

DUCHESNE COUNTY TREASURELAND!

DUCHESNE COUNTY & ROOSEVELT AREA

A county truly laden with treasure, not only the treasure of the "lost mines" so searched for here, but more apparent are the treasures that the earth and nature so abundantly provide treasures of beauty, recreation and peace.



This land is one of great diversity, from high mountain peaks to the basin floor; from pristine forests, lakes and streams, to desert landscapes with colorful and intriguing formations; from modern cities with complete facilities, to Utah's largest Wilderness area where you can lavish in serene solitude; from the fast paced present into the timeless past, well preserved by fossils, ancient ruins and petroglyphs.

Historically, the Uintah Basin and Duchesne County have long been home of the Native American Native Americans. There is evidence of inhabitants in the area predating written history. Impressive displays of petroglyphs and pictographs can be viewed throughout the area. Some places of particular interest are located in the Pleasant Valley area near Myton. Also, Native American ruins and writings can be seen in the Nine Mile Canyon area south of Myton. Nine Mile Canyon not only exhibits early Native American Culture but also early frontier settlements as well. This road was the major freight and stage line route from Price to Myton for many years, and many things of historic value are preserved there.

THE UTE NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE TODAY

Much of this land is on the Uintah and Ouray Native American Reservation. The Ute Native Americans live throughout the area with concentrated communities in Whiterocks, Fort Duchesne, and Bottle Hollow. They have a unique and proud heritage and culture that they enjoy sharing with visitors.

The Ute Native Americans have several exciting and colorful celebrations throughout the area to which visitors are welcomed and encouraged to attend, but the utmost respect and courtesy towards the Native American culture should be observed. No pictures or recordings should be made without first asking permission. Some ceremonies are very sacred and no recordings of any kind are allowed. This is particularly true of the *Sun Dance* ceremony which is a religious observance. *The Bear Dance*, which commemorates the advent of Spring, and the *Pow-Wow* are more social events and rules are not as strict. For more information regarding dates and places for these events contact the Ute Native American Tribe at 435-722-5141.



INDIAN SETTLEMENTS AND COMMUNITIES

WHITEROCKS

The present day community is a quiet residential area. Historically this was the first trading post in Utah, originally called the Reed Trading Post, ownership was transferred to Antoine Robidoux in the 1830's. Fort Robidoux or Fort Winty, as it was sometimes called, served as an unsavory rendezvous,

trading post, fort, and traveler's stop until 1844 when the post was burned to the ground and white males killed by the enraged Utes. Robidoux's absence saved him from the same fate. A Native American agency was established near there from 1869-1912 when offices were moved to Fort Duchesne. Whiterocks Village, a prehistoric settlement was excavated by the University of Utah in 1966. A number of structures were unearthed as well as large quantities of cultural debris. Evidence indicated occupation by Fremont Culture about 850 A.D. It is listed as a historic site. It is not open to the public and little remains there. Permission to go onto this land must be granted by the Ute Tribe 722-5141.

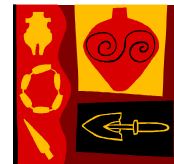
FORT DUCHESNE



Touring of Fort Duchesne area is permitted. Historic Fort Duchesne provides another glimpse into the past, recalling the establishment of a Calvary regiment near the confluence of the Uintah and Whiterocks Rivers. Buildings built in early 1800's are still standing and in use today.

UTAH STATE ANTIQUITY LAWS

These laws protect all Native American artifacts. Finds are to be left as they are. The State Historical Society should be notified in the case of large finds. The removal of invertebrate fossils for private collecting is often allowed on lands outside of State and National Parks. Fossil remains are abundant in the Uintah Basin. Fossilized vertebrates of any kind (dinosaur or mammal) are protected and cannot be removed. Notify the State History Museum in Vernal 435-789-3799.



HUNTING AND FISHING TRIBAL LANDS



Excellent hunting and fishing opportunities exist on Native American Land. Permits are required in addition to State licenses. These are easily obtained in most sporting goods stores in the area or from the Tribal Fish and Game department (722-5511). Camping permits are also required on Tribal land.

TRIBAL WATERS

Most seasons run from mid-April through September, some year round.

BIG SPRINGS, PONDS AND CAMP AREA

Located in Uinta Canyon, Big Springs is a delightful camp area with good fishing. It is a favorite spot for family outings.

CEDARVIEW RESERVOIR

Cedarview Reservoir is located seven miles northwest of the Uinta Canyon road on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation. Boats with or without motors are permitted.

Also known as Lake Borham, it is located approximately nine miles southwest of Roosevelt. Boating, camping, and fishing with permits. Other tribal waters and land in the area are marked and require permits.

THE ADVENT OF WHITE MEN INTO THE AREA

This truly was the last Frontier as far as White settlement in Utah was concerned. First, Father Escalante came in 1776 looking for another route westward, then Domingues and other Spaniards looking for gold. Trappers and traders made their way into the Basin in the years that followed.

Brigham Young, the famous Mormon leader and colonizer, sent survey crews into the area in 1860 to ascertain its potential for development. They concluded that it was “entirely unsuitable for farming purposes, a waste except for nomadic purposes, and a hunting ground for the Native Americans, and to hold the rest of the world together.” Consequently, due to such reports, the climatic, physical barriers, lack of transportation capabilities, etc. this area was overlooked during the early settlement of the state.

In the fall of 1861, President Lincoln proclaimed the major portion of western Uintah Basin as a Native American Reservation. Only a handful of settlers resided there at the time. It remained in that state until 1902 when Theodore Roosevelt issued a counter-proclamation providing for the “opening” of certain reservation lands to homesteaders, and setting forth the procedure by which this land would be allotted. The actual opening of the reservation land occurred in August, 1905. One of the few white settlers here at that time, a young daughter of R.L. Marimon, the licensed U.S. trader at Whiterocks, remembers that she and her younger sister waited at the window all day to see this great “opening” that she had heard so much rumor about. With disappointment, she recounted her feelings when that night her father tried to explain to her that it was not like a present being “opened up.”



In another history written by George E. Stewart, the Basin land rush days were described. “It was not like the land race along Cimarron in Oklahoma, the government had learned its lesson there, so in the Big “U” Country the red tape made the rush much more orderly, but the homesteaders came by the hundreds.” An old Ute said, “When the Americans came, they came by the many, manys, and they came nose to tail like a string of black ants crossing the sand.” Some came from Colorado through Vernal, some through Strawberry Valley, but the most came along the stage road from Price through Nine Mile Canyon. An old-timer who lived at the Strip before and during “the opening”



said, “It was like the touch of a fairy's wand, yesterday there was nothing but wilderness and desert, today there are fences, ditches, plowing, planting, houses and towns: settlers were everywhere... it was almost magical.”

Under the law, homesteaders picked their land, paid \$2.25 an acre for one hundred and sixty acres. They must move on the land, build an adobe, improve it and live there for five years. After you “proved up” you received title by way of patent from the U.S. Government.

GHOSTS, GUNMEN, AND GOLDMINES

So unique in its settlement, this new frontier had some interesting and distinct history. You will not find brick pioneer mansions, or quaint gingerbread homes, nor towns settled in a mapped out orderly fashion, rather homesteads sprang up haphazardly throughout all of the old Native American land, with each little band of homesteaders establishing their own school, church buildings and so forth. Many of these are now completely abandoned, leaving only “ghosts” and stories behind. Consult your library for one of the many books available, such as *The Historical Guide to Utah's Ghost Towns* by Steven L Carr.



One very famous Ghost Town was known as “The Strip”. This was a triangular shaped piece of land, just east of Fort Duchesne, was purchased from the Native Americans by a mining company. There was no law or authority on this piece of ground. Federal marshals could only enforce federal law, which mainly dealt with military or Native American trouble. The Native American Agent at Whiterocks was not responsible, as this was no longer Native American land. The Utah territory officers also had no jurisdiction here. A miserable little town quickly developed with every vice imaginable open for all. Many murders took place there. Boothill was located on the red bluff about 1 ½ miles away. The story goes that Butch Cassidy, who frequented this area, was seen there after he was supposedly killed in South America... who knows? The Outlaw Trail Festival is celebrated each July in Vernal, complete with stories, plays, and activities depicting this era.

LOST GOLD MINES

Off in another direction—but who knows where, these are *lost* mines remember! Throughout the area is evidence of early Spanish exploration and mining. Within recent years, a number of ancient precious metal mines have been located and uncovered, having likely been developed originally by Spanish interest. Gold, silver, and other precious metals have been mined on a limited basis throughout the region, while dreams persist of a “lost gold mine”, harboring a reported Mother Lode of gold, lost, and just waiting to be rediscovered in one of the mountain canyons. The mine originated with Caleb Rhoades in the 1800’s and produced millions of dollars in gold. The secret of its location died with Mr. Rhoades. Before his death, Caleb Rhoades sent his brother to obtain additional gold from the mine, but the brother did not return, presumably killed by Natives in the valley. There are many books and maps published on the subject. Also, many “experts” residing in the area can show you some of the Spanish markings and actual mines. This is a fun way to spend a few days, and who knows, you just might get lucky.



THE UINTA MOUNTAINS

Perhaps the greatest single attraction accessible from the Basin, these towering mountains offer a vast expanse of wilderness area. The Basin is molded on the north by the only major mountain range traversing east and west. Utah's highest peak, Kings Peak, is located here at an elevation of 13,528 feet. There are three National Forests in this mountain region, The Ashley, Wasatch, and

Uintah. Utah's largest designated Wilderness was established here in 1984. Throughout the high



Uintah's are thousands of fresh water lakes fed by melting snow and abounding with trout. Several streams have their beginnings in the Mountain Range. Red Creek, Duchesne River, Rock Creek, Lake Fork, Yellowstone, Uintah River, and Whiterocks River are in this area.

Current Creek and Strawberry River, which have headwaters in Wasatch County, flow eastward and join the Duchesne River. This is some of the best fishing in the world.

Outside of the wilderness, nearly every canyon opens to recreational potential. Lakes and streams, and a paradise of hunting and fishing terrain, with camping, dude ranches and backpacking facilities avail themselves to visitors who want to enjoy the solitude of the mountains. Animal life here is indeed varied. From the tiny pica that lives in the higher altitudes, to marmots, ermine, chipmunks, squirrels, porcupines, lynx, ring-tailed cats, mountain lions, badgers, black bear, moose, deer, and even mountain sheep. There are beautiful scenic mountain back roads that can take you virtually from the Kamas or Wasatch area, across high mountains and into the Vernal area. These roads are mostly graded or dirt and may not be suitable for passenger cars, but for those who are up to this type of travel, they offer a beautiful vista full of wild flowers, animals, and geological points of interest. Some of the roads are: Wolf Creek Pass, Blind Creek, and Elkhorn Loop. The wilderness does have a party restriction so contact the forest service for information (435) 722-5018.

WHITEROCKS CANYON AND CAVE

This picturesque canyon is located some 25 miles northeast of Roosevelt. The Whiterocks River runs through this canyon providing excellent fishing. Camping and hunting are also popular there. The cave, which has been compared to Timpanogas Cave in size and beauty, is located in Whiterocks Canyon on a steep side slope, and is somewhat difficult to climb, so come prepared. Normally, one half day should be allowed for the climb and tour. Reservations for tours must be made through the Forest Service in Vernal at (435) 789-1181. There are 21 camp sites located in the canyon.



WHITEROCKS FISH HATCHERY

This hatchery raises 1,600,000 fish per year from eggs, of which 117,000 are planted when they are the size of 10-12 inches to grow under natural conditions. For more information call (435) 353-4855.

MOON LAKE

Approximately 30 miles north of Duchesne, past the town of Mountain Home, lies beautiful Moon Lake. Moon Lake has a 55-unit campground, two group use areas that can be reserved, and a resort run by a private concessionaire. Moon Lake is the trailhead access to the Brown Duck and Upper Lake Fork areas. Moon Lake's blue water and sandy beach lie in a most scenic area. Boating, fishing and hunting (in season) are allowed at Moon Lake.

UINTA CANYON

Uinta Canyon is some 23 miles from Roosevelt at the foot of the High Uinta Mountains. It is a beautiful canyon year round and provides excellent picnic, camping, backpacking, and horse riding opportunities. Uinta Canyon is accessible by auto after the snow melts and the weather dries out (mid-May through late fall).

CHEPETA LAKE



Named for a beloved Native American Princess, this lake is accessible through Whiterocks and Farmcreek on the Polecreek Road. It is open from about mid-June to snowfall.

Beautiful high alpine scenery surrounds the lake and is a jumping off place for several high country lakes within walking distance. The nights are cool. Fishing, camping, and hunting are available.

POLECREEK LAKE AND CAMPGROUND

Located at approximately 10,200 feet, Polecreek Lake is open from June until snowfall. It is 35 miles from Roosevelt to the north via Whiterocks through Farmcreek. The Farmcreek road provides the access point for snowmobiling in the winter and to the headwater of Whiterocks Canyon.

PARADISE RESERVOIR

This high mountain reservoir is located 35 miles northeast of Roosevelt in the Ashley National Forest at an elevation of 10,200 feet. Fishing and camping are allowed and small boats without motors can be taken on the lake. The water is very cold and the nights equally cool.

HIKING TRAILS, MOUNTAIN BIKING AND SNOWMOBILING

Contact the Forest Service for specific trail information (435) 722-5018 or (435) 738-2482.

STARVATION RESERVOIR STATE PARK

Don't let the name fool you. This magnificent lake lies just west of Duchesne. It offers many possibilities for boating, fishing, water skiing and camping.

SANDWASH RESERVOIR

Sandwash is located in Upalco, about 12 miles west of Roosevelt. One can camp, fish and play on the sandy beach, or use the boat launching facilities.



SANDWASH BOAT RAMP

Not to be confused with Sandwash Reservoir, this is the access point for boat trips through Desolation Canyon. The boat ramp is located approximately 40 miles south of Roosevelt on the

Green River. River permits must be obtained early in the season to use this river access. Open applications are taken during January and February. A drawing is then held in March. This is handled through the BLM in Moab. Group size is restricted to 25 persons.

WILDERNESS RIVER TRIPS

If you're looking for excitement of rising rapids and are attracted to primitive, wild and deep canyons, if you're seeking more than just an ordinary vacation, then river running may be just the thing you're looking for. There are many river guides in the area. The mixture of exciting rapids and serene landscapes make a wilderness trip an unforgettable experience.

PELICAN LAKE



This lake is located near Ouray in a flat valley bottom. It offers some of the finest bass and bluegill fishing in Utah. Not only does the lake provide excellent warm water fishing, but it is also becoming more popular with bird watchers as the area attracts many diverse species of birds especially in the Spring.

THE BOOKCLIFFS

A most rugged, remote region of the State, the Bookcliffs offer beautiful vistas, trophy hunting and fishing, biking, and back country yet to be discovered. Several guides are available to help you discover this region.

OURAY BIRD AND WILDLIFE REFUGE

While you are out in this area you may wish to visit other points of interest, and the Ouray Bird and Wildlife Refuge is a bird watchers paradise. This refuge lies along the banks of the Green River. Visitors are welcome to enjoy the wildlife and scenic beauty. Open to the public except on some limited closures during the hunting season. Contact the refuge manager for current regulations (435) 789-0351.

PARKS

Roosevelt

A regional complex, Constitution Park, has been developed in Roosevelt with ball diamonds unsurpassed in the State. Facilities for picnicking, celebrations, reunions and similar events, children's playground. There are also ball fields and a basketball court located at the old park site.



DUCHESNE

Duchesne has a large recreational park with ball fields and picnic facilities. The County Fair complex is also used for similar purposes.

SMALL TOWNS

Myton, Altamont, Tabiona, and Neola have ball fields and parks that are busy throughout the summer season.

OTHER

Churches - Most major religions are represented in the area.

Swimming - Community pools are available in Duchesne and Roosevelt.

Movie Theaters - Three indoor theaters and a summer drive-in are located in Roosevelt.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

Duchesne County Area Chamber of Commerce (435) 722-4598 or www.duchesne.net

Duchesne County Welcome Center (435) 738-2166

Dinosaurland Travel Board (435) 789-6932 or (800) 477-5558 or www.dinoland.com

District Bureau of Land Management (435) 781-4400

District Fish and Wildlife (435) 781-3101

Ute Tribe Fish and Wildlife (435) 722-5511

Forest Service Offices: Duchesne (435) 738-2482; Roosevelt (435) 722-5018; Vernal (435) 789-1181

Reservations for Utah State Parks (800) 280-2267, in Salt Lake (801) 322-3770

Northeaster Utah Visitor Center (435) 789-7894