



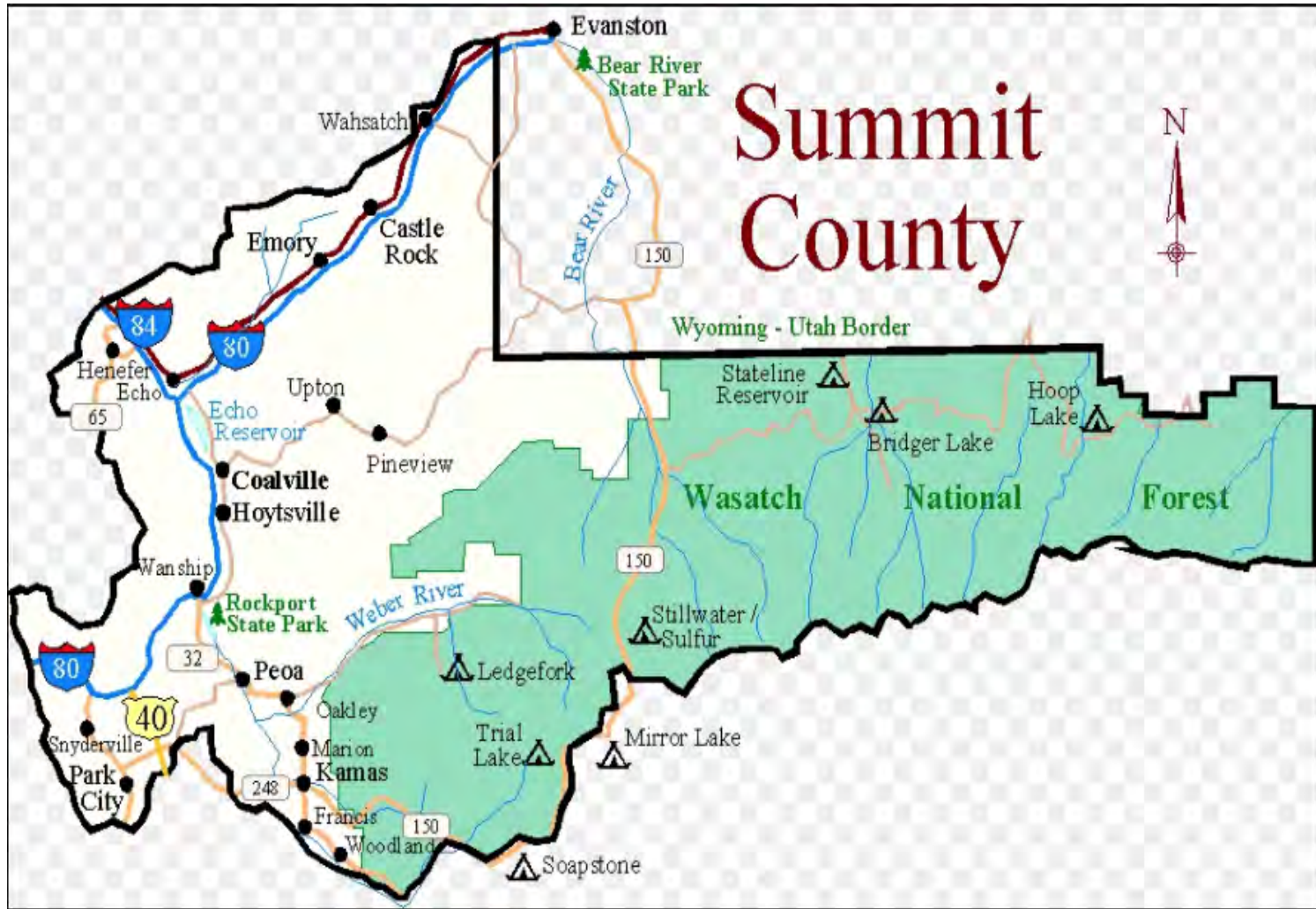
Economic Profile Park City & Summit County, Utah

ECONOMIC HISTORY

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Summit County - Economic Development History

Figure 1 Summit County - Current Municipalities, Roadways, Waterways and Land



Source:
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INTRODUCTION

Summit County's abundant natural resources and stunning alpine beauty, along with its location as gateway to Zion and points West, have attracted an enterprising population and made for a rich and unique history and a key role in the Utah's economic development. Park City's silver mining and Olympic narratives have often caught the national and international spotlight, contrasting with the quieter, agrarian communities to the east pioneered by the Mormons.

LAND AND LIVELIHOODS

Three major alpine valleys—Kamas (or Rhodes), Coalville/Wanship area, and Snyderville Basin-- are bordered by the Uinta and Wasatch Mountain Ranges. The Uinta range is the highest in Utah and the only major range in the contiguous United States that has an east/west orientation. Approximately 60% of Summit County is national forest. (Figure 1) Four major Utah rivers originate in the High Uintas—the Duchesne, Provo, Weber and Bear. Abundant water, along with other natural resources-- timber, game, coal, copper, silver, gold, oil, sandstone, gravel, clay, oil and natural gas—provided the raw materials for employment opportunities and business development within the industries of agriculture, mining and timber harvesting, and railroad and highway construction. The area's natural beauty has created increasing demand for recreational land usage and a growing tourism industry.

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EARLY PEOPLE / SETTLEMENTS

Archaeological evidence suggests human habitation as far back as 12,000 years ago. By around 700 to 800 years ago, semi-nomadic Ute and Shoshoni Indians enjoyed the bounty of bison, antelope, bighorn sheep, fish, camas roots and seeds of wild grasses for their sustenance. Spanish explorers looking for gold and fur were probably in the area as early as the 1500s. They were followed by other explorers, trappers, scouts and soldiers, who often traveled the natural corridor of Echo Canyon from Wyoming into Utah in search of opportunities for transportation routes and commerce. Sustained by natural resources and fertile lands, the mid-nineteenth century saw increasing numbers of wagon trains, gold prospectors, and miners and pioneers traveling the canyon as well. The town of Echo was settled in 1854 as station stop for the wagon trains. To the southwest, the Snyderville area had a private sawmilling operation. Brigham Young, who had settled his group of Mormon faithful in the Salt Lake Valley, now urged the creation of settlements throughout the Utah Territory. In the Summit County area, towns sprang up along the Weber River as well as the Provo. By 1860 the towns of Wanship, Peoa, Hoytsville, Coalville, Henefer, Kamas and Rockport had been settled, followed by Echo and Upton in 1861 and later Grass Creek, Oakley, Marion, Woodland and Francis. Competition for resources led to both collaboration and conflicts between the early pioneers and the Ute and Shoshoni tribes. With the creation of the Uintah Indian Reservation in the Uinta Basin and various treaties of the 1860s most natives moved to other areas.

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PARK CITY - SILVER TO SKIING

Silver put Park City on the map. Soldiers stationed in Salt Lake trekked over the mountains from Big Cottonwood Canyon to the Park City area in late 1868 and discovered an outcropping of silver, later to become the Flagstaff mine. This was followed by the discovery in 1872 of a major vein of silver that would become the Ontario mine. The Ontario, bought for around \$27,000 by George Hearst (father of William Randolph Hearst) and partners, would yield over \$50 million during its lifetime. Also in 1872, George and Rhoda Snyder arrived in the area and named it Parley's Park City, later shortened to Park City, for the beautiful wildflowers and scenery. More silver discoveries led to the establishment of other mines, including the Silver King mine, one of the area's largest producers. All in all, about \$400 million in silver ore would be mined, creating 23 millionaires. Park City grew quickly, with hopeful prospectors arriving from Ireland, England, Wales, Germany, Denmark, Finland and Canada, as well as the states. Chinese laborers, originally in Summit County to work on railroad construction, gravitated to Park City for jobs as servants and launderers. Businessmen and entrepreneurs of all types arrived to provide goods and services for the growing population. Boarding houses, mine buildings, mills, saloons, brothels, theaters, stores, homes, schools and churches spread throughout the area.

COAL MINING & OIL

The first mining in the area was for coal. Thomas Rhoades discovered coal near Chalk Creek (later renamed Coalville) around 1860 and further outcroppings were discovered soon after near Grass Creek. Ox teams and later railroad lines transported coal to the Salt Lake valley and to the mines of Park City. In the 1920s, oil companies began exploring the area between Coalville and the Wyoming border with little success. Major improvements in exploration and drilling technologies culminated in the 1979 discovery of the Anschutz Ranch East Field, one of the most significant onshore finds in the U.S.

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SKIING/RECREATION

In the 1920s and 30s skiing was largely a spectator sport with ski jumping as the focus. The first-rate jumping facility at Ecker Hill, located in what is now the Pinebrook area, brought world attention to the sport with Norwegian immigrant Alf Engen setting world records, reaching 285 feet in a practice run in 1941. Recreational skiing caught on and locals enjoyed the small resort of Snow Park (later to become Deer Valley Resort) started by Park City residents Bob Burns and Otto Carpenter. They introduced the first ski lift to the area in 1946. The opening of the Treasure Mountain ski area in 1963 brought large-scale skiing to Park City. The recent acquisition and joining of Canyons and Park City Mountain by Vail to form North America's largest resort and Deer Valley's acquisition by Alterra Mountain Company, along with the introduction of the Epic Pass and the IKON pass, are revolutionizing the ski industry. The summer recreation scene has been receiving increasing recognition for first-rate biking and hiking trails, along with golf, fishing and water sports

FUTURE

Summit County and Park City are poised for continuing growth and focused on issues of land use and development, transportation, affordable housing, labor, water supply and usage. Protecting Summit County's natural beauty, recreation, and agricultural heritage are vital concerns. As this is being written, city officials are meeting to discuss a possible bid for the 2030 Winter Olympic Games—stay tuned!

Reference source for Economic History:

Paraphrased from David Hampshire, Martha Sonntag Bradley, Allen Roberts, *A History of Summit County*, Utah State Historical Society Summit County Commission, 1998.

For more information, please visit the Park City Historical Society and Museum website at parkcityhistory.org and the Summit County Historical Society website at summitcounty.org/history.