

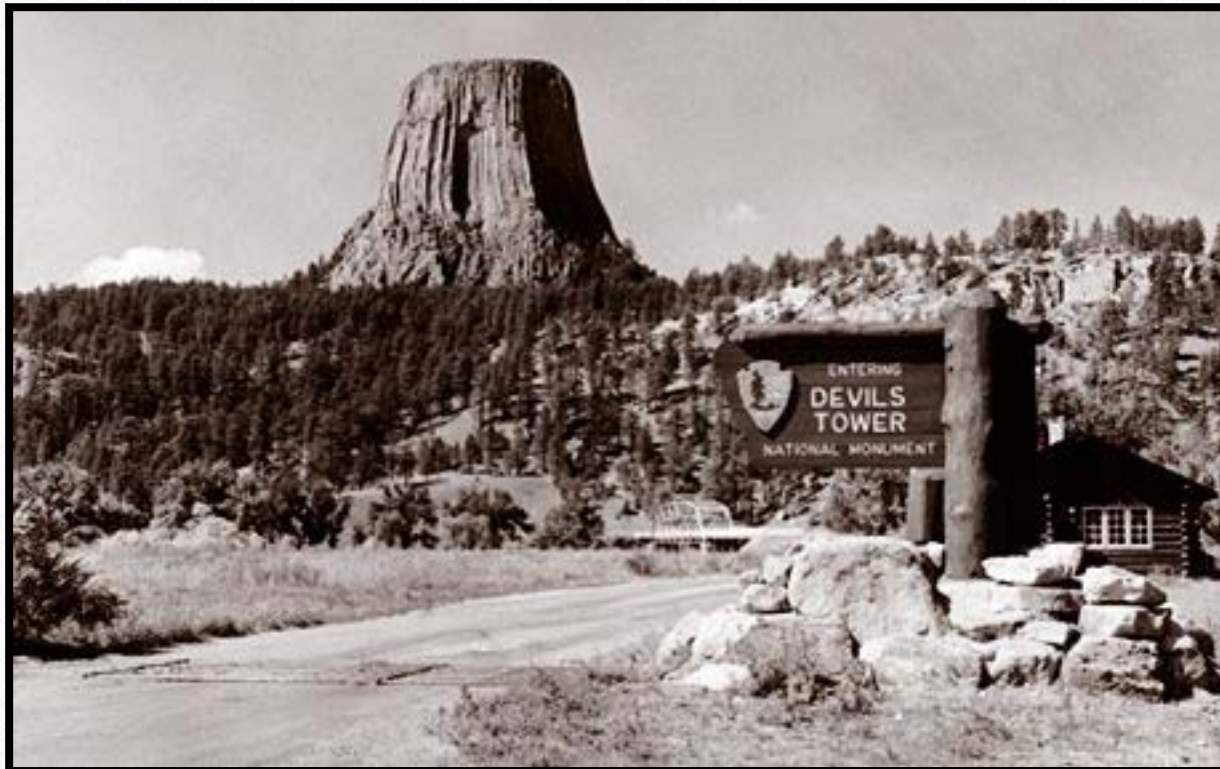
Devils Tower | Bear Lodge

Sacred Site and Modern Conflict

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J412

Winter 2014



Brief History of the Black Hills Region

- Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 changed tribal boundaries, created the Great Sioux Reservation.
 - In this treaty all of the Black Hills land was included in the reservation.
- In 1874, it is announced that gold has been found in the Black Hills area. The army is tasked with keeping intruders out of area per treaty agreement.
 - United States government begins looking into purchasing the Black Hills area from Native peoples.
- In 1889 the Sioux signed an agreement that would break up the Great Sioux Reservation.
 - This broke up the once large reservation into six smaller ones, making the rest of the land open to white settlers.
 - The Devils Tower/Bear Lodge site was one that was made available for purchase.

General History

- First white visitors are documented in William F. Raynold's journey to Yellowstone in 1859.
- On September 24, 1906, Theodore Roosevelt declared the first ever United States National Monument
- It was not until the 1930's that the site became more accessible to visitors with newly paved roads and new amenities (such as parking lots and visitor centers).



Tribal Ties

Over twenty different Native American tribes have cultural ties to the sacred site.

- Assiniboine & Lakota (MT)
- Blackfeet
- Blood (Canada)
- Crow
- Cheyenne River Lakota
- Crow Creek Lakota
- Devil's Lake Lakota
- Eastern Shoshone
- Flandreau Santee Dakota
- Kootnai & Salish
- Lower Brule Lakota
- Northern Arapaho
- Northern Cheyenne
- Oglala Lakota
- Pigeon (Canada)
- Rosebud Lakota
- Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota
- Southern Arapaho
- Southern Cheyenne
- Standing Rock Lakota
- Three Affiliated Tribes
- Turtle Mountain Chippewa
- Yankton Dakota

Modern Issue: Name Change Controversy



Traditional Names

There are many different traditional Native names and narrative legends that are associated to the scared site.

- Arapaho -- “Bear’s Tipi”
- Cheyenne -- “Bear’s Lodge”, “Bear’s House”, “Bear’s Tipi”, “Bear Peak”
- Crow -- “Bear’s House”, “Bear’s Lair”
- Kiowa -- “Aloft on a Rock”, “Tree Rock”
- Lakota -- “Bear Lodge”, “Bear Lodge Butte”, “Grizzly Bear’s Lodge”, “Ghost Mountain”

A Kiowa Sacred Legend for the Site

- One day a boy and his seven sisters were out playing, when the boy was grasped by a powerful spirit and was transformed into a bear.
- He began to chase after his sisters, who climbed up into a tree to escape him.
- As the tree trunk grew upwards the boy/bear clawed the trunk as it rose as a way to reach his sisters.
- The sisters were brought up into the sky where they then became and live as the seven stars of the Big Dipper.



Historical Proof of Bear Lodge Name

- In a 1869 geologic report of the Black Hills the site was listed under the Bear Lodge name.
- The formation was referred to in its traditional name in the 1876 commercially published *Colton Map of Wyoming and the Dakotas*
- Maps printed in 1877, 1880, 1891, and 1910 all refer to the Tower as Bear Lodge

How Bear Lodge Became Devils Tower

- Lieutenant Colonel Richard Dodge sent by United State government to investigate area because of claims of gold in the Black Hills area.
- He wrote and published a book in 1876, *The Black Hills*, that became a bestselling book of the time. It was popular with white settlers during the period. In his book he refers to Bear Lodge as Devils Tower. Saying that “[t]he Indians call this shaft ‘The Bad God’s Tower’, a name adopted, with proper modification by our surveyors”.
 - It is believed that someone in Dodge’s party must have wrongly interpreted the name.
 - *wakansica* (pronounced *wah-KON-she-cha*) in the Lakota language means devil or bad spirit.
 - *wahanksica* (pronounced *wah-ON-ksee-cha*) in the Lakota language means black bear.
- Because of this mistranslation and due to the popular nature of his book, many people took to calling the site Devils Tower, while in government documents it was still referred to as Bear Lodge.

Modern Issue: The Name Game

- To many tribes, the Devils Tower name is offensive to the sacred site and their culture.
- It reinforces the longstanding cultural oppression of Native communities by a dominant society.
- Many tribes want the Bear Lodge name to be reinstated because it has a longer documented history.

Modern Issue: The 1996 Name Change Discussions

- In March of 1996, a meeting was scheduled with 12 tribal representatives and the National Park Service in regards to how the government agency could address and accommodate tribal concerns.
- August 1996, word spreads that staff from Devils Tower National Monument were scheduled to attend the Western States Geographic Names Conference.
 - There was staff scheduled to attend and give a presentation on the national monument's name, but no formal name change proposition was given.

Modern Issue: The 1996 Name Change Discussions

- The idea of a name change for Devils Tower inspired public outcry and preventative legislative measures by Wyoming Representative Barbara Cubin.
 - She introduced a bill that would prevent a name change from every occurring at the Devils Tower site.
 - The bill was indefinitely postponed.
- Wyoming citizens are adamant that the name remains the same because the monument's name is so well known, and the tourism from the site is an important factor to the economy of the area.



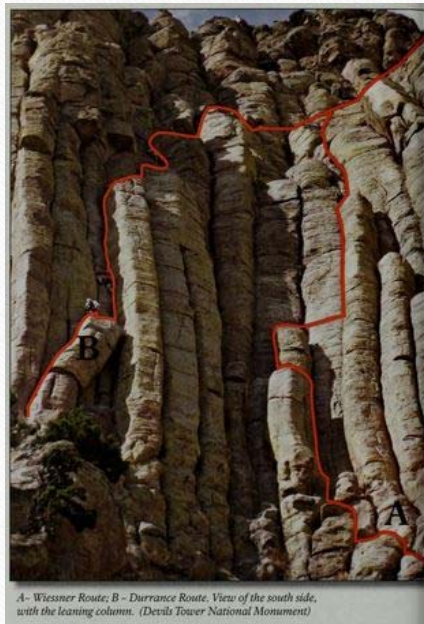
Modern Issue: The Name Change Discussions

- Deborah Liggett, the 1996 Devils Tower National Monument Superintendent, proposed that the tower itself should be renamed to “Bear Lodge National Historic Landmark”, while keeping the name of “Devils Tower National Monument” for the rest of the site.
- However, nothing came from this attempt at a compromise. A name change for the monument would require governmental action by both legislature and congress.

Modern Issue: Ongoing Name Change Struggles

- In 2005, the dual-name proposition was revived by Superintendent Lisa Eckert.
 - Congresswoman Barbara Cubin again introduced legislation that would prevent the name change from happening.
- No change occurred from this campaign.
- This is still considered an area of issue for the site.

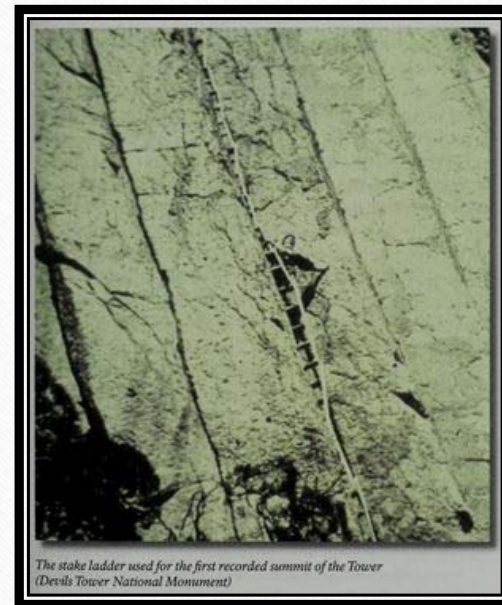
Modern Issue: Recreational Climbing



A- Wiessner Route; B - Durrance Route. View of the south side, with the leaning column. (Devils Tower National Monument)

Modern Issue: Recreational Climbing

- As the site became more accessible to the American public, it brought about increased tourism and climbers to the site.
- The first documented climb of Devils Tower/Bear Lodge occurred in 1893 by two Wyoming ranchers. They did so by constructing a ladder built into the vertical cracks of the rock.



*The stake ladder used for the first recorded summit of the Tower
(Devils Tower National Monument)*

Modern Issue: Climbing Destination

- Since 1937, there have been over 50,000 climbers that have made it to the peak of Devils Tower/Bear Lodge.
- In the 1990's there were over 6,000 people that came to the sacred site for recreational climbing.
 - That number has decreased down to around to 5,000 in recent years.
- The technical difficulties of climbing the monument range from 5.7 to 5.13 making it a popular destination for novice and experienced climbers alike.

Modern Issue: Desecrating Sacred Sites

- To many Native American tribes, the Devils Tower/Bear Lodge site holds significant cultural and religious importance.
- The climbers and the increased tourism of the area has created conflict with Native communities because of the lack of privacy or respect during cultural and religious ceremonies at the site.
- They see the climbing materials left in the stone (such as bolts) and the physical act of climbing the monument as disrespecting the sacred site.

Modern Issue: Climbing

- There are almost 220 different reported climbing routes to reach the peak at Devils Tower/ Bear Lodge.
 - With over 600 metal bolts, and several hundred pitons embedded in the monument.
- There are several climbing guide companies that have commercial permits for use at the site.



Modern Issue: The 1995 Climbing Management Plan

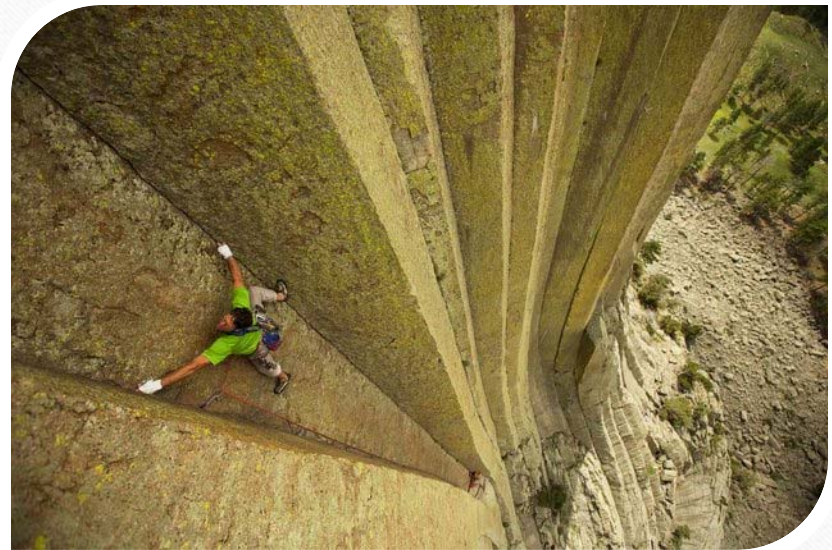
- In response to growing discontent among Native American communities, the National Park Service implemented the Climbing Management Plan as a way to address these concerns.
 - It was the end result of a two year deliberation period in which the agency met with leaders of Native American tribes, environmentalists, climbing groups, and other governmental agencies to develop a plan that would better serve these communities.

Modern Issue: The 1995 Climbing Management Plan

- The new plan was introduced early in 1995.
- Under the Climbing Management Plan:
 - The implementation of a voluntary ban on climbing the monument during the month of June.
 - During this month, many Native peoples congregate at the sacred site to perform cultural and religious ceremonies.
 - Many people in the Native, climbing, and various religious communities supported this particular effort by the Park Service that favored cultural sensitivity.
 - No new bolts or fixed pitons could be installed on the tower. However, it did allow for the replacement of worn and old bolts and pitons

Modern Issue: Implications of the 1995 CMP

- During its first year in effect, the voluntary climbing ban resulted in a 85% reduction.
- However, in August the National Park Service was met with a lawsuit instigated by Mountain States Legal Foundation on behalf of some of the site's commercial climbing companies.
 - These companies claimed that the voluntary climbing ban established by the Park Service was in contention with the Establishment Clause in the Bill of Right's



Modern Issue: The Establishment Clause

- Under the Establishment Clause it “prohibits lawmakers from creating laws “respecting [or favoring] an establishment of religion”.”
 - The companies were arguing that by enacting the voluntary climbing ban that the National Park Service was favoring the religion of Native Americans.
 - The restriction of activities on public land forced non-religious people to partake in that religion by default in observing the ban.

Modern Issue: The Opposition

- The opponents of the voluntary June climbing ban represented a group that potentially stood to lose income during the month.
- In media, they argued that Native Americans wanted to end climbing on Devils Tower/Bear Lodge permanently.
 - Which is an accurate statement, there are many (not all) in the Native communities who would rather see an end to all climbing on the sacred site.
- However, these opponents to the 1995 CMP also claimed that the “true” motives of Native peoples was to eventually end all non-Native access to the site in the future.



Modern Issue: *Bear Lodge Multiple Use Ass' v. Babbitt*

- In 1998, the U.S. District Court maintained the National Park Service's climbing plan.
- In 1999, it was ruled in the Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit that the voluntary ban did not conflict with the purpose of the Establishment Clause.
- And in 2000, the Supreme Court denied the plaintiffs appeals of the prior rulings. Thereby permanently finalizing the legality of the 1995 Climbing Management Plan.

Important Recent Changes



Important Changes: Voluntary Climbing Ban

- In recent years, the voluntary no-climb compliance rate has not as high as some park officials would like to see and the compliance rate had been in decline.
 - It reached a new low in 2004 with a rate of 69%.
 - However, in 2005 there were fewer climbers than there had been in the previous year with only 122 people making 283 climbs during the month as compared to 177 people making 342 climbs in 2004.

Important Changes: Societal Impacts

- In 2003, a new airport was scheduled to open near Devils Tower/Bear Lodge, since it was determined that it would not affect the monument.
- As a way to alleviate community concerns the Hulett Airport Advisory Board agreed to a few terms:
 - That there would always be a 2-mile no fly zone around the Tower.
 - During the month of June, as a sign of cultural awareness, they would enact a 3-mile no fly zone radius around the Tower for respect of Native American communities.

Important Changes: Dorothy FireCloud

- In 2006, Dorothy FireCloud was inaugurated as the first person of Native American descent to become Superintendent of Devils Tower National Monument.
 - She is a member of the Rosebud Sioux.





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