had come to see – such as Yellowstone National Park or the national forests – where they would then proceed by stagecoach or on horseback to their destinations. At the turn of the twentieth century the most convenient way to access Yellowstone National Park, which had been established in 1872, was via the Northern Pacific Railroad's Yellowstone Branch Line that ran between Livingston and Gardiner, Montana, on the north edge of the park near Mammoth Hot Springs.[1] For this reason travel to Yellowstone National Park did not strongly influence travel through Wyoming prior to the construction of the first named highways in the state.

In the early twentieth century, despite growing national interest in auto tourism, the Department of the Interior maintained that automobiles should not be allowed in the national parks. When questioned as to the feasibility of allowing automobiles in Yellowstone, superintendent Maj. Harry Benson replied, "The character of the roads, the nature of the country, and conditions of the transportation in this park render the use of automobiles not only inadvisable and dangerous, but to my mind it would be practically criminal to permit their use." Benson was writing in 1909, when between fifteen hundred and eighteen hundred head of horses pulled stagecoaches over the recently-completed, narrow, often one-way Grand Loop Road during the tourist season, and he feared that horses and automobiles could not safely share the roads.[2] Yellowstone was not the only national park to resist private automobiles, but it had a special reason for doing so. Early legislation regarding the park had forbidden the use of steam vehicles within park boundaries. This legislation was intended to keep railroads from crossing the park, but the law was thereafter interpreted to cover all power vehicles, including automobiles.[3]

Despite the reluctance of park administrators, nascent automobile clubs were determined to gain access to Yellowstone and other national parks in the West. These clubs had an exceedingly strong influence on park service policy. By 1911 the National Park Service had

[1] Hal K. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 45-47. Rothman notes that the Yellowstone Branch Line was the first rail line in the western United States to convey passengers specifically to a tourist destination.
[2] Laura E. Soulliere, "Historic Roads in the National Park System: Special History Study" (United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, 1995), https://www.nps.gov/parkhistory/online_books/roads/index.htm (accessed January 3, 2017).
[3] "Automobiles for the Park," *Basin Republican* (Basin, WY), January 10, 1908, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.

concluded that the biggest obstacle to increasing park visitation, a major concern at the time, was limited automobile access. In 1915 Yellowstone was opened to automobiles for the first time, a major victory for automobile clubs. Yellowstone's concessioner phased out horse-drawn stagecoaches during the 1917 season, replacing them with touring cars and motor buses. By 1920 the National Park-to-Park Highway connected twelve national parks in the western United States, including Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado to Yellowstone and Yellowstone to Glacier National Park in Montana.[4]

Automobile clubs had earlier roots in the Good Roads Movement, which originated among rural Americans in the 1870s. Organizers argued that road construction and maintenance should be supported by national and local government as it was in Europe. Road building in rural areas would allow rural residents to gain social and economic benefits enjoyed by urban citizens with access to railroads, trolleys, and paved streets. Farmers in particular could benefit from reliable roads to transport crops to market. During the bicycle craze of the late nineteenth century, cyclists joined the cause, reasoning bicycles could be more fully enjoyed on good country roads.[5]

Bicycles declined in popularity after the turn of the twentieth century as interest in automobiles grew, but there was considerable overlap between cyclists and early automobile owners and mechanics at the turn of the century. Elmer Lovejoy, a Laramie bicycle shop owner, was the first man to own an automobile in Wyoming. He assembled the machine between 1897 and 1898 from parts he ordered from Chicago. Lovejoy took his horseless carriage for what is likely the first car ride in Wyoming on May 7, 1898.[6] Other early automobile owners included physicians and sheep ranchers, relatively high-status members of their communities. Rancher J.B. Okie purchased a 1906 Great Smith – reportedly central Wyoming's first car – and had it shipped to his home in Lost Cabin via rail and freight wagon. Okie was a major employer in command of a large estate and soon had his men building roads to and through Lost Cabin.[7]

In 1908 the Great Auto Race between New York City and Paris crossed Wyoming along a route that roughly followed the Union Pacific Railroad and that would set precedent for the route of the Lincoln Highway, the nation's first transcontinental highway, a few years later.

[4] Soulliere, "Historic Roads in the National Park System"; Lee Whiteley, *The Yellowstone Highway: Denver to the Park, Past and Present* (Boulder, CO: Johnson Printing Company, 2001), 9-15. For a discussion of the influence of automobiles on the character of the national parks, see David Louter, "Glaciers and Gasoline: The Making of a Windshield Wilderness, 1900-1915," in *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West*, ed. David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001).
[5] Isaac B. Potter, *The Gospel of Good Roads: A Letter to the American Farmer* (New York: The League of American Wheelmen, 1891).
[6] Phil Roberts, "Lovejoy's Toy: Wyoming's First Car," *Buffalo Bones: Stories of Wyoming's Past*, http://www.uwyo.edu/robertshistory/buffalo_bones_lovejoys_toy.htm (accessed January 3, 2017).
[7] Tom Rea, "J.B. Okie, Sheep King of Central Wyoming," WyoHistory.org, http://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/j-b-okie-sheep-king-central-wyoming (accessed January 3, 2017); Editorial, *Natrona County Tribune* (Casper, WY), March 22, 1906, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.

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The 1909 Cheyenne Frontier Days included a two hundred-mile auto race, where a world record for speed was set, among the usual rodeo events. By 1910 automobiles had become relatively common in Wyoming, creating needs for new legislation. In 1913 a law set the speed limit at twelve miles per hour in towns. In 1914 the State of Wyoming required that all automobiles should be licensed, and in 1917 the Wyoming Legislature created the Wyoming Highway Department, in part so that the state would qualify for federal funding for road projects. The legislature authorized the acceptance of federal aid on a matching basis. The matching funds were raised through a bond issue of $2.8 million, approved overwhelmingly by popular vote in April 1919. A second bond issue of $1.8 million passed in 1921. Thereafter, the Oil and Gas Leasing Act of 1920 and the gasoline tax of 1923 poured royalties into Wyoming's matching fund. By 1918, 15,900 automobiles were registered in Wyoming, ten times as many as five years before. By 1920 twenty-four thousand automobiles had been registered, and in 1930 there were sixty-two thousand registered autos in the state.[8]

Not only did automobiles bring profound social change to Wyoming, but also widespread changes to the physical characteristics of towns and other small communities. Historic commercial centers, often thought of as "downtowns," had not been developed with automobiles in mind and lacked convenient and safe places to park these treasured vehicles. Storefronts were designed to appeal to traffic on foot or conveyed by horses. The new speed made possible by automobiles rendered much signage and many window displays ineffective. Within a matter of years a vast network of improved roads allowed Wyomingites and visitors to the state to travel with unparalleled freedom, shortening distances in a temporal sense and connecting isolated communities to the larger world.

The first links in the growing network of roads were the named highways of the 1910s. Despite the efforts of the Good Roads Movement, national and local governments had yet to take interest in constructing and maintaining roads. Instead, boosters – often including businessmen who stood to gain from increased sales of auto parts or gasoline – led a grassroots movement on behalf of automobile enthusiasts. Boosters selected a route over existing roads, often networks of varying quality that included city streets, freight and wagon roads, and abandoned railroad grades. The route was given an evocative name echoed in the name of the trail association formed to promote the route. The trail association collected dues from businesses in towns along the way, published trail guides and newsletters, held conventions, and advocated for improvement and use of the route. Association goals included

[8] Emmett D. Chisum, "Crossing Wyoming by Car in 1908 – New York to Paris Automobile Race," *Annals of Wyoming* 52, no. 1 (1980): 34-39; Phil Roberts, "The 'Cheyenne 200': The 1909 Auto Race Rival to Indianapolis," *Buffalo Bones: Stories of Wyoming's Past*, http://www.uwyo.edu/robertshistory/cheyenne_200_auto_race.htm (accessed January 3, 2017); Phil Roberts, "The Oil Business in Wyoming," WyoHistory.org, http://www.wyohistory.org/encyclopedia/oil-business-wyoming (accessed January 3, 2017); T.A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 2nd Ed., Revised (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 407-408, 424; Julie Francis, "Historic Context and Evaluation of Automobile Roads in Wyoming," Draft (Cheyenne, 1994). On file at the Wyoming Department of Transportation.

the promotion of the named route, of the Good Roads Movement, and of cities and businesses along the route.[9]

In 1912 an Indiana entrepreneur and former auto racer named Carl Fisher began promoting his idea for a transcontinental highway to stretch from New York City to San Francisco. At the time there were over two million miles of rural roads in the United States, and between 8 and 9 percent of those roads were "improved," meaning they were constructed of gravel, brick, oiled earth, or other ephemeral materials. Maintenance fell to those who lived along the roads and had the greatest need for them. Many states had constitutional prohibitions against funding internal improvements, and the Federal Government had not yet seen fit to provide money toward road construction and maintenance.

Fisher formed the Lincoln Highway Association (LHA) in 1913. He was a manufacturer of Prest-O-Lite compressed carbide-gas headlights and an effective fundraiser among his associates in the auto industry. Many manufacturers and oilmen saw public highways as a way to encourage Americans to buy cars and automobile accessories and services. An important exception was Henry Ford, who told Fisher as long as private citizens were willing to fund public infrastructure, the Federal Government would not be motivated to allocate funds to roadbuilding.

Most of the money raised from private donors was spent on advertising the Lincoln Highway rather than improving it. The LHA sponsored seedling miles in several states, including Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska, though none were constructed in Wyoming. Seedling miles were short concrete sections constructed through donations from the Portland Cement Association and were intended to demonstrate the desirability of permanent roads. In general, though, the LHA never succeeded in raising the amount of money necessary for coast-to-coast improvements. Instead the highway relied on existing roads. In Wyoming the Lincoln Highway traversed the corridor established by the Overland Trail and the First Transcontinental railroad and telegraph line. Between Rawlins and Rock Springs the highway utilized an abandoned Union Pacific railroad grade. In western Sweetwater County and Uinta County the highway followed the mid-nineteenth century route of the Mormon pioneers. To compensate for the lack of improved roads, the LHA and other trail associations marked their routes with painted signs or insignia on telephone poles, rocks, buildings, and other surfaces within easy sight of the roads.[10]

[9] Richard F. Weingroff, "From Names to Numbers: The Origins of the U.S. Numbered Highway System" (U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration), http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/numbers.cfm (accessed January 3, 2017).
[10] Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 407; Richard F. Weingroff, "The Lincoln Highway" (U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration), https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/infrastructure/lincoln.cfm (accessed January 4, 2017).

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Because the named highways were not planned, designed, and constructed in the sense that modern interstate highways are, the "official" route also changed over time. For example, the route described in the *Official Road Guide to the Lincoln Highway* in 1915, the first year it was published, differs at several points in significant ways from the route published in the 1924 fifth (and final) edition of the road guide, reflecting road improvements that happened within the intervening nine years that caused different sections of road to be preferable to the original recommendations.[11] Additionally, road guides provided a recommended route, but conditions might make some stretches impassable at certain times, and so motorists had to be prepared to detour as needed.

The Black and Yellow Trail, the total length of which stretched from Chicago to Yellowstone National Park via the Black Hills of South Dakota, ran from Sundance to Moorcroft, then to Gillette, Sussex, and Buffalo before crossing the Bighorn Mountains to join with the Yellowstone Highway, another auto trail, at Worland. The inaugural drive of the Black and Yellow Trail, referred to as the "Pathfinder Tour," took place in August of 1913. The booster chairman made the following report:

> [The trail] is a prairie road. It passes through a most interesting country. Evidences of considerable improvements were found along the line. In Crook county the road was undergoing a change in many places to avoid steep grades, etc. New culverts and bridges were being installed. . . . There is only one criticism which the committee can offer, viz: these counties have neglected to give as much attention as they should to the markings [i.e., insignias identifying the highway and its route]. If this department is looked after the road will be under all of the circumstances meritorious.[12]

In 1914 the *Converse County Review* reported that the Black and Yellow Trail "would be very good except for chuck holes."

> Chuck holes that reduce the running time of tourists by half. Chuck holes that must be damaging to loaded wagons or light vehicles as well as automobiles. Chuck holes that can be eliminated at very little expense but which will not be because there is not a county commissioner in the world who can be made to see how uncalled

[11] The modern Lincoln Highway Association, a historical society, provides an excellent map demonstrating the way the route changed during the 1910s and 1920s and offering a good comparison between the route of the Lincoln Highway, U.S. Highway 30, and modern Interstate 80. https://www.lincolnhighwayassoc.org/map/ (accessed January 4, 2017).

[12] "Black and Yellow Trail Meritorious," *Crook County Monitor* (Sundance, WY), October 16, 1913, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.

> for they are. One can easily imagine that all commissioners are in league with the manufacturers of springs.[13]

The Yellowstone Highway, which opened in 1915, was another major named highway in Wyoming. It was organized at a meeting of the Douglas Good Roads Club several years before, but did not open until 1915 because that was the year automobiles were first admitted into Yellowstone, as well as the year Rocky Mountain National Park northwest of Denver, Colorado, was established. The Yellowstone Highway was intended to link the two national parks. In Wyoming it originally spanned from Cheyenne to Wheatland, then to Douglas, Glenrock, Casper, Lost Cabin, Thermopolis, and Worland, where it joined the Black and Yellow Trail, and then to Basin, Burlington, and Cody before terminating at the east entrance to Yellowstone National Park. By 1924, the year the Wyoming Highway Department opened an auto road through the Wind River Canyon, the route changed between Casper and Thermopolis to include Shoshoni rather than Lost Cabin. The highway as described in the *Official Route Book of the Yellowstone Highway Association* utilized part of the Bridger Trail and required navigating a pass through the Bridger Mountains before emerging at Buffalo Creek south of Thermopolis. J.B. Okie, one of the first car owners in the state and the owner of the Oasis Hotel in Lost Cabin, was the Yellowstone Highway Association commissioner representing Fremont County.[14] This is likely the reason the route book favors the road through Lost Cabin rather than a similar route that utilized Birdseye Pass, an alternate means of reaching Thermopolis. By 1920 the Yellowstone Highway had been joined with other named highways in the Rocky Mountains and Pacific West to form a grand loop connecting twelve national parks called the National Park-to-Park Highway, and it is often referred to under this name in the 1920s. The Yellowstone Highway was the first segment of this larger road to be completed.

Like the LHA, the Yellowstone Highway Association published an official route guide, though it appears that it was not revised or reissued after its initial 1916 publication. No similar publication is known to exist for the Black and Yellow Trail in Wyoming. In general, South Dakota seems to have been more diligent about promoting their section of this road than Wyoming was. The road guides were full of advice to both seasoned and novice motorists of the West, such as “West of Cheyenne, Wyoming, always fill your gas tank at every point gasoline can be secured, no matter how little you have used from your previous supply. This costs nothing but a little time and it may save a lot of trouble.” The guides also included advertisements for tourist services in major towns along the routes, and some of the buildings

[13] “Automobile Trip to Buffalo Through Powder River Valley,” *Bill Barlow’s Budget and Converse County Review* (Douglas, WY), August 20, 1914, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.
[14] *Official Route Book of the Yellowstone Highway Association in Wyoming and Colorado* (Cody, WY: Gus Holm, 1916); Robert G. and Elizabeth L. Rosenberg, “Moneta Divide EIS Project: Class III Inventory of Six Historic Linear Resources in Fremont and Natrona Counties, Wyoming” (Longmont, CO, 2014), 202-209. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.

that housed these services still stand. The Plains Hotel in Cheyenne, for example, is advertised in both the Lincoln and Yellowstone highway road guides.[15]

In 1919 the Custer Battlefield Highway was organized between Des Moines, Iowa, and Glacier National Park in northwest Montana. In Wyoming it utilized the same route as the Black and Yellow Trail between the South Dakota-Wyoming border and Gillette, then left the trail to run north through Sheridan, Ranchester, and Dayton before crossing into Montana.[16] The Custer Battlefield Highway was a significant part of the Sheridan County tourist economy but had little or no social or economic impact on the rest of Wyoming. It is considered of secondary importance to the Lincoln and Yellowstone highways and the Black and Yellow Trail in this respect. Several other named highways were promoted in Wyoming but all mirrored the route of auto trails previously discussed. One exception is the Rocky Mountain Highway, which entered Wyoming below Laramie, connected Laramie to Woods Landing, Encampment, and Saratoga, then ran northwest to Rawlins, Lander, and Dubois and terminated at Moran Junction, the southeast entrance to Grand Teton National Park. Similarly, the Atlantic Yellowstone Pacific Highway and the Grand Highway followed the Yellowstone Highway until they diverged at Shoshoni, leading instead to Riverton, Dubois, and Moran Junction.[17]

Newspaper accounts of the 1910s suggest that booster clubs leaned heavily on county governments to make improvements to the highways, emphasizing the economic benefit of encouraging tourists to travel through local communities.[18] Boosters also petitioned state legislatures for road improvements and lobbied for federal involvement in highway construction. Because of a lack of reliable funding for road improvement, construction and maintenance of roads tended to happen in a piecemeal fashion. For example, in 1919 or 1920 the Wyoming Highway Department tractor-graded a seventeen-mile-long segment of the Black and Yellow Trail.[19] Some portions of the road that crossed Bighorn National Forest were constructed using federal money, sometimes with matching funds from the State.[20] Other sections of the road received little or no improvement. In 1924 the LHA reported that the highway department had embarked upon an "ambitious" program of highway improvement concentrated on the primary roads of the state, including five hundred thousand dollars spent on the improvement of seventy-seven miles of the Lincoln Highway in 1923. Moreover,

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[15] *Official Route Book of the Yellowstone Highway Association*, 29; *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 5th Ed. (Detroit: The Lincoln Highway Association, 1924), 41, 412.
[16] Cynde Georgen, *In the Shadow of the Bighorns: A History of Early Sheridan and the Goose Creek Valley of Northern Wyoming* (Sheridan, WY: Sheridan County Historical Society, 2010), 80-81.
[17] Whiteley, *The Yellowstone Highway*, 32-33.
[18] The Wyoming Newspaper Project, part of the Wyoming State Library Digital Collections, is an excellent source of information regarding the activities of local boosters, how they operated, and how their actions affected road development and improvement in the 1910s and 1920s. http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.
[19] Intermountain Antiquities Computer System Site Form, Site 48CA2785, the Black and Yellow Trail. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.
[20] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, Site 48JO1479, the Black and Yellow Trail. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.

> From Cheyenne west to Evanston, Wyoming, the Lincoln Highway tourist will encounter less than 40 miles of poor road and when it can be truthfully said that six or eight years ago the entire drive across the state was one very difficult to negotiate and likely, at times, to be almost impassable, some idea of the improvements accomplished will be gained.[21]

Trail associations and other local boosters provided a valuable service to early motorists; however, the named highway system had a number of problems. For one, motorists could not be assured that the road advertised to them was truly the shortest, easiest, or best maintained road, especially if there was a competing route. As illustrated above, road improvement and maintenance were inconsistent and concentrated in some sections to the detriment of others. Between 1910 and 1920 the number of registered motor vehicles in the United States increased from five hundred thousand to nearly ten million, and increased again to twenty-six million by 1930. As the number of car owners and drivers continued to swell, it became clear the Federal Government would need to assist local and state governments in the creation of reliable routes and the construction of uniform highways.

The Federal Aid Highway Program commenced in 1916 with the passage of the Federal Aid Road Act. This landmark act was the first time the Federal Government provided assistance for state highway costs by granting funds for any rural road over which the U.S. mail was carried. The act required states to have a highway department capable of designing, constructing, and maintaining these roads in order to be eligible to share in the appropriation. The Federal Highway Act of 1921 refined the scope of federal funding, limiting the amount of money that could be spent on local roads and emphasizing the importance of building roads that were "interstate in character." As the Federal Government assumed greater responsibility for establishing a national network of roads, the need for auto trail boosters diminished.

In 1925 the Federal Government formed the Joint Board on Interstate Highways, which was charged with selecting a system of routes from among the named highways and designing a national system of signs and markers. Among other things, the board determined that the new system would have numbered routes rather than named – east-west routes were given even numbers and north-south routes odd. The standard U.S. route marker, which replaced the trail association insignias, became the shield and number system used today. During 1926 over one thousand U.S. markers were placed on 2,806 miles of U.S. Routes in Wyoming.[22]

The basic routes of the three major named highways through Wyoming were all retained under the new numbered system and were designated as follows. The Lincoln Highway

[21] *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 407-408.
[22] Weingroff, "From Names to Numbers"; Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report, 1924-1926* (Cheyenne, 1926), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 39-41.

became U.S. Highway 30, dividing into north and south routes near Granger. US 30 North ran to Kemmerer and on to Pocatello, Idaho. US 30 South followed the path of the Lincoln Highway to Salt Lake City, Utah. The Black and Yellow Trail became U.S. Highway 16, running north from Gillette to Ucross rather than south to Sussex. The Yellowstone Highway became U.S. Highway 87 between Cheyenne and Orin Junction and U.S. Highway 20 thereafter. In the 1920s the Wyoming Highway Department maintained roads by grading, providing drainage, and adding gravel surfacing to dirt roads. In 1924 the department began to experiment with oiling gravel roads. This oil-aggregate mixture was an early form of "blacktop." Because of the budding oil industry centered in Casper, black oil was abundant and cheap in Wyoming. By 1929 there were eighty-seven miles of oiled roads in Albany, Carbon, Goshen, and Natrona counties. Ten years later, every major road in Wyoming had received this treatment.[23]

In the 1920s most of the U.S. Routes consisted of dirt roads lacking a constructed base or grade, with very little cut and fill. Minor cuts lowered some hills, and a few drainages were filled. Road profiles were slightly crowned to facilitate drainage. Road beds were about twenty-four feet wide, and right-of-way width was typically between sixty-six and eighty feet. Along the Lincoln Highway, horizontal realignments straightened short curves. As late as 1924, the LHA asserted that, "Trans-state travel in Wyoming has not yet reached the density requiring permanent paving work and the fine, decomposed granite gravel grades constructed, provide all-weather conditions more than adequate to take care of the traffic volume of the present and immediate future."[24]

During the Great Depression the Civilian Conservation Corps undertook several road projects in Wyoming, building the Snake River Canyon Road in today's Bridger-Teton National Forest and the roads through Guernsey State Park. Federal aid highway projects boomed during the same period. The Wyoming Highway Department began major construction projects such as the realignment of U.S. Highway 30 between Medicine Bow and Walcott Junction, where nearly five miles were eliminated from the 1922 iteration of the Lincoln Highway. Reconstruction of the Yellowstone Highway between Cody and the east gate of the park took place between 1924 and 1938. Surfacing consisted of crushed gravel saturated with black oil.

At this time roads began to approach modern engineering standards in order to accommodate traffic speeds up to seventy or eighty miles per hour and increased truck traffic. Accordingly, new rights-of-way were as much as two hundred feet wide. Subgrades as wide as thirty-six feet and composed of gravel fill were constructed to support heavier automobiles. Compacted road beds began to replace the dirt roads constructed in the 1920s. Many existing pipes, culverts, headwalls, guardrails, and fences were removed. Masonry was often used for

[23] Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Sixth Biennial Report, 1926-1928* (Cheyenne, 1928), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 19-21; Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 424-425.
[24] Francis, "Historic Context and Evaluation of Automobile Roads in Wyoming"; *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway*, 408.

retaining walls and culvert facings during new construction. Traveling surfaces were around sixteen to twenty-four feet wide for two lanes of traffic. Shoulders consisted of gravel or earth and sloped steeply to the bottom of borrow ditches. Increased speeds combined with these dramatic drop-offs likely contributed to the over one hundred traffic fatalities recorded in 1934.

Very little domestic road building took place during World War II while national resources were diverted to the war effort. After the war, highway construction responded to changes in the automobile industry, new federal standards, and a greater concern for safety. Horizontal line changes straightened curves for smoother travel and to allow improved sight distance for passing. Improvements to vertical alignments also increased sight distances. Passing lanes were added to many two-lane roads during the 1940s and 1950s, widening roads to forty-eight feet in these locations. Sub-grades widened considerably: earth bases were often as wide as fifty-six feet and topped with gravel sub-grades about forty-four feet wide. Fill slopes were significantly lessened. Asphalt, or "hot plant mix," was introduced as a surfacing material. By the late 1940s and early 1950s a typical highway consisted of a paved, two-lane road having gentle gravel shoulders and a moderately steep embankment sloping to a borrow ditch.[25]

World War II had deferred federal spending from infrastructure projects to the war effort; however, General and later President Dwight D. Eisenhower's experiences in Germany during the war, specifically with the Autobahn, helped him to recognize that highways were a necessary component of a national defense system. As a young Lt. Colonel, Eisenhower had participated in a 1919 transcontinental motor convoy undertaken by the U.S. Army and promoted by the LHA. The convoy left the White House on July 7 and headed for Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, where it merged onto the Lincoln Highway and followed it to San Francisco, arriving on September 5. The convoy demonstrated that existing bridges and roads across the nation were entirely inadequate to sustain a large number of heavy vehicles, and thus a threat to national defense. Eisenhower recalled the experience in his autobiography *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends*, writing: "The old convoy had started me thinking about good, two-lane highways, but Germany had made me see the wisdom of broader ribbons across the land." President Eisenhower announced a "Grand Plan" for highways in 1954. During his administration the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956 authorized a new Interstate Highway System of superhighways that in many places replaced the U.S. Routes.[26]

In Wyoming Interstate 80 followed basically the same route as the Lincoln Highway and U.S. Highway 30 South, the major difference being the route between Laramie and Rawlins. Interstate 80 was constructed between 1956 and 1976 and was routed close enough to US 30 that many towns along the older corridor were not entirely left behind. Exceptions include Bosler, Rock River, and Medicine Bow north of Laramie, and the original site of Little America, which in 1952 moved south to the future interstate corridor and was eventually given its own

[25] Francis, "Historic Context and Evaluation of Automobile Roads in Wyoming."
[26] Weingroff, "The Lincoln Highway"; Dwight D. Eisenhower, *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967), 166-167.

interstate interchange. Little America was originally sited near the town of Granger along a portion of the Mormon pioneer trail to Salt Lake City. Interstate 25 superseded U.S. Highway 87 and the Yellowstone Highway between Cheyenne and Casper, and Interstate 90 covered a similar route to the Black and Yellow Trail to Buffalo and the Custer Battlefield Highway.

In the early 1960s the completion of Interstate 90 across the northeast corner of Wyoming helped to maintain a direct route to the national parks through Wyoming, even though it only conveyed tourists as far as Sheridan or Buffalo.[27] Travel routes through north central Wyoming were hotly contested as the tourist economy was recognized to be a significant contributor to the economic vitality of communities on the main leisure travel routes. Two U.S. Routes crossed the Bighorn Mountains, U.S. Highway 14, the northern route west from Sheridan, and U.S. Highway 16, which crossed the mountains southwest of Buffalo. These U.S Routes divided at Ucross a point where Sheridan and Buffalo competed vigorously for the tourist trade. During the late 1950s US 16 was improved to eliminate a narrow stretch of road through Tensleep Canyon, shortening the travel time between Buffalo and Worland and enhancing the route's appeal to tourists. As the interstate highway system developed, residents of Sheridan protested a plan to construct a route west from Gillette to Buffalo to connect with US 16. Governor Milward Simpson was called upon to settle the issue. Ultimately it was decided that routing Interstate 90 from Gillette to Buffalo would keep most of the traffic to the national parks in Wyoming, rather than lose much of it to a parallel route in Montana. The section of Interstate 90 between Gillette and Buffalo officially opened in 1962, though work continued for a few additional years.[28]

Interstate 25 funneled travelers driving north on the east side of the Rocky Mountains to U.S. Highways 20/26, Cody, and the east entrance of Yellowstone National Park, while Interstate 80 brought transcontinental or regional travelers to routes heading north to Jackson Hole, Grand Teton National Park, and Yellowstone. Towns and communities along these routes experienced a continued increase in travelers and in demand for lodging. Interstate highways reinforced existing travel patterns in Wyoming in the 1960s and 1970s, rather than introduced significantly different ones. This relates to a long-standing pattern in Wyoming in which infrastructure tends to develop within transportation corridors, where multiple routes share essentially the same space. The most compelling reason for this phenomenon seems to be that there are only a few safe, efficient ways to cross the challenging mountainous terrain and arid basins within the state. Nationally, the rise of interstate travel had the effect of concentrating tourist lodging in larger cities at the expense of small town businesses. While

[27] The completion of I-90 also appears to have had a significant effect on visitation to Devils Tower National Monument. Visitation to the monument increased notably from 2,159 visitors (at the time, a record number) in 1963 to around 127,500 visitors in 1965. These numbers were reported in *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (January 1966): 10.

[28] Frank Hicks, "Interstate Route Means Great Deal to Buffalo," *Wyoming State Tribune and Wyoming Eagle* (Cheyenne, WY), July 22-25, 1958; Robert W. Fenwick, "The Second Battle of the Little Big Horn," *Denver Post Empire Magazine*, July 21, 1957. Both articles clipped in Highways vertical file, Wyoming State Archives.

this was likely true in Wyoming in a limited sense, the state has only a small number of large towns spaced over long distances, meaning that lodging properties in smaller towns remained the only convenient options along many routes.

A traffic flow map prepared by the Wyoming Highway Department for 1957 indicates that US 30 was by far the most heavily traveled route in Wyoming. The differentiation of in-state and out-state automobiles indicates that roughly one-half of the traffic was "transcontinental" or out-of-state in origin. US 87, at the time the major north-south route between Cheyenne and Sheridan, was the second most busy road in Wyoming. During the late 1950s the volume of traffic entering Yellowstone National Park through the east and south gates was approximately the same.

The traffic flow map of 1966 indicated that Interstate 80 was the most heavily traveled route in the state, just as US 30 had been. Between 1956 and 1966 the number of visitors to Yellowstone National Park increased steadily year by year, adding nearly 700,000 additional visitors at the end of ten years. Many of these tourists drove through Wyoming. Traffic over US 16 nearly doubled after Interstate 90 was opened between Gillette and Buffalo. The volume of traffic on the adjacent US 14 also increased noticeably. The number of vehicles on the road between Cheyenne and Casper along Interstate 25 also grew significantly between 1958 and 1966. Traffic between Jackson and the south entrance to Yellowstone was heavier than that on the highway between Cody and the east entrance to the park and seems to reflect growing numbers of visitors to Grand Teton National Park.[29]

Because the interstate system was designed for maximum speed and efficiency, it does not run through communities, but near them. Interstates eliminate head-on traffic and limit traffic movement to the right, enhancing free flow. A system of highway interchanges allows drivers to enter and exit at defined points. This is in contrast to the moderate speeds of the named and numbered highways, where drivers could enter and exit the road at almost any point with relative ease and safety. The named and numbered highways allowed business owners to erect roadside services wherever they owned land or where it was for sale. The abundance of land on either side of the named highways and U.S. Routes meant that land was fairly cheap. As a result, roadside businesses were often generously spaced from one another and could be sprawling in sparsely populated states like Wyoming. The defined entrance and exit points mandated by interstate interchanges, however, concentrate roadside services in certain locations, driving up the value of land at these locations and encouraging business owners to build up rather than out. In particular, the interstate interchange system has had a direct effect nationwide on how lodging properties are constructed.

[29] Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Twenty-First Biennial Report, 1956-1958* (Cheyenne,1958), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 50-51; Wyoming State Highway Commission, *Twenty-Fifth Biennial Report, 1964-1966* (Cheyenne,1966), RG 0045, Wyoming State Library, 69.

DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN WYOMING, 1913-1975

Tourists have had an economic presence in Wyoming since the late nineteenth century, first as leisure travelers arriving by train and then, beginning in the early twentieth century, by car. Particularly in the northwest portion of the state, automobile travel ensured that tourists were spending money in Wyoming communities, whereas rail travel had primarily funneled visitors to Yellowstone National Park through Montana. Newspaper accounts from the 1910s and 1920s reveal that auto trail associations and other local boosters of the named highways constantly reinforced the importance of capturing the tourist dollar of visitors in route to Yellowstone, or on a coast-to-coast tour crossing southern Wyoming. For example, a leader in the trail association for the Chicago, Black Hills, and Yellowstone Park Highway (i.e., the Black and Yellow Trail) argued that the trail association should be diligent in giving wide publicity to the merits of the route, claiming, "By so doing the association can attract over its highway the great bulk of the vast automobile touring traffic. Procuring this traffic will render returns to the association and the cities and municipalities making up the association, beyond prediction."[30]

Historian Marguerite S. Shaffer describes early motorists along the first national highways as "a relatively homogenous community of upper- and middle-class, urban, white Americans," explaining, "Although occasionally auto tourists met up with traveling salesmen, migrant workers, and tramps, automobile touring took time and money. During the late teens and the early twenties it was a pastime enjoyed by a select few of the upper and upper-middle class." Shaffer estimates that in 1921 twenty thousand motorists, or 0.02 percent of the American population, made transcontinental auto tours, far less than the 294 thousand Americans who are estimated to have traveled abroad that year. The cost of purchasing an automobile and needed supplies for the journey was certainly an obstacle for many Americans. Once in route, a month-long tour could conceivably cost one hundred and fifty dollars per person, or roughly 10 percent of a clerical worker's annual salary of fifteen hundred dollars. [31] An equally significant obstacle was the rarity of paid vacation leave for both salaried workers and wage earners in the early twentieth century.

Before the final years of the Great Depression, the majority of American workers had neither the discretionary income nor the leisure time to be tourists. Until the 1920s the idea of vacation was of little concern to middle- or working-class Americans, for whom extended periods of time off connoted unemployment rather than earned leisure. During the late nineteenth century industrial wage earners began to advocate for better working conditions, focusing on obtaining eight-hour workdays, five-day work weeks, and higher wages. At this

[30] "Black and Yellow Trail Meritorious," *Crook County Monitor* (Sundance, WY), October 16, 1913, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/.
[31] Marguerite S. Shaffer, "Seeing America First: The Search for Identity in the Tourist Landscape," in *Seeing and Being Seen: Tourism in the American West*, ed. David M. Wrobel and Patrick T. Long (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001), 174-175, 190.

time white-collar employees and wage earners were rarely given paid vacation, which was reserved for high-level executives and managers. An additional one-third of Americans were engaged in agricultural work that tied them to a farm or ranch and limited their ability to travel.

In the early twentieth century progressive management experts began to suggest that leisure, and especially vacation, was essential to restoring the vitality of those salaried, white-collar workers depleted by the unnatural stresses of desk work in the industrial age. While physical work was considered healthy and appropriate to a man's nature, the mental labor undertaken by a growing number of white-collar workers taxed the brain beyond what was natural. Yearly vacations with pay, the experts argued, would allow white-collar workers to engage in physical activity and recuperate from mental strain, thus enhancing their productivity throughout the remainder of the year. Ultimately, the cumulative effect of vacations taken by individual workers would improve the social health of the entire American middle class. By 1920 nearly 40 percent of all white-collar workers received annual vacations with pay, a statistic that would more than double to 80 percent within the decade.

During the early twentieth century employers and management experts alike considered manual labor to be far less taxing than mental labor, and working-class employees, by extension, were thought to have less need for vacations to revitalize their productivity. In 1920 fewer than 5 percent of non-salaried employees received vacation time with pay. Advocates for extended time off for wage earners argued that vacations increased productivity, efficiency, and health, but also noted that vacations would enhance company loyalty among workers, decrease labor turnover, diminish workplace conflict, and lessen worker interest in unions. Although very little change occurred in the prosperous 1920s, the financial and social crises of the 1930s reinforced managements' desire to win employee loyalty in an attempt to forestall union organization. By the eve of World War II a majority of American wage earners, as well as 95 percent of salaried workers, had achieved yearly vacations with pay. Twenty-five million workers received paid leave, and sixty million Americans enjoyed at least a week's vacation away from home.[32]

A number of factors, both practical and ideological, combined to create significant social changes in the average American's approach to leisure and vacation in the late 1930s and after World War II. The phenomenon of mass tourism is most often associated with unprecedented prosperity in postwar America; however, historian Michael Berkowitz notes that vacation expenditures rose steadily not only during the boom years of the 1920s, but also over the first six years of the Great Depression.[33] This suggests that material prosperity was not the only factor, or even the most significant factor, in establishing regular vacations as an important element of twentieth-century American culture. Practical considerations include not

[32] Michael Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure: Making Mass Tourism during the Great Depression," in *Being Elsewhere: Tourism, Consumer Culture, and Identity in Modern Europe and North America*, ed. Shelley Baranowski and Ellen Furlough (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 187-193.
[33] Ibid, 185.

only higher wages and paid vacation leave, but also the development of a system of improved national highways and the affordability of mass-produced automobiles. The American Industrial Revolution, beginning around 1880, created a demographic shift that reshaped the character of the nation from a largely agrarian population to an increasingly urban population having the capacity to step away from industrial labor for one or two weeks of leisure in a way that agricultural workers could not. During World War II a large segment of the American population traveled away from home, often overseas, as part of the war effort. Many of these Americans found travel to be a profound experience that shaped their enthusiasm to see different parts of the world.[34]

Tourism became part of the American character. Berkowitz notes that by the end of the New Deal, "mass consumption of leisure, especially in the form of vacations and tourism, was [perceived to be] a necessity for the social, cultural, and economic health of the nation." The policies of the New Deal promoted new consumer practices, including tourism, in an effort to revitalize the national economy. Business leaders and government officials at national and local levels increasingly boosted the benefits of tourism and the attractions available in specific states and regions of the country, ultimately creating national interest in travel that extended beyond the upper- and upper-middle class Americans who had been the leisure passengers on the railroads and the early motorists. Nascent tourism promotion organizations had the task of educating Americans about the desirability of travel away from home. Employers saw little benefit in paying vacation leave only to have workers to sit at home for a week or more, as the rejuvenative effect of vacation time was believed to be tied to travel. As auto roads proliferated across the nation, opening more corners of America to outsiders, local boosters promoted the attributes that made their communities worthy destinations. Berkowitz writes,

> Wherever a literate person turned during the 1930s, he or she was bombarded with professionally designed images and copy promoting the advantages of two-week vacation opportunities, vacation bargains, and all-in-one destinations. Although no one image or cleverly phrased slogan brought a tourist to a particular region, the aggregate effect of such advertising had created a cultural climate in which tourism could become increasingly accepted as a psychic necessity. More than advertising a particular product, community tourism had advertised a particular way of life.[35]

Nationwide, millions of Americans began to consider tourism definitive of the American character. While widespread changes in employee compensation and developments in infrastructure and technology made travel possible, decades of intensive advertising and

[34] Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 193-194; Karen Dubinsky, "'Everybody Likes Canadians': Canadians, Americans, and the Post-World War II Travel Boom," in *Being Elsewhere*, 324-325.
[35] Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 187, 193-194, 200.

consumer education by tourism promotion organizations made travel desirable. Slogans like "See America First" contributed to evolving ideas about American identity and nationhood. Tourism promoters cast travel as a patriotic ritual of citizenship, transforming an increasingly diverse nation into a unified group of consumers in search of a shared sacred landscape. The prevailing attitude of the time was that Americans were made better citizens through travel that revealed new aspects of their own country.[36]

While reshaping the cultural life of Americans, tourism promotion organizations simultaneously created a commercialized profit-driven industry of enormous economic power. On the eve of World War II, tourism was one of the largest industries in the nation, as large as automobiles, petroleum, and lumber combined, and 50 percent larger than iron and steel production. More than five million Americans were employed in the tourist industry. Capital investment in travel had reached thirty billion dollars, and travel expenditures of over six billion dollars a year accounted for close to 8 percent of national purchasing power. Nationally, tourism promoters spent $6.5 million a year on advertising.[37] In Wyoming, tourism promotion efforts were centralized in Cheyenne within a state agency called the Department of Commerce and Industry.[38] The character of Wyoming was particularly well-suited to the consumer desires of the day. Shaffer notes that tourists were seeking for the "real" America often encapsulated in idealized images of the West: "The West became the antithesis of the northeastern industrial core. Tourists associated it with democracy, freedom, friendliness, and community. They saw only a land of farmers, ranchers, cowboys, and friendly Indians – people who lived close to the land."[39] Accordingly, Wyoming experienced an incredible influx of tourists during the mid-twentieth century whose needs and demands shaped the commercial landscape along the major named and numbered highways in the state.

In 1927 the Wyoming State Legislature established the Department of Commerce and Industry. This department oversaw tourism as part of its responsibility to publicize Wyoming and its products in addition to what was then the department's main concern of colonizing the Riverton and Willwood Federal Irrigation Projects.[40] An early department publication promoted the natural resources, markets, crop yields, weather, highways, and schools of Wyoming before concluding with this section on recreation:

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[36] Shaffer, "Seeing America First."
[37] Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 194, 205-206.
[38] The railroads, and later the Federal Government in various partnerships, heavily promoted tourism to Yellowstone National Park but did not include the wider state. For more information on the promotion of Yellowstone and other parks, see Peter Blodgett, "Selling the Scenery: Advertising and the National Parks, 1916-1933," in *Seeing and Being Seen* and Berkowitz, "A 'New Deal' for Leisure," 200-205.
[39] Shaffer, "Seeing America First," 175.
[40] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Second Regular Legislative Session, April 1, 1931 to January 1, 1933* (Cheyenne, 1933), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.

Wyoming offers you:
Good roads and wonderful mountain scenery.
Vast forests and beautiful valleys.
Wild flowers in great profusion (only two states have a greater variety).
Thousands of miles of fine trout streams.
The greatest big game country in the United States.
The largest hot springs in the world (Thermopolis) – temperature 135° Fahrenheit – flow, 20 million gallons daily.
Yellowstone National Park (2,142,720 acres), the most marvelous of Uncle Sam's family National Parks. 187,807 tourists visited the Park in 1926.
Splendid hotels, summer resorts and ranches throughout the State.[41]

Although this list of offerings was doubtless intended to promote settlement in the sparsely populated state as well as tourism, it established many of the images and destinations that the Department of Commerce and Industry and its successor agencies would continue to market to tourists throughout the historic period covered in this context, and that the Wyoming Office of Tourism continues to use today.

In 1933 the Department of Commerce and Industry prepared its first biennial report for the Wyoming Legislature. Executive Manager Charles B. Stafford reported that the department responded to around twelve thousand personal letters from people seeking information about travel in Wyoming. The department maintained a repository of photographs suitable for publication in national magazines and newspapers and a library of 16mm films that it distributed nationally. Using the tag line "Wyoming – Worth Knowing" it produced and distributed twenty-five thousand folders, fifty thousand automobile window stickers, and ten thousand brochures, as well as distributed around twenty-five thousand official highway maps. The department also made available a gummed sticker suitable to affix to envelopes or letterhead advertising "Wonderful Wyoming, The Vacationist's Paradise, Smooth, Resilient Oiled Gravel Roads."[42]

By the beginning of the 1930s the Department of Commerce and Industry had already assumed many of the functions carried out by the State's tourism arm through the end of the period covered by this context. The biennial reports prepared between 1931 and the onset of World War II indicate that department personnel responded to some seventy-five thousand personal letters from potential travelers seeking information about Wyoming, and because the data is incomplete for all years within the ten-year window, the actual number of requests and

[41] Department of Commerce and Industry, "Wyoming" (Cheyenne, 1927), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.
[42] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Second Regular Legislative Session*, 17-20.

responses is likely significantly higher. Many letter writers requested travel literature. In 1939 the most popular query was for the official highway map, followed in order of decreasing popularity by informational pamphlets on Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks, camping in Wyoming's national forests, rodeos and other outdoor Western-themed shows, dude ranches and resorts, hot springs, and the Sun Dances of the Plains tribes.

Many Americans were prompted to write the Department of Commerce and Industry through national advertising campaigns in leading magazines and newspapers. In the 1930s and early 1940s the department purchased ad space in *Sports Afield*, *American Forests*, *Outdoor Life*, *Field & Stream*, *Spur*, *Newsweek*, *Travel*, *Life*, and *Rocky Mountain Motorist*, among others. In addition, newspapers in New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Kansas City ran ads for travel in Wyoming. The department proactively mailed its literature to American Automobile Association (AAA) affiliates, independent auto clubs, commercial organizations that maintained a tourist bureau, tourist and travel bureaus operated by daily newspapers, and life insurance companies. In 1940 the department distributed sixty tons of travel literature to such organizations including all public libraries in the nation serving urban populations of five thousand or more. It produced and circulated 16mm films of the state to a similar group of interested parties.

In the late 1930s the department launched several special campaigns and events. In addition to maintaining a repository of photographs of the state that were distributed on request to the media, the department provided twelve-foot enlargements of photographs of the Jackson Hole elk herd to go on permanent display in railroad stations in Chicago and New York City. It built sixteen "Wonderful Wyoming" signs strategically set between North Platte and Big Spring, Nebraska, on U.S. Highway 30. Fifty thousand "Wonderful Wyoming" windshield and baggage stickers were distributed in 1937, and in 1938 the department produced and distributed 435 thousand windshield stickers that commemorated the approaching fifty-year anniversary of Wyoming statehood. On May 30, 1938 Governor Leslie A. Miller welcomed the world to visit Wyoming via an international radio broadcast.[43]

The Department of Commerce and Industry claimed that in 1938 the average visitor to Wyoming stayed six-and-a-half days, an increase of four days over data from 1934. Increasing the average length of stay was one of the most important tasks of the department in order to reap the full benefit of the tourist dollar to the lodging, automotive, and food industries. The department asserted,

[43] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Second Regular Legislative Session*; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature, April 1, 1937 to January 1, 1939* (Cheyenne, 1939), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 3, 8-9, 18-21, 25-28; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1939-1940* (Cheyenne, 1940), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 2, 6-7.

> This substantial increase in the average length of stay of the motor tourist is largely due to the fact that in recent years we have obtained such broad distribution beyond our State borders of the pictorial tabloid, "Wonderful Wyoming," and of the official state highway map, together with other supplemental literature, that many tourists have studied these publications before coming into the State and have planned their trips through the State in such manner as to permit visiting a maximum number of the scenic beauty spots, recreational areas and places of historical interest, thus prolonging their stay.[44]

The department also claimed that the expenditures of travelers in Wyoming, both those for whom Wyoming was a destination and those who were traveling through the state, totaled more than fifteen million dollars in 1938, a value of $67 per capita to the residents of the state.

Transcontinental travel was found to have a value of six million dollars in Wyoming, more than four million of which was accrued along U.S. Highway 30. Wyoming hosted more than one million travelers – five times the population of the state – in 357 thousand automobiles during this year, and nearly 60 percent of these autos crossed US 30. At Yellowstone National Park, long considered a bellwether for tourism in Wyoming,[45] visitation increased from just over two hundred thousand in 1927 to 466 thousand in 1938. During this decade 3.2 million tourists, or more than fourteen times the population of Wyoming, visited the park. By 1938, 90 percent of automobiles in Yellowstone either entered or exited through a Wyoming gate, and the average tourist car using one of the Wyoming gates traveled seven hundred miles in Wyoming. Yellowstone tourists spent an estimated one million dollars on gasoline and five million dollars on food and lodging in Wyoming.[46]

In 1940 nearly 193 thousand out-of-state cars were counted at Wyoming ports of entry between June and September, beating the 1939 record of around 185 thousand cars during the same four months. The Department of Commerce and Industry extolled the value of "new money" from out-of-state visitors, pointing out that tourism "does not deplete any resources of the State. We can use our scenery over and over again." During the height of the 1940 tourist season Wyoming collected $1.6 million in taxes on gasoline and $231 thousand in sales tax on $16.5 million spent on meals, lodging, and incidentals. The department conducted a survey of visitors, to which two hundred automobile parties responded. The survey found that 76 percent of respondents patronized tourist camps, 17 percent hotels, resorts, and lodges, 4

[44] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature*, 13.
[45] Wyoming's national forests have also played an important role in attracting tourists to the state; however, because the national forests were frequently used by residents, often for day trips, usage data for the national forests is not as revealing of revenue generated from long-distance visitors in need of lodging and other roadside services.
[46] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Special Biennial Report to the Twenty-Fifth Legislature*, 15-18.

percent national forest campgrounds, and 3 percent dude ranches. Visitation to Yellowstone increased 8 percent from 1939 and broke the half-million mark for the first time in park history.[47]

The entry of the United States into World War II sharply curtailed what had been a dramatic increase in tourism to Wyoming from the late 1920s to the early 1940s. The Department of Industry and Commerce's data report for 1942 states, "The tourist industry was all but given up because of war restrictions on transportation. Tourists visiting the state, as indicated by the Yellowstone National Park 'yardstick', dropped off as much as 70 per cent." The department's 1944 report of activities noted that the department had served as "a sort of a clearinghouse for many war activities," while 1944 was the "smallest" travel year since 1929. In 1944 – prior to the conclusion of the war – Yellowstone's visitation data and returns on the gas tax indicated that travel to the park had increased by a third. Nearly eleven thousand servicemen visited Yellowstone, almost 13 percent of the park's total visitation. During the war Yellowstone suspended its bus service and offered only minimal accommodations. The park could not be accessed by air, bus, or rail, but more than twenty-four thousand automobiles entered the park in 1944.[48]

In 1946 the AAA stated, "The most significant reflection of post-war prosperity, will be in a tremendous increase in tourist traffic." The editors of *Holiday* echoed this sentiment, writing,

> In that yesterday before World War Two vacations, with pay, for those who were so fortunate, usually meant a week or two away from job and housework. Only the minority could afford the time or the cost of going beyond a three or four hundred mile radius from home. But this is the post-war world, for which great sacrifices were made. This is the new world, in which vacations are the rule instead of the exception.[49]

At the conclusion of the war the AAA predicted nearly half of American car owners would visit the West. A postwar increase in tourist-related traffic was clearly evident in Wyoming. The Department of Commerce and Industry's 1946 *Report of Activities* concluded, "You could not have kept the tourists and visitors out of Wyoming this past year with a stone wall."[50] The tourism industry in Wyoming benefited from America's spirit of celebration following the war, but more specifically from a fascination in American popular culture with the West. Western

[47] Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1939-1940*, 5, 12, 14.
[48] Department of Commerce and Industry, "Wyoming's Industries, 1942" (Cheyenne, 1942), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1943-1944* (Cheyenne, 1944), RG 0286, Wyoming State Library, 2-4.
[49] Both quotations in Dubinsky, "'Everybody Likes Canadians',"322-324.
[50] Wyoming Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1945-1946* (Cheyenne, 1946), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 6.

films had been popular during the silent era before falling out of favor with the advent of sound. Westerns were relegated to pulp status for over a decade before several major studio productions in 1939 reinstated the genre's popularity, which would not peak until the 1950s. Western radio dramas such as *The Lone Ranger* were also very popular between the 1930s and 1960s. When Americans began purchasing televisions in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Western programs quickly became audience favorites. In 1959 twenty-six Westerns aired during primetime, and Westerns comprised almost one-quarter of television programming. Among the top ten television shows of the late 1950s were eight Westerns.[51]

Around 1947 the Department of Commerce and Industry was reorganized as the Commerce and Industry Commission. The commission produced literature and national advertisements that relied more and more on popular ideas about the West. Whereas earlier tourism publications had featured dramatic photographs of mountains and other impressive vistas, thermal features, and big game animals, publications from the 1950s emphasized Wyoming's suitability for family vacations, generally depicting a father, mother, and two children being entertained and educated on vacation in the state.[52] Prior to 1955 Western television programs and many radio programs and films of this genre were geared toward children, suggesting that parents considered children's interests when planning family vacations. In 1952 and again in 1954 the commission released comic books that depicted typical families of four touring the state. In the 1954 publication the family is magically transported to Wyoming by "Wyoming Joe," a mounted cowboy who leaps from their television screen and offers to show them the "New West."[53]

Both comic books were well received within the tourism industry. The commission noted in 1952,

> This year, a brand new and strikingly different publicity idea was used, utilizing one of the most popular mediums in existence today, the "comic book" type of magazine. This novel 16-page, full color publication on Wyoming has created much interest in Wyoming

[51] Susan Sessions Rugh, *Are We There Yet: The Golden Age of American Family Vacations* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2008), 92-93; Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor, eds., *Hollywood's West: The American Frontier in Film, Television, and History* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2009).

[52] Historian Hal K. Rothman notes that recreation tourism, travel involving physical experiences with the outdoors, was the dominant form of tourism between the 1920s and mid-1940s. Following World War II marketing strategies for western tourism shifted to entertainment tourism, which characterized the West as "a playground, the American dreamscape, historic, mythic, and actual . . ." and more closely approximated the West of popular culture. Rothman, *Devil's Bargains: Tourism in the Twentieth-Century American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 23-24.

[53] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report, 1947-1948* (Cheyenne, 1948), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Commerce and Industry Commission, "Wonderful Wyoming" (Cheyenne, 1952), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Commerce and Industry Commission, "Wyoming: The Cowboy State" (Cheyenne, 1954), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.

vacations and, in addition, has brought our state much publicity because of its uniqueness. The publication was written up in newspapers all over the country as well as in several national magazines, including Time.[54]

This version of the comic won the Midwest Writers Association national award in 1953, influencing the commission's decision to issue another "larger and more attractive" comic the following biennium.[55] In addition to the comics, other commission publications from this era often relied on line drawings and other illustrations to convey popular ideas and conjure exotic destinations that had earlier been depicted through photographs. Concerned that Wyoming advertisements had no cohesive theme, in 1955 the commission approved the creation and use of "Cowpony Joe," an anthropomorphic horse the agency hoped would aid readers in remembering the ad copy they had seen about Wyoming. Cowpony Joe, a "fiery-eyed waddie," was intended to be a "modern-day version of Wyoming's famed license plate bucking horse" who enjoyed Wyoming the way visitors would, fishing, taking photographs, and even riding another horse.[56] Cowpony Joe's lifespan appears to have been limited, as he is absent from the commission's publications after 1958.

The daily activities of the Commerce and Industry Commission closely mirrored those of the prewar years. According to biennial reports from this era, commission staff received and responded to a large volume of personal letters requesting information about Wyoming. Many of these requests were accompanied by clippings from national magazines or newspapers in wide circulation. In the late 1940s and 1950s advertisements were frequently placed in magazines like *National Geographic*, *Field & Stream*, *Holiday*, *Newsweek*, *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Sunset*, and others. In a departure from prewar trends, advertisements were also purchased in women's magazines such as *Mademoiselle*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, and *House Beautiful*, perhaps indicating the increasing importance of family vacations to Wyoming.[57] Magazine campaigns seem to have been very successful. The May 17, 1948 edition of *Time*, which included an ad for Wyoming vacations, hit newsstands on Friday, May 14. By Monday morning the commission had already received 273 inquiries based on this ad, while regular subscribers had yet to receive their copies of the magazine in the mail.[58]

[54] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report, 1951-1952* (Cheyenne, 1952), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library.
[55] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Fourth Biennial Report, 1953-1954* (Cheyenne, 1954), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 11.
[56] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report, 1955-1956* (Cheyenne, 1956), RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.
[57] Karen Dubinsky has commented on the broader trend of advertising vacations to women during this time period, writing, "It was commonly held that, within families, women made the decision about where to travel." Quoted from "Everybody Likes Canadians," 323.
[58] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*.

During the postwar years commission staff began attending travel shows on a regular basis. These shows were typically located within the markets from which Wyoming was drawing the most visitors, the West Coast and Midwest, particularly the greater Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles metropolitan areas. States like Iowa, Ohio, Missouri, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota were also large markets for Wyoming tourism. In the 1950s a greater emphasis was placed on drawing Texans to the state. Ad placement in newspapers also followed these lucrative markets.[59] The commission continued to produce photographs and 16mm film for distribution on request. Radio advertisements were aired in key markets such as Chicago. In 1953 the first "TV films" were produced. By 1956 nine Wyoming films had aired on television stations in Los Angeles, Detroit, and Cleveland, and two others were aired nationally by the National Broadcasting Company.[60]

The commission published a variety of literature during the postwar years. The "Paint-Brush Map," which had first appeared in the late 1930s, was very popular in the 1940s and in distribution at least through the early 1950s. This stylized state map presented a cartoon version of historic and cultural offerings around Wyoming. The tag line "Wonderful Wyoming" continued to be used on general informational material, as well as "Wyoming, Frontier for Fun" and "Wyoming, Wonderland of the West." The commission also published directories for dude ranches, campgrounds, and motels in the state. 1950 saw the release of "Ski Wyoming," a new publication describing fifteen downhill ski areas in the state, many of which were in the national forests. The 1939-1940 biennial report had been the first to identify winter sports as a promising tourist opportunity for Wyoming, but World War II caused a setback in winter tourism development that only began to reverse in the 1950s.[61]

In 1948 the commission estimated that 1.3 million visitors left seventy-five million dollars in the state through the purchase of gas, oil, lodging, meals, and other items. Yellowstone alone attracted one million visitors, doubling the record of five hundred thousand visitors set in 1940. In 1947 and 1948, 283 thousand cars and 305 thousand cars entered the park, respectively. It seems likely that Yellowstone was not prepared to deal with this dramatic increase in visitation, because the park's numbers slumped by fifteen thousand in 1949 following complaints from the public regarding the condition of housing, eating, and sanitary facilities at the park. Despite the temporary decline at Yellowstone, Wyoming's highway officials

[59] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report, 1949-1950* (Cheyenne, 1950) RG 0268, Wyoming State Library, 6; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report*.
[60] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report*, 6; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Fourth Biennial Report*, 7; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Fifth Biennial Report*.
[61] Department of Commerce and Industry, "Paint-Brush Map" (Cheyenne, 1938), RG 0268, Wyoming State Library; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report*, 6; Department of Commerce and Industry, *Report of Activities, 1939-1940*, 21.

anticipated a 10 to 15 percent increase in traffic in 1950. The commission claimed that Wyoming received over one hundred million dollars in interstate travel in 1951.[62]
From 1950 to 1954 Wyoming hosted between two-and-a-half and three million visitors each year, with a rate of expenditures ranging from $85.9 million to $124.1 million. The average party spent around five days in the state. Yellowstone saw a little more than one million visitors each year. By the end of this five-year period Grand Teton National Park was also hosting one million visitors. The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission began reporting an increase in out-of-state hunting and fishing licenses in the late 1940s. Between 1950 and 1954 out-of-state applications for antelope licenses more than tripled, deer licenses were in excess of five times the resident demand, and bear licenses nearly doubled. In 1956 three million tourists generated $136 million for Wyoming, including $33.9 million spent on food and beverages, $26.2 million spent on gas, and $35.5 million spent on accommodations.[63]

During the biennium of 1957 and 1958, 6[illegible] million tourists visited Wyoming, twenty times the resident population of the state. Ninety-seven percent of these visitors traveled by car, staying on average between five and six days. During these two years approximately one out of every twenty-five Americans visited Wyoming. Wyoming residents enjoyed the largest per capita return on tourism in the nation, as the $2[illegible] million spent by tourists yielded around nine hundred dollars per resident. Tourists spent $[illegible] million on food, $62.2 million on lodging, and $65.2 million on gas.[64]

Steady growth in tourism during the 1950s proved that the travel boom predicted at the conclusion of World War II was realistic. Nationally, expenditures for all travel – both pleasure and business – more than doubled between 1950 and 1960. The travel industry in Wyoming was the third largest income producer in 1960. Studies of the tourist industry in Wyoming completed during the late 1950s and early 1960s highlighted significant trends. One was the importance of the state's motels in the tourism economy. The 53[illegible] motels in Wyoming in 1961 offered 8,691 units. These businesses were concentrated in ten of the state's twenty-three counties. Over 25 percent of the motels were along U.S. Highway 30 and 34.5 percent of these businesses were located in the counties adjacent to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. Motels accounted for more than 50 percent of the tourism industry's gross receipts in 1958. During the previous four years motel lodging sales had increased by over 58 percent. Motor courts and motels were mainly small, owner-operated businesses. As a group, they were estimated to be the fourth largest employer and third largest industry in Wyoming. Out-of-state travelers preferred a roadside motel to a downtown hotel: over 80 percent of the motel business was from non-resident travelers, in contrast to only 65 percent

[62] Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Second Biennial Report*, 7; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*.
[63] Commerce and Industry Commission, *Fourth Biennial Report*, 6; Commerce and Industry Commission, *First Biennial Report*; Commerce and Industry Commission, *Third Biennial Report*.
[64] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Biennial Report, 1957-1958* (Cheyenne, 1958).

of the state's hotel clientele. The Wyoming lodging industry was in line with broader trends. Nationally motels experienced an 86 percent gain between 1954 and 1958.[65]

Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks were top destinations for vacation travelers. A study of the out-of-state tourist market listed eight different travel routes through Wyoming, and most of them included the national parks. In fact, 40 percent of Wyoming's tourists saw very little of the state other than the routes in and out of the two parks. A large proportion of tourists took a direct route to Yellowstone and Grand Teton, spent several days there, and then departed by the most direct route. Nearly 65 percent of the visitors to Wyoming spent at least one night in Yellowstone; 40 percent also spent the night in the Grand Teton and Bighorn regions. A third of the state's visitors traveled more widely over more than eight days. The draw of Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks was paradoxical – it brought visitors to the state, but they traveled primarily on beelines to the parks. The challenge of getting tourists to stay longer in Wyoming remained a dominant one.[66]

In contrast to the rapid growth of tourism following World War II, the 1960s and 1970s saw steady visitation numbers and maturation in the tourism industry. In the early 1960s the recently renamed and restructured Wyoming Travel Commission adopted a new slogan – "This is Big Wyoming," or simply "Big Wyoming" – that would remain in use at least until 1990. The "Big Wyoming" campaign marked a return to emphasizing the natural wonders of Wyoming through photographs of the state's famous landmarks. Popular ideas about the West and Western history were less important during this period than awe-inspiring scenery and outdoor experiences. In the early 1960s the travel commission began offering tourist clinics for towns in Wyoming that served a large number of tourists. These clinics educated business owners on visitor expectations and coached them in how to meet customer demands.[67]

The Wyoming Travel Commission maintained many of the daily activities of its predecessors. It purchased advertisements in *National Geographic*, *Life*, *Sports Afield*, *Sunset*, *Holiday*, *Field & Stream*, and numerous others, as well as newspapers and radio stations within its major markets in the West and Midwest. In April 1966 *National Geographic* carried "Wyoming: High, Wide, and Windy," a forty-one-page article on the state. During the 1963-1964 biennium the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) aired three Wyoming events on network television. The travel commission began producing television commercials in 1970. Wyoming

[65] Robert F. Gwinner Jr., "An Analysis of the Travel Industry in the State of Wyoming," (PhD diss., University of Arkansas, 1963), 105, 107, 110 and 112.
[66] Robert F. Gwinner Jr., *A Study of Wyoming's Out-of-State Tourist Market* (Laramie: University of Wyoming College of Commerce and Industry, Division of Business and Economic Research, 1962), 27-33, 54-55.
[67] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1963-1964* (Cheyenne, 1964), RG 0221, Wyoming State Library; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1965-1967* (Cheyenne, 1967) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.

native Curt Gowdy featured outdoor recreation in the state on his ABC program *American Sportsman* in the early 1970s.[68]

The commission continued to receive and respond to a voluminous correspondence, to maintain a library of photographs and 16mm film, and to attend travel shows in its major markets. Promotional literature during this period included a full-color vacation guide titled "This is Big Wyoming," an accommodations directory, a camping directory, and a ski directory. The growing importance of winter tourism is evident in editorials published in *Wyoming Motel News* from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s. The lodging community was hopeful about the possibility of turning communities like Jackson into year-round destinations. In 1970 the south entrance to Yellowstone National Park opened to snowmobiles for the first time. Other winter offerings included fourteen ski areas, snowmobiling in seven national forests, ice fishing, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and viewing the elk herd at the National Elk Refuge near Jackson.[69] The growing importance of snow sports merited a new travel commission publication, "Winter Sports in Big Wyoming." Another new publication was "Family Water Sports Guide to Big Wyoming." In 1975 the commission began publishing "Afoot," a guide to climbing and backpacking.[70]

The pattern of steady numbers of tourists was altered by gasoline shortages and high prices as well as an inflation crisis and recession during 1973 and 1974. The cost of travel rose 15 percent in 1974 over the previous year.[71] Vacation travel was on the cusp of change throughout the United States by this time due to social factors. The children of the postwar baby boom were growing up and were not as willing to pack the family station wagon for a vacation. Road trips with friends began to supplant the family vacation as the idealized way to travel. Those who continued to take driving vacations were more likely to travel to a specific destination, one close to home, and stay, in contrast to the long, constantly on the move, meandering car trips of the previous decades. While some families continued the tradition of a car trip to a national park, others chose to spend their time at a single destination resort. Travel advertising began to focus on niche marketing. While motels continued to serve recreational travelers, they increasingly relied on business travelers to be profitable.[72]

[68] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1963-1964*, *1965-1967*; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1969-1971* (Cheyenne, 1971) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library; Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1971-1973* (Cheyenne, 1973) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.
[69] *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (December 1965): 8, 12; *WMN* 5 (May 1966): 9; *WMN* 6 (February 1967): 1; *WMN* 7 (May 1967): 1; *WMN* 7 (April 1968): 1, 5; *WMN* 8 (May 1968): 1; *WMN* 8 (January 1969): 7; *WMN* 9 (December 1969): 6; *WMN* 10 (December 1970): 7.
[70] Wyoming Travel Commission, *Report to the People of Big Wyoming, 1963-1964*, *1965-1967*, *1969-1971*, *1971-1973*; Wyoming Travel Commission, "Afoot: Backpacking, Climbing Big Wyoming" (Cheyenne, 1975) RG 0221, Wyoming State Library.
[71] *Wyoming Motel News* 14 (February 1974): 5; *WMN* 15 (February 1975): 9.
[72] Rugh, *Are We There Yet*, 180-181; *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (September 1965): 8; *WMN* 15 (February 1975): 9.

DEVELOPMENT OF AUTOMOBILE-ORIENTED LODGING IN WYOMING, 1913-1975

At the beginning of the twentieth century hotels were the only type of overnight lodging available to travelers in most of the United States. These properties were typically found in larger towns, and almost always within reasonable proximity to a railroad, which was still the dominant means of travel. By the 1930s Wyoming's larger towns had at least one hotel. Business collectives and local chambers of commerce collaborated in building and promoting hotels, which were seen as essential to prosperous business communities. Local newspapers promoted the hotels, and these buildings became landmarks of economic energy. When the automobile became part of the tourist economy, hotel owners marketed their properties to motorists.

The status of hotels could not overcome the disadvantages they held for motorists. Hotels were inconveniently located in crowded downtown areas. They lacked parking for cars and were oriented to serve train travelers and pedestrians. Hotels built after 1920 were located at the edge of business districts and so were harder to locate, especially when travelers were exhausted from a day's drive. Motorists were tired and also dirty, unlike train passengers, and were embarrassed by their appearance upon arrival in grand hotel lobbies. Because the ground floors of many hotels contained restaurants, coffee shops, and rented meeting rooms – which many times were the spaces generating the most profit for the hotel – travelers were obliged to pass through crowded public areas devoid of the privacy they later came to enjoy in lodging oriented toward automobile travel.[73]

Camping was an alternative to lodging at a hotel. Motorists had the freedom to stop anywhere at any time, unlike train travelers. Motoring itself was a form of recreation, affording tourists a sense of adventure and a chance to interact with the scenery they had come to enjoy. Camping without explicit permission on private land also saved travelers money, not only on hotel rates, but also on tips, parking fees, and other small charges. Money saved on lodging left more for gasoline, and thus led to longer trips. Motor companies began selling products such as the "Auto-Camp Comfort Outfit," which consisted of a collapsible folding tent, bed, chair, table, and settee. The idea of free accommodations was popular in the 1910s and 1920s, but destruction of private property and litter caused landowners to post "no trespassing" signs and fence off popular camping spots.[74] In 1927 T. A. Shaw, a rancher near Wheatland, offered a one hundred-dollar reward for the arrest and conviction of tourists who started a fire that destroyed three buildings on his property.[75] Wyomingites also had cause to

[73] Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995): 169-170; John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996): 23-29; Heyward D. Schrock, "A Room for the Night: Evolution of Roadside Lodging in Wyoming," in *Annals of Wyoming* 75 (2003): 31-33.
[74] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 170; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 31-33; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 33-34.
[75] Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 34.

complain about hitchhikers who lined the highways, abandoned automobiles at the edges of towns, and "obnoxious" advertisements painted on rock features along the Lincoln Highway.[76]

The increase in automobile traffic in the 1920s resulted in the emergence of municipal campgrounds. These facilities were located along principal roadways in city parks or near downtown businesses. Campgrounds channeled auto traffic to spaces that were convenient and affordable for visiting motorists and that could subvert irritation and inconvenience to local landowners. Amenities included parking, camp sites, and sanitary facilities, and later expanded to electricity, picnic tables, and recreation areas. The footprints of several of these municipal campgrounds survive in places like Lions Park in Cheyenne, Hamblin Park in Evanston, and Hot Springs State Park in Thermopolis. In the summer of 1920 approximately forty thousand people camped at the municipal campground in Cheyenne. Although these places are important landmarks in the evolution of motorists' lodging across Wyoming, none are thought to retain sufficient integrity to be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places in this context, as modern municipal park amenities have replaced the landscape features motorists of the 1920s would have recognized as belonging to auto camps. Local businesses considered auto tourists a boon to the economic community. In 1920 the businessmen of Thermopolis estimated that auto campers contributed "approximately $30,000" to the local economy through the purchase of groceries and automobile supplies and services.

The downside to municipal car camps was that these inexpensive (often free) campgrounds attracted undesired transients and other long-term squatters as well as tourists who truly intended to move on after a night or two. As cars became cheaper, more budget travelers began using the campgrounds, discouraging the affluent travelers who had been the first to own automobiles from staying there. To discourage extended stays, by the mid-1920s municipalities were increasingly charging entrance fees and added costs for amenities such as telephones, firewood, and showers and other sanitary facilities. Time limits on stays also were imposed. In 1923 Cheyenne began charging fifty cents a night for its best facilities, though it also maintained some free camping. Once the idea of monetizing car camps was introduced, municipal campgrounds were quickly replaced by private business owners eager to capitalize on the new market.

Private campgrounds offered travelers the ability to purchase groceries, cook meals in a communal kitchen, wash clothes in a laundry, use a telephone, and receive basic automobile services, all on site. Competition grew between private enterprises, and campground owners sought new ways to improve their offerings over nearby businesses. By the late 1920s cabins rather than tents were a common feature of private commercial campgrounds; by the end of decade tent sites had been largely phased out in favor of standalone cabins, and the earliest motor courts were born. At first many cabins were bare, but soon owners began to furnish them with tables, chairs, beds, and stoves, and to supply them with electricity. Rather than encouraging a communal, neighborly experience focused on the outdoors, cabins increasingly

[76] T. A. Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 2nd Ed., Revised (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 423.

encouraged privacy and socialization among one's traveling companions within indoor accommodations accessible for longer periods of the year and in inclement weather.[77]

Motor courts emerged in cities and small towns along the major named highways in Wyoming. At least one enterprise, the Big Horn Camps, Inc., was formed to unite several shareholders in Sheridan, Cody, Cheyenne, Shoshoni, and perhaps other Wyoming towns in constructing "rustic cabin camps" – that is, log cabin motor courts – "in 14 Wyoming towns and scenic localities," including Sheridan, Buffalo, Muddy Pass, Gillette, Devil's Tower [sic], Lusk, Cheyenne, Wheatland, Douglas, Casper, Thermopolis, Basin, and Cody, as well as Spearfish, South Dakota. Construction was slated to begin in the spring of 1928 at a cost estimate of seventy-five hundred dollars.[78]

Haphazard site dispersal had been typical of tent camping, but the greater permanence of individual cabins within emerging motor courts lent itself to increasing formalization of the overall landscape of the lodging property. Standard layouts included rows of freestanding cabins, or more often U- or L-shaped configurations around a central open space. Parking spaces were clearly assigned, and communal green space was emphasized with lawn furniture. Often resembling tiny villages, cabins were placed close enough to the road to be visible to passing motorists but far enough from the road to appear private. In the 1930s subtle linguistic changes began to inform the lodging industry. "Court" became more common than "camp" and "cottage" began to replace "cabin." Physically, lodging became more homey with additions like closets, rugs, dressing tables, chairs, mirrors, curtains, radios, and bathrooms complete with bathing facilities. Many individual units were heated and insulated for use over longer periods of the year. Attached covered parking became very popular in the 1930s. In addition to the groceries and communal kitchens that had been available in the 1920s, many motor court operators chose to add coffee shops or restaurants to the premises. Just as in the 1920s most motor courts offered branded (i.e., Sinclair, Standard Oil, Pennzoil, etc.) gasoline and other oil-based products for sale on site.[79]

In Wyoming motor court units, often called cabins or cottages, typically took the form of small gable-roofed buildings constructed of frame or log. Along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30, cabins were typically frame. Numerous examples of these spare, simple buildings are seen in postcards.[80] Perhaps the best surviving example is the Black and Orange Cabins at

[77] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 171-174; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 33-34; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 34-35; Larson, *History of Wyoming*, 408, 423.
[78] "Chain of Log Cabin Camping Grounds is Planned for Wyoming," *Shoshoni Enterprise* (Shoshoni, WY), November 4, 1927, http://newspapers.wyo.gov/; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 35. It remains unclear if this chain of camp grounds was constructed. No evidence has been found to suggest the business venture was successful.
[79] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 174-177; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 38; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 35-36.
[80] For example, the Minnehaha Camp in Cheyenne, the Silver Cabins in Hanna, the Sunset Camp in Medicine Bow, and the Ideal Motel in Rawlins. Postcard, Minnehaha Camp, 1928, box 713; Postcard, Silver Cabins, 1942, box 716; Postcard, Sunset Camp, 1940, box 718; Postcard, Ideal Motel, n.d., box 720. All in Coll. 10674, James

Fort Bridger. These cabins were constructed in 1925 and operated until 1936 near historic Fort Bridger, an important site in Western history that served as a tourist draw for those making a cross-country journey on the Lincoln Highway. These cabins were constructed simply: the side-gable roofs consist of 2" x 4" lumber joined at the peak without cross braces, ridge boards, or trusses, and the roofs sit atop a wall structure composed of 2" x 4" lumber covered in weatherboards. The interior walls are composed of fiberboards; otherwise the cabins are not insulated. The interior of each unit, eight in total, measures 13'11" x 10'2". Covered parking provided by the gabled roofs measures 14' x 7'7". These cabins are also representative of many, if not most, frame motor courts that existed during this period in Wyoming, in that they are devoid of any overt nationally-popular architectural style. The property is distinct from other similar lodging properties in the state in its historic use of orange paint with black trim to catch the eyes of passing motorists.[81]

Highways giving access to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks seem more likely to have offered lodging properties constructed of log. Two possible explanations for the prevalence of log motor courts in the northern part of Wyoming are: (1) log architecture more closely matched the theme of a journey to Wyoming's famous parks and through the surrounding national forests, and appealed to travelers' expectations and (2) logs were more readily available near the state's national forests. In contrast, many of the towns along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30 did not have a local source for finished logs. Fieldwork and archival research have produced only one late 1930s log motor court along US 30,[82] while several log motor courts have been documented in towns like Buffalo, Jackson, and Pinedale. Camp O' the Pines in Pinedale was constructed one block from U.S. Highway 191, which was originally planned as a scenic byway that diverged from the Lincoln Highway at Rock Springs and connected motorists to Jackson Hole, Grand Teton National Park, and the south entrance to Yellowstone. The history of Camp O' the Pines illustrates an important but often overlooked aspect of motor courts: although built primarily to serve as tourist lodging, cabins sometimes served other purposes in their communities. They might act as short-term rentals for workmen or, as at Camp O' the Pines, as temporary lodging for ranching women who were soon to deliver a baby and wanted to be near a doctor when they went into labor. Particularly in winter, when tourists were few, repurposing tourist lodging in this way must have been very attractive to business owners.

Camp O' the Pines has been remodeled and renamed several times since initial construction; however, the oldest, circa 1929 cabins are constructed of saddle-notched logs that originally projected beyond the gable-roofed eaves and decreased in length as the logs ascended toward the roof. (Water damage necessitated shortening the exaggerated log corners in the 1960s.) The cabins are approximately 25' x 14' and were originally designed so that each

L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.
[81] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, Site 48UT2648, Black and Orange Cabin Complex. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.
[82] The Longhorn Lodge in Rock River dates to circa 1957 and includes several log cabins in addition to a log motel unit, a log restaurant, and a large freestanding neon sign.

cabin contained two lodging units. Much like the Black and Orange Cabins and other motor courts of the era, a freestanding outhouse served all cabins.[83] Unlike frame motor courts, which often carry no overt national style, Camp O' the Pines and other log motor courts displayed elements of the Rustic Revival style. The Rustic Revival emerged in the early twentieth century and was greatly influenced by the architecture of federal land management agencies that were creating buildings intended to harmonize with the natural world. Among the hallmarks of Rustic Revival style are rejection of the regularity and symmetry of the industrial world and reliance on native wood and stone materials.

A small number of motor courts in Wyoming used elements of picturesque or romantic styles such as the Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The remaining portion of the Sunset Motor Court in Evanston incorporates elements of Mission Revival style, including stucco walls, tile awnings, and a shaped parapet. The Indian Village Motor Lodge of Cheyenne meshed several popular images of the West into a single lodging property. A concrete teepee resembling the traditional housing of Northern Plains tribes housed the motor court's office, while the lodging units reflected the Mission Revival style through the use of concrete or stucco construction, non-structural vigas, and a shaped parapet. Covered parking was integrated into the flat roof and separated individual lodging units from one another.[84]

In the 1930s the lodging industry began to embrace a national shift away from romantic visual metaphors embodied in the picturesque architectural styles toward modern, clean design. Commenting on this new aesthetic, E. H. Lightfoot, consulting architect with *Tourist Court Journal*, wrote, "Regardless of where a court is erected it should be built of stucco with a sand finish, using modern architecture with its attractive simplicity and simple lines, and be painted pure white." Widely known as the Streamline Moderne, the style was applied often enough to lodging properties that it was sometimes called "Motor Court Modern." The Branding Iron Auto Lodge in Laramie referenced the Streamline Moderne style through its curving form, stucco exterior, and continuous bands of horizontal lines that followed the perimeter of its flat roof.[85]

The Great Depression affected all aspects of the American economy, yet the rise of tourism during the Depression and the continued sale of automobiles and dependent products such as gasoline ensured that middle-class vacationing Americans still needed overnight lodging. Few motor courts in Wyoming appear to have failed as a result of the Depression, and, as mentioned above, many improvements were made to lodging properties during this time. Nationally, the Federal Housing Administration's decision to permit financing of cottages under two thousand dollars without a down payment allowed more lodging businesses to open. In 1933 the American Automobile Association (AAA) estimated that thirty thousand "tourist cottage and camp establishments" lined American highways. Many of these lodging

[83] Rheba Massey, "Log Cabin Motel," National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form (Cheyenne, 1992).
[84] Postcard, Indian Village Motor Lodge, Postcards-Motels-Wyoming, P98-19/1, Wyoming State Archives.
[85] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-179. Photograph of Branding Iron, 178. Lightfoot quoted, 179.

properties were constructed and assembled by the business owner or local craftsmen. Kits of prefabricated lumber could be purchased from local lumberyards or traveling salesmen. Many other outfits were likely based on plans available in popular magazines, or were constructed based on what a business owner had observed at another site. Still other buildings were adaptively reused and retrofitted to meet tourists' needs.[86]

As the Great Depression worsened, out-of-work architects began to look to the still-growing lodging industry for new commissions. Similarly, manufacturers of domestic wares discovered the motor court's potential as a showroom for stylish new products in a sluggish economy. As a result, lodging properties and their interiors underwent a period of greater standardization as architects and designers realized that growth in this market remained steady despite the state of the national economy. In addition, lodging properties became disseminators of modernism to middle-class Americans spending the night in these "tiny, roadside exhibition centers." The motor court had transformed from a "home away from home" to an aspirational space more modern and luxurious than many homes.

The onset of World War II, however, and especially the diversion of automobile production to war machines and the rationing of gas, introduced a period of economic hardship for automobile-oriented lodging properties. Although hotels benefited from the resulting increase in train travel, many motor courts did not survive the war years. Following the conclusion of the war in 1945, the automobile industry not only regained but quickly exceeded prewar manufacturing numbers. Nationwide, there were sixty thousand motor courts or motels by 1956. The lodging industry enjoyed a construction boom starting in the postwar years and continuing through the late 1960s, a period of upward mobility during which many Americans also purchased houses and cars. The Federal Interstate Highway Program of 1956 improved transportation across the nation and increased the ease of traveling from one part of the country to another. While Wyoming had contained 375 automobile-oriented accommodations in 1938, by 1958 the Wyoming Travel Commission was reporting a total of 570 properties.[88]

The postwar construction boom in automobile-oriented lodging loosely marks the transition from motor courts to motels, as defined as property types in this document. While the hospitality industry as whole began to embrace the term "motel" during the late 1940s, many business owners in Wyoming retained use of "motor court" or "court" until the late 1950s. As such, the use of "motor court" or "motel" by individual lodging businesses should not be considered definitive of the property type; instead, a comparison must be made between the physical characteristics of the property and the registration requirements outlined in this document. There may be a short window in which motor courts and motels were being constructed simultaneously, most likely during the late 1940s and/or early 1950s, but in general motor courts were far less likely to be newly constructed after World War II. There

[86] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-180; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 38-39; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 36.
[87] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 180-181.
[88] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 181-182; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 36.

were, however, many existing motor courts that continued to operate after the war, some of which remain viable businesses today. Over time, some lodging properties that existed as motor courts prior to the war were expanded with the addition of linear multi-room units in keeping with motel construction. Because lodging properties are commercial enterprises that must meet consumer demand to survive, many motor courts, motels, and hybrid properties will demonstrate an evolution in form that reflects changing industry standards and customer expectations.

After World War II motor hotels, or "motels," emerged in a consistent form. Instead of individual cabins, a string of private rooms, each sharing a partition wall or walls with the next, were integrated into a single building under a shared roof. Whereas hotels typically contained interior corridors from which access to individual rooms was gained, motel rooms opened directly from parking lots found in the center of the complex or, less commonly, to the rear of the building. Initially, motels were single-story buildings. Toward the end of the period covered by this context, some two-story units were constructed. Similar to the motor courts, newly constructed motels often had a U- or L-shaped footprint, or consisted of two freestanding parallel buildings. In all cases individual units opened to the center of the property, which most often contained parking and sometimes also a shared green space. The rear elevations of early motels were typically devoid of architectural expression and may even have consisted of blank walls, unless a small window in each unit was present. Later, however, some motels chose to site parking behind the individual units. In these cases, a rear door within the motel room gave access to assigned parking.

Many motels of the 1950s and 1960s were not overtly stylish and were recognizable chiefly according to their function as modern lodging properties. Whereas many motor court units had been constructed of log or frame, most motels used one or a combination of the following materials: brick, concrete block, stone, and stucco. A smaller number were constructed of frame. Roofs were typically flat or gabled, often with a wide overhang that sheltered the entrance to a motel room and the open trunk of a car in the event of inclement weather. In these ways, many motels reflected the design of nationally-popular American ranch houses, the dominant domestic form of the mid-twentieth century. Unlike most ranch houses, motels typically contained steel casement windows, fixed multi-pane windows, or glass blocks. Toward the end of period covered by this context, large single-pane fixed windows came to dominate new construction. Lodging units were typically articulated with details emphasizing that many travelers were on holiday. For example, cheery color was often applied to doors, to panels beneath windows, or to the balcony of two-story buildings. Windows might also be enlivened with awnings, valences, or other special treatments to the surrounds. Sometimes decorative concrete curtain walls drew attention to a particular aspect of the property.

Because of the uniformity of many motel buildings, and because of the need to attract motorists in moving vehicles, most lodging properties distinguished themselves from other businesses through large, often freestanding neon signs. These signs existed in a great variety of forms, sizes, and shapes, but many were designed with a great deal of whimsicality

and imagination. Sadly, many older neon signs have been replaced with graphic, backlit signs in an effort to reassure the public that older motels remain viable lodging options. The neon signs that remain should be considered important features that can convey integrity to historic motels. Names of motels were also important ways to appeal to travelers specifically in search of the West they had seen in popular television shows and movies. Although some lodging properties were named pragmatically – for example, Bower Court operated by Lawrence and Esther Bower in Lander and the Rawlins Motel in Rawlins – many other motels evoked romantic ideas. The Covered Wagon Motel in Lusk, the Firebird Motor Hotel in Cheyenne, the Sage and Sand Motel in Saratoga, and the Ranger Motel in Laramie are only a few of the many motels in Wyoming in which a name and perhaps some aspects of a neon sign suggested an exotic destination, while the motel buildings were interchangeable with those found all across America.

Those Wyoming motels that distinguished themselves through overt references to nationally-popular styles seem to have done so in a limited number of ways. First, like the motor courts, there were a small number of motels that used elements of Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The Wyoming Motel in Cheyenne is one of these, chiefly because of its tiled roofs and stucco exterior. Second, another small group of motels exhibited a late use of Streamline Moderne, such as the El Rancho Motel (now the Federal Inn) in Riverton. The most common nod to popular national styles, however, came in the form of exaggerated modern rooflines, including hyperbolic canopies and barrel-vaulted walkways. The Ideal Motel in Rawlins was updated sometime in the mid- to late-1950s to include an on-site Standard Oil station under an exaggerated shed roof. The Bel Air Inn, also of Rawlins, used barrel-vaulted roofs to emphasize its restaurant, bar, and covered walkways between buildings.[89] Often the component of the motel property with the most overt nod to the Exaggerated Modern style was the motel office, as at the Sands Motel in Cheyenne. While the U-shaped motel does little to distinguish individual rooms, the office is sheltered by a multi-pitched canopy that dominates the principal facade.

In contrast to low-budget exteriors, many motel owners emphasized comfortable interiors and expended funds to furnish them. Amenities included air conditioning, telephones, and radios, some of which were advertised prominently on neon signs. Brand name mattresses were frequently listed in the description on the back of complimentary motel postcards. In 1949 *Hotel Management* (which also published on the motel trade) offered the following list of items that should be included in a typical motel guest room:

> Innerspring mattresses and box springs, – woolen blankets; Heavy Chenille bed spreads; Percale sheets. – Dresser with large mirror; Writing desk (all furniture is of oak). – Two large easy chairs; One or two straight back chairs. – Luggage rack. – One or more smoking stands and at least three ash trays. – Large floor lamp,

[89] Postcard, Ideal Motel, 1964, box 720; Postcard, Bel Air Inn, 1970, box 720. Both in Coll. 10674, James L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

bed lamp, desk lamp and ceiling light (all with 100-watt bulbs, including bath). – Wall to wall carpeting. – Rubber mat outside door. – 12 by 16-inch original water color picture; Several prints – some in groups – giving the room a homey lived-in look. – Cross ventilation – two large windows. – Venetian blinds and either sheer curtains or colorful draperies. – Window air conditioners; Ceiling fans; gas heaters. – Coin-operated radio on night stand. – Closets and drawers lined with quilted satin paper. – Closets have many coat hangers and a laundry bag.

Writing desk contains 10 sheets of writing paper; 7 envelopes; scratch pad; several post cards; blotter; business cards; sewing kit with buttons, thread and needle, pins, rubber bands, paper clips. – Telegram blanks; laundry and dry cleaning list; sample coffee shop menu; calendar and house directory. Bathrooms have: Tile shower; Plastic shower curtain; Bath mat; Facial tissue in chrome container; Two 12-oz. drinking glasses; Three bars of soap; Four face towels, four bath towels, two wash cloths.[90]

Nationally, the swimming pool became an important amenity at many lodging properties during the 1950s; however, motels in Wyoming responded in a limited way to this trend. Very few locally-owned "mom-and-pop" motels appear to have added swimming pools. The Frontier Motel of Cheyenne is one exception – owners claimed to have "Wyoming's Largest and most Luxurious" pool, which was heated and filtered and measured fifty by one hundred feet.[91] The relative unpopularity of swimming pools in Wyoming likely related to the short summer season. Many years an outdoor pool would not be attractive until mid-June and might close again as early as mid-September, rendering it unusable for as much as three-quarters of the year. Motel owners noted that swimming pools were expensive and time-consuming to maintain, and a relatively small number of guests used them.[92] Lodging properties such as the Mansion House Motel and Mountain View Motel, both in Buffalo, pointed travelers to the municipal pool in the absence of having one on site.[93] Other ancillary buildings and structures found at motels in Wyoming might include laundry facilities and eateries like dining rooms, lounges, and/or coffee shops. Landscape features included shared green spaces in the form of picnic areas or playgrounds. Shade, if it was available, was often explicitly advertised as an amenity.

By the early 1950s a number of problems were becoming apparent in mom-and-pop motels. Because of significant growth in the motel industry, many older motor courts and the more unsophisticated motels faced stiff competition from newer and better-managed properties within their local markets and lacked the financial resources and management skills to improve

[90] Quoted in Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 183.
[91] Postcard in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.
[92] *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (September 1965): 6.
[93] Postcards in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.

their offerings. Additionally, families that managed lodging properties were trapped in twenty-four-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week businesses in a country where the majority of workers enjoyed paid vacation time. Worst of all, new interstate highways bypassed some of the earlier named and numbered highways, isolating small businesses such as motor courts and motels from the main stream of traffic, drastically reducing their potential market.

As some mom-and-pop motor courts and motels began to falter, the first chain motels arrived to fulfill the changes in demand for overnight lodging. While some small businesses struggled due to the challenges listed above, the concept of overnight lodging still held great potential for investors on a large scale. Though motel chains existed from the 1920s onward, the earliest franchised chains did not appear in Wyoming until the 1960s. By the mid-1960s both Cheyenne and Casper had acquired a Holiday Inn. Ramada Inn, Imperial 400 Motel, and Downtowner Motor Inn also appeared in the 1960s. Having greater financial resources, chain motels could afford trained professional management and could compete with other roadside businesses – such as gas and service stations and emerging fast food chains – for prime real estate conveniently located at interstate highway interchanges.[94]

Chain motels brought brand-name recognition and corporate regimentation to an in-state market dominated by mom-and-pop motels. Chain motels also introduced a new building plan previously unknown in Wyoming. Based on a low-cost World War II building technique, "center-core construction" included one or more stories of rooms arranged back to back along a utility core. The bathrooms of every four units were grouped at the intersecting corners. Doors and windows faced outside, and circumferential walkways served the rooms.[95] By the late 1950s other chain motels relied on mid-rise construction, enclosing central corridors and adding elevators for access to upper floors. Unlike the long strechers of early highways, land at interchanges came at a premium price, and building up rather than sprawling out was expedient.

Chain motels rarely branded themselves architecturally; in contrast, many fast-food chains of the day began to adopt specialized rooflines and other structural characteristics that have become obvious parts of brand identity, often recognizable even when a former restaurant building is vacant. Instead, the corporate logo, such as the golden crown of Best Western or "Holiday Inn" in the chain's distinctive script, came to signal standardized, reliable guest rooms and a positive experience that could be replicated across the country. Ultimately, the power of brand identity would give chain motels a considerable advantage over small lodging businesses in Wyoming as in the rest of the nation.[96]

Many of the first chain motel properties in Wyoming have been demolished, or have been altered over time in such a way that they do not retain integrity to their date of construction. The Downtowner Motor Inn, built in 1963 in Cheyenne, was the first of the Downtowner chain

[94] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 183-186; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 37.
[95] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 186.
[96] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 186-187; Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 37-38.

to be constructed in Wyoming and possesses relatively high integrity. Unlike most automobile-oriented lodging in Wyoming, the Downtowner Motor Inn was constructed in the heart of the historic commercial district rather than at the periphery. The motel included four floors of rooms (eighty-eight rooms in total) atop a substantial ground floor level that housed a coffee shop, dining room, cocktail lounge, and meeting rooms. A Village Inn Pancake House and enclosed swimming pool were part of the site. Because of its location downtown, the motel relied on a basement garage.[97]

Little America is a regional chain of motels and hotels with roots in Wyoming. In 1934 the original Little America began as a small gas station, a motor court of twelve cabins, and a café. Little America was located near the town of Granger on U.S. Highway 30. When the property burned in 1950, owner S. M. Covey decided to rebuild closer to the eventual location of Interstate 80.[98] Today, Little America is the largest "travelers' oasis" in Wyoming and boasts its own zip code and its own interstate highway interchange.

Referral chains became an important factor in the Wyoming lodging industry. Referral chains consisted of small groups of motel owners that cooperated in upgrading properties. Ultimately, individual owners intended to create networks of lodging properties maintained to prescribed standards that would allow an owner in one locality to recommend lodging in another town along a traveler's route with confidence. Each member of a referral chain pledged to maintain mutual standards and display the group's identifying emblem. An early referral chain member in Wyoming was the Indian Village Motor Lodge in Cheyenne, which belonged to the United Motor Courts chain. United Motor Courts was organized in California in 1933 and became the most successful of the early chains. In 1936 the group claimed,

> You will find in United Motor Courts a new and unparalleled achievement in combining comfort and economical luxury with the convenience of first floor accommodations made necessary by our present mode of automobile travel. United Motor Courts is a group of independent owners, comprising only those motor courts which come up to the highest standards in comfort, quiet atmosphere, and courteous service.

Members retained their own name but identified themselves through a shield logo that mimicked the new shield markers used throughout the federal highway system. United Motor Courts remained a strong presence in the lodging industry until after World War II.[99]

Best Western, formed in 1946 in Long Beach, California, became the dominant referral chain in Wyoming by the 1960s. Unlike earlier referral chains, Best Western was incorporated (as Western Motels, Inc.). Promotors drove major western highways soliciting membership from

[97] Schrock, "A Room for the Night," 38.
[98] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, 48SW3979, Little America. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.
[99] Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 139-142.

existing mom-and-pop motor courts and motels. In the early 1960s membership in Best Western offered many benefits. The company printed and distributed travel guides that listed the proximity of member lodging properties to the nearest major highway. They also purchased advertising in publications priced beyond the reach of many small business owners, including national magazines, major newspapers, and AAA directories. Best Western allowed travelers to pay in advance for reservations. It also made group purchasing of furnishings and supplies available to small business owners, allowing individual lodging properties to enjoy discounted prices like the national chains. Best Western provided its members with insurance, affiliated with several major credit-card companies, and offered design and accounting expertise through its national headquarters to property owners who likely lacked education in these areas.

Each motel affiliated with Best Western operated under its own name but prominently displayed the company logo. Members were also required to purchase products such as soap bars and shower curtains branded with the Best Western crown. The chain reinforced strict standards. Each year two salaried field representatives inspected motels within the system. In addition, each member was required to inspect three other member motels. In 1963 members paid dues of two hundred and fifty dollars for the first twelve units and fifteen dollars for each additional unit up to forty-nine units. A sliding scale determined dues for larger motels. At an annual convention members elected officers, drafted changes to the constitution, and shared information. The chain developed marketing programs and decreased the operating costs of small businesses through bulk purchasing, shared-risk insurance, credit-card discounts, and training programs.[100]

The Holiday Lodge in Lander is one of the best preserved of the Best Western members, though it is no longer affiliated with the company. On the back of a postcard marked "Spring 1967," the motel claims to have "Lander's Finest Accommodations" and lists among its amenities "T.V. – Phones, Attractively Spacious Units in a New Motel, Kitchenettes Available for Sportsmen." The Best Western and AAA logos are included.[101]

OVERARCHING TRENDS, COMMON PATTERNS IN WYOMING

Each motor court or motel property has its distinct history but is likely to be tied to one or more of the following broad patterns.

Prominent travel patterns drove motor court and motel construction.
The development of motor courts and motels in Wyoming was concentrated on the main roads and highways through the state. These routes included first the three major named highways, second the U.S. Highway Routes, and third interstates 80, 25, and 90. Communities along these routes developed lodging services in proportion to changes in demand over time.

[100] Ibid, 142-146.
[101] Postcard, "Holiday Lodge," Postcards-Lodges-Wyoming, PC02-610, Wyoming State Archives.

Communities that were not located directly on the principal routes used by tourists had fewer lodging properties.

Automobile-oriented accommodations were located on highways, typically clustered at the peripheries of historic commercial centers.
“Commercial strips" contained clusters of businesses, including lodging properties, on the peripheries of towns along main highways. These strips are the typical locations of motor courts and motels. Because of the rural nature of Wyoming, lodging properties, particularly motor courts, are also found in relatively isolated locations having a rural rather than industrial setting.

Properties were expanded, modernized, and renamed over time.
Many commercial properties were continuously updated to meet consumer expectations, and many of these changes are likely to have happened during the period of significance for any given property.

Many automobile-oriented accommodations were locally-owned and operated in Wyoming.
Roadside accommodations were typically owned and operated locally and were not part of a local or national chain or franchise group. During the 1960s affiliation with the Best Western referral chain became increasingly popular among mom-and-pop motel owners. The first chain motels began to appear in Wyoming in the 1960s but were concentrated in the largest towns like Cheyenne, Casper, and Laramie and did not dominate the market during the period covered by this context.

F. Associated Property Types

MOTOR COURTS AND MOTELS

Introduction

Motor courts and motels survive as some of the most visible reminders of the importance of auto tourism in local and state economies in Wyoming between 1913 and 1975. Several other property types associated with overnight accommodation are found in Wyoming but are not included in this context. The first property type not included in this context is hotels. Hotels are here defined as large, multistory lodging buildings typically located in a historic commercial center or rural resort community. Generally, hotels contain formal space on the ground floor for lobbies, restaurants and/or dining rooms, ballrooms, and small retail enterprises, all of which are typically available to consumers not lodging at the hotel as well as hotel patrons. Hotels include shared interior corridors from which individual rooms on the upper floors are accessed. Hotels are not included in this context because the majority of those constructed in Wyoming predate the era of automobile travel. Instead, hotels were most typically sited and constructed to accommodate railroad travelers. While some automobile tourists chose to lodge in hotels, this property type was inconvenient for motorists in several ways and gradually fell out of favor over the period of significance, as will be discussed below.[102]

The second type of overnight accommodation not addressed in this context is the dude ranch. Dude ranches have an important place in Wyoming's tourism industry; however, a dude ranch is typically a destination for travelers rather than a service travelers use out of necessity while away from home. Dude ranches provided not only overnight lodging, but also meals and entertainment as part of an immersive experience. In contrast, most motor court and motel patrons needed a convenient place to rest before continuing on a trip or enjoying the attractions they had come to see in that area. Motor courts and motels are not generally considered to be destinations in and of themselves.

Two broad categories of lodging properties – motor courts and motels – are described below. In this document, motor courts are defined as those lodging properties consisting of individual units that are visibly distinct from one another. Motor courts include properties consisting of freestanding cabins, cabins connected because of non-integral "lean-to" covered parking, and lodging units integrated beneath a shared roof but still independent from one another, most often because units do not share partition walls. In contrast, motels are considered to be those properties composed of lodging units arranged in a continuous line or lines, sharing partition walls, and presenting a one-dimensional primary façade. Other typical characteristics of both property types will be discussed below.

[102] John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers, *The Motel in America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 19, 23-31; Chester H. Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 169-170, 180-181.

The period of significance identified in this document is 1913 to 1975. The beginning date corresponds to the first highways in Wyoming: the Lincoln Highway and the Black and Yellow Trail opened in 1913, and the Yellowstone Highway in 1915. These highways unlocked the state to motorists, allowing them to access the natural wonders of northwest Wyoming, or to cross the state on the first transcontinental highway. Motorists were a new kind of consumer that required new kinds of services, such as overnight lodging convenient to automobile travel. The end of the period of significance reflects changes in the fabric of individual lodging properties in Wyoming, as well as in the overall landscape of services catering to travelers and tourists. In 1956 the Federal Aid Highway Act ordered the construction of interstate highways that rendered many of the U.S. Routes obsolete for long-distance travel. By the mid-1970s the changes wrought by the interstate highways had significantly altered the landscape of travel in Wyoming, and newly constructed lodging reflected these changes.

The post-World War II construction boom in lodging properties loosely marks the temporal transition from motor courts to motels, as defined as property types in this document. While the hospitality industry as whole began to embrace the term "motel" during the late 1940s, many business owners in Wyoming retained use of "motor court" or "court" until the late 1950s. As such, the use of "motor court" or "motel" by individual lodging businesses should not be considered definitive of the property type; instead, a comparison must be made between the physical characteristics of the property and the registration requirements outlined in this document. There may be a short window in which motor courts and motels were being constructed simultaneously, most likely during the late 1940s and/or early 1950s, but in general motor courts were less likely to be newly constructed after World War II. There were, however, many existing motor courts that continued to operate after the war, some of which remain viable businesses today. Over time, some lodging properties that existed as motor courts prior to the war were expanded with the addition of linear multi-room units in keeping with motel construction. Because lodging properties are commercial enterprises that must meet consumer demand to survive, many motor courts, motels, and hybrid properties will demonstrate an evolution in form that reflects changing industry standards and customer expectations.

MOTOR COURTS

Historically, motor courts as a property type defined in this document were referred to using a variety of trade names, including motor court, tourist court, auto court, motel court, hotel court, cottage court, or cottages. Motor courts are defined as those lodging properties consisting of individual units that are visibly distinct from one another. Motor courts include properties consisting of freestanding cabins, cabins connected because of non-integral "lean-to" covered parking, and lodging units integrated beneath a shared roof but still independent from one another, most often because units do not share partition walls. The earliest motor court properties included shared bathhouses or outhouses. Over time, many property owners added bathrooms to individual units or constructed new units complete with private baths. Often, individual units were independently heated and/or cooled. Crucially, these properties

provided travelers with parking for automobiles, typically immediately adjacent to their unit for convenience and security. In contrast to motels, the architecture of motor courts is more likely to express elements of picturesque or romantic revival styles.

Motor courts emerged as a direct outgrowth of private campgrounds established to service long-distance motorists who most often carried camping equipment in their cars. In the early 1920s, in an effort to keep increasing numbers of auto tourists from camping on private property, many municipalities across the nation established auto campgrounds to funnel motorists to locations appropriate for camping. By the mid-1920s privately-owned campgrounds had largely replaced those operated by municipalities. Small business owners realized they could charge patrons more for a cabin or cottage rather than a tent site, and by the late 1920s many tent sites had been phased out in favor of freestanding cabins. Thus, the motor court was born.

Haphazard site dispersal had been typical of tent camping, but the greater permanence of individual cabins within emerging motor courts lent itself to a formalization of the overall landscape of the lodging property. Standard layouts included rows of freestanding cabins, or more often U- or L-shaped configurations around a central open space. Parking spaces were clearly assigned, and communal green space was emphasized with lawn furniture. Often resembling tiny villages, cabins were placed close enough to the road to be visible to passing motorists but far enough from the road to appear private and quiet.

By the 1930s it was more common to refer to properties of this type as "courts" rather than "camps," and "cottage" was used interchangeably with "cabin." The first cabins were bare – motorists were responsible still to bring their own bedding – but owners soon began to furnish them sparingly with beds, tables, chairs, and stoves, and to supply them with electricity. In the 1930s cabins became more homey with additions like closets, rugs, dressing tables, chairs, mirrors, curtains, radios, and bathrooms complete with bathing facilities. Many individual units were heated and insulated for use over longer periods of the year. Non-integral, "lean-to" covered parking between cabins became very popular in the 1930s. In addition to the grocery stores and communal kitchens that had been available at municipal and then private campgrounds in the 1920s, many motor court operators added coffee shops or restaurants to their premises. Just as at the campgrounds, most motor courts offered branded (i.e., Sinclair, Standard Oil, Pennzoil, etc.) gasoline and other oil-based products for sale on site.[103]

In Wyoming, motor court units, often called cabins or cottages, typically took the form of small gable-roofed buildings of frame or log construction. Along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30, cabins were typically frame. Several examples of these spare, simple buildings are seen in postcards.[104] Perhaps the best surviving example is the Black and Orange Cabins at Fort

[103] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 170-175; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 31-34, 36-45.
[104] For example, the Minnehaha Camp in Cheyenne, the Silver Cabins in Hanna, the Sunset Camp in Medicine Bow, and the Ideal Motel in Rawlins. Postcard, Minnehaha Camp, 1928, box 713; Postcard, Silver Cabins, 1942,

Bridger. These cabins were constructed in 1925 and operated until 1936 near historic Fort Bridger, an important site in Western history that served as a tourist draw for those making a cross-country journey on the Lincoln Highway. These cabins were constructed simply: the side-gable roofs consist of 2" x 4" lumber joined at the peak without cross braces, ridge boards, or trusses, and the roofs sit atop a wall structure composed of 2" x 4" lumber covered in weatherboards. The interior walls are composed of fiberboards; otherwise the cabins are not insulated. The interior of each unit, eight in total, measures 13'11" x 10'2". Covered parking provided by the gabled roofs measures 14' x 7'7". These cabins are also representative of many, if not most, frame motor courts that existed during this period in Wyoming, in that they are devoid of any overt nationally-popular architectural style. The property is distinct from other similar lodging properties in the state in its historic use of orange paint with black trim to draw the attention of passing motorists.[105]

Highways giving access to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks seem more likely to have offered lodging properties constructed of log. Two possible explanations for the prevalence of log motor courts in the northern part of Wyoming are: (1) log architecture more closely matched the theme of a journey to Wyoming's famous parks and through the surrounding national forests, and appealed to travelers' expectations and (2) logs were more readily available near the state's national forests. In contrast, many of the towns along the Lincoln Highway/U.S. Highway 30 did not have a local source for finished logs. Fieldwork and archival research have produced only one late 1930s log motor court along US 30,[106] while several log motor courts have been documented in towns like Buffalo, Jackson, and Pinedale. Camp O' the Pines in Pinedale was constructed one block from U.S. Highway 191, which was originally planned as a scenic byway that diverged from the Lincoln Highway at Rock Springs and connected motorists to Jackson Hole, Grand Teton National Park, and the south entrance of Yellowstone. The history of Camp O' the Pines illustrates an important but often overlooked aspect of motor courts; although built primarily to serve as tourist lodging, cabins sometimes served other purposes in their communities. They might act as short-term rentals for workmen or, as at Camp O' the Pines, as temporary lodging for ranching women who were soon to deliver a baby and wanted to be near a doctor when they went into labor.[107] Particularly in winter, when tourists were few, repurposing tourist lodging in this way must have been very attractive to business owners.

Camp O' the Pines has been remodeled and renamed several times since initial construction; however, the oldest, circa 1929 cabins are constructed of saddle-notched log that originally

box 716; Postcard, Sunset Camp, 1940, box 718; Postcard, Ideal Motel, n.d., box 720. All in Coll. 10674, James L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

[105] Wyoming Cultural Properties Form, Site 48UT2648, Black and Orange Cabin Complex. On file at the Wyoming Cultural Records Office.

[106] The Longhorn Lodge in Rock River dates to circa 1957 and includes several log cabins in addition to a log motel unit, a log restaurant, and a large freestanding neon sign.

[107] Rheba Massey, Log Cabin Motel, National Register of Historic Places Inventory/Nomination Form (Cheyenne, 1993).

projected beyond the gable-roofed eaves and decreased in length as the logs ascended toward the roof. (Water damage necessitated shortening the exaggerated log corners in the 1960s.) The cabins are approximately 25' x 14' and were originally designed so that each cabin contained two lodging units. Much like the Black and Orange Cabins and other motor courts of the era, a freestanding outhouse served all cabins.[108] Unlike frame motor courts, which often carry no overt national style, Camp O' the Pines and other log motor courts displayed elements of the Rustic Revival style. The Rustic Revival emerged in the early twentieth century and was greatly influenced by the architecture of federal land management agencies that were creating buildings intended to harmonize with the natural world. Among the hallmarks of Rustic Revival style are rejection of the regularity and symmetry of the industrial world and reliance on native wood and stone materials.

A small number of motor courts in Wyoming used elements of picturesque or romantic styles such as the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The Indian Village Motor Lodge of Cheyenne meshed several popular images of the West into a single lodging property. A concrete teepee resembling the traditional housing of Northern Plains tribes housed the motor court's office, while the lodging units reflected the Mission Revival style through the use of concrete or stucco construction, non-structural vigas, and a stepped parapet. Covered parking was integrated into the flat roof and separated individual lodging units from one another.[109]

In the 1930s the lodging industry began to embrace a national shift away from romantic visual metaphors embodied in the picturesque architectural styles toward modern, clean design. Commenting on this new aesthetic, E. H. Lightfoot, consulting architect with *Tourist Court Journal*, wrote, "Regardless of where a court is erected it should be built of stucco with a sand finish, using modern architecture with its attractive simplicity and simple lines, and be painted pure white." Widely known as the Streamline Moderne, the style was applied often enough to lodging properties that it was sometimes called "Motor Court Moderne." The Branding Iron Auto Lodge in Laramie referenced the Streamline Moderne style through its curving form, stucco exterior, and continuous bands of horizontal lines that followed the perimeter of its flat roof.[110]

The Great Depression affected all aspects of the American economy, yet the rise of tourism during the Depression and the continued sale of automobiles and dependent products such as gasoline ensured that middle-class vacationing Americans still needed overnight lodging. Few motor courts in Wyoming appear to have failed as a result of the Depression, and, as mentioned above, many improvements were made to lodging properties during this time. Nationally, the Federal Housing Administration's decision to permit financing of cottages under two thousand dollars without a down payment allowed more lodging businesses to open. In 1933 the American Automobile Association (AAA) estimated that thirty thousand "tourist

[108] Ibid.
[109] Postcard, "Indian Village Motor Lodge," Postcards-Motels-Wyoming, P98-19/1, Wyoming State Archives.
[110] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-179. Photograph of Branding Iron, 178. Lightfoot quoted, 179.

cottage and camp establishments" lined American highways. Many of these lodging properties were constructed and assembled by the business owner or local craftsmen. Kits of prefabricated lumber could be purchased from local lumberyards or traveling salesmen. Many other outfits were likely based on plans available in popular magazines, or were constructed based on what a business owner had observed at another site. Still other buildings were adaptively reused and retrofitted to meet tourists' needs.

As the Great Depression worsened, out-of-work architects began to look to the still-growing lodging industry for new commissions. Similarly, manufacturers of domestic wares discovered the motor court's potential as a showroom for stylish new products in a sluggish economy. As a result, lodging properties and their interiors underwent a period of greater standardization as architects and designers realized that growth in this market remained steady despite the state of the national economy. In addition, lodging properties became disseminators of modernism to average Americans spending the night in these "tiny, roadside exhibition centers." The motor court had transformed from a "home away from home" to an aspirational space more modern and luxurious than many homes.[111]

Historic Significance in Wyoming, Criterion A
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Commerce and Community Planning and Development
Period of Significance: Based on the period it operated in its current configuration during the broader period of significance

Motor courts may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for their association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad historical patterns. These properties should demonstrate an important role in the areas of commerce and/or community planning and development. Motor courts were operated as businesses that provided an essential service to customers in need of overnight lodging. The emergence of motor courts as the dominant method of lodging automobile tourists during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s demonstrates the way in which many Wyoming communities developed beyond the historic commercial centers that had been planned and constructed before the invention of automobiles. The development of "commercial strips" at some distance from the older commercial district, or "downtown," demonstrates the way community development responded to the invention and increasing popularity of new transportation technology.

A motor court removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it can be demonstrated that it is the surviving structure most importantly associated with an event (Criteria Consideration B), or if it has achieved significance in its new location under Criterion A. Properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years may be considered eligible if they are determined to be of exceptional importance (Criteria Consideration G).

[111] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 178-180; Jakle, Sculle, and Rogers, *The Motel in America*, 38-39.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Wyoming
County and State Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number F Page 46

Motor Court Architecture in Wyoming, Criterion C
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Architecture
Period of Significance: Based on the period of design and construction

Motor courts may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. These properties should demonstrate their significance in the area of architecture. Motor courts having individual units constructed of log will most likely display elements of the Rustic Revival style. Other motor courts might reflect the Spanish Colonial Revival styles or the Streamline Moderne. Properties consisting of simple frame cabins or cottages should not be dismissed based on the absence of an overt national style. This type of motor court was likely one of the most numerically popular during the period of significance and thus may be able to demonstrate the architecture motorists commonly encountered in Wyoming during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. In all cases, motor court properties should be complete; that is, enough of the original buildings and structures should be extant that the overall configuration of the property within the period of significance remains evident. In general, one or several remaining buildings will not be considered eligible if the majority of the property is no longer extant.

A motor court removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it is significant primarily for its architectural value (Criteria Consideration B) or if it has achieved significance in its new location under Criterion C. Properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years may be considered eligible if they are determined to be of exceptional importance (Criteria Consideration G).

MOTELS

Motels are defined as those lodging properties composed of lodging units arranged in a continuous line or lines, sharing partition walls, and presenting a one-dimensional primary façade. Construction of this property type quickly outpaced the construction of motor courts following World War II; however, motels were constructed prior to the war, and new motor courts were constructed in small numbers at least into the 1950s. In contrast to the romantic or picturesque architectural styles sometimes used in the construction of motor courts, many motels display the contours of the Modern style with an emphasis on horizontality. In general, motel buildings tend to express their commercial function first, and a subdued modernism secondarily. Perhaps because the majority of motel buildings lack distinction from one another, many motel properties include a large, whimsical neon sign sited for maximum visibility from the nearby highway. Most motels have an office, also sited near the highway, that is at once integrated with, yet visually distinct from, the lodging units. Motel properties are more likely than motor courts to include “luxury” amenities, the most common of which is the swimming pool.

The post-World War II construction boom in roadside lodging properties loosely marks the temporal transition from motor courts to motels. After the war motor hotels, or "motels," emerged in a consistent form. Instead of individual cabins, a string of private rooms, each sharing a partition wall or walls with the next, were integrated into a single building under a shared roof. Whereas hotels typically contained interior corridors from which access to individual rooms was gained, motel rooms opened directly from parking lots found in the center of the complex or, less commonly, to the rear of the building. Initially, motels were single-story buildings. Toward the end of the period covered by this context, some two-story units were constructed. Similar to the motor courts, newly constructed motels often had a U- or L-shaped footprint, or consisted of two freestanding parallel buildings.[112] In all cases, individual units opened to the center of the property, which most often contained parking and sometimes also a shared green space. Later, some motels chose to site parking behind the individual units. In these cases, a rear door within the motel room gave access to assigned parking.

Many motels of the 1950s and 1960s were not overtly stylish and were recognizable chiefly according to their function as modern lodging properties. Whereas many motor court units had been constructed of log or frame, most motels used one or a combination of the following materials: brick, concrete block, stone, and stucco. A smaller number were constructed of frame. Roofs were typically flat or gabled, often with a wide overhang that sheltered the entrance to a motel room and the open trunk of a car in the event of inclement weather. In these ways, many motels reflected the design of nationally popular American ranch houses, the dominant domestic form of the mid-twentieth century. Unlike most ranch houses, motels typically contained steel casement windows, fixed multi-pane windows, or glass blocks. Toward the end of period covered by this context, large single-pane fixed windows came to dominate new construction. Lodging units were typically articulated with details emphasizing that many travelers were on holiday. For example, cheery color was often applied to doors, to panels beneath windows, or to the balcony of two-story buildings. Windows might also be enlivened with awnings, valences, or other special treatments to the surrounds. Sometimes decorative concrete curtain walls drew attention to a particular aspect of the property.

Perhaps because of the uniformity of many motel buildings, and because of the need to attract motorists in moving vehicles, most lodging properties distinguished themselves from other businesses through large, often freestanding neon signs. These signs existed in a great variety of forms, sizes, and shapes, but many were designed with a great deal of whimsicality and imagination. Names of motels were also important ways to appeal to travelers specifically in search of the West they had seen in popular television shows and movies. Although some lodging properties were named pragmatically – for example, Bower Court operated by Lawrence and Esther Bower in Lander and the Rawlins Motel in Rawlins – many other motels evoked romantic ideas. The Covered Wagon Motel in Lusk, the Firebird Motor Hotel in Cheyenne, the Sage and Sand Motel in Saratoga, and the Ranger Motel in Laramie are only a

[112] Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 182-183.

few of the many motels in Wyoming in which a name and perhaps some aspects of a neon sign suggested an exotic destination, while the motel buildings were interchangeable with those found all across America.

Those Wyoming motels that distinguished themselves through overt references to nationally-popular styles seem to have done so in a limited number of ways. First, like the motor courts, there were a small number of motels that used elements of Spanish Colonial Revival styles. The Wyoming Motel in Cheyenne is one of these, chiefly because of its tiled roofs and stucco exterior. Second, another small group of motels exhibited a late use of Streamline Moderne, such as the El Rancho Motel (now the Federal Inn) in Riverton. The most common nod to popular national styles, however, came in the form of exaggerated modern rooflines, including hyperbolic canopies and barrel-vaulted walkways. The Ideal Motel in Rawlins was updated sometime in the mid- to late 1950s to include an on-site Standard Oil station under an exaggerated shed roof. The Bel Air Inn, also of Rawlins, used barrel-vaulted roofs to emphasize its restaurant, bar, and covered walkways between buildings.[113] Often the component of the motel property with the most overt nod to the Exaggerated Modern style was the motel office, as at the Sands Motel in Cheyenne. While the U-shaped motel does little to distinguish individual rooms, the office is sheltered by a multi-pitched canopy that dominates the principal facade.

In contrast to low-budget exteriors, many motel owners emphasized comfortable interiors and expended funds to furnish them. Amenities included air conditioning, telephones, and radios, some of which were advertised prominently on neon signs. Brand name mattresses were frequently listed in the description on the back of complimentary motel postcards. In 1949 *Hotel Management* (which also published on the motel trade) offered the following list of items that should be included in a typical motel guest room:

> Innerspring mattresses and box springs, – woolen blankets; Heavy Chenille bed spreads; Percale sheets. – Dresser with large mirror; Writing desk (all furniture is of oak). – Two large easy chairs; One or two straight back chairs. – Luggage rack. – One or more smoking stands and at least three ash trays. – Large floor lamp, bed lamp, desk lamp and ceiling light (all with 100-watt bulbs, including bath). – Wall to wall carpeting. – Rubber mat outside door. – 12 by 16-inch original water color picture; Several prints – some in groups – giving the room a homey lived-in look. – Cross ventilation – two large windows. – Venetian blinds and either sheer curtains or colorful draperies. – Window air conditioners; Ceiling fans; gas heaters. – Coin-operated radio on night stand. – Closets

[113] Postcard, Ideal Motel, 1964, box 720; Postcard, Bel Air Inn, 1970, box 720. Both in Coll. 10674, James L. Ehernberger Western Railroad Collection, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming.

> and drawers lined with quilted satin paper. – Closets have many coat hangers and a laundry bag.
>
> Writing desk contains 10 sheets of writing paper; 7 envelopes; scratch pad; several post cards; blotter; business cards; sewing kit with buttons, thread and needle, pins, rubber bands, paper clips. – Telegram blanks; laundry and dry cleaning list; sample coffee shop menu; calendar and house directory. Bathrooms have: Tile shower; Plastic shower curtain; Bath mat; Facial tissue in chrome container; Two 12-oz. drinking glasses; Three bars of soap; Four face towels, four bath towels, two wash cloths.[114]

Nationally, the swimming pool became an important amenity at many lodging properties during the 1950s; however, motels in Wyoming responded in a limited way to this trend. Very few locally-owned "mom-and-pop" motels appear to have added swimming pools. The Frontier Motel of Cheyenne is one exception. Owners claimed to have "Wyoming's Largest and most Luxurious" pool, which was heated and filtered and measured fifty by one hundred feet.[115] The relative unpopularity of swimming pools in Wyoming likely relates to the short summer season. Many years an outdoor pool would not be attractive until mid-June and might close again as early as mid-September, rendering it unusable for as much as three-quarters of the year. Motel owners noted that swimming pools were expensive and time-consuming to maintain, and a relatively small number of guests used them.[116] Lodging properties such as the Mansion House Motel and Mountain View Motel, both in Buffalo, pointed travelers to the municipal pool in the absence of having one on site.[117] Other ancillary buildings and structures found at motels in Wyoming might include laundry facilities and eateries like dining rooms, lounges, and/or coffee shops. Landscape features included shared green spaces in the form of picnic areas or playgrounds. Shade, if it was available, was often explicitly advertised as an amenity.

Toward the end of the period of significance, the first national chain motels began to appear in Wyoming. Many of the original chain properties in the state are no longer extant, or have been altered to the extent that they no longer possess integrity to the period of significance. At least three chain motels remain in a recognizable state: the Imperial 400 Motel of Casper (now the Royal Inn) and two Travelodges, now the Travel Inn of Laramie and the Budget Inn of Rawlins, respectively. These chain motel properties have many of the characteristics associated with locally-owned motels of the same time period. The most notable difference is the corporate preference for two-story lodging units, whereas most mom-and-pop motels in Wyoming were only a single-story in height.

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[114] Quoted in Liebs, *Main Street to Miracle Mile*, 183.
[115] Postcard in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.
[116] *Wyoming Motel News* 5 (September 1965): 6.
[117] Postcards in the private collection of Heyward Schrock. Shared with WY SHPO.

A true anomaly among the motels considered in this document is the Downtowner Motor Inn in Cheyenne (now the Central Plaza Hotel). Unlike most automobile-oriented lodging in Wyoming, the Downtowner Motor Inn was constructed in the heart of the historic commercial district rather than at the periphery. The motel included four floors of rooms (eighty-eight rooms in total) atop a substantial ground floor level that housed a coffee shop, dining room, cocktail lounge, and meeting rooms. A Village Inn Pancake House and enclosed swimming pool were part of the site. Because of its location downtown, the motel relied on a basement garage. In many ways, this motel has more in common with the center-core and high-rise constructed motels clustered at new interstate highway interchanges than the sprawling motel properties found along the U.S. Routes that crossed Wyoming.

Far more prevalent in Wyoming than franchised chain motels were referral chain properties, particularly those affiliated with Best Western. The referral chain phenomenon has been discussed elsewhere in this document. Notably, Best Western-affiliated properties were locally-owned motels designed and constructed prior to becoming associated with the referral chain. As such, these motels do not share physical characteristics that branded them as Best Western properties; instead, the Best Western logo was an addition to existing motel signage. It was far more common, however, for a Best Western affiliate property to include a swimming pool, as compared to those motels that remained wholly independent.

Historic Significance in Wyoming, Criterion A
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Commerce and Community Planning and Development
Period of Significance: Based on the period it operated in its current configuration during the broader period of significance

Motels may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for their association with events that have made a significant contribution to broad historical patterns. These properties should demonstrate an important role in the areas of commerce and/or community planning and development. Motels were operated as businesses that provided an essential service to customers in need of overnight lodging. The emergence of motels as the dominant method of lodging motorists following World War II demonstrates the way in which many Wyoming communities responded to a continued preference for obtaining goods and services in “commercial strips” at some distance from the older commercial district, or “downtown.”

A motel removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it can be demonstrated that it is the surviving structure most importantly associated with an event (Criteria Consideration B), or if it has achieved significance in its new location under Criterion A. Properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years may be considered eligible if they are determined to be of exceptional importance (Criteria Consideration G).

Motel Architecture in Wyoming, Criterion C
Level of Significance: Local
Areas of Significance: Architecture
Period of Significance: Based on the period of design and construction and/or when it operated in its current form during the broader period of significance
Motels may be eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion C as properties that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction. These properties should demonstrate their significance in the area of architecture. Motel buildings will typically be stylistically restrained and will primarily express their commercial function. Some will embody elements of the Spanish Colonial Revival styles, or late expressions of the Streamline Moderne. Many more will recall the architecture of nationally-popular ranch houses.

In all cases, motel properties should be complete; that is, enough of the original buildings and structures should be extant that the general configuration of the property within the period of significance remains evident. In general, one of several remaining buildings will not be considered eligible if the majority of the property is no longer extant.

A motel removed from its original location may be considered eligible if it is significant primarily for its architectural value (Criteria Consideration B), or if it has achieved significance in its new location under Criterion C. Properties that have achieved significance within the past fifty years may be considered eligible if they are determined to be of exceptional importance (Criteria Consideration G).

MOTOR COURTS AND MOTELS: HISTORIC INTEGRITY

To be considered eligible for listing in the National Register, a motor court or motel must be able to convey all or most of the seven aspects of integrity to its period of significance. Historic integrity is evaluated in the following ways.

Location: Location is the place where a historic lodging property was built and occupied during its period of significance. In general, motor courts, particularly those consisting of freestanding cabins, are the most likely property type to have been moved from their original location, or rearranged on the same site. Movement of a lodging property or an element thereof prior to or during the period of significance does not diminish integrity of location. It is possible that movement might play a significant role in the property's continued use, especially if an associated road or highway was being realigned and the property followed. If the removal of a lodging property took place after its period of significance, the property cannot be said to retain integrity of location.

Design: Design is the combination of elements that create the form, plan, space, structure, and style of a lodging property. It is not necessarily important that a lodging property express a nationally-popular style; instead, lodging properties should be assessed as to their authenticity relative to their historic appearance. Many lodging properties in Wyoming may be judged "plain" from a purely aesthetic perspective but still retain integrity of design. Alterations made within the period of significance are acceptable as long as they are in keeping with the building or site's original design. Alterations to the lodging property after its period of significance generally detract from integrity of design.
It is important that motor courts and motels should be complete; that is, enough of the original buildings and structures should be extant that the overall configuration of the property within the period of significance remains evident. In general, one or several remaining buildings will not be considered adequate to retain integrity of design if the majority of the property is no longer extant.

Setting: The setting is the area or environment in which a historic lodging property is or was found. To retain integrity of setting, a lodging property must be found in the same or very similar physical environment as during its period of significance. Many historic lodging properties were found alongside other commercial buildings, often within commercial strips at some distance from Wyoming's historic downtowns. A smaller number of lodging properties were found in rural locales. In all cases the landscape during the period of significance must be compared to modern conditions. The less contrast between the historic and modern landscape, the greater the integrity of setting. Lodging properties that remain part of an identifiable commercial strip have a high chance of retaining integrity of setting.

Materials: Materials refer to the component parts of a motor court or motel. Like most commercial buildings, successful lodging businesses underwent frequent maintenance and modernization cycles. If a lodging property fell into disrepair or became outmoded, it would likely have ceased to operate in its historic capacity. In general, materials replaced during the period of significance reflect the evolution of a commercial property over time based on consumer expectations. Materials replaced following the period of significance typically detract from integrity of materials, except in cases of restoration and in-kind replacement. Replacement with non-historic materials, such as modern windows, constitutes a loss of integrity. The degree of this loss depends on the overall impact to the building and the importance of the replaced elements to the building's significance.

The interiors of most motor courts and motels contained few finishes (moldings, built-ins, etc.) so that units or rooms could be cheaply and quickly constructed, would be easy to clean quickly, and would not become outmoded. Furnishings were relied upon to carry popular aesthetics rather than architectural elements of the interior. As such, the interiors of many lodging properties are likely to retain integrity of materials. One interior space that will likely have experienced frequent changes, however, is the bathroom. This document recognizes that bathrooms within historic lodging properties must undergo frequent updates to meet

customer expectations, particularly in those lodging properties still functioning in their historic capacity.

Workmanship: Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history, including technology and aesthetic principles, and their local applications. Workmanship will be most evident in lodging properties that retain integrity of materials. Where historic material has been removed, integrity of workmanship will be diminished.

Feeling: Feeling pertains to the qualities that historic motor courts or motels have in evoking the aesthetic or historic sense of a past period of time. These qualities are intangible, yet depend on the significant physical characteristics of these lodging properties. Evidence of integrity of feeling might be found in the glow of a historic neon sign at twilight, the smell of chlorine from a motel pool, or the experience of checking in with the owners at the small motel office before parking a car directly in front of the room.

Association: Association is the direct link between a property and the event for which the property is significant. The other aspects of integrity often combine to convey integrity of association. With respect to lodging properties, the motor court or motel should retain proximity to the route that produced it (e.g., an iteration of the Lincoln Highway or U.S. Highway 30, depending on the property's period of significance).

When considering the physical integrity of a motor court or motel, care must be taken to differentiate between integrity and condition. The concept of integrity addresses the accumulation of man-made alterations and changes to a property that have happened over time. Condition, on the other hand, reflects changes to a property that may include natural causes, most commonly weathering. Damage to or loss of historic fabric due to weathering does not necessarily entail a loss of integrity, and those properties damaged by natural causes are generally considered to retain a higher degree of integrity than those where non-historic fabric replaces historic.

G. Geographical Information
This context covers motor courts and motels across the state of Wyoming.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Historic Context Development
Historic lodging properties in Wyoming were investigated through archival research and fieldwork. Historic postcards and photographs housed in the Wyoming State Archives and the American Heritage Center (AHC) at the University of Wyoming were major sources of information. The AHC's Barnes L. Ehernberger Collection contains a particularly extensive group of postcards from around the state. In addition, the private postcard collections of Russell Rein of Ypsilanti, Michigan, and Heyward D. Schrock of Cheyenne were consulted. The Wyoming State Library contains records for the forerunners of the Wyoming Office of Tourism – which has existed in several different incarnations over the years – including biennial reports and promotional brochures. The state library also houses the Wyoming State Highway Commission biennial reports and other transportation records.

Fieldwork consisted of a buildings and landscape survey conducted along the Interstate 80 corridor between July 2013 and October 2016. The purpose of this survey was to identify roadside resources associated with the Lincoln Highway, U.S. Highway 30, and the early years of Interstate 80. The survey was conducted in-house by State Historic Preservation Office staff, notably Beth King and Richard Collier, with fieldwork assistance from intern Erin Dorbin. Beth King and Richard Collier have also completed a reconnaissance-level survey of roadside resources throughout Wyoming. This fieldwork was invaluable in understanding the development of tourist accommodations in Wyoming.

Property Type Development and Registration Requirements
State Historic Preservation Office staff Beth King and Brian Beadles developed the two property types based on an examination of national-level publications by leading authors, notably Chester Liebs (*Main Street to Miracle Mile*) and John A. Jakle, Keith A. Sculle, and Jefferson S. Rogers (*The Motel in America*), as well as archival research and fieldwork conducted at the state level.

Period of Significance
The period of significance identified in this document is 1913 to 1975. The beginning date corresponds to the first highways in Wyoming: the Lincoln Highway and the Black and Yellow Trail opened in 1913, and the Yellowstone Highway in 1915. These highways unlocked the state to motorists, allowing them to access the natural wonders of northwest Wyoming, or to cross the state on the first transcontinental highway. Motorists were a new kind of consumer that required new kinds of services, such as overnight lodging convenient to automobile travel. The end of the period of significance reflects changes in the fabric of individual lodging properties in Wyoming, as well as in the overall landscape of services catering to travelers and

tourists. In 1956, the Federal Aid Highway Act ordered the construction of interstate highways that rendered many of the U.S. Routes obsolete for long-distance travel. By the mid-1970s, the changes wrought by the interstate highways had significantly altered the landscape of travel in Wyoming, and newly constructed lodging reflected these changes.

Historic Integrity
There are many motor courts and motels in Wyoming that were constructed during the period of significance. The historic integrity of these properties ranges from poor to excellent. The most common issues leading to loss of integrity include the loss of historic portions of the property and the addition of non-historic materials. A small number of the surveyed properties will retain sufficient integrity to be listed in the National Register in association with this MPDF.

Survey
The Lincoln Highway Buildings and Landscapes Survey and other reconnaissance-level survey of roadside resources was conducted by SHPO staff between 2013 and 2016. At the request of the Teton County Preservation Board (TCPB), historian Michael Cassity conducted a 2004-2005 survey of historic resources in Teton County that included some historic lodging properties. In 2013-2014 the TCPB hired Kaval Paschinsky to research and document historic motels in the county. This fieldwork resulted in the documentation of twenty historic lodging properties and informed the completion of the Historic Tourist Accommodations in Teton County, Wyoming, Multiple Property Documentation Form and the individual listing of the Alpenhof Lodge in the National Register.

In addition, the Camp O' the Pines in Pinedale, the Blue Gables Motel in Buffalo, and the Twin Pines Cabin Camp in Dubois, all log motor courts, have been previously listed in the National Register.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property Wyoming
County and State Historic Motor Courts and Motels in Wyoming, 1913-1975
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Motels and Motor Courts in Wyoming

1 message

Brian Beadles <brian.beadles@wyo.gov> Wed, Nov 15, 2017 at 4:59 PM
To: "Wyatt, Barbara" <barbara_wyatt@nps.gov>

It took me longer than I anticipated to finish this up. A few other projects distracted me away from looking at this. Attached is a revised version of the Motels and Motor Courts MPDF. I didn't make a whole lot of changes, but hopefully I addressed the comments. Let me know what you think.

On a different topic...A mistake in an old nomination was recently pointed out to me. The Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley Railroad Passenger Depot in Converse County, WY was listed in 1994. The address on the nomination form (100 Walnut Street) is incorrect. The correct address for the depot is 121 Brownfield Road. The map and boundary description are both correct, but the address is incorrect.

–
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Received resubmission - approved by B. Wyatt 12-7-17 emailed to Edson