

An Environmental and Cultural History of the Pilot Creek Watershed

[1994]

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[This paper was first published in 1994 as the cultural resources input section of the Six Rivers National Forest Pilot Creek Watershed Assessment; I have placed a copy on the web to make it more easily accessible to researchers and the general public.]

Authors Note:

I wrote this paper during the late winter and early spring of 1994 as a member of a Six Rivers National Forest interdisciplinary team (biologists, botanists, foresters, hydrologists, archaeologists) studying the ecosystem of the Pilot Creek watershed. Since then I have continued to research the environmental and cultural history of this area. I suggest those interested in further information on "Pilot Ridge Country" visit my web site:

www.solararch.org

I have tried to refrain from making changes to the original text except for minor editing. I have, however, in a few places included in text boxes or in brackets comments due subsequent research that in some way (for better or worse) has led me to change or modify my data or conclusions.

TK

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Introduction

The Pilot Creek Watershed has had a long history of human occupation. This paper presents a brief overview of the region since humans first entered the area during the prehistoric period. The land-use activities resulting from human occupation, during both historic and prehistoric periods have had a significant influence on the environment of the Pilot Creek Watershed. The prehistoric era dates from as early as about five thousand years ago until the beginning of the historic period when Euro-American explorers first the region in about 1850.

The Climate and Environment of the Pilot Creek Watershed During the Holocene

The climate of the interior portions of northwestern California (including the Pilot Creek Watershed) has not remained static during the period of human occupation. Evidence for climatic fluctuations during the Holocene in the North Coast Ranges, has been summarized by James West (1983). West (1993) has concluded that interior regions of the North Coast Ranges have experienced significant shifts in climate during the last 10,000 years. These shifts in yearly mean temperature, and quite likely, the amount of annual precipitation, have significantly affected the distribution of plant and animal species across the landscape.

The past climate of the interior North Coast Ranges may be divided into three broad periods (Simons 1986, West 1993).

Early Holocene (10,000 B.P. to 8,500 B.P.)

Research to date suggests that during this era, a cooler climate with the greater temperature extremes usually associated with continental conditions and a corresponding reduction in the coastal maritime influence. In the North Coast Ranges, coniferous forests dominated and the range and distribution of oak woodlands (and quite likely grassland savannas) was much less widespread than today. Evidence supporting this conclusion includes the documentation of glaciation during this period on North and South Yolla Bolly Mountain, Anthony Peak and other locations in the Coast Ranges (Simons 1983:3.3).

Mid-Holocene (8,500 B.P. to 2,300-3,800 B.P.)

During the mid-Holocene, the North Coast Ranges experienced a shift to a warmer and somewhat drier climate. This era is sometimes referred to as the Xerothermic Period. Temperatures averaged about 1.2 to 2.1 degrees centigrade warmer than today. It appears that the mean annual latitude of the jet stream was located further to north than today (carrying winter storms on a track further to the north and also somewhat extending in length the dry season). In response to this change in climate, vegetation distributions shifted with respect to elevation, latitude, and longitude. For example, it is likely that the oaks and pines expanded their range during this period while for the most part, the distribution of coniferous forest was limited to higher elevations and other more mesic localities (Simons 1986:36). It is also likely the more xeric species such as white oaks (*Quercus garryana*) and black oaks (*Q. Kelloggii*) migrated upslope as much as 300 meters in elevation.

In addition, several Great Basin plant species (Taylor 1976:307) including western juniper (*Juniper occidentalis*), fox-tail pine (*Pinus balfouriana*), and aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) extended their range into the mountains of northwest California at this time. Today, disjunct stands of these trees species are found in the Yolla Bolly Mountains (Keter n.d.: 64). Also, at the extreme southern end of the Mad River basin on the divide with the Middle Fork of the Eel River a very small distribution of western juniper has been identified (personal observation). At this time, it is the only occurrence of western juniper known to occur within the Mad River basin.

Additional evidence for the Xerothermic Period exists today in the presence of several species of plants in the North Coast Ranges that are isolated from

their current range of distribution. For example, isolated stands of gray pine (*Pinus sabiniana*) are found north of Weaverville and in Hoopa Valley. Gray Pine are also found in the southern portion of the Mad River basin where they are somewhat isolated from the main distribution of these trees which are found further to the south and to the east in the Sacramento drainage (Griffin and Critchfield 1972: 89). In addition, today remnant or disjunct stands of Ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*) are found only at the higher altitudes in the southern part North Coast Ranges from about Clear Lake south to about Mount Saint Helena with their main distribution to the north of Clear Lake (Simons 1983: 3.13-3.14).

Late Holocene (3,800-2,300 B.P. to Present)

Beginning about three thousand years ago, there was a gradual shift in temperature and amounts of precipitation to a cooler wetter maritime climatic pattern similar to that of today. Coniferous forest slowly expanded its range down slope to lower elevations as oaks and associated species retreated down slope as much as 200 to 350 meters in elevation (Simons 1985:15) and to the south and east. Along the lower mountain slopes and in the river valleys just to the east of the redwood belt, the mixed evergreen forest with tanoak became more widespread.

It is likely that in response to the changing climate, individual plant taxa responded independently rather than as part of an interrelated related plant association (Simons 1986:37). For that reason, it appears that many of the present day plant associations within the interior portions of the Mad River basin have formed over the last several thousand years (West 1984:27).

The Pollen Record

Over the last decade, a number of archaeological excavations have been undertaken within or adjacent to the Pilot Creek Watershed. The bulk of the archaeological work has occurred along Pilot Ridge on the divide between the Mad River basin to the west and Grouse Creek in the Trinity River basin to the east (a small portion of Pilot Ridge at its extreme northern end is situated on the divide between Redwood Creek and Grouse Creek), Last Chance and Whiting Ridges at the headwaters of Pilot Creek, and along the northern third of South Fork Mountain.

Associated with several of these excavations were studies on the past climate and vegetation associations of the region (West 1983, 1984, 1985). A number of the locations where the pollen cores for these studies were taken were located on Pilot Ridge and South Fork Mountain. Two of these cores, Lemonade Springs and McKay Springs on South Fork

Mountain, exhibited a shallow time depth of about 1000 years (organic material permitted the radiocarbon dating of the McKay Springs site which produced a radiocarbon date of 1240+/- 60 B.P.). These cores showed little change in the pollen record over this period of time (West 1984:27). The third core was extracted from a small marsh adjacent to archaeological site CA-HUM-558 on Pilot Ridge. The results of this core sample are discussed in the following section. A fourth sample, from Big Lake, located in the Trinity River basin just to the east of Mad River basin was also cored. This core also had a shallow time depth and no carbon-14 dateable materials were recovered.

Pollen Analysis at CA-HUM-558

Abundant and well preserved pollen were present in the core samples taken at this site and forty-five different types of pollen were identified (West 1983:3.19). In addition, two samples were submitted for radiocarbon dating. Based on the results of the radiocarbon dating, the pollen samples collected from this site span a period of about 5,000 years. The results from the radiocarbon dating of the two samples were as follows:

<u>Sample Number</u>	<u>Depth</u>	<u>Age</u>
IA	20-22 cm	2640+/-70 B.P.
IIA	128-133 cm	4600+/-100 B.P.

Two pollen zones were identified based on the relative frequency of arboreal pollen types within the cores. The pollen core data contained in the Pilot Ridge excavation report are summarized below (West 1983: 3.19-3.20).

Pollen Zone III, Pine-Douglas-fir-Oak zone (26.2-139 cm.)

This zone had high pine values, increasing Douglas-fir values, and high average oak values. A sharp drop in pine, Douglas-fir, and TCT (*Taxaceae*) [yew family], *Cupressaceae* (cypress family), and *Taxodiaceae* (*Taxodium* family) pollen and sphagnum spores corresponds to an increase in grass (*Gramineae*) and composites (*Compositae*) in samples between 124.5 and 127 cm. With the exception of two samples, absolute pollen volume values show little change over time.

Pollen Zone IV, Douglas-fir-Pine-Fir-Tanoak-Chinquapin Zone (0-26.2 cm)

This zone is characterized by relatively high values for Douglas-fir, pine, fir, and significant values for tanoak and chinquapin. Willow (*Salix* spp.) pollen is also significant in this zone.

The results of this study provide evidence of a number of changes, through time, in both the species of trees present as well as the relative abundance of trees and other plants growing adjacent to the site (West 1983:3.21). The appearance of tanoak (*Lithocarpus densifloras*)

and chinquapin (*Castanopsis chrysophylla*) occurs at about 2,600 B.P. (radiocarbon years). The current composition of the mixed evergreen forest did not begin to take place on this portion of Pilot Ridge until about 2,700-2,800 (radiocarbon) years ago. This fact has important implications for the region's prehistoric record. Significantly, as depth of the cores increase (i.e. get older) there is an increase in the amount of *Quercus* (oak) pollen and a decrease in *Pseudotsuga* (Douglas-fir) pollen.

Other pollen samples have been collected in the North Coast Ranges to the south in the Mendocino National Forest (West 1991, 1993b). The results of these studies tend to confirm that there has been an increase in the distribution and relative abundance of Douglas-fir in the North Coast Ranges over the last several thousand years and a corresponding decrease in the distribution of oaks (see also Keter 1994a:60-63)

Prehistory of the Pilot Creek Watershed

Archaeological excavations at a number of prehistoric sites within or adjacent to the Pilot Creek Watershed on Pilot Ridge, Whiting Ridge, Last Chance Ridge, and the northern part of South Fork Mountain indicate that the first humans may have entered this region as early as about 5,000 years ago. Thus, for thousands of years, hunter and gathering peoples have lived within or visited the region to procure subsistence resources. The following section presents a brief overview of archaeological investigations which have taken place within or adjacent to the Mad River basin. The archaeological data suggests that a dynamic relationship existed between the influence of the environment on the peoples inhabiting the region and their influence on the environment through their land-use activities.

A number of important archaeological excavations and studies have been undertaken within this area on the ridgelines which form the divide between the Mad River and South Fork of the Trinity River basins along Pilot Ridge, Whiting Ridge, Last Chance Ridge, and South Fork Mountain. During the 1982, 1983, and 1984 field seasons, a series of 15 prehistoric sites situated along these ridgelines were excavated (Hildebrandt and Hayes 1983, Hildebrandt and Hayes 1984, Hayes and Hildebrandt 1985). These sites are listed below.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Site Trinomials</u>
1982	CA-HUM-367, 538, 546H, 553, 558, 573, 577, 588, 595/H, 605
1983	CA-HUM-678, CA-TRI-240, 262
1984	CA-HUM-535, 734

These sites ranged in elevation from between about 4,500' to 6,000'. Excavations of these sites were the first substantive studies of inland high elevation prehistoric sites in this region of northwest California.

One other archaeological site has been excavated in this area (Vaughan 1983) on South Fork Mountain just to the south of the excavations outlined above. The excavation of this site (CA-TRI-243) recovered artifacts that were similar in nature to the sites excavated further to the north.

Studies undertaken on the cultural materials recovered from the sites in the Pilot Ridge/South Fork Mountain region suggest that there were three broad cultural patterns for this portion of the inland North Coast Ranges. Definition of these cultural patterns is based on chronology and artifact patterning. These time periods and their primary characteristics are summarized below.

The Early Period (Borax Lake Pattern)

The pit feature described below was radio-carbon dated to nearly 8,000 years B.P.

See Fitzgerald and Hildebrandt Society for California Archaeology paper:

WILL THE TRUE AGE OF THE BORAX LAKE PATTERN PLEASE STAND UP? THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF CA-HUM-573, AN EARLY HOLOCENE SITE ON THE SOUTH END OF PILOT RIDGE, HUMBOLDT COUNTY, CALIFORNIA.

web link:

<https://www.scahome.org/publications/proceedings/Proceedings.15Fitzgerald.pdf>

The earliest period of human occupation in the North Coast Ranges is also sometimes referred to as the Borax Lake Tradition. It spans that period of time from the entry of aboriginal peoples into the region, approximately 4,000 to 5,000 B.P. to about 3,000 B.P.--roughly coincidental with the change in the region's climate at the end of the Xerothermic Period. Little is known about the first people to enter this portion of the North Coast Ranges, neither the language they spoke nor where they came from. The artifacts found on prehistoric sites within and adjacent to the region dating to this period include the Borax Lake Pattern assemblage defined by Borax-Lake wide-stemmed projectile points, milling slabs, hand stones, and relatively large serrated bifaces (worked on both sides with a saw-like edge on some portion of the artifact).

Several "single component" Borax Lake sites (i.e. all the materials recovered from a specific area of the prehistoric site dated from this time period) were identified. These assemblages show little variability from site to site (Hildebrandt and Hayes 1993:110) and for the most part appear to be locations where a number of subsistence oriented activities (processing of both animal and plant resources) took place--inferring that family groups were camped at these locations. Further supporting this hypothesis is the recovery from the Borax Lake components of these sites of a greater percentage of artifacts associated with food processing and household maintenance activities than were recovered from

either Middle or Late Period single component sites. Early Period artifactual materials included handstones, spall tools, cobble tools, and drills,

One of the sites excavated on Pilot Ridge contained a feature which appears to be the remains of a structure approximately 5' x 5' in size. Structural indicators included a possible compacted floor surrounded by three post holes (Hildebrandt and Hayes 1993: 110). This feature contained a significant number of artifacts including 12 milling slabs (two of which were stacked one on the other), four hand stones, three hammer stones and numerous bifaces, projectile points, flaked tools and cores. This feature represents the oldest structural remains to be found to date in this region of the North Coast Ranges.

It has been hypothesized that the peoples living in this region during the Early Period lived in small, highly mobile bands, probably consisting of one or a small number of extended families. These small groups utilized a "foraging" resource procurement strategy oriented towards a wide range of resources but emphasizing little handling or processing time such as big game (elk and deer) and hard seeds. With this resource procurement strategy, little emphasis is placed on storage of food resources, rather "incongruities in the distribution of resources over time and space are solved by moving people from places of declining productivity to areas where foraging opportunities are enhanced" (Hildebrandt and Hayes 1993:115). Thus, within the Mad River basin during the Early Period it is likely that relatively small highly mobile groups inhabited the region for at least some portion of the year moving from location to location as various kinds of resources became seasonally available for procurement. This subsistence strategy requires frequent moves by entire social units resulting in homogenous settlement site structure (i.e. little site-to-site variability) with similar generalized artifact assemblages (Hildebrandt and Hayes 1993:115).

Even at this early date, land-use activities related to subsistence resource procurement were, quite likely, having an effect on the environment and the species composition of both plants and animals. By this time, anthropogenic (human caused) fires along with natural fires, were quite likely a major force influencing vegetation trajectories and environmental dynamics in this region. In addition, collection of certain plant species and the hunting of animals also influenced environmental dynamics and trajectories. For example, the large Borax lake projectile points were probably used on spear points or atlatl darts for the hunting of large game animals including elk. It has been hypothesized that the over-hunting of elk and the reduction in their numbers as a result may have influenced to shift to the utilization of a wider range of resources including acorns.

The Middle Period (Mendocino Pattern)

The Middle Period spans that interval of time between approximately 3,000 B.P. and 1500 B.P. The beginning of this period is roughly coincidental with the change in climate at the end of the Xerothermic Period. This change in climate has implications for the prehistoric record. It appears that montane forest began to increasingly dominate at higher elevations

(above about 4,500 feet in the northern portion of the basin and 4,000' in southern portions of the basin). This change in vegetation distributions through time resulted in a shift in resource procurement strategies. The artifact assemblages recovered from single component site areas dating from this period include projectile points, bifaces, flake tools, and hammerstones indicative of an emphasis on game.

During this period, there appears to have been a decline in the intensity of use of the upland region. This decline is reflected in the archaeological record with a reduction in the relative amount of Middle Period artifactual materials recovered from the high elevation sites when compared to the number of artifacts recovered from the early period.

Archaeological evidence suggests that it was during this time period, that the shift from a forager to a "collector" based subsistence strategy began to take place. Collectors store foods for some part of the year; usually in sedentary or semi-sedentary villages. In addition, rather than a need for group mobility, as in the forager resource procurement model, distributions of resources across time and space are solved by moving the resources to consumers resulting in fewer residential moves. Land-use activities in relation to settlement patterns are, therefore, also changed. Under the collector strategy, site variability becomes more pronounced. There are, for example, residential sites (villages) as well as various other kinds of specialized sites used for the collection of specific resources. These resources (such as acorns, grass seeds, or deer) were hunted or gathered and/or processed at special use sites then transported back to the main village locations (Simons 1983:1.23).

In addition to changes in climate and vegetation species trajectories, another factor which might have influenced both site settlement patterns was the increase in population density. Population growth necessitates that more energy be extracted per unit of land. Generally, this is accomplished by an increase in the range of resources utilized. That is, there is an increased use of lower ranked resources.

Given the intensification in the procurement of subsistence resources resulting from an increase in population density, the procurement of a wider range of resources, and the use of fire to promote the productivity of desired resources, it is probable that by the end of this period the environment of the region was being affected to some extent by human land-use activities.

Late Period (Gunther Pattern)

This period extends from approximately 1,500 B.P. to the beginning of the historic period (often referred to as the contact period) and includes the ethnographic period (that will be discussed in greater detail in the next section). The artifact assemblages recovered from these sites were predominately of flaked stone tools (i.e. projectile points, cores, bifaces and other flaked tools [Hildebrandt and Hayes 1993:112]) similar to artifact assemblages found in Middle Period components. It appears that there was a continuing increase in

population density and intensification in the collection of lowland subsistence resources like fish and acorns. There was also more emphasis placed on the storage of resources for winter consumption. Sites located away from the sedentary village locations along the rivers are of a more limited and specialized nature reflecting their use as temporary camps visited for specialized resource procurement activities (Simon 1983:1.26).

By the Late Period, aboriginal peoples, through their land-use activities and increased population density, were an important influence on the environmental dynamics of the Pilot Creek Watershed. Human land-use activities, by this time, were significant factors influencing the mix of plant species and animal species found in the region. The next section discusses in greater detail the effects human land-use activities within the basin during the ethnographic period.

A theoretical dispute among archaeologists exists in this region related to the relationship between the peoples occupying the area towards the end of the Late Period (i.e. the ethnographic period) and those living here during the earlier time periods. One hypothesis suggests that the changing adaptations to the environment and the ethnographic cultural patterns present at the time of historic contact occurred in place and were relatively early in origin. The alternative hypothesis, also supported by linguistic data (Whistler 1979), contends that many of adaptations related to the exploitation of subsistence resources and cultural patterns present during the ethnographic period were brought in by immigrant groups with "technological systems preadapted to the local resource base" (Hildebrandt and Hayes 1993:116).

This theory suggests that the original inhabitants of the Pilot Ridge watershed, the more northerly portions of the Mad River basin, and the adjacent region, were ancestral Karuk (Hokan Stock) with a culture focused on an inland-oriented subsistence resource procurement strategy. The evolution of both inland and coastal cultures during the later portion of the Late Period is summarized by Hayes and Hildebrandt (1993:116).

At around 1100 B.P., the Wiyot arrived and occupied previously under-used coastal habitats. Soon thereafter, the Yurok settled along the lower Klamath and adjacent coastline, a process made possible by their superior technological abilities to fish, build boats, and store salmon. Marking the beginning of the Gunther Pattern, these arrivals are thought to be manifested archaeologically at a series of coastal sites containing *Dentalium* shells, bone and antler harpoon points, various woodworking tools, ceremonial obsidian bifaces, ground stone zoomorphs, as well as a variety of other artifact forms.

The final hypothetical wave of immigration brought the speakers of the Athabaskan languages (Tolowa, Chilula, and Whilkut). Arriving about 700 B.P. and occupying areas peripheral to the Wiyot and Yurok, these groups possessed an acute knowledge of forest and riverine environment, and possibly an improved technological system that included the toggle harpoon and sinew-backed bow.

The Ethnographic Period

This section of the Pilot Creek Watershed study focuses primarily on delimiting the territorial boundaries and the land-use practices of the peoples who were living in this region of the North Coast Ranges during the ethnographic period. The ethnographic period encompasses the late prehistoric era and includes those aboriginal cultures inhabiting northwestern California at the time of the first contact with Euro-Americans. During the ethnographic period, the Pilot Creek Watershed was inhabited by the Athabascan speaking Nongatl. The Nongatl were closely related to a number of groups who inhabited the interior section of Humboldt County including the Lassik, Pitch Wailaki and Wailaki; collectively referred to as the inland Southern Athabascans (Keter 1993). The territorial boundaries of the inland Southern Athabascans are poorly documented and their inter-group relationships are complex and poorly understood.

2015: Use of the term "Lassik"

During my research over the last 35 or so years and in my interaction with numerous Wailaki from southern Humboldt, northern Mendocino, and southwestern Trinity Counties as well as with Wailaki consultants living in Hulla Valley and Round Valley who had links to what has been delineated by ethnographers as "Lassik Territory" (see Baumhoff 1958), not one individual I have talked to considered themselves to be Lassik but referred to themselves as Wailaki. This included descendants of Lucy Young (who despite being called Lassik by Merriam, Essene and Kroeber insisted that she was Wailaki) and descendants of Mary Majors who were two of the principal informants for Essene and Merriam.

I wrote a paper on this subject in 2009 (referenced below) and it is posted on my web site. I have chosen to use the term "**Wailaki Lassik**" in order to clarify that like the Pitch Wailaki (see Goddard's work on the North Fork) the Wailaki Lassik were a direct offshoot and therefore closely related not only through language and familial ties with the other Wailaki "triblets" (I prefer the term "communities" see Keter 1991 for my rationale) but also shared cultural practices as well. The people living in this region prior to the historic era, referred to themselves collectively with some derivative of the term *ken'-es-ti* (personal communication: Fred Coyote Downey, Merriam field notes).

It is clear given the common language and shared cultural beliefs of the Native Americans residing in southern Humboldt, northern Mendocino, and southwestern Trinity Counties during the ethnographic period, that at some higher level than Kroeber's small triblets, southern Athabascans (ethnographers have named Sinkyone, Eel River Wailaki, Pitch Wailaki, Lassik, and possibly the Nongatl) shared a common cultural and linguistic identity.

2009 All Those Things that You're Liable to Read in the Ethnographic Literature They Ain't Necessarily So. Paper presented to the Society for California Archaeology, Modesto, CA.

PDF at: www.SolarArch.org

The Nongatl

The territory of the Athabascan speaking Nongatl included the Pilot Creek Watershed, as well that part of the Mad River basin stretching from Bug Creek south to about the mouth of Jonathan Creek. They also occupied a significant portion of the Van Duzen drainage to the west of the Mad River Basin. Very little ethnographic data was recorded for the Nongatl. Alfred Kroeber (1925) included only one paragraph in his seminal work the Handbook of the Indians of California. Albert Elsasser (1978) who summarized the ethnographic data on the southern Athabascans for the Smithsonian Institution series on the Indians of North America wrote:

Because of their isolated geographical situation, these five tribes have been among the least known to California ethnography. It is only by combining data from several different and limited sources that these Athapaskans can be placed in the well-known cultural patterns of northern California.

The only ethnographic data recorded for the Nongatl is related to some village locations and other similar ethnogeographic data for the Bridgeville area (located in the Van Duzen Basin located directly to the west of the Pilot Creek Watershed). No village locations have been identified ethnographically for the Nongatl within the Mad River Basin including the Pilot Creek Watershed (Baumhoff 1958:181-184).

Given the incomplete and poorly documented ethnographic data for the Nongatl, it is possible that some village sites may have been located along the Mad River. One prehistoric site that was possibly used as a village site but more likely was an extended seasonal occupation site (CA-HUM-753) has been recorded along the lower portion of Pilot Creek near its junction with the Mad River.

It should also be noted that the Pilot Creek Watershed may also have been utilized to some extent by the Athabascan speaking Chilula and possibly even the Hupa. Lack of ethnographic data for this region, however, leaves this question unanswered. However, there is least some suggestion on the use of this area by the Chilula and Hupa. Goddard (1914) who worked with Chilula informants in the early twentieth century recorded a story from two different elderly Chilula on an event which happened just after historic settlement of the region began in about 1856 (Carranco and Beard 1981:78, Goddard 1914:269, 351).

At this time a number of Chilula were captured by the military and sent south via Humboldt Bay on a steamer to the Mendocino Reservation near Fort Bragg. They escaped from the reservation and headed north through unknown territory in an attempt to return to their homeland over 100 miles away. Traveling through Lassik territory, near the future location of Fort Seward, they were attacked by the Lassik and all but a few were killed. The ones who escaped returned to Chilula territory and a war party consisting of Chilula, as well as some Whilkut and Hupa (quite likely relatives of those killed) was organized. The Chilula informants indicated that prior to setting off for Lassik country to revenge the killings a war dance took place at the southern end of Pilot Ridge (near Pilot Rock). The Chilula

made several trips south into Lassik territory and ambushed a number of Lassik camps.

The significance of this episode as related to tribal occupation of the Pilot Creek Watershed is that it is likely that this dance was held near the southern end of Chilula territory and suggests that at least portions of the Pilot Creek Watershed may also have been used by members of the closely related Chilula and Hupa whose core territory was located directly to the north of the region. It is quite possible that boundaries between the Nongatl and these more northerly Athabaskan groups may have shifted, over time, based on kinship affiliations and other factors including availability and distribution of subsistence resources.

Part of the problem with defining the territorial boundaries of the Athabascans living in this region is related to differences in world view and cultures between the anthropologists who documented the group boundaries and the Indian people. To the anthropologists working in the area boundaries were a product of western logic conceived as strict demarcations that were well defined and agreed upon. However as George Foster (1944:157) noted: "in the minds of the Indians exact boundaries were never known."

It is likely, therefore, that the territorial boundaries of the peoples living in this region were more complex and ambiguous than the lines confidently drawn on the map by ethnographers. Keter (1993:48) discusses the problem related to delineating ethnographic boundaries in this region:

No doubt certain portions of their homelands were well defined. For example, ownership extended to the immediate area surrounding the village. This might change, however, if another, related community was in need of resources controlled by a particular village. In that case cooperation and resource sharing would occur. Also ownership was sometimes claimed and territory defended by a particular extended family or community at a location rich in a particular subsistence resource within what might be termed their core territory...In other instances, territory was claimed by two or more groups further complicating the efforts of ethnographers.

It is more likely that there were no hard and fast "tribal" boundaries. Rather, boundaries between groups and communities were dynamic and varied over time based on the relations between individuals and extended families. For the Athabascans living in this region of northwestern California,

[T]he key to understanding "boundaries" lies in the socialization and affinal ties among the peoples who inhabited the region. Their concept of family influenced all aspects of culture. None of the communities...were self-sufficient. They relied on trade and cooperation in obtaining subsistence resources which were both needed and desired. Effective communications and cooperation developed through extended kinship ties were primary factors in the ability of the inland southern Athabascans to successfully and effectively exploit their environment (Keter 1993: 49).

Whichever ethnographic groups utilized the Pilot Creek watershed archaeological evidence suggests that the use was extensive. This use, however, appears to have been seasonal in nature. Tangible evidence of this use includes numerous sites within the watershed containing Late Period materials, including Gunther barbed projectile points. This archaeological evidence is outlined in the heritage resources management section.

Goddard noted (*in* Baumhoff 1958:181) that his informants indicated that salmon did not migrate up the Mad River into their territory. For this reason, the Nongatl differed from the groups (Yurok, Karuk, Hupa) on the major salmon streams who focused primarily on riverine resources for their subsistence needs. Many of the inland southern Athabascans, including the Nongatl were, in general, more dependent on a wider range of plant and animal resources for their subsistence than the more riverine oriented groups to the north. They also tended to spend some portion of the year (possibly as much as three to six months) away from their river village sites living in the mountains. A generalized seasonal subsistence resource procurement model for the inland southern Athabascans is presented in the next section.

Subsistence Resource Procurement Strategies for the Pilot Creek Watershed

The Lassik and Pitch Wailaki were closely related to the Nongatl culturally and it is likely that the Nongatl pursued a resource procurement strategy very similar to these two groups. The following section which primarily focused on the neighboring Lassik has been adapted from Keter (1994) with additional relevant information where available for the Pilot Creek Watershed.

The Seasonal Round

Although Nongatl winter villages were located along the Mad River, a significant portion of each year was spent in the mountains. The inland southern Athabascan groups, including the Nongatl, pursued a resource procurement strategy that has been termed the seasonal round or transhumance. This subsistence strategy involves movement through the environment across ones territory in order to procure subsistence resources as they become seasonally available. Year-to-year strategies varied depending on environmental conditions effecting the distribution and availability of various procurement resources.

A general model (adapted from Keter 1994) of the yearly seasonal round applicable to both the Nongatl and the other inland southern Athabascan groups is presented below.

Spring

Spring marked the end of the long winter season in which stored resources, including grass seeds and acorns, were the primary staples. One of the earliest food resources to be collected this time of year were the young leaves and stems of a number of plants, including

clovers, referred to collectively as "greens." Essene (1942:84) wrote that "the earliest clover is eagerly gathered as greens [and] have been a conspicuously absent dietary item during the past season." During March and April, anadromous fish were also available for procurement by the Lassik in the North Fork of the Eel River and for the Nongatl in portions of the Van Duzen drainage. In the main Eel and the North Fork of the Eel there were small runs of both spring steelhead trout and spring chinook salmon (this conflicts with Goddard [1924:217] who indicated that salmon did not migrate up the North Fork). In late April and early May there was also a run of Pacific Lamprey in the North Fork. This run lasted for about three to four weeks (see Keter 1992 for an overview of the aquatic resources available in this region).

It was sometime during the spring when communities and extended families began to leave their winter villages to start their seasonal round. In the Mad River region this travel most often was not over great distances, rather, it was a gain in elevation. The usual pattern was for each extended family to travel alone. Sometimes, however, several families might be together for weeks at a time. At certain times of the year families would gather at a location (for example on South Fork Mountain or Pilot Ridge) when a particular resource was abundant. This gathering of extended families or even a number of communities also provided the opportunity to socialize. Therefore, in addition to the ready availability of subsistence resources, cultural factors including socialization and the need to share environmental information on the availability and location of particular resources were also considered in selecting the location of seasonal camps.

Bulbous plants including certain species of *Brodiaea*, *Camas*, and *Lillum* began to mature in late March or early April. V. K. Chestnut (1974:322) writes; "nowhere in the world is there more characteristic abundance and variety of bulbous rooted liliaceous plants than in California." The bulbs of these plants are highly nutritious with a nut-like flavor and were collected in great quantities. Subsequent to the historic era they were referred to as "Indian Potatoes."

One of the most important of these bulbs was *Camassia leichtlini*. The Wailaki referred to this bulb by its Wintu name--*Ket' in*. This bulb was found in great abundance in Hettenshaw, Kettenpom, and Hoaglin Valleys (just to the west of the Mad River basin) in the month of June. It is also likely that bulbous plants were abundant in the upper Mad River basin along the large flats now covered by the Ruth Reservoir and stretching south to about Three Forks. It is also likely that bulbous plants were available on the hillsides within the Pilot Creek Watershed.

Deer were also an important food resource during the spring. In the Mad River region (including the lower southwestern facing slopes of Pilot Ridge), deer travel in herds in the winter and spring. During this time communal hunting was practical because of the large numbers of deer (see also Foster 1944:161). Women and children would drive the deer upslope. Snares were set where game trails came together at low gaps in the ridgelines. A hunter would be located near the snare to shoot any deer avoiding the snare. During certain times of the year (including the spring) a deer drive would be organized every two or three days and there was no need to preserve meat because of the abundance of deer.

Summer

With the arrival of summer the hillsides began to dry out and the availability of plant resources at the lower elevations began to decline. Deer also tend to leave the lower elevation country with most summering on the ridgelines and mountain areas above about 4,000'. The mountain encampments usually consisted of simple brush shelters, conical bark houses, or people simply slept under the stars (Essene 1942:12, 57).

Lucy Young (an elderly [Wailaki] Lassik woman who was a primary informant for Essene and Merriam) indicated that summer was a "good time" because of the abundance of food resources available (Murphey Ms.). One of the most notable things about summer in this region was the wide variety of plant resources collected and the distances that families sometimes traveled to pursue resources or to socialize. This may indicate that while there were a great many food resources available but that these resources were not available in large quantities at any one location.

Some food resources did remain available for procurement at lower elevations during the summer. For example, resident trout and suckers were found in the Mad River. It is not known at this time if spring steelhead (which would spend the summer in large deep pools) were present in this portion of the Mad River basin.

Fall

By late summer and early fall the extended families began returning to their communities along the Van Duzen River. Fall was a critical time of year when the winter food supply was collected and stored. The most important food resource in this region was oak acorns (Chestnut 1974:333). Lucy Young told Frank Essene (1942:55), "[i]f Indians ain't got acorns it seem like he ain't got nothing." The species of oak acorns available in this region were white oak, black oak, and tanoak acorns (tanoak did not grow in the Pilot Creek Watershed but were found a short distance to the north in the Grouse Creek Watershed). A year's supply, about 400-500 pounds of acorns, was collected by each family. Lucy Young indicated that in her community tanoak acorns were considered best for acorn soup while white and black oak acorns were best for bread (Murphey 1941: 359).

Hazel nuts were also prized and hazel branches and shoots were used as basketry materials. A major location for the collection of hazelnuts was on the upper slopes of South Fork Mountain (this quite possibly would have included the northern portion which forms the eastern divide for the Pilot Creek Watershed). Gray pine nuts were another important storable food resource found in the upper Mad River basin. [They are not found within the Pilot Creek watershed.]

Grasses which began to mature as early as July were collected and along with other seed resources such as sunflower seeds and tarweed to make *pinole*. *Pinole* stored well and next to acorns was the most important winter staple. Both grass seed and acorns (except tanoak in some locations) were most likely available in significant quantities within a

reasonable distance of the river villages. Deer begin to move down into the lower elevations of the Yolla Bolly country by October and would also have been available as a food resource. Significantly, there were no fall runs of anadromous fish in the upper Mad River (personal communication, Jerry Boberg, USFS fisheries biologist).

Winter

By mid-to-late November, winter usually arrives in the Mad River country. Merriam (Ms.) noted that this time of year, the families of each community were scattered along the rivers in small rancherias consisting of four to seven families living in two or three houses. Each house was inhabited by about seven or eight people. Houses were excavated to about two feet and were made of split pine (probably ponderosa with cedar used when available as it splits easily) slabs standing upright or sloping in at the top to form a conical house (some ethnographers recorded bark covered houses; see also Curtis 1924, Baumhoff 1958 176).

In preparing for the long winter, families would pile firewood in a dry place and fill their storage bins made of hazel and willow branches with acorns. Important winter staples included seed resources (for *pinole*), dried meat, and acorns.

Heritage Resources Management: Status of Site Recordation, Archaeological Surveys, and Research

The following section summarizes the current status of heritage resources management activities within the Pilot Creek Watershed. This information includes:

- * The number and kinds of prehistoric sites that have been recorded within the basin.
- * Where, in general, archaeological surveys have been undertaken.
- * A listing of all properties or districts determined eligible or listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- * Current research needs as related to the prehistoric record and heritage resources management.

National Register of Historic Places: Pilot Ridge Historical and Archaeological District

A significant amount of archaeological data exists for the extended ridgelines surrounding the Pilot Creek Watershed. The Pilot Ridge Archaeological and Historic District was determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in 1982 (Gmoser and Keter 1983). This district included all of Pilot Ridge from its junction with Kinsey Ridge south to

about Pilot Rock, Whiting Ridge, Last Chance Ridge, and the northern three miles of South Fork Mountain. In 1983, the district was extended southward along the crest of South Fork Mountain for an additional ten miles. In 1984, the southern portion of Pilot Ridge was added to the District.

The sites included within the District include:

Prehistoric sites.....	102
Prehistoric site with some historic component....	5
Historic sites (trails).....	<u>2</u>
	total sites 109

No other cultural resource properties within the watershed have been nominated or determined eligible for the National Register.

Archaeological Sites Recorded within the Pilot Creek Watershed

In addition to the prehistoric sites listed above, approximately twenty-five additional prehistoric sites have been recorded below the surrounding ridgelines of the Pilot Creek watershed. These sites are scattered throughout the basin on the lower and mid elevation slopes of South Fork Mountain to the east of Pilot Creek as well as the western slopes of the watershed. The majority of these sites appear to fit one of two major categories.

- * Subsistence resource procurement and processing sites including hunting and butchering and plant gathering and processing locations.
- * Occupational sites including small temporary camps.

One possible village site has been recorded within the lower course of the watershed near the mouth of Pilot Creek. The historic trails recorded for this area are discussed in the historic heritage resources section of this study. Many of these trails appear to date to the prehistoric era and were probably used for centuries for travel within and through the basin.

Archaeological Survey

Major portions of the Pilot Creek watershed have been surveyed. Nearly all of the areas surveyed have been on public lands administered by the Forest Service. To the east of Pilot Creek approximately 6,000 acres have been surveyed on the slopes of South Fork Mountain. To the west of Pilot Creek a number of surveys have been undertaken as a result of timber harvest activity in the area. This coverage encompasses many of the east-trending ridges (including Bryant, Baily, Becker, Dorr and Al Hazen Ridges) that slope down to Pilot Creek from Pilot Ridge. In the northern portion of the watershed nearly the entire area to the north of the mouth of Dan East Creek has been surveyed. Total area surveyed within the watershed is approximately 9,000 acres.

Heritage Resources Management and Archaeological Research Needs

There are still several important kinds of studies and data recovery projects needed to provide a more complete understanding of the area's prehistory. These studies include the following:

- * Additional high altitude sites with single time period components; especially those from the Middle period.
- * Investigations of middle elevation sites for example, sites situated on the western slopes of South Fork Mountain or along slopes of Last Chance, Whiting and Pilot Ridges that descend to Pilot Creek.
- * Investigations of low elevation sites on terraces along Pilot Creek and the adjacent Mad River. These sites are likely to have been the primary village sites inhabited much of the year, including the winter, during the Late Period. Data from this kind of site should provide insights on the cultures living in the region during the ethnographic era. In addition, there is virtually no archaeological data for this region on whether these low altitude sites contain materials dating to the Middle or Early Periods. Artifact assemblages from these sites should help to answer research questions related to use of lowland habitats prior to the Late Period.

Historical Development of the Pilot Creek Watershed

The following section presents a brief historical overview of the Pilot Creek watershed. The emphasis of this overview is on the land-use practices which helped to shape the contemporary environment of the watershed.

The Early Years: 1850-1865

It is not known exactly when Euro-Americans first entered the Pilot Creek region. It is likely, however, that this event occurred in about 1850 or 1851. The first significant exploration of the Pilot Creek Watershed was a result of the desire to establish a transportation link between Humboldt coastal communities and the mines in Trinity County. The first trail (see the section on trails below) linking the coastal settlements in Humboldt County with the mining regions of Trinity County was developed by the Cooper brothers in 1852. The five Cooper brothers settled in the Hydesville area and developed a trail over Shower's Pass to Hyampom and the mines in Trinity County. This trail passed along the southern edge of the Pilot Creek Watershed ascending Eight Mile Ridge to the crest of South Fork Mountain.

In 1856, it was proposed that a wagon road be constructed between Humboldt Bay and Weaverville (Coy 1929:71). The route passed down Pilot Ridge and circled around the

head of the Pilot Creek Watershed on Whiting and Last Chance Ridges. It is likely that this route and other early trails in the Pilot Creek Watershed followed the earlier routes used by the local aboriginal people inhabiting the region. The road was never built but portions of this route were eventually used by one of the trails (the Last Chance Trail see Trails section of this report) to supply the mines in Trinity County.

Following this initial exploration of the area little development took place during the next decade due to the conflict between the local Indian tribes and the whites settling in the North Coast region. During late 1850s and the first half of the 1860s, a series of violent confrontations took place between the Indians who had resided in this region for centuries and the local settlers. The culmination of these conflicts was the "Two Years War" in which the military took an active role in pursuing the Indians inhabiting the inland regions of Humboldt and Trinity Counties. A. J. Bledsoe (1885) recounts this period of conflict in his book *Indian Wars of the North West*.

During this period the remote Board Camp Mountain, Pilot Ridge, and Grouse Creek regions were a refuge area for a substantial number of the native peoples who were avoiding confrontation or capture (and placement on Indian reservations at Hoopa, Round Valley, or Smith River) by local settlers and the military. Bledsoe (1885:240) writes that some of the Indian refugees "were in the mountains at the head of Pilot Creek, where they were almost inaccessible, and where they might elude the vigilance of pursuers until hunger compelled them to seek the more open country of the foothills."

Some of the fighting and military activity during this period took place within or adjacent to the Pilot Creek Watershed. For example, about one mile below the mouth of Pilot Creek is the location where the County Line Trail crossed the Mad River. This spot is called Olmstead crossing. In July of 1862 four men including William Olmstead were attacked by Indians at this location. One man was killed and Olmstead was wounded. In about September of the same year there was another Indian attack along the trail at the same location against three men driving hogs to the mines in Trinity County. All three men were killed in the attack (Bledsoe 1885:221-222).

In early 1865, the conflict between the settlers and the Indians ended. Many of the Indian people not killed in skirmishes with the military and the local settlers were removed to the Hoopa Valley Reservation. Bledsoe (1885:276) writes:

The end of the Two Years' War was the beginning of permanent peace between the two races in the Northwest, a peace that was to endure unbroken through all the years of the future.

[For more information about this era see Keter 1990, 2013, in References Cited section of this paper]

Land-use Activities During the Early Years

Given the historical data presented above, it is likely that by the year 1865, about fifteen years after the initial exploration of the Pilot Creek Watershed by Euro-Americans, the region had not been impacted by historic land-use activities to any significant degree. Perhaps the major land-use activity during this era in the Pilot Creek Watershed would have been the hunting of deer for the sale of their hides. This activity although not specifically documented for the Pilot Creek region was wide-spread in the eastern region of Humboldt County and in the region of Trinity County west of South Fork Mountain (See Keter 1990, 1994a). In 1861 Lieutenant Lynn (U.S. Army), whose men were operating in the Humboldt/Trinity County region noted:

Between Spruce Grove [near Harris] and Willburn's place on the Eel River, and especially between [the] main Eel River and Larrabee's Creek [to the west and south of Pilot Creek], game particularly deer, is quite plentiful, owing mainly to the fact I suppose, that buckskin hunters, killing deer in contravention of game laws and for their skin, have not yet, to any great extent, infested that region (U.S. War Department 1897a:10)

It is likely, therefore, that the first commercial activities during the historic period within the Pilot Creek Watershed were related to the development of trails and the hunting of deer for hides.

The Ranching Era 1865-1905

The land-use activities taking place within the Pilot Creek Watershed during much of the remainder of the nineteenth century were driven by the same socio-economic factors that were affecting the county and state as a whole. The principal land-use activities during this period were related to the grazing of livestock and towards the end of the nineteenth century, the establishment of a few small subsistence-sized homesteads.

Livestock Grazing and Settlement: The Early Years

Inland from the redwood belt of the northwestern California coastal region stretches a narrow band of mountains with numerous open prairies and areas of Oregon and black oak woodlands. This region is often referred to as the "Bald Hills" and early on the area was recognized for its grazing potential. The perennial bunchgrasses which grew in this area were rich in nutritive value and grew as high as a man's horse (Keter 1994b: 4). There was little brush as the Indians frequently burned the area. Although the Bald Hills stretch north along the western divide of Redwood Creek almost to Orick, the main region extends south from about Pilot Rock to Round Valley across portions of western Trinity County, eastern Humboldt County, and northeastern Mendocino County. During last several decades of the nineteenth century, thousands of sheep and cattle grazed on the rich rangelands of the Bald Hills including the portion within the Pilot Creek Watershed.

The *Humboldt Times* (July 15, 1856) carried an article about the grazing lands of the Mad River county based on information provided by the U.S. Deputy Surveyor (a Mr. Murray) who was working in the area at the time.

He says there are thousands of acres of the finest stock lands he ever saw. For miles in succession they are obliged to wallow through the most luxuriant grass, which being a kind of mountain grass is known to be exceedingly nutritious....

On the North-east side of Mad River and lying between that stream and South Fork, [the Pilot Ridge-South Fork Mountain region] there is still a greater extent of available country for stock purposes. The feed is equally as good but the climate is somewhat warmer...The feed as before mentioned, grows spontaneously and in the greatest abundance, and is of a quality much superior to that in the lower valleys--Mr. M. says that in many places he has found it growing as high as his head, and the animals eat it as they would oats.

Later that same year, the *Humboldt Times* (August 23, 1856) noted that ranchers were already beginning to bring in cattle and were starting up ranching operations to take advantage of the rich grazing lands of the Bald Hills to the east of Eureka.

About a week ago near two hundred head of cattle arrived in this county from Sacramento Valley, in one drove....The extensive ranges of excellent feed on the Bald Mountains and small valleys of Redwood Creek, Mad River, and other portions of this county will accommodate thousands of stock the year round, without any danger from flood or drought. The advantages of superior feed and mild climate which this section offers for stock raising are just beginning to be appreciated, and it will not be long before every available tract will be covered with herds of mules and cattle. Those who wish to secure good ranches will have to select them soon, for the surveyors and trail builders, during this summer, have been the means of bringing to light the choicest spots in the rear of this Bay, and already they are being rapidly taken...

The end of hostilities in early 1865 resulted in the opening of the interior regions of Humboldt County and southern Trinity County for settlement and the establishment of the livestock industry. Cattle were the first livestock to be introduced into the rangelands of the Bald Hills country. Most of the cattle brought in to form the foundation herds of the future cattle industry in Humboldt County were driven into the region from southern California. In some cases, however, cattle were driven in from as far away as Texas (Keter 1994b:13). During this early period the numbers of cattle in the interior regions of Humboldt County remained relatively low as the ranches to the west of the Pilot Creek watershed were just being established.

Over the next several decades, the larger ranching operations, that ran the majority of stock in the Pilot Creek/Mad River region did so on a seasonal basis using the area and the South Fork Mountain region to the east for summer and fall range. Most of these ranches were located to the west of the Mad River basin in the Van Duzen basin. A few of the ranches were also located to the south of the Pilot Creek watershed within the Upper Mad River Basin region (for example the Erickson Ranch; see Keter 1994b).

The Rise of the Sheep industry

Although the first livestock to be introduced into the rangelands of eastern Humboldt County were cattle, by the early 1870s many of the ranchers in the interior sections of the County began to change over from the raising of cattle to sheep. There were several reasons for this change, perhaps the most important was the price being paid for wool. After the Civil War, a high tariff was placed on wool keeping out foreign competition and driving up the price (Carranco and Beard 1981:185). Also, some of the remote ranches preferred sheep because it was much easier to pack out the wool than to drive cattle to market (Robb 1978:15). Another reason for the change to sheep was the initial lack of predators, including coyotes (Keter 1994b: 26), which if present can significantly affect the profitability of raising sheep. The trend towards sheep ranching during this period was state-wide. Historically, the number of sheep within the state of California reached its highest level in 1875 (Herbert et al n.d.:5)

The rapid growth of the sheep industry in the early 1870s is reflected in the steady increase of the sheep population within Humboldt County. In 1865, the total number of sheep in Humboldt County numbered 2,110. By 1870, this number had increased to 12,660. In 1873 the number of sheep totaled 74,148 and by 1875 the number of sheep had risen to 115,483 (Burcham 1981:157).

For the reasons outlined above it is likely that during the 1870s, 1880s, and the early 1890s sheep predominated on the rangelands of the Pilot Creek Watershed. Although no specific data relative to the number of sheep could be located it is likely that the number substantially exceeded the long term carrying capacity of the range. This inference can be made from the numbers of sheep and the condition of the rangelands during this era in the region directly to the south of the watershed (Keter 1994a, 1994b).

Generally, during this period, the large-scale ranchers hired sheep herders (often local Indian men) to drive the sheep to summer pasture and to remain in the mountains during the summer slowing moving the sheep along a route through the high country as forage at one location became scarce. These routes were known as "trailways." The sheep were driven to the summer pasture in "bands." A band of sheep numbered about 2,000 to 3,000 animals and usually one man and several dogs were responsible for each band of sheep. The ranchers usually brought in supplies to the mountain camps periodically (Keter 1994b:24).

The majority of the lands within the Pilot Creek Watershed were within the public domain

and there were no regulations regarding grazing of livestock. Since the ranchers did not own the land, there was little motivation to take any precautions to prevent overgrazing and short term economic gain in the form of raising the maximum number of sheep possible was the general rule.

With the availability of "free" and unregulated grazing lands the larger landholders did not want to see development. For example, Owen Coy (1929:283) wrote:

"In the fall of 1868 the issue of a Mendocino road [only trails led south to connect with Mendocino at this time] was put to a vote and defeated decisively by a vote of 1038 to 134." One of the reasons this road was voted down was that the stockmen believed that trails were all they needed for their stock and that the opening of a wagon road would attract settlers to the area to homestead the interior country and "limit their extensive stock ranges."

That a certain number of large-scale sheep ranchers were utilizing the public domain did not go unnoticed. In Mendocino County the Ukiah paper (Democratic Weekly Dispatch April 26, 1882) noted that one rancher was grazing his livestock on unsurveyed lands that:

...if divided would make good homes to settlers....But as it is these men are becoming millionaires by its use, having no taxes to pay on the land.

Given the fact that the lands were not owned by the ranchers there was little motivation to prevent over grazing and the realization of short term profits over long term rangeland management resulted in a significant deterioration of the rangelands ultimately affecting their carrying capacity.

Homesteads 1865-1905

During this period of time only a few homesteaders or squatters (those living on the public domain without filing a homestead application) established homesteads within the Pilot Creek watershed. It is likely that for homesteading purposes the Pilot Creek watershed is only marginal when considered as a location for establishing a subsistence homestead due to the more interior climate and higher elevation creating more snow and colder and somewhat longer winters than lands to the west in the Van Duzen drainage. During the early years of settlement the best lands located to the west of Showers Pass were being settled. As settlement continued and the best locations to homestead were taken up, the more isolated regions such as the Pilot Creek watershed were only then homesteaded.

In discussions with long-time residents of this region (PCWI#1, PCWI#2) indicated that there were few homesteaders living within the Pilot Creek watershed until after the turn of the century. Forest Service records (SRNF Lands Department files) indicate that four homesteads were established within the Pilot Creek watershed prior to 1900. These homesteads were established in the late 1870s, 1880s, and early 1890s (see Table I). It is

not clear how long these homesteads were inhabited or what kind of land-use activities took place, but it is likely they were related to the ranching industry. Several other homesteads were established just to the west of the watershed on the crest and western slopes of Pilot Ridge and the lands of some of these homesteads extended into the Pilot Creek watershed (Property Records, Lands Department, see also Table I and Map 2).

Given the scenario outlined above, it is likely that during the period from 1865 to 1890 the major use of the Pilot Creek watershed was for the seasonal grazing of bands of sheep. Although perhaps a few isolated homesteads or squatters cabins were established within the watershed these locations were for the most part inhabited by single men willing to forego the trapping of civilization since the region was isolated much of the winter and was miles from the nearest wagon road.

In addition to homestead entries, there were a number of other parcels of land claimed within the Pilot Creek watershed prior to the turn of the century. It appears that many of these parcels were purchased under a law providing for a "cash entry" to purchase lands. In addition, several parcels were claimed and purchased under the Timber and Stone Act. A review of records indicates that under these two provisions of the law 20 parcels of land totaling approximately 2,620 acres were purchased between 1877 and 1891. Many of these parcels were on lands containing the major springs within the region. For example, in 1891 James Whiting purchased a parcel of land containing Whiting Springs and Sidney Edgar purchased a parcel centered on Edgar Springs. By controlling the springs the adjacent public domain lands could then be controlled and used for grazing (the Whiting Springs parcel was sold almost immediately for only five dollars to rancher Ira Russ). This effort to control public lands through control of the limited availability of water in this region was common during this period (Keter 1994b:5).

Two homesteads also show up within the basin on the GLO map for 1897. Both of these names on the GLO map are partly illegible (also they do not show up in the Forest Service Lands Records). One of the homesteads is located in the NW1/4 of Section 19 T2N., R6E. and is labeled "James Boyds"; next to the name is the notation "garden" and a dot placed on the map (this Township and Range do not match the current survey lines for this section). The other homestead is located in the NW 1/4 of Section 20 (same Township and Range). The name is somewhat illegible (it appears to be labeled "Jench's House"). These section numbers do not match the current survey section for this region (nor do these parcels and names appear in the Land Entry Record Files). The location of these homesteads appears to be along the Skull Camp Trail to the north of Eight Mile Creek on the lower slopes of South Fork Mountain. Neither of these homesteads appears in the Land Office Files.

It is probable that several other homesteaders settled in the area during this period of time. Some of those who moved into the area spent a few years trying to make a go of it in the isolated back country far from civilization and then moved on. It is likely that history does not record many of these attempts to establish a homestead in the area. One homestead which is recorded for this period is that of Fred Becker (T2N., R5E., Section 11). He homesteaded a 160 acre parcel along Pilot Creek in June of 1902 (records indicate he filed for entry in 1901). He built a frame house 14' x 16' (from the description in the Homestead

File it appears to have been of pole and shake construction). There was also a 14' x 14' shed attached to one end of the cabin as a wood shed. He also had a barn (14' x 43' with 8' walls) and a poultry shed (6' x 9'). He had six acres under cultivation (in 1908) and about 10 acres of timberland. He had no sheep or cattle but 16 horses. One consultant (PCWI#1) indicated that Becker raised race horses on his homestead. His application for homestead patent was approved on February 18, 1908.

It is likely that the number of homesteaders living within the Pilot Creek Basin when the Forest Service took over administration of the public domain in 1905 numbered about three to four. These homesteads were occupied for the most part by single men. The homesteading of the Pilot Creek Watershed and the area directly to the west of Pilot Ridge did not begin in earnest until after 1905 when many families began moving into the region to homestead.

The Homesteading Period 1905-1940

[See *Homesteading in Pilot Ridge Country* 2014, pdf at: www.solararch.org]

Between 1905 and about the beginning of World War II a number of homesteads were established within the Pilot Creek Watershed. During era from about 1905 to 1930 the number of people living within the watershed reached its peak for the historic era. After this brief period of activity, the population began to steadily decline as homesteaders began to sell out to the Northern Redwood Lumber Company and other large land holders.

In April of 1905 President Theodore Roosevelt signed legislation creating a number of Forest Reserves including the Trinity Reserve which encompassed the public lands located within the Pilot Creek Watershed. This event signaled a major change in the management of public lands by the federal government and increased regulation of the human land-use activities taking place within the Pilot Creek Watershed [see Keter 2015; *The People's Forests; The Progressive Movement and the Creation of America's National Forest System*, pdf at www.solararch.org]. Prior to this time, except for the filing of claims under the Homestead Act of 1864 and the Timber and Stone Act of 1878 (a number of "cash entries" were also made during the period before the turn of the century), virtually no regulation or direction from the federal government had been forthcoming on the use of public lands in this region. The principal implication of placing the management of the Pilot Creek Watershed under the jurisdiction of the U. S. Forest Service was to incrementally over the next several decades increasingly restrict and regulate the use of public lands by private land holders for their personal benefit. In addition, steps were taken to maintain trail system, control wildfires, and to establish a communications link between the various homesteads, guard stations, and lookouts in the region (the Forest Service supplied each homestead with a phone and ran the telephone line; homesteaders supplied the batteries to operate it).

The following section briefly outlines the establishment of the homesteads and the increase in the regulations and rules governing the use of public lands within the Pilot Creek watershed after the Trinity National Forest was created in 1905..

Homesteading in the Pilot Creek Watershed after 1905

With administration of the Pilot Creek watershed placed under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service, after 1905 the homestead applications for lands settled in this region fell under the jurisdiction of the Forest Homestead Act of 1906 (this act opened for homestead entry all lands suitable for agriculture on forest reserves). During this period, roughly from the turn of the century (several homesteads filed for "entry" prior to 1905 but "proved up" after that date) until about the late 1930s, numerous homesteads were established within the Pilot Creek watershed and on the western slopes of Pilot Ridge. Within the Pilot Creek watershed Forest Service Land Office Records (on file Six Rivers National Forest) indicate that approximately 12 homesteads were patented. All of the homesteads both prior to and after 1900 were located to the south of the Dan East Trail with the upper portion of the basin remaining relatively undeveloped. Total acreage claimed in these homestead entries was 1,845 acres. In addition, several parcels of land were also acquired under the Timber and Stone Act and under the Cash Entry law. The homesteads and other parcels which were acquired by private individuals after 1900 are outlined on Map 2 and Table I.

There were people from different social groups moving into the Pilot Creek watershed and adjacent lands during this period. There were a number of single men (such as Fred Becker) who established homesteads in the area. Some of the consultants (PCWI#1) interviewed indicated that after World War I a number of the men coming to settle in the region were veterans who seemed to have suffered problems related to the war and wanted to live in an isolated area away from civilization. Also, there were a few families but due to the problem of no nearby school it was difficult for the homesteaders with children to provide for an education.

During the homestead era there were two principal methods which were used to find locations in the region to homestead. The first consisted of a number of individuals (including the parents of PCWI#1) who acquired their homesteads in this isolated region by knowing a local homesteader who provided information on potential spots to homestead. In addition, there were a number of men who were known as "locators." They were paid a fee to locate and provide information on parcels of land and how to do the paperwork.. For example, in 1908 Joseph Pratt (Six Rivers Homestead Files) who settled within the Pilot Creek watershed hired a locator, H. Hocks, to find him some property to homestead. Mad River District Ranger Gray reviewing the homestead application noted that the land was:

...located by...H. Hocks--others [homesteads] were located by the same locator on nearby land--entry man was from a distance. John Sands a settler living near states that the locator merely rec'd [sic] compensation for

locating and making survey of the land for the entry men.

It is likely that the early 1920s saw the greatest number of single men and families living within the Pilot Creek watershed during the historic era. By about 1920 some of the earlier homesteaders were already leaving the region and selling their homesteads. Consultants (PCWI#1, PCWI#2) indicate that one of the main reasons for this was the fact that the area was so isolated that the children of the settlers were not able to attend school. It appears that the homesteaders in this area placed a high value on education and often would leave temporarily (in the case of the PCWI#1) or sellout (and leave for good when their children were of school age). At one time there were so many children moving into the area that a school was proposed for the "School Section 36" (located on Pilot Ridge) but the minimum of five students was never realized. Some of the homesteaders sent their children to the Harts Valley school to the west of Showers pass and to the north there was also a school along Bug Creek (PCWI#1).

By 1922 when the Belcher Title and Abstract Company issued a map (on file Heritage Resources Six Rivers National Forest) showing the parcels of property in the Pilot Creek watershed, numerous homesteaded parcels had already been sold. At this time there were three principal landholders who appear to have been accumulating property in the area: F.G. and R.B. Hinkley, Agnes Johnson, and the Northern Redwood Lumber Company (Belcher Title and Abstract Map).

Grazing 1905 to 1940

By the time the Forest Service took over administration the days of large bands of sheep spending the summer grazing in the Pilot Creek watershed and the slopes of South Fork Mountain were already a thing of the past. In the late 1800s some ranchers as far away as Loleta and the lower Eel River valley had driven bands of sheep over Showers Pass into the Mad River Basin and the summer range of South Fork Mountain and the Pilot Creek watershed.

With the numerous homesteads being established the large areas of open rangeland needed for the large numbers of sheep was a thing of the past. In addition, as noted earlier, by the turn of the century, due to economic factors related to the profitability of the wool market, cattle were the principal livestock animal to be found on the rangelands of the Pilot Creek region. It is likely, however, that some sheep were still summering here at this time.

Due to the problems related to overgrazing and deterioration of the grasslands, in about 1934, the Forest Service closed the Pilot Creek watershed to open range grazing as it was "destroying the rangelands." After this time most of the livestock were gone except for a very few regulated grazing permits (PCWI#2). By the early 1940s the sheep market had collapsed. This collapse was mostly a result of market forces as synthetic fibers were being brought to the market place and the price of wool collapsed (PCW#2).

During the period (prior to about 1934) many of the local homesteaders also grazed some animals on Forest Service lands. Some of the large ranching operations also grazed their livestock, principally cattle, in this area (PCWI#1). One consultant (PCWAI#3) indicated that the Northern Redwood Lumber Company and the Russ Company were the principal ranching operations in the area at this time. In the case of the Northern Redwood Lumber Company the lands that they acquired within and adjacent to the Pilot Creek Watershed were bought specifically to run cattle. The reason for this is that the Corbel brothers (who owned the company) operated a large mill and related logging operations in the region adjacent to Blue Lake and Corbel. They raised cattle in order to supply their logging camps with fresh beef and the open rangelands of the Pilot Creek region were within a reasonable distance of their logging operations.

In addition to the grazing of livestock, feral pigs also contributed significantly to the degradation of the grasslands in the Pilot Creek Watershed. Interviewees (PCWI#1, PCWI#2) indicate that during the first several decades of the twentieth century feral pigs were common in the region. Feral pigs were found throughout the Bald Hills country from about Pilot Rock south to Round Valley. They consumed bulbs, acorns, and even some grasses and were a major problem for livestock owners (see Keter 1990, 1994b).

The Era of Development 1940-1990

[See *Pilot Ridge Country 1947 to 1996: The End of History and the Rest of the Story* Keter 2011, pdf at: www.solararch.org]

By the late 1930s most of the homesteads within the Pilot Creek Watershed had been abandoned and the settlers had sold out and moved on. Most of the homesteaders who established the small subsistence homesteads in the early 1900s sold out to the large landholders who were attempting to acquire the private lands in the area (the 1922 Belcher Title and Abstract Company Map indicates that the Northern Redwood Lumber Company bought up the majority of the homesteads within the Pilot Creek watershed). It is likely that by 1940 no year-around residents were living within the Pilot Creek watershed (although several residents were living just to the west of the Pilot Creek/Mad River divide). For the next decade or so until about the mid-1950s human land-use activities within the watershed were at perhaps the lowest level of the historic period. In addition, with the beginning of World War II the interest of the nation, including the Forest Service, was on the war effort and few land-use activities were pursued within the Pilot Creek watershed. During these years, however, the region was still a favorite location for hunters.

During the late 1940s the principal activities in the area were related to trail maintenance, Forest Service administration, and hunting. Pilot Ridge country has always been recognized as prime deer and bear hunting territory. It is also clear that despite the over grazing and homesteading that had been taking place in Pilot Ridge country for over fifty years the region was still rich in wildlife (see PCWAI#1, PCWAI#2).

By the 1950s the market for Douglas-fir was increasing and logging and road building were steadily pushing into eastern Humboldt County and the Pilot Creek region. The first road into the Pilot Creek watershed was constructed in the late 1950s. Nearly all of the original homesteads and parcels of land acquired under the Timber and Stone Act and through Cash Entry were then owned by a man named Bliss who had bought the lands from NRLC (PCI#3). S&H Timber Company from Oregon bought the timber rights from Bliss for many of the parcels of land in the vicinity of Pilot Ridge and the Pilot Creek Watershed. The first road leading into the Pilot Creek region was started in 1955. It headed to the south and east from the end of the Maple Creek County Road. One interviewee (PCWAI#3) indicated that the logging operation slowly made its way from the end of the county road towards Pilot Rock logging parcels of land as they went. He also indicated that they hit Whiting Ridge in about 1958. He was not sure if this area (one 160 acre parcel is adjacent to Whiting Spring) was logged at that time or in about 1960 after Simpson Timber Company bought the lands.

The parcels of private land within the Pilot Creek watershed were logged about 1960 (possibly by Simpson). A road down to these parcels was constructed along the general route of the old Dan East Trail. During much of the time logging operations took place in this area tractors were used for yarding logs--even on extremely steep slopes and cable yarders were not used (PCWAI#3). It appears that the Forest Service granted a Special Use Permit to build the road down Whiting and Last Chance Ridges. The reason for this road was that there were a significant number of parcels of private land on the east slopes of South Fork Mountain. This area was logged at about the same time and a road was constructed along the eastern slope of South Fork Mountain for about ten miles. The pine from this area was trucked to Hyampom and on to the Sacramento Valley for milling. The Douglas-fir was trucked to the mill in Blue Lake.

During this period of time in the mid-to-late 1950s it appears that a large deer population still inhabited the area as one interviewee who worked for the logging operation (PCWAI#3) remembered that at that time one could see 200-300 deer a day in the area. In addition, black bear were still relatively common in the area.

In the early 1980s, a Forest Service Road (6N01) was constructed along the crests of Pilot Ridge, Whiting Ridge, Last Chance Ridge, and the northern ten miles of South Fork Mountain. Road construction began in 1982 and was complete by 1984. This paved road was constructed as a main haul route for logging operations on Forest Service lands and as part of the Forest Transportation System to connect the Lower Trinity and Mad River Ranger Districts. Prior to this time the road from Maple Creek to Pilot Rock (known as the Simpson Road) was gated and not open to the public. The only way to access the Pilot Creek drainage was via a rough jeep road down the crest of Pilot Ridge, a jeep road connecting from South Fork Mountain north to Last Chance Ridge, or via a long circuitous route from the Grouse Creek drainage (some of this last route was on private lands and access was controlled). With the construction of the new road use of the Pilot Creek watershed by deer hunters increased dramatically (PCWAI#1). Finally, in the mid-to-late 1980s a number of Forest Service timber sales took place within the Pilot Creek drainage. At this time a high grade dirt road was extended south along Pilot Ridge from 6N01 to the

southern end of the ridge and a number of side roads (for example down Hazen Ridge) were constructed.

Other major road building and logging operations on public lands also occurred in the vicinity of Eight Mile Ridge (in the southern part of the watershed) as early as the 1970s. Finally, after the Blake Fire of 1987 on the slopes of South Fork Mountain in the Henry Ridge area, a salvage logging operation took place which included the construction of several roads (2NJ17, 2N18) from the crest of South Fork Mountain down slope into the Pilot Creek watershed. Additional timber harvest sales and road construction took place to the north just to the west of Blake Mountain at about the same time.

Given the number of logging operations, road building projects and associated activity as well as the opening of maintained roads into the Pilot Creek watershed, and the accompanying dramatic increase in the number of hunters and other Forest visitors (hiking, OHV use, etc.) it is clear that land disturbing activities and human land-use activities during the last 30 years have resulted in more on-the-ground land disturbance than the previous nearly one hundred years of land-use activities during the historic period.

Environmental Dynamics: The Effects of Land-use Practices during the Historic Period

With the beginning of the historic era human land-use activities which for hundreds of years had influenced the plant and animal communities of the Pilot Creek watershed were, relatively speaking almost overnight, changed radically. For thousands of years the aboriginal groups of the region had used the Pilot Creek area for their hunting and gathering activities. Suddenly, within a decade new and very different land-use activities began to occur. While the earlier cultures had used the land to provide a subsistence base for habitation, the newcomers were more interested in what might be termed resource extractive economic uses. Over the next century ranching, hide hunting, trapping, road building, and timber harvest activities, resulted cumulatively in major effects to the dynamics and trajectories of plant and animal communities within the watershed.

In addition to the land-uses outlined above, homesteaders settled in the area, feral pigs ranged throughout the watershed, and hunters and fishermen visited the area in relatively large numbers. The result of all of these activities has been a change in the distribution of plant communities, the invasion of non-native grass and forb species, the disappearance of native grasses--especially perennial bunch grasses, and a general decline in wildlife populations with grizzly, wolves, and perhaps other mammal species becoming extinct.

One other major factor contributing to environmental changes in the watershed is the change in fire regimes. During the prehistoric area fire was a major factor influencing the dynamics of plant communities. With the change from periodic burning by aboriginal groups to control of wildfire by the Forest Service after 1905 the distribution of the oak woodlands has declined while that of Douglas-fir forest has increased (see Keter 1994a for

an in-depth discussion of this process).

A generalized model which documents the prehistoric environment and the changes that have occurred during the historic period has been developed for the North Fork of the Eel River located about 30 miles to the south of the Pilot Creek watershed. The processes taking place within the Pilot Creek watershed are similar in nature and the interested reader is referred to Keter (1994a) for a more in-depth overview of the changes to the environment in the north coast region since the beginning of the historic era.

Interviews undertaken for this study (PCWI#1, PCWI#2 see Appendix 1) included questions related to changes in the environment witnessed by long-time residents over the period beginning in about the 1920s and continuing until today. These interviews present data on animal populations within the Pilot Creek watershed and brief comments on the changes in the distribution of vegetation communities. It is suggested that the interested reader consult with these interviews for more information related to wildlife populations and environmental dynamics within the Pilot Creek watershed.

Historic Trails of the Pilot Creek Watershed

[See Keter 2013 *Historic Trails of the Pilot Ridge Country* pdf at www.solararch.org]

Along with sheep grazing and homesteading during the late 1800s another important land-use activity within the Pilot Creek watershed was the construction of a number of trails. Some of these trails were used as transportation routes passing through the basin linking the interior sections of Trinity County with the coast. Others were used by local homesteaders for access to their remote and isolated homesteads. Probably all of the trails were used by the ranchers as "trailways." Trailways were routes followed by bands of sheep as they moved through a region grazing in one location for a period of time and then moving on after consuming the local forage. Many of the perennial springs located within the Pilot Creek watershed were the location of sheepherder camps. These springs are often located along the trailways (Mud Springs, Whiting Springs, Pistol Springs etc).

The trails (refer to Map 1) located within the Pilot Creek watershed are discussed below.

The Eel River-Weaverville Trail located on Eight Mile Ridge (The Yager Creek to Indian Valley Trail)

This trail is quite likely the earliest trail in the region; it appears to predate the County Line Trail ([see below] that was also referred to as the Eel River-Weaverville Trail when the old section of the trail was rerouted) by several years. Some confusion on the construction date of this trail exists, however, research for this project, including the location of an 1872 GLO map (located in the Supervisor's Office, Six Rivers National Forest) seem to suggest that this is the route of the trail built by the Cooper brothers of Hydesville in 1852 (Rowley

Ms., Bledsoe 1956:98).

If that is the case, it would have been the earliest trail to be constructed in this region of the Mad River basin and the earliest to cross the Pilot Ridge watershed. On the 1872 GLO map the trail is shown as heading west from the crest of South Fork Mountain directly down Eight Mile Ridge crossing the Mad River about 2 miles below the mouth of Pilot Creek. Later maps show the trail bearing to the north near the western end of Eight Mile Ridge dropping down and crossing the Mad River near the mouth of Pilot Creek. On the earlier GLO map, the trail is labeled the "Indian Valley Yager Trail." The name Indian Valley was an early name for Hyampom (Rowley Interview).

Evidence regarding the possibility that this trail predates the Eel River Weaverville Trail can be found in an article in the *Humboldt Times* (August 9, 1856) which recounts the travel of a Mr. Howland over the new Eel River-Weaverville Trail (ie. the County Line trail). In the article Howland states that:

Leaving Shower's Pass, I took the new trail, surveyed by E. Davis Esq., bearing **to the left of the old trail** [emphasis added]....

The whole distance is about 80 miles and I should think a pack train might make the trip easily in about five days. The distance by the old trails varies little from this, but they are not so pleasant, and have not the facilities to be found on the new one.

The location where Howland headed "to the left" is most likely where the new trail forked to the north of the older trail just to the east of Showers Pass (as shown on the 1872 GLO map) while the older trail continued east crossing the Mad River and climbing Eight Mile Ridge.

Eel River-Weaverville Trail (County Line Trail)

Given the hypothesis presented above on the route of the first trail through the Pilot Creek Watershed it is likely that a new route also referred to as the Eel River-Weaverville Trail was constructed in 1856 (*Humboldt Times* August 2, 1856). Later on this trail would be known as County Line Trail. The trail crossed over Showers Pass from the Van Duzen basin into the Mad River basin crossed the Mad River to the north of Pilot Creek at Olmestead Crossing and climbed east to Pilot Ridge hitting the ridge top near Mud Springs. At this point it dropped down to Pilot Creek crossing the creek at the future location of Becker's Cabin. It then climbed South Fork Mountain headed north a short distance and then dropped down on the trending ridgeling to the south of Kurlin Creek to the South Fork of the Trinity River and to Hyampom.

This trail used for several decades as a main transportation route from cities on the Humboldt coast to the mining regions of Trinity County lying to the east of South Fork Mountain. The *Humboldt Times* (August 2, 1856) reported on the first pack train to carry

supplies from Eureka to the mines in Trinity County over the new trail. Over the next decade, numerous pack trains used this trail to move supplies from Humboldt Bay to the Trinity mines. This trail shows up on the 1872 GLO map and where it crosses the Pilot Creek watershed it is labeled the "Hayfork Yager" trail.

Last Chance Trail

An alternative route used to avoid the early snows on 6,000' South Fork Mountain, headed north from Mud Springs and circled around the head of the Pilot Creek watershed on Whiting and Last Chance Ridges. This side trail was known as the Last Chance Trail since it was the "last chance" to get around the high country of South Fork Mountain (Rowley Ms., PCWI#1, PCWI#2). Modern maps show this trail ascending South Fork Mountain to the south from the junction of Last Chance Ridge and South Fork Mountain. This section of trail was in later times referred to as part of the Last Chance Trail where it connected Blake Mountain with Last Chance Ridge it is likely however the earliest and original portion of the trail was the section along Last Chance Ridge which continued east around the toe of South Fork Mountain and then dropped down to Hyampom.

Whiting Ridge Trail

Sometimes the portion of trail connecting the north/south portion of the Pilot Ridge trail heading north from Mud Springs and the Last Chance Trail (on Last Chance Ridge) is referred to as the Whiting Ridge Trail. This is all part of the same trail system as Whiting Ridge connects between Pilot Ridge in the vicinity east of Pilot Rock with Last Chance Ridge section of trail (PCWI#1). It appears to have stayed on the ridgeling for the most part and there was a spur trail down to Whiting Springs located just to the east and below the ridge.

Torrey Corrals Trail (Blake Mountain Trail)

This trail connected with the Pilot Ridge Trail to the west of the watershed. After dropping down and crossing Pilot Creek, it passed by Torrey Corrals and ascended the South Fork Mountain hitting the crest near Blake Mountain. Blake Mountain was named after a settler (David A. Blake) who homesteaded on the slopes of South Fork Mountain in this area.

Dan East Trail

This trail was the most northerly crossing of Pilot Creek. It headed almost directly west from the junction of Pilot and Whiting Ridges dropping down and crossing Pilot Creek and ascending to the crest of South Fork Mountain about three and one-half miles north of Blake Mountain.

Pilot Ridge Trail

This trail traversed the entire length of Pilot Ridge. The southern portion of the trail (south of Pilot Rock) extended south to the mouth of Pilot Creek. The portion of the trail from Mud Springs south to the mouth of Pilot Creek was also part of the County Line Trail. This is one of the oldest trails in the area. It shows up on the 1872 GLO map. Pilot Ridge is labeled "Pilot Creek Ridge" on this map.

Henry Ridge Trail

This trail followed Henry Ridge from its junction with the crest of South Fork Mountain eastward along the top of the ridge as it descended to the mouth of Eight Mile Creek.

Skull Camp Trail

This trail came from the south crossing over Eight Mile Ridge into the Pilot Creek watershed and then headed north eventually paralleling Pilot Creek to its junction with the Torrey Corrals Trail. This is one of the older trails in the watershed and dates to a period of time before the 1900s. It shows up on the 1897 GLO map.

Hazen Ridge Trail

This short section of trail connects Pilot Ridge with the Torrey Corral Trail. It heads east down Al Hazen Ridge from Pilot Ridge and meets the Torrey Corral trail to the south of the mouth of Owl Creek. It was named after a settler who homesteaded on this ridge (Al Hazen).

Current Status of the Historic Trails

Every historic trail within the Pilot Creek basin has been impacted in some way. The majority of trails are crossed by roads or roads were built over the trails. Another activity which has affected the integrity of trails is timber harvesting. There are short sections of trail which retain a relatively high integrity. The Skull Camp Trail (05-10-54-169) has already been determined ineligible for the National Register due to its poor integrity. [The County Line Trail has been determined eligible for the National Register within the Pilot Creek watershed.]

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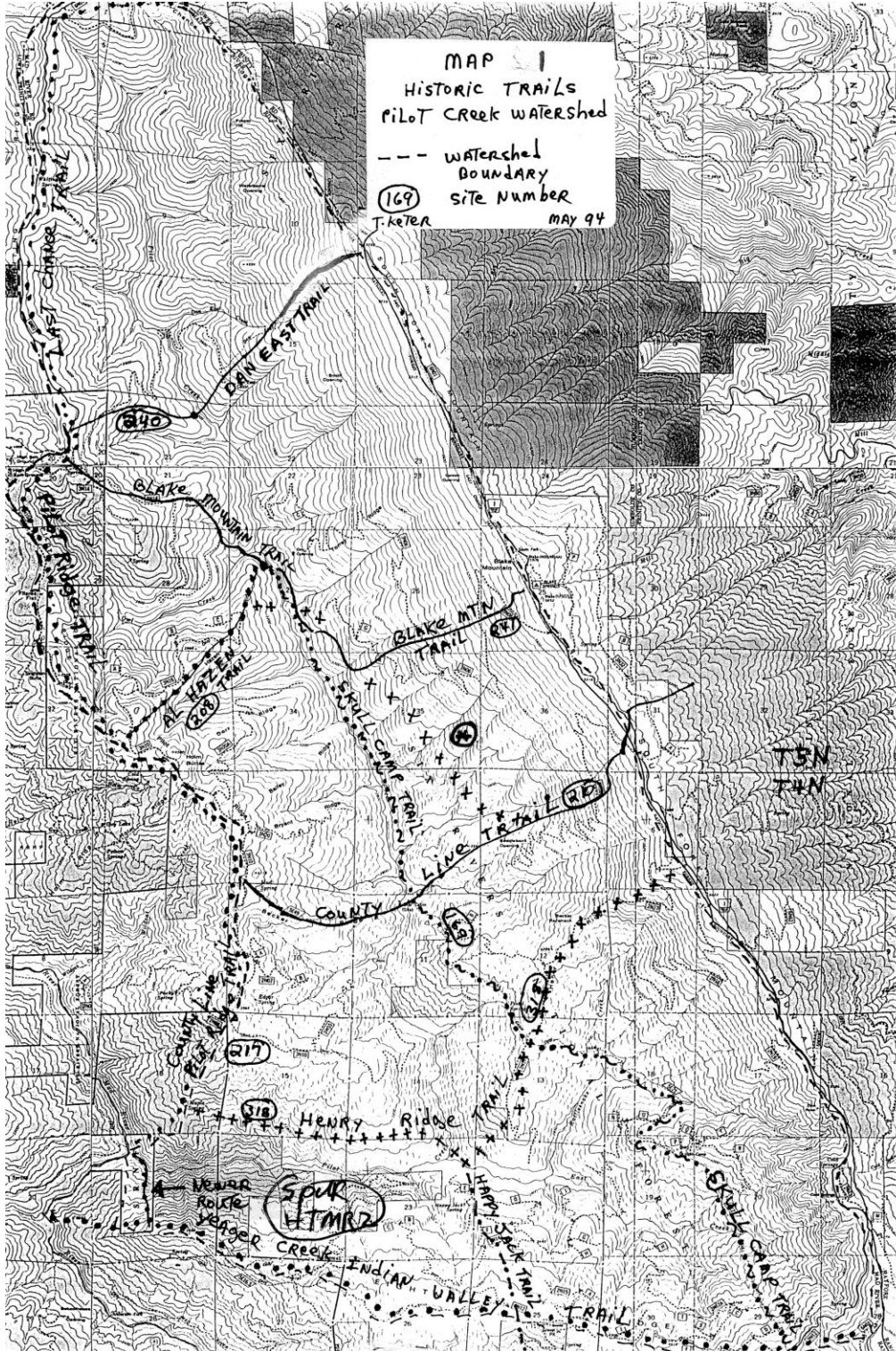
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Map 1

[For an updated and improved map and further discussion of trails within the Pilot Creek watershed see *Historic Trails of the Pilot Ridge Country, Humboldt and Trinity Counties, California* on my web site www.solararch.org TK 2015]



Map 2

[For an updated and improved map and Tables 1 and 2 see *Homesteading in Pilot Ridge Country 2014* at my web site www.solararch.org TK 2015]

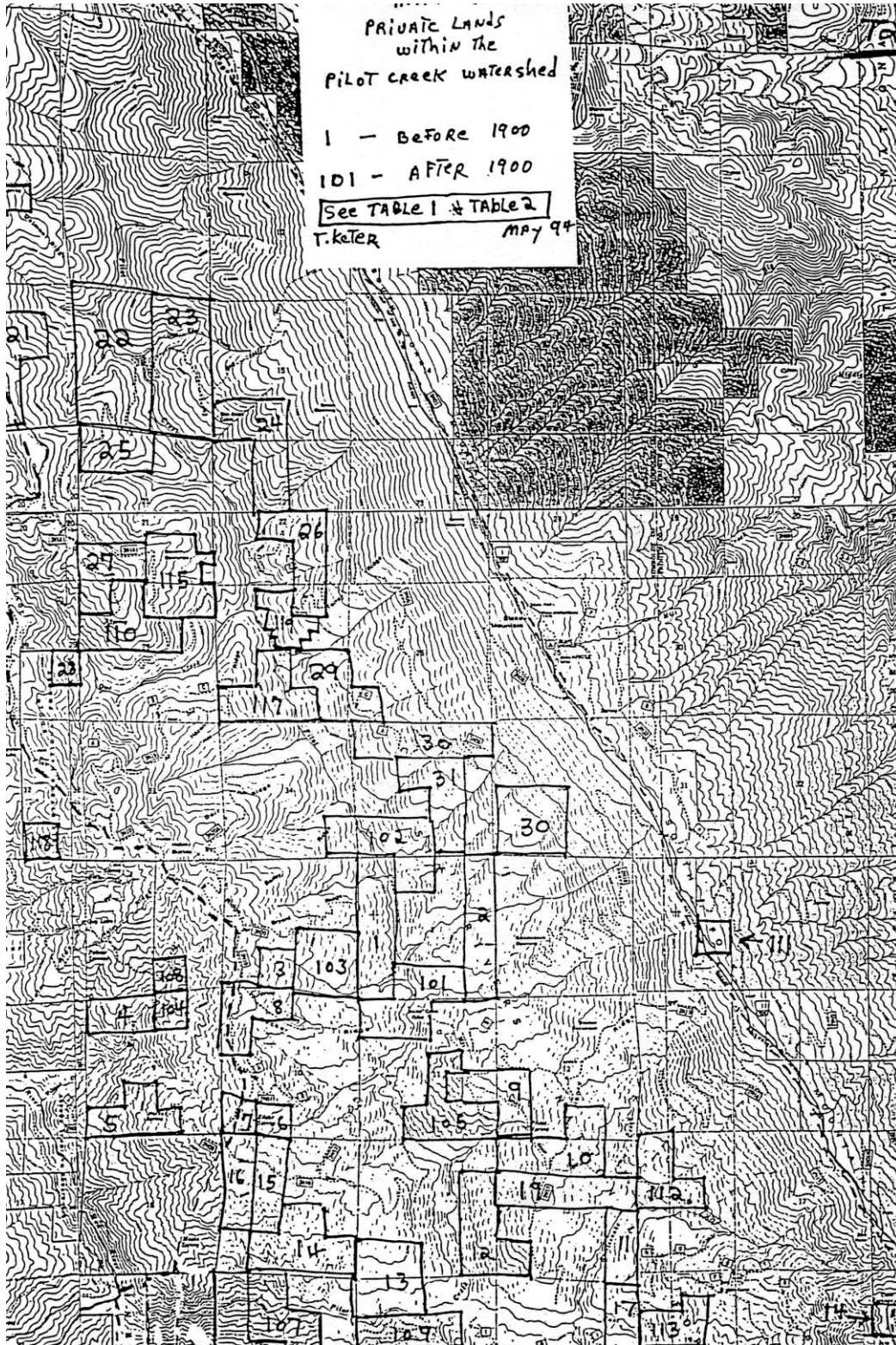


TABLE 1

Private Parcels of Land within the Pilot Creek Watershed

Entries Before 1900

Map Key	Name	Entry	Pat.	Type	Acres	Comments
1	John A. Russell	1877	1878	C	161	
2	Adamson J. Kenny	1884	1888	H	161	
3	Louis Hansen	1884	1882	H	40	Near Mud Spring
4	Jacob Fredrickson	1875	1882	H		West of P. Ridge
5	Nils Nissen Peterson	1879	1882	C		Pistol Springs to W.
6	Sidney Edgar	1875	1876	C	40	Edgar Spring in area
7	John McCaffrey	1875	1876	H	40	near Edgar Springs
8	Louis Hansen	1875	1882	H	100	20 outside watershed
9	John Henry	1876	1881	C	160	
10	Peter Knudson	1882	1882	C	160	
11	Charles B. Finch	1879	1880	C	80	
12	Issac Andrews	1879	1880	C	160	
13	Samuel Allen	1879	1880	C	160	
14	William Ferrilaugh	1875	1875	C	160	
15	Sidney Edgar	1875	1876	C	120	see also 6
16	John McCaffrey	1875	1876	C	120	see also 7
17	Charles B. Finch	1879	1880	C	80	
18	Christen Jensen	1887	1878	C	10	Pat.date conflicts
19	John Henry	1896	1877	C	160	Pat.date conflicts
20	James Whiting	1888	1891	C	60	100 acres to west Whiting Spring
21	John E. Hoskins	1886	1890	C		80 outside PCW
22	John H. Wilson	1886	1906	S	320	School Sec unclear why private
23	Thomas L. Thompson	1889	1910	S	320	see above
24	Hiers of John Bonham	1886	1890	T	160	
25	Moses Howell	1885	1888	H	80	
26	Samuel B. Shaw	1887	1890	C	160	
27	John E. Hoskins	1887	1890	H	120	see 21 also
28	Abram Gable	1874	1875	H	40	
29	August Peterson	1887	1890	C	160	
30	Robert Taylor	1877	1878	C	320	multiple of 160a
31	Thomas Sibley	1886	1890	C	160	

Table 2

Private Parcels within the Pilot Creek Watershed

Entries 1900 and After

Map Key	Name	Entry	Pat.	Type	Acres	Comments
101	Fred Becker	1901	1908	H	160	
102	Frank Bailey	1902	1910	H	160	Part Cash entry
103	George M. Brant	1902	1902	H	160	Bryant Ridge
104	Carl E. Cameron	1916			80	Relinquished W. of PCW
105	Zella R. Shepherd	1914	1923	H	160	3 parcels
106	Jessie Wheatley	1907	1909	T	160	
107	Lulu E. McElroy	1907	1902	T	160	
108	Oscar Stapp	1918	1923	H	80	W. of PCW
109	Joseph Pratt	1907	1908	C	160	
110	USFS right-of-way					acquired 1960
111	A. H. Jones		1904	S	320	School Admin
112	John B. Murray	1912	1917	H	147	
113	Ross R. Robertson	1914	1918	H	95	
114	Robert F. Elkins	1901	1911	H	40	Cold Springs
115	William E. Severance	1912	1918	H	140	Severin Spring
116	Vaugh W. Smith	1918	1924	H	140	Spring on parcel
117	Alfred Hazen	1902	1910	H	160	Hazen Ridge
118	Benjamin Beckman	1904	1908	H		W. of PCW
119	David A. Blake	1914	1915	H	62	Listed in Home- stead records

[The following interviews are on file at Six Rivers National Forest. For that reason I have left them unedited.]

Pilot Creek Watershed Interview #1

Date of Interview: February 16, 1994
March 16, 1994
April 6, 1994
May 11, 1994

Interviewee A: Man in his 70s
Interviewee B: Woman in her 70s

Interviewed by:
Tom Keter and Steve Pollard USFS
(first date rest of interviews TK only)

Reason for interview:
To collect historic information on the Pilot Creek Watershed and general area south of Board Camp Mountain in the Mad River basin.

The interview was held at the interviewee's home. In the summer, they still spend time at their homestead out on the southern end of Pilot Ridge. B's parents homesteaded in the Bug Creek area in 1916. A's parents settled out on Pilot Ridge in the Wild Cat Creek area in 1918. At that time, there were no roads even approaching this region and it was very isolated. The first roads into this part of the country were not built until after World War II. The closest town for supplies was Blue Lake. A remembered that they traveled up Pilot Ridge around the head of Redwood Creek to the west and past Twin Lakes and Snow Camp to get to town.

A's father's brother and a friend first moved into the area in 1916 to establish homesteads. This homestead is still in the family. This spot was first homesteaded a bit earlier by a Carl Cameron who relinquished his rights to A's father who finally proved up. During this era (from about 1915 to the early 1920s) there were many settlers and their families moving into the area to homestead. There were also a number of homesteads established in the late 1800s before the Forest Service came in.

A remembered that other homesteaders living in the area at the time he was growing up included his uncle, the Shepherds, John A. Murray (out on Henry Ridge), Smiths, Petersons, Hembucks, Strongs, Singleton, Sargents (on Coyote Creek) and the Days.

Most of the small 160 acre-size homesteads had some horses, ran a few cattle and hogs, and did

some trapping to earn cash. They trapped raccoons, wild cats, civets, mink etc. I asked if they had ever trapped fishers. A indicated that he remembers trapping 2 or 3 and that they paid about \$90 to \$100 for their pelts. They trapped fisher in December to February and this was in the late 1920s or early 1930s.

During this period of time, the area was open range and they ran their stock on their homestead and nearby Forest Service lands without permit. There were also two large ranching operations who used this area and they were the only ones who were running large herds of cattle--they were the Russ Company and Korbel Company. They did not run many sheep in this part of the country. A noted that the local lore has it that this was sheep country prior to the bad winter of 1889/90 when the ranchers in the area lost nearly everything. After that in the 1900s mostly cattle were ran in the Pilot Creek watershed. Most were by the local homesteaders who ran a few on their homesteads and adjacent lands. A said that Torrey Corrals was used for cattle and he did not remember this as a homestead area.

The homesteaders formed a close knit community and helped each other out--it was a remote area and it was a necessity to cooperate with your neighbors. Homesteaders did not earn much hard cash but made, hunted or grew nearly everything they needed. They had a cow for milk, in the fall they would butcher a hog and smoke enough meat to last through the winter. They also had large gardens, and hunted deer and other game. Many of the homesteads also had fruit trees--mostly apple with some plum trees and pear trees were not uncommon. Nearly all of the homesteaders used horses to get in and out of this country as the nearest wagon roads were miles away. There were also quite a few mules in the area--they were used to pack in supplies and were always led by a bell mare. A remembered that they also used bells on cattle. That usually the cattle would stay around and follow the animal with the bell.

I asked about wild pigs. A indicated that there were pigs but that they were wild in the sense that they escaped from the homesteads. He remembered that many the settlers had pigs (???were they fenced in??? how big and area???. A and his father used to drive pigs to Socita to the slaughterhouse. One time he remembers they drove a herd of 50 hogs to market. They used dogs to do this. Dogs were important work animals on the local homesteads and were used for hunting and driving animals to market--everyone had a few dogs on their homesteads--most were "long-haired" shepherds. A said that to drive pigs they usually used two dogs and that if you used too many that could also cause some problems.

Pigs were not fenced in and ranged throughout the countryside. They were fed occasionally to keep them returning and A remembered that often they would return to the barn if a storm was coming in. They rooted the ground everywhere, both in the oak woodland areas and the open meadows where they ate some species of plants. A said the Forest Service did not like pigs and thought they damaged the land. Finally, pigs were prohibited on public lands. For years afterwards, feral pigs still inhabited the Pilot Creek region. A noted that homesteaders contended that by digging up spring areas and opening up the ground water that they had some use.

The homesteader's cabins were usually made of local materials--Pete Holm was the only one who brought in lumber to build his cabin--he carried it in by mule. Most homesteaders used shakes

for roofs and siding.

The closest town was Korbelt and they would travel to town once a year for staples. At one time there were a number of children living in the area and they tried to establish a school in Section 16, the school section, but there were never quite enough children to meet the minimum requirement. Finally, A's family moved to the Showers Pass area where he went to school (Hart's Valley school) in a small one room cabin. There was also a post office at this location. He remembered that you needed "five and a half" students to establish a school. B went to school at her great uncle, Harmons homestead which was in the Bug Creek area. She rode horseback 3 miles each way to school (A walked 5 miles each way to school). B remembered that the homesteaders would gather at (????) and have dances. Everyone would ride their horses to the dances and they would dance all night and return to their cabins to do the chores the next morning.

A remembers that after World War I a number of men (nearly all single?) who had fought in the war moved into the area to try to homestead. They appeared to be "shell shocked" and suffered from some psychological problems and wanted to live in a remote area with few people.

I asked if A remembered any homesteaders in the Pilot Creek drainage. He said that there were quite a few--among them he remembered the names--Shepherd, Murray, Dan East, Severins, Smith, a man named Jensen had a cabin at the head of the Pilot Creek drainage--just over the ridge into the Grouse Creek drainage. [this is a recorded prehistoric site recorded by Keter and Gmoser in 1982--no evidence of the homestead was visible--the locations the open glade about 1/3 mile to the east of the junction of Last Chance Ridge and South Fork Mountain].

A said that there were a few homesteaders here prior to the turn of the century. One of them was Pete Holm. He settled in the area probably in the 1880s and raised sheep. He lost nearly everything in the winter of 1889/90. During this early period A remembered that another man Fred Bair ran sheep in this country.

Another homesteader was Happy Jack (A knew him by no other name) who had a cabin in the Pilot Creek basin. A remembered that Fred Becker had a cabin in the area. Becker raised race horses and A estimated that he had about 15-20 horses on his place. The local settlers used to go up on the large flat on Henry Ridge to hold horse races (this flat is the first large flat on the ridge after dropping down from South Fork Mountain the USGS 15' Pilot Creek Quad notes this location as "Becker's Race Track").

He also said that by the 1940s, nearly all the remaining homesteads had phones. Some were put in at least by 1918 since his family had a phone in their cabin. Each phone had a unique ring (for example one long and one short ring). The Forest Service furnished the line and phones and the homesteaders bought the batteries.

I asked what happened to the homesteaders who lived in the area since all are gone today. He said that it was not unusual for the Russ Company or the Korbelt Company to have people establish homesteads in the area even loaning them money from time-to-time then later after they proved up buying them out. By the end of World War II the homesteaders were nearly all

gone. Today, A's family are the only ones left who own their original homesteads in this region. Many of the homesteads were purchased by ranchers (including the Hinckley brothers Fred and Dolf).

A remembered that it was in the mid-1950s that the MacIntosh Company punched the first road into the region---they logged the old private homesteads down in Pilot Creek at that time and used a road that dropped down near the old Dan East Trail.

A remembered that at that time, there were many more deer than there are today in that country. He remembers at one time traveling through "Section 16--the school section" with his father and counting over 75 big bucks and many with smaller horns. At that time the country was mostly open oak woodland with much less Douglas-fir. B remembered that there used to be big beautiful black oaks 5'-6' in diameter. She noted that today they are disappearing--dying under canopies of Douglas-fir. One of the reasons that this country remained open was that like the Indians used to do, the ranchers when they moved out their herds--usually in about November used to set fires to burn the brush. Sometimes, homesteaders would girdle the fir trees to kill them since they wanted open country for grazing.

I also asked A about the flow of water from springs in the area. He indicated that it appears to him that the springs on average do not run as strong as they used to and even some of the creeks seem to have less water flow in the summer than in the old days. They both thought that one reason for this is that there used to be more rain and snow in the winter than there is today. I also asked if the area was more open. He indicated that it was, for example, on South Fork Mountain Potato Hill was more open and an area just to the south of it, Waterbarrel Opening, was a large prairie--it is gone now.

There were very few Indian families living in this area. B remembers only one. She did remember that a number of Indian families would visit the region near where she lived (Bug Creek) in the summer and spend time in the mountains collecting WHAT?? She remembers as a child seeing elderly Indian women who had "111" [tatoo marks) on their chin. Some of the places they camped included Bug Creek Butte "where the wind flows over" and "Hole-in-the-ground" on Chaparral Mountain where there were good springs there and a little lake."

There were numerous trails in the area connecting all the homesteads. Some of the homesteaders, including A's and B's fathers, used to earn money from the Forest Service in the summer by clearing the trails of brush. The Hyampom Trail I(also know as the County Line Trail) went east from Hydesville crossing the Mad River and passing by Blake Mountain. Pilot Rock got its name because during the early history of the area was used for a landmark. In the winter, they used to ski to get around--when the snows were deep it was the only way to travel.

Wildlife In Pilot Creek Watershed

Black Bears--There were quite a few bears but the number varied depending on the acorn crop in the fall. A notes that they used to travel up to the north and cross over Last Chance Ridge into the Grouse Creek drainage if there was not a great acorn crop.

Deer--a lot more deer in the 1920s and 30s than today. Some deer would spend the winter in the lower elevations of the watershed. A thought that opening up the logging roads and making it easier for hunters to get into the area contributed to the decline.

Eagles--There were some bald eagles but most were golden

Peregrine Falcon--A was not certain but thought that there were none in the area.

Bob Cats-- There were lots of bobcats in this country and they were one of the main animals trapped---A remembers that in the 1920s in one year they took 19 bobcats just in the Wildcat Creek drainage. They used to get advertisements from the various companies that bought pelts and would simply mail the pelts to the companies that offered the highest prices. Some of these companies were from as far away as Denver.

Mountain Lion-- there were quite a few.

Raccoon--They also trapped raccoons.

Coyote--There were quite a few coyotes in this country and there still are.

Wolves--A and B do not remember even hearing of wolves in this country--BUT about six years ago A saw a wolf two times in the Pilot Ridge area. It was Dark brown almost black and had Fluff on cheeks. (???how large)

Civet Cat (spotted skunk)--quite a few--they used to trap these.

Ringtail cat--Caught several of these in the area while trapping.

Fox--there were also foxes in the area.

Wolverine--they never saw any wolverine.

Marten--there were a few--they were higher up on South Fork Mountain they were not common but A did see one.

Fisher--There were more fisher than marten.

Porcupine--There were lots of porcupine.

Badgers--There were quite a few in this area in the 1920s.

Trout--although the trout are about the same size they are much less common than they were--A was not sure if these were resident or steelhead.

Eels--Eels were also found in the Mad River. Like the anadromous fish they had trouble getting

over the falls at the "Big Bend" see photo. A noted that a few steelhead usually made it past the falls as did some eels. Eels used their suckers to affix themselves to rocks and inch forward by reattaching their sucker to a rock. A remembers seeing the pool below the falls "full of steelhead" trying to get past the falls.

Quail/Grouse--there were lots of quail and grouse in this country.

Pigeons--After mentioning that another consultant (PWA#i2) had talked about all the pigeons in the area--A indicated that yes he also remembers thousands of pigeons. He thought they were most common in the fall and that they were there to consume acorns. He remembered that one time he shot a pigeon for food and found 7 acorns in its throat.

Lady Bugs--Also A and B remembered seeing millions of lady bugs--one time he remembered seeing a huge "ball" about three foot in diameter of solid lady bugs. The seemed to be out in the late summer or early fall.

Social Issues

I asked the questions from the social issues group but A and B did not have too many concerns. The main concern they had was related to the deer hunters in the area. Questions 2,3,5,6, and 7 are answered in detail in the above interview. The areas of concern (Question 1) had to do with the possible opening of a deer hunting season for does. They thought that this was a bad idea and that the deer population was already too low. Also that hunters would often shoot a doe and keep hunting and then if they got a bigger deer or buck they would simply leave the doe unclaimed. They also complained about the number of hunters and that in the Pilot Creek area they tend to litter and have even committed acts of vandalism such as taking down the sign on the gate at Pilot Ridge that identifies their cabin as being down that particular road. This is also connected to question 4. As noted in the interview---they believe that the deer herd was most affected when logging roads made this remote country more accessible.

Today, They spend the summer at their place just below and to the west of Pilot Ridge about two miles south of Pilot Rock. They use the area for hunting and hiking. They know where all the old trails re and occasionally use some of these trails.

Pilot Creek Watershed Interview #2

Date of interview: February 22, 1994
(Second) April 5, 1994

Interviewee A: Man in his 70s. His father homesteaded in the area and he knows the area well-- he also worked on the Mad River R.D. for a number of years beginning in the late 1940s. He retired from the Forest Service in the late 1980s.

Interviewed by Tom Keter USFS in regards to the history and past land-use activities within Pilot Creek Watershed and Mad River Basin.

I met with A at a restaurant in downtown Willow Creek. He gave me several pages of notes on the history of the area (attached) and some maps to copy.

His grandparents homesteaded in the area just to the west of Showers Pass and over the divide from the Mad River. There was a small school near here called Harts Valley--it was within about a mile of the homestead. The family eventually moved to Fieldbrook so that the children could attend school. (high school?)

A has studied this area for years is knows much of its history. He talked a bit about the trails in the Pilot Creek drainage (see attached) he said that the Hyampom Trail from Hydesville crossed over Showers Pass and into the Mad River Drainage. It climbed the ridge to Mud Spring then dropped down and crossed Pilot Creek at the Becker Cabin site. It then climbed SFM and headed north to about Blake Mountain where it dropped down Kurlin Ridge(to south of Kurlin Creek) to Hyampom and then north to Big Bar (Cox Bar). Much of the trail within the Pilot creek basin is gone due to logging and the 1987 Blake fire.

He noted that the County Line Trail (also known as the Hyampom Trail) crossed the Mad River at Olmstead Crossing and that Bledsoe (1885:221-222) mentions several killings of packers by Indians took place at this spot.

He noted that South Fork Mountain (SFM) is 6,000' in elevation and that to avoid the early snows when crossing to Hyampom, there was a longer alternate. The trail headed from Mud Springs north up Pilot Ridge then east along Whiting and Last Chance Ridges (see the Trails section of this report). It then went around the north end of SFM (passing Cow Chip Springs) before dropping down to Hyampom. This was the "last chance" to get around SFM hence the name. He also indicated that the trail from Blake Mountain--north to Last Chance ridge has a trail but it was not part of the original Last Chance trail. Over the years it appears that this trail has come to be called a part of the Last Chance Trail. He also thought that there was no name for the trail along the top of SFM--it is likely that with the easy travel and open country this was a natural trail or way [quite likely dating to the prehistoric era] and that over the years it was developed but was not a main trail connecting two localities.

A noted that one of his sources indicated that at one time Hyampom Valley was called Indian Valley--this fits in with the GLO plat showing the trail from "Yager Creek to Indian Valley."

The section of the County Line Trail from Mud Springs to Becker cabin was paralleled by a FS phone wire and the trail was cut deep like a trough due to the hundreds of pack mules and horses using it (it was also used by livestock). It was a steep haul from the Becker Cabin up to the top of SFM.

I asked why in the 1920s people began to abandoned their homesteads--he noted that parents thought education was very important and that often when children reached a certain age the parents would move in order to provide an adequate education. A noted this kind of move happened in his family when they moved to be closer to a school in the Hydesville area.

By the mid 1860s most of the Indians ("Nongatl in this area") were gone from this country either killed or placed on reservations.

Wildlife

I asked about the wildlife in the area during the homestead era.

Elk

No--my father who came in here in the 1880s never saw any elk in the area.

Bald eagles

In all the years as a MR employee he never saw a bald eagle until the Ruth Reservoir came in. There may have been a few but very rare. There were some golden eagles and many hawks

Peregrine Falcon

Locals did not pay much attention to the species of birds they were either "chicken hawks" those up in the mountains and "fish" hawks close to the river--he does not remember anyone mentioning peregrine falcons.

Quail and Grouse

they were in the area but he did not recall extremely large populations.

Civit Cat

A small skunk they were not very afraid of people and they were found all over the area.

Ringtail cat

He remembers that there were some in the area.

Bobcats

He said that there were lots of bobcats and that they were very common.

Mountain Lions

They were also very common out in the Pilot Ridge country.

Coyotes

During the period A remembers there was always lots of coyotes in this country

Wolves

His father said that the last wolf killed in the region was in the Kelsey Peak (southern end of SFM) area in about 1913 or 1914. There were never very many in this country at least during the last 100 years.

Grizzly bear

They were gone by the time most homesteaders moved into the area. They were killed early on as unlike black bears they do not run but stand their ground so it was easy to hunt them down.

Black bear

There was a large population. Hunters would always see bears. The population was large because in the basin were both areas of conifers and forest and also lots of oak trees with acorns.

Wolverine

There has been a big argument over this critter. The government scientists say they are here but the locals say that they have never seen any and that what people are seeing is fisher.

Marten

These were rare but they did occur in Pilot Creek watershed.

Fisher

There were lots of fishers in the area especially in Pilot Creek drainage. A said that even though pilot Ridge was open, there were lots of true fir stands at the higher slopes of SFM and also some good stands of timber on its slopes.

Porcupine

There were not a lot of porcupine at that time they "were kind of rare"

Badgers

Very rare--"I saw one in the area"

Wild pigs

The domesticated pigs of settlers escaped captivity and for years there were large

numbers of "wild" pigs in the area. They were common into the mid-1930s. A remembers seeing the evidence of their ground disturbance activities. Under the oak trees there would be a disturbance of the ground almost as if someone had dug it up. The pigs rooted for last years acorns under the leaves. A remembers his grandfather would close down his lumber mill each year for a month to go hunting in the area and they would always bring back deer and wild pigs.

He said that the Pilot Creek area (Pilot Rock) was really the divide from the forests of the north and the open oak woodlands which stretched all the way south to Round Valley (there were some open areas to the north on Pilot Ridge and the connecting ridgelines up to about Berry Summit but the main oak woodlands region began at about Pilot Rock). It was in the Bald Hills from Pilot Rock south, that the wild pigs were most common--there were not many north of this point.

Salmon

A said that he never saw a salmon in Pilot Creek or even the Mad River up this far--he thought that there was a barrier--"a falls" lower down Mad River at a place called "Big Bend" that prevented their migration upstream. His family never caught any salmon here and they fished in the river as early as the 1880s.

Steelhead

A did not know if they were catching steelhead or resident trout in the Mad River but the fist were about 2 ft. long and it was easy to catch a lot of fish in the river during the summer. The best fishing was in Mad River but Pilot had trout but they were smaller.

Band-tailed Pigeons

He noted that there were thousands of band-tailed pigeons in the area. At times in the fall "the ground was blue with pigeons eating acorns" and that there were thousands and thousands.

Lady Bugs

One thing A volunteered which he thought was notable was the number of lady bugs in the area. He said that in one spot in the rocks you could stick your arm up to the elbow on lady bugs and that the stems of hazel were coated several inches thick with ladybugs.

Rattlesnakes

He remembered that there were also lots of rattlesnakes in the country during this period (1940s)

There were not a lot of homesteads in the Pilot Creek watershed compared to some of the other areas but there were about 8 to 10. Al Hazen had a cabin in the area as did Fred Becker. A thought the 64 flood may have taken out the Becker cabin. A remembers that Becker smoked constantly "he always had one in his mouth, one on his ear ready to smoke, and he was rolling one". Marvin Stapp's father came by the cabin one day and found him in bad condition due to

emphysema he bundled him up and took him to Showers pass where he was taken by auto to the hospital in Eureka where he died. He is buried in the Hydesville cemetery.

A remembers another person who lived in the area but maybe not all the time--his name was Gustafson he had a cabin in the area in the 1920. The Jackson place was due east of Pilot Rock in the pilot Creek drainage--this was possibly the old Whiting Place. Whiting was a sheep man before the turn of the century. Whiting Springs was named after him--it was the likely location of a sheep camp.

Most of the homesteads were actually on the western slopes of Pilot Ridge south of Pilot Rock. A said that Torrey Corrals was a sheep corral and there was a cabin there--he thought Torrey was a big-time sheep rancher in this country before the turn of the century.

A said that the Shepherd Place was located near the mouth of Pilot Creek. The Murrays were on the SFM side of the Pilot Creek drainage somewhere up the mountain slope.

Dan East's cabin was still standing when he worked out in this country.

A also, despite being a former Forest Service employee, criticized the way the area in Pilot Creek and on SFM had been logged over the last few years. He said that the foresters had a quota and "to hell with the environment" and that "this [logging] is how foresters got their [GS] 12's, 13's, and 14's. He said they destroyed many Indian sites and rare flowers and didn't care where they put a unit.

I asked how the settlers in the area made their living during the homestead era. He said his father told him that "they hunted a little, fished a little, worked a little" and with tongue-in-cheek he said "and stole a little" to makes ends meet. Some of them also ran a few cattle.

He said that in about 1934 the FS made the ranchers stop running sheep up in this country because it was destroying the rangelands. There were still sheep in the area on private lands but the market really collapsed in about 1941. After that time most of the sheep in this country were gone. A lot of this was based on economics. This was about the time that synthetics came on the market and wool prices collapsed.

He said up in this country sheep were sheared about once a year--in about June before the hot weather hit. The sheep were sheared by a group of men who traveled from ranch to ranch and were experts at it--they came from as far away as Sacramento or Oregon.

In the early years, the sheep were driven into the Pilot Creek drainage and the Mad River country in the early summer and many bands came in via Showers Pass. The winter ranges were in the Bridgeville area west to Hydesville and Rhonerville--some sheep were even wintered as far west as Loleta.

A said that there was much better water in the summer back then. The springs flowed better in the summer and the creeks had more water in them. He felt that one of the reasons for this was that from the 1880s into the early 1900s the winters were generally wetter than today and that

most winters they got from about 50"-60" of rainfall. In addition, there might be some decline due to the replacement of oaks by fir forests.

I asked about fires during this era and why Douglas-firs still managed to come in. He said that the number of fires started by ranchers maybe over estimated. He said that as a kid he did not remember many fires in the area (this was however after the FS came in and prohibited setting fires). He also said that the ranchers burned differently that the Indians. Ranchers burned later in the year when they were taking their stock out to winter range. Most times the fires didn't d much--they "squirreled around" but did not burn hot.

(A has a copy of the voter registration rolls for the Showers Pass Precinct for 1906.)

A felt that most of the Indian sites were along the ridges and that few places were adequate along Pilot Creek for a major Indian encampment--in addition they were more likely using this area seasonally and were interested in staying up on the ridges.

I also asked about development in the 20th century. He noted that after the decline of the homesteads in the 1920s when the timber and cattle companies bought out the small homestead parcels that the are reverted somewhat to a wilder (less populated) area. It was always popular for hunting and in the 30s and 40s was a favorite hunting area for deer and bear.

1950s

A noted that it was in about 1955 that the roads were first punched into the area. They came up from Maple Creek (the current Simpson Road) around the Bug Butte area and hit Pilot Ridge near Pilot Rock. The road continued around Whiting Ridge and Last Chance Ridges and much of the timber they got was from the east side of South Fork Mountain. They also logged the private parcels in the Pilot Creek Watershed that had been purchased from the homesteaders who had left and sold out. The MacIntosh Lumber Company was the logging company and they got a right-of-way to get to their lands from the Forest Service. They also logged the right-of-way and hauled out those logs.

(Max's cousin Charles (Chuck) Shriner of Westhaven was one of the cat drivers on this road project)

Social

Finally, I asked about any concerns he had in the area. A noted that he "wished that they had never logged the Pilot Creek area." It had move value in its original state due to the Indian sites and historic trails and there was not a large amount of timber. As for current management---he would like to see sections of the original County Line Trail preserved (for example from Becker Cabin to the top of SFM) since it was so historically important--perhaps erecting a monument on South Fork Mountain where the trail hit the ridge to note its location.

Pilot Creek Watershed Interview #3

Date of Interview: May 4, 1994

Interviewee A: (man in his 60s)

B: Wife

Post Office Box 806
Trinidad, Ca. 95570
677-0304

Interviewed by: Thomas S. Keter USFS

Reason for Interview:

To collect data on the land-use practices within the Pilot Creek Watershed.

The interview was held at the interviewee's home in Trinidad. Interviewee A was a cat skinner (tractor operator) who helped open the roads into the Pilot Creek region during the 1950s.

I began by asking what was the name of the company that first logged in the area. A indicated that the actual lumber company that did the logging was the S and F Lumber Company out of Oregon. Jess Forester was running the operation. Actually a man named Bliss owned the property and sold the logging rights to S and F. Bliss was a large property holder in Humboldt County and he bought some of the lands of the Northern Redwood Lumber Company (NRLC) [probably in the late 1920s]. It appears that NRLC was having financial problems related to the Great Depression and business set backs. In 1960 Simpson bought the lands in the area from Bliss. It appears that they also bought up many of the other NRLC lands--A was not sure if its was from NRLC or another entity.

S&F Built the first roads into the Pilot Creek region by extending what is now called the Simpson Road from the end of the county road at Maple Creek up to the Pilot Rock area. The road continued on out Whiting and Last Chance Ridges to the "backside" (the east side) of South Fork Mountain. There was a lot of private land in that area and the road continued on the side slope for about ten miles. A indicated that they started from the county road in 1955 and slowly made their way towards the Pilot Creek region logging as they went. They hit Whiting Ridge by 1958 and by 1959 had extended the road past Last Chance Ridge. A also noted that they entered the Pilot Creek watershed (the private parcels on the ridge and along Pilot Creek) via a route near the Dan East Trail in about 1958. He was not sure if the are was logged at this time or after 1960 when Simpson owned the land.

A indicated that at this time all of the logging was done by tractor even the steepest areas and that cable yarding was not used until after Simpson came in.

A also indicated that many of the roads that they put in were over the top of game trails and early pack trails. The reason for this is that they had the best grades and the most direct routes and they were easy to lay out.

The reason that logging was taking place at this time was economic--the market for timber after the war had improved. All of the Douglas-fir was trucked out to Blue Lake. Much of the Pine was not really very good timber ("it was watery") it was shipped out via Hyampom to a mill in the Sacramento Valley.

When they were building the road they at first commuted due to the short distance. As the road extended up towards Pilot Rock they set up a camp with trailers.

At that time there was still a resident of Last Chance Ridge by the name of Emmet Lewis.

A indicated that at this time there was still good hunting in the area and one could see 200-300 deer a day. Also there were lots of black bears.

Originally the Korbels owned the Northern Redwood Lumber Company which bought up many of the parcels of land in the region. At the time they bought the lands it was not for the timber but to run cattle. They had a large timber operation in Korbels and a cookhouse and needed land to run their beef cattle on to feed the men working in the woods and in the mills. A indicated that at the time they got the land in the area most of the Douglas-fir were only 15-20 feet tall and much of the area was good land for cattle grazing.