

NINAISTAKO: ORAL DOCUMENTATION OF CULTURAL USE BY THE BLACKFOOT PEOPLE



**CHIEF MOUNTAIN: ORAL DOCUMENTATION
OF CULTURAL USE BY THE
BLACKFOOT PEOPLE**

BY:

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ABSTRACT

The Chief Mountain area of the Rocky Mountains, which lies near the border of Canada and the United States, has long been an integral component of Blackfoot culture. Both the National Park Service and the Blackfeet Tribal Government have jurisdiction over this area and, when constructing policies, must be cognizant of this ongoing cultural affinity with the region. There are published materials documenting the spiritual and economic relationship between the Blackfoot people in the United States and Canada and the Rocky Mountains in general; however, the sources lack primary documentation and a focus on the Chief Mountain area. This project, *Chief Mountain: Oral Documentation of Cultural Use by the Blackfoot People*, is an important step toward remedying the vacuity. Blackfoot elders in the U.S. and Canada were interviewed to aggregate their knowledge pertaining to their extant cultural affiliation with the Chief Mountain area specifically. The elders articulated the historical and continuous cultural connection of the People to the area. In many ways, Chief Mountain represents a cultural stronghold for the Blackfoot. It is central to their worldview and currently serves as a primary location for the cultural and religious reemergence of the People's traditional way of life. The mountain symbolizes the need for cooperation across national jurisdictions because it is located on the boundary between the Blackfeet Reservation and Glacier National Park and is less than 7 km from the Canadian border. Cultural and ritual use of Chief Mountain is increasing, as is recreational use of the mountain. Many Blackfoot People believe it is time for a joint plan among the nations that will raise awareness of the mountain's importance to the Blackfoot People and will increase the level of resource protection that currently exists. Utilizing the information in this report, land managers can establish new policies or alter existing policies and achieve an improved cooperation between the Blackfoot People and the National Park Services in both the U.S. and Canada. As a first step, it is recommended that the information from this report be used as a foundation to nominate Chief Mountain to the National Register of Historic Places as a Traditional Cultural Property. The nomination would be a collaborative effort between Glacier National Park and the Blackfeet Tribal Historic Preservation Office and would include recognition and support from our Canadian partners.

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DECLARATION: BLACKFEET TRIBAL CONSTITUTION 1935

“The Blackfeet Nation sleeps in the shadow of the Great
Rocky Mountains,
It is the last encampment of a proud and mighty people
Who once roamed the prairies of a vast land which
Was called the “Big Sky.”
Driven here by force, we watched an endless flow of
Persons come and go- persons sent as servants by
The Great White Father in Washington, who came to
Serve, but only served themselves.
Suffering from their diseases, enduring hunger and starvation,
Deprived of our precious freedom, still we survived,
But the greatest of all was the loss of our pride and dignity.
So like the mighty grizzly bear who, when fall approaches,
Goes into a winter sleep, we went into our sleep.
Now, the winter of our suffering is over and we arise,
Refreshed with due strength, declaring to all men that
We shall form a new government, a new way of life,
Recapturing our pride and our dignity and fostering
Our culture and our heritage.
Then the last encampment of a proud and mighty people
Shall be the homeland for all Blackfeet Indians that
Shall endure for as long as the sun shall rise and
These mountains cast their shadows, and the Blackfeet
Nation will live in peace and harmony with our
Brothers and our neighbors, forever.”

INTRODUCTION

The Blackfoot People have utilized Chief Mountain as a spiritual and cultural area for centuries. However, past United States Government policies created an environment in which the Blackfoot People were forced to cede the area that is now Glacier National Park. Because of the survey techniques utilized to define the boundary of the land cession, Chief Mountain was divided into jurisdictional units. This resulted in the Blackfeet Tribe and Glacier National Park both managing the mountain. Both land managers must be cognizant of the cultural and spiritual importance the mountain had and continues to have to Blackfoot People.

Conceptual Basis

Glacier Park's history is often told in an ethnocentric manner, with little information offered about how the land was used by or obtained from the people indigenous to the area. In the past, the Blackfoot People's ownership and relationship with the area that is now Glacier Park had been set aside by a Eurocentric American Public. James Willard Schultz, a friend of the Blackfoot People, wrote several books about the Blackfoot People's experiences within the Rocky Mountains, which were labeled fiction and their historic value ignored. Unfortunately, people appeared to view the Indians and their history as merely entertainment for their pleasure, and no significant thought was given to the fact that these people had cultural and legal ties to the land.

When Glacier Park was established, the Blackfoot People, who were destitute and in need of employment, were hired to provide performances and entertainment for the people who came to the park. Ironically, they were used as advertisements to increase

park visitation. In brochures, pictures of Blackfoot people were used to encourage tourists to come to Glacier Park and watch the Blackfoot people dance and tell stories about the park lands. Beautiful buildings, in which the Blackfoot People were not allowed to enter, were constructed to provide lodging services to the tourists.

However, in recent years Glacier National Park has supported studies to identify tribal affiliations with the park. In one of these studies, Chief Mountain was identified as a place which possesses great religious and cultural significance to the Blackfoot People (Reeves 2001:153). Brian Reeves and Sandra Peacock (2001) wrote an ethnographic overview of the park and often cited James Schultz's publications of his interviews with Blackfoot People; however, they did little to single out or acquire new information about the past and current religious use of the Chief Mountain area. The mountain is currently under the joint management of the National Park Service and the Blackfeet Tribe.

As the Blackfeet Tribe and the National Park Service seek to create a management plan, they need information on the relevance the mountain has played and continues to play in the Blackfoot culture. The ethnographic studies, which have been done on the park, are often based upon secondary sources as primary information about Chief Mountain is severely lacking. The details held by the living cultural elders of the tribe offer unique insight into the cultural importance the mountain holds to the Blackfoot People. The information gained by this study will fill gaps in many peoples' understanding of Chief Mountain's significance to contemporary Blackfoot People, and will support dialogue to strengthen the cooperative relationship that exists between the Blackfeet Tribe and the National Park Service as they manage the Chief Mountain area.

Historical Context

As the Indians were viewed as inferior people or as side notes in the history of the United States, the majority of historical information available about them has been written through the eyes of their colonizers. This often results in a distorted version of Indian history. When doing studies such as this, it becomes important to be a critical reader. Most of the information available on Indians is based upon military accounts, employees of the Indian Department, and missionaries. These people were part of the political movement to assimilate Indians into American society; as such they often tell a tale of their emotional and physical responses to the Indian people and their struggles in converting the Indians into their own images. However, little is told of the actual life ways of the Indians, because the accounts given are filtered through the ethnocentric glasses of those lacking appreciation of Blackfoot culture. Taking this into account, I have attempted to tell a more accurate history of the Blackfoot People.

During the reservation era destitution forced Indigenous people into selling/ceding land that held religious or economic value to them, to the United States Government (Schultz 1916; Middleton 1954:2). Most land was acquired by the United States at the request of its citizens. In the case of the Blackfeet and the Rocky Mountains, the land was believed to hold mineral wealth (Kipp 2002:31). In 1895, the United States Government and the Blackfeet negotiated an agreement in which a part of the Rocky Mountains was ceded; however, the Blackfeet retained the right to hunt, fish, and gather within the lands. When no significant amounts of minerals were found, the land's intrinsic value was realized and a portion of the ceded territory was made into Glacier National Park on May 11, 1910 (Kipp 2002:27).

The Blackfoot Confederation was made up of three tribes: the Pikuni or Blackfeet, the Kainah or Blood, and the Siksika or Blackfoot. Their traditional territory extended east from the Rocky Mountains to the headwaters of the Missouri River, north to the Saskatchewan River and south to the Yellowstone River (Wissler 1910:7). They were a mobile people who subsisted by hunting bison and gathering the plants of the area. When the international boundary between the United States and Canada was established, the Blackfoot and the Blood, whose traditional territory had been to the north, fell under Canadian jurisdiction along with the northern portion of the Blackfoot band. The Southern Blackfeet remained under the jurisdiction of the United States. As United States and Canadian citizens pushed westward, the great bison herds were depleted, European diseases devastated native populations, and the Blackfoot were separated from their places of religious significance; their way of life changed forever (Ewers 1944:45).

The Blackfoot People signed their first treaty with the United States in 1855, which defined a common hunting ground for several tribes. The treaty granted permission for the United States to build military posts and granted a railroad easement within the common hunting territory. However, Indian Tribes were not permitted to establish permanent occupations there. In addition to the land and resource cession, the Indians guaranteed they would not molest any United States Settlers who crossed the area. In exchange, they were promised United States military protection against depredations committed by settlers (Deloria 1983:6). As payment for this, the United States Government agreed to supply the Blackfeet with goods and services for ten years (Cohen 1950:8).

Shortly after this treaty was signed, the bison herds which were the main food source for the Blackfoot were depleted. During this time, as the Blackfoot sought food, they often killed non-native people's cows to eat. The cow's owners petitioned the United States Government for restitution, which they often received. As the settler population increased, feuds between them and the Blackfeet People escalated until January 23, 1870. Prompted by the settlers, the United States military attacked a sleeping village of Blackfoot People. According to the military commander, Eugene M. Baker's, report on February 18, 1870 about the massacre; "The result of the expedition is one hundred and seventy-three Indians were killed, over one hundred prisoners, women, and children, (these were allowed to go free, as it was ascertained that some had the small-pox), forty- four lodges with all of their supplies and stores destroyed, and three hundred horses captured" (Baker 1870). This contradicted with Blackfeet accounts, which claimed there were fifteen men, ninety women, and fifty children killed (Schultz 1988:302). The message had been clear; all Indians, whether involved in the disputes or not, would be punished for violations against the settlers and their property, but no protection would be offered to the Indians for the numerous criminal acts they had suffered at the hands of the settlers.

In an attempt to stop the conflicts, an executive order was issued in 1874, which established a reservation for the Blackfoot. This was supposed to segregate the Indians from the settlers. At the settler's demands for more land, another executive order was issued in 1875, which reduced the reservation's borders (Kennedy 1978:15).

The Blackfeet, who were now confined to the inadequate sized reservation by military force, were unable to travel to find the plants and animals they had traditionally

subsisted on, and quickly depleted the available resources. They became completely dependant upon the United States Government for their survival needs.

Because of the Indian Department's total disregard of the Indian's circumstances, during the 1883-1884 winter, approximately six hundred Blackfeet People died of starvation (West 1958). After suffering the devastation of losing one third of their people, in an attempt to ensure their survival, the Blackfeet signed another treaty with the United States Government in 1888. In this treaty, they sold land, which insured goods and services would be provided to them for ten years (Kennedy 1978:12). When the annuities were about to expire from this treaty, the Blackfeet entered into an agreement in 1895, in which they ceded the western portion of their reservation for the sum of one million five hundred thousand dollars.

During the negotiation for the Agreement of 1895, many of the Blackfoot People voiced their objection to the land cession (Pollock 1896). This is recounted in the Blackfoot oral history of the negotiation. Blackfoot leaders such as Big Beaver, who objected to the land cession, became distressed over the negotiation process when United States negotiators began distributing alcohol to the Blackfoot People, forcing him and another opposition leader to flee the scene of the negotiations (WeatherWax 2005). This alcohol was likely supplied by Joe Kipp, a notorious whisky runner and negotiator representing the Blackfoot people in this agreement (Miller 2005). The Blackfoot People today believe that had these people stayed, the agreement would not have been made. In the end, only four signatures were obtained from Blackfoot People. The rest of the People were simply represented by Xs signed on their behalf by one person (WeatherWax 2005).

Later the Agreement was ratified by Congress and the money was paid over a ten year period beginning when the last payment was made for the 1888 treaty (Kennedy 1978:14). In the 1895 agreement, the Blackfeet insured their claim to the land by retaining their right to fish, hunt and gather wood there (Kennedy 1978:14). However, White Calf's sentiment at the closing of the negotiations represents the cultural and spiritual ties the Blackfoot people have with all of the mountains of the region, and with Chief Mountain in particular, "Chief Mountain is my head. Now my head is cut off. The mountains have been my last refuge... These words that I have spoken are not my words only, but the words of all that are here."

Problem Statement

The land ceded by the Blackfoot in the 1895 agreement was included in Glacier National Park when the park was created in 1910. The Chief Mountain area of the park is unique in that part of it is under the National Park Service jurisdiction, and the other part is managed by the Blackfeet Tribe. The mountain itself is bisected by the boundary between the park and the Blackfeet Reservation. Presumably this is a result of surveyor techniques of surveying peak-to-peak. The two management entities do not always get along as they have different mandates and missions. Currently the park and the tribe are engaged in boundary disputes and maintain very different perspectives about the Blackfeet People's retained rights to hunt, fish, and gather within the park. However, they must transcend their differences to jointly manage the Chief Mountain area.

As federal land managers, the National Park Service and the Blackfeet Tribe must take into consideration the cultural, as well as natural, resources under their jurisdiction. Chief Mountain has been identified in the literature as having spiritual significance for

the Blackfeet (Reeves 1995:145). In 1938, James Willard Schultz published an article in the *Great Falls Tribune* called “Indian Lifts Bison Skin Mystery Veil” (Schultz 1938). This article outlines the use of Chief Mountain as a spiritual place where Blackfoot people went to gain favor with their deities. He claimed that in 1902, hikers had discovered bison skulls on the top of the mountain, which had been used as pillows for the vision seekers. The Glacier National History Association in their publication “*Place Names of Glacier/Wateron National Park* ” Identified Chief Mountain as Nina’istuki, the home of Thunderbird, a spirit of great importance to the Blackfoot People (Holterman 1985:31).

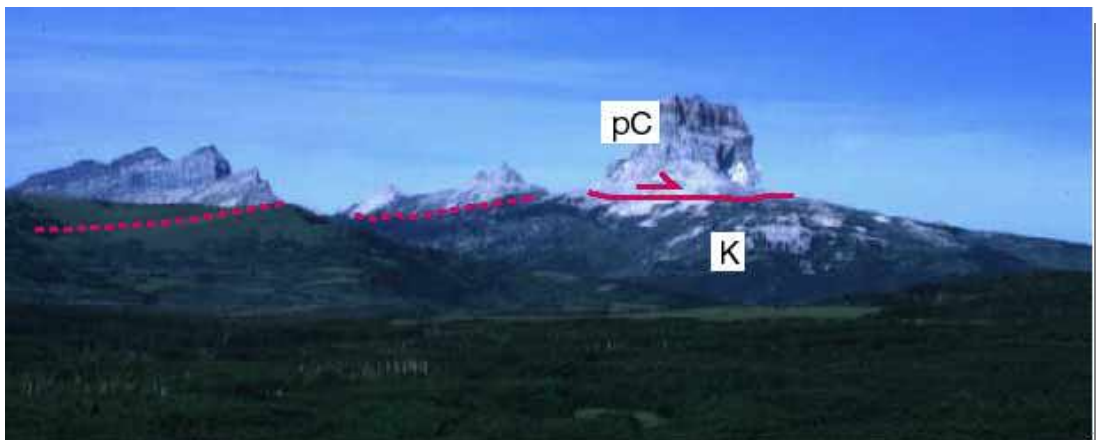
Because of the identified spiritual aspects of Chief Mountain, the National Park Service, in accordance with various federal laws and executive orders, must consult with the Blackfeet Tribe in their management plans. This research project investigates a means of preserving the sacred meaning of Chief Mountain by collecting oral histories from members of the Blackfoot Confederacy that describe many aspects of the Peoples’ vital connection to the landscape. This is an important step in what must become an ongoing dialogue between the Blackfoot People and the National Park Service toward preservation of this unique and critical resource. Because the research includes oral histories from both U.S. and Canadian tribes, the project has the potential to strengthen the working relationships among all three governments. The immediate situation of protecting Chief Mountain will be addressed in part by nominating it to the National Register of Historic Places as a Tradition Cultural Property.

STUDY AREA

Chief Mountain is located in one the outstanding natural areas of the world. Located on the eastern flank of one of North America's largest ecologically intact areas, known as the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem, the area encompasses a richly diverse, forested, mountain terrain to the west and the vast grasslands of the northern Great Plains to the east. Recognition of the region's uniqueness has come not only through setting aside land for two national parks (Glacier National Park in the US and Waterton Lakes National Park in Canada) but through three special international designations. Waterton-Glacier became the world's first peace park in 1932; the two parks were further designated biosphere reserves as part of UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Program; and in 1995 the two parks were jointly named as a World Heritage Site. The international designations of the park reflect the peace and goodwill between Canada, the United States, and the Blackfoot Confederacy, which borders the Peace Park on the east side.

The massif of Chief Mountain itself is bisected by the boundary between Glacier National Park and the Blackfeet Reservation. Therefore, it lies half in the park, half in the reservation to the east, and just over 7km from the international border that passes through the Peace Park. It is a very prominent landscape feature. While not the highest peak in Glacier, Chief Mountain stands ahead of the other mountains on the eastern edge of the Rockies and looks out over the plains. The most prominent peak along the Front Range, it can be seen for hundreds of kilometers around, from the highlands southeast of Calgary (190 km to the north) to the Sweetgrass Hills of eastern Montana (180 km east) to the highlands north of Great Falls (160 km southeast).

The area around Chief Mountain is special, both in terms of the natural landscape and in terms of its cultural significance. Geologically, the mountain is referred to as a klippe structure, which means it has been moved tectonically away from its place of origin through thrust faulting and erosion. The rocks of the mountain are of Precambrian (pC) age and contain some of the most ancient life forms found on the planet. These ancient ocean sediments form the cap of the mountain. The gentle flanks of the mountain and most of the surrounding area are made up of rocks formed during the Cretaceous (K) time period and are younger than the overlying rocks by millions of years. The Blackfoot People have lived near the mountain for millennia and are aware of its power. Use of Chief Mountain for ritual and ceremonial purposes goes back thousands of years. It is a sacred area.



Lewis Thrust Fault exposed on Chief Mountain, with Precambrian rocks (pC) resting on top of Cretaceous (K) aged rocks.

METHODS

Research Questions

The research questions posed in this project revolve around the knowledge that Blackfoot People hold about the Chief Mountain area. The project helps to identify key areas and resources found in the vicinity of Chief Mountain that need to be protected. It also addresses the current needs and desires of the Blackfoot People as they seek to maintain their cultural heritage, by answering the questions: Is the Chief Mountain area significant to the Blackfeet People? What is or what was the significance? Does the current management plan make available significant places for religious practice? Does the current management plan insure the availability of the resources for future generations? Do the Blackfeet Tribal government and the National Park Service take into consideration the Blackfoot People's wishes who reside in Canada? Is there any information that should be withheld from the general public about the religious significance of the area? What do the Blackfoot People currently think about their role in the management of the Chief Mountain area?

Research Design

This project investigates the relationship the Blackfoot People have with the Chief Mountain area in northwestern Montana. The primary focus revolves around the knowledge that the people currently hold about the area. Historical documents, archival materials, and published works were reviewed to provide a background of the prior relationship between the Blackfeet and Glacier National Park. After this initial phase, twelve interviews were scheduled to access and document the knowledge that Blackfoot People hold about the significance of the area and to identify key resources that exist in

the vicinity of Chief Mountain that need to be protected. The interview process also offers the opportunity for current needs and desires of the Blackfoot People to be expressed as they seek to maintain their cultural heritage. Because the Blackfoot Confederacy was separated with the creation of the United States and Canada, the oral histories are divided equally between the people who reside in Canada and those in the US. Questions for the interview (Appendix 1) were developed in consultation with Dr. Gregory Campbell of the University of Montana, Dr. Leigh Welling of Glacier National Park, and John Murray, the Blackfeet Historic Preservation Officer.

Twelve interviews were conducted and included representatives from three of the four Blackfoot bands: five interviews were carried out with the Southern Piegan people, five with the Northern Peigan, and two with members of the Blood Tribe. This distribution resulted in a total of seven Canadian interviews and five in the United States. Canadian interviews were conducted in Standoff, Brockett, and Pincher Creek, Alberta, homes of the Kainai and Northern Peigan people. United States interviews were conducted in or near Browning, Montana, which is the seat of the Blackfeet Tribal Government and serves as the central office for this study. Three interviews were with individuals located on the southern side of the reservation and two were located in the Browning area. No interviews were accomplished with a member of the Siksika Tribe; however, the Blackfoot people of Gleshen, Alberta are currently conducting their own traditional land use study.

Approach for Working with Tribal Elders

Initially, contact was made with John Murray, the Blackfeet Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, to seek authorization to carry out the project. For this project, a

cultural elder was not indicated by age, but by the knowledge they possessed. Following a review of published works and relevant documents, a list of questions were created and reviewed by Dr. Gregory Campbell of the University of Montana, Dr. Leigh Welling of Glacier National Park, and John Murray. After completing the initial stage of the project, the interview phase began. Potential interviewees were contacted, and interviews scheduled. Interviews were scheduled through a third person, usually a friend or family member. Once approval was given an appointment was made. Depending upon the interview setting chosen, food, tobacco, or sweet grass was purchased and given to the interviewee with a request for information.

The interviewees were given information about the goals of the project and the use of the information. Consent forms were read and signed by the participants that stipulated the information could be shared with the Blackfeet Tribe, the University of Montana and Glacier National Park so that management policies could be altered or created by Glacier National Park and the Blackfeet Tribe, and Chief Mountain could be possibly nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as a Traditional Cultural Property. Any other use of the information would require written authorization from the participants.

Interviews began with the question of whether or not the person had knowledge of the Chief Mountain Area that they would be willing to share. At that time, individual interviewees stipulated the format of the interviews. Many cultural elders chose a traditional format of storytelling over the prepared questions, while others allowed a formal interview setting. Although the interviewees were given the option to have the interviews filmed on a visual format, all declined and instead chose an auditory recording

of the interview. At the end of the interview, the participants were asked if any information they had given needed to be restricted; to which all replied no. After completing the interview process, the participants were asked if they knew of other potential interviewees. Every effort was made to contact the people identified. It was through this process other people were also recognized as cultural elders and contacted. At the completion of the session, the interviewees were given a gift of \$100.00.

After the interviews were completed, the auditory tapes were transcribed to offer the agencies a user friendly format in which they could also read the interviews as well as the interview summary that identified subjects of concern. Eleven of the twelve interviewees agreed to have their pictures taken. All interviewees agreed that they could be identified as participants of the project by name and biographies were created which consolidated the pictures, names, and information. These are attached to the beginning of the transcribed interviews. Finally, the contents of the interviews were analyzed for themes of significance and areas of concern that Blackfeet People about the Chief Mountain Area.

Project Timeline

The project was divided into two parts. The first being the survey of primary and secondary sources and the second being the interview/fieldwork portion. The entire study was to take place from January 2004 to September 2005.

From January to June 2004, research was conducted using secondary sources which documented the culture and history of the Blackfeet People. Special attention was given to their political relationship with the United States Government, and the

Agreement of 1895 in which the Blackfeet Tribe ceded what is today Glacier National Park.

During July and August research was conducted on primary sources and United States Government documents obtained from the Blackfeet Community College, the National Archives, University of Montana's Mansfield Library, the Montana State University's Library, and the Montana State Historical Society.

In September, financial support was sought to fund the fieldwork portion of this study. In May of 2005, interview questions were created and potential interviewees were contacted to schedule appointments. From June through September 2005, interviews were conducted.

By September 15, 2005, the interviews were transcribed and a draft of the official report was submitted to the funding agency, Blackfeet Historic Preservation Office, and Glacier National Park. In November a draft that can be released to the public was created as well as a confidential version that will be given to Glacier Park and the Blackfeet Tribe with copies of the taped interviews.

RESULTS

The results of the interviews given here highlight the primary issues and areas of concern that were raised by more than one of the interviewees. Much of the knowledge about Chief Mountain is contained and transmitted in story form. Stories are fluid; they are always moving. This is a traditional form of communication. However, several themes emerged from the interviews that involve traditional use of Chief Mountain, how it fits into Blackfoot culture and worldview, and thoughts that people have toward a better management of the area. The remainder of this section is organized to highlight

the themes that emerged from more than one interview and point to issues and areas of concern surrounding the Chief Mountain area.

Sharing Knowledge of the Area

The Blackfoot people who were interviewed gained their knowledge of the area by two forms of transmission. One form of transmission was that they were taught throughout their life. This group of the interviewees stated that they did not know the exact moment that they learned of the area. This was a gradual process of being told stories during the winter months and at night and being immersed in the traditional culture since birth. The second form of transmission occurred later in the life of the informant, when the interviewee wanted to participate in the traditional spiritual life of the Blackfoot culture. These people sought out traditional elders who passed on their knowledge.

At one time the knowledge of who would use Chief Mountain and for what purpose would privileged information and shared with only the Elders and people who were directly involved. However, all interviewees were willing to share their knowledge with people who are interested. They believe sharing stories and information at this time is important toward reclaiming lost spiritual and religious knowledge. The loss of this traditional knowledge is in part a result of the religious and cultural suppression that the Blackfoot People have experienced.

In all of the interviews, reference was made to the policies and laws of the United States and the Canadian governments that were created to stifle Indigenous religions and spirituality by making their practice illegal. In defiance of these laws and policies, it was noted that many people continued to practice and teach these spiritual practices only in a

secret environment. This allowed for the passing of this knowledge to future generations. Informants stated that they were freed by the passage of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act in 1978, but that the damage had been done to people's ability to openly speak about their spiritual beliefs and practices. Not only was it discussed that people were afraid to speak out because of the laws, but also because of the ridicule they might experience from people of their own culture who had converted to Christianity. Sharing stories and information at this time is important toward reclaiming lost spiritual and religious knowledge and reestablishing the traditional Blackfoot culture for present and future generations.

Connections with the Broader Landscape

The Blackfoot People have lived in this area for millennia. The traditional territory was from the Saskatchewan River to Yellowstone Park and from the Rocky Mountains in the west all the way east to the Dakotas. This is the world of the Creator, or Napi. All of the landscape is sacred. And while Chief Mountain itself is significant, all of the mountains are known to have power. Consequently, there was concern raised from several of the interviewees about trying to separate just one mountain and area from the others. In the Blackfoot worldview, to do this is like removing one piece of an intricate three dimensional puzzle that is under construction and cannot stand alone without the missing piece.

Two areas of special significance that were mentioned in several interviews, either along with or in reference to Chief Mountain, were St. Mary Lake and the Sweet Pine Hills (Sweet Grass Hills). St. Mary Lake gave the Beaver Bundle to the Blackfoot People. This is the first of the sacred bundles and pipes and is very revered. According to

oral history a person went into the water and obtained the knowledge of the ceremony and songs associated with the bundle at the lake. Each of the animals of the area gave a song to the bundle. Because of the relationship between the Blackfoot People and their spiritual world and environment all of the plants and animals of the area are represented in the bundle. Later another bundle was given to the Blackfoot at what is now Waterton Lake.

The Sweet Pine Hills (often referred to as Sweet Grass Hills), which are considered by many as the homeland for the Blackfoot People, are often discussed in connection to Chief Mountain. More than one interviewee mentioned that you can see the Sweet Pine Hills from the mountain. It is significant for people to view their homeland, as it gives them perspective on life, or a worldly view. It is important to realize the connection between the two areas and both are frequently referenced in prayers.

Keeping in mind that Chief Mountain cannot be understood in isolation, the participants did their best to explain the significance that Chief Mountain and the surrounding area have in their worldview. One participant described Chief Mountain as the Blackfoot Stronghold. It is a prominent mountain, the strongest mountain in the Front, and it stands out from the rest.

The Blackfoot used Chief Mountain to define their territory and it has always been an important place of power. The prominence and visibility of the mountain provides guidance and a landmark for travelers. According to oral history, the Blackfoot who traveled utilized its appearance to assess their location. They would recognize it and

would know where they were in relation to other locations such as rivers and streams or how many days it would take to travel somewhere else like down to the Yellow Stone.

The mountain was sometimes used a “staging area” because of its location and because of its power. When the Blackfoot people would hunt or go on a raid, they would look to the mountain for protection and they would pray for spiritual support. Sometimes they would leave articles, such as moccasins and food, at the base of Chief Mountain prior to a hunt or a raid so that if they came back empty-handed they would have something. The mountain would guard their supplies.

Today, according the Blackfoot People who reside in Canada, the vision of Chief Mountain removes the artificial boundary that separates the Confederacy into northern and southern bands. The mountain belongs to all of the Blackfoot People and it symbolizes that the 49th parallel does not exist.

Origin Stories and Relationship to the Source

The Blackfoot People, the Real People, the Nitsitapi, have always had a relationship with the source of life. Chief Mountain is a giver of life and a giver of knowledge. All of the creation stories of the Blackfoot People go back to Chief Mountain. To the Blackfoot People, the Creator gave the source of life so that the people could retain their relationship with the spiritual world, the Source of Life, and their traditional domain. Part of the creation stories was that the buffalo came out of Chief Mountain. The buffalo provided all of life’s necessities to the People such as clothing, shelter, spirituality and identity. The societal structures, the medicine bundles are all related to the buffalo. One interviewee stated that the buffalo coming out of Chief Mountain indicated that life began on Chief Mountain.

Chief Mountain is considered the oldest spirit of any of the mountains. It contains ancient knowledge. It is central to how they receive knowledge and guidance from Napi, the Creator. Chief Mountain has epistemological significance for the Blackfoot. The Blackfoot People's relationship to Chief Mountain is central to their philosophy, to their spiritual realm and belief system, to their traditions, and their visions for future and present time.

Guidance and Gifts from the Spirit

In the Blackfoot worldview, all things in the universe have a spirit. Things such as rocks, plants, animals, and landscape areas have spirits that contain power that if requested can be transferred to the individual. When help is being sought, a person first consults with the spirit beings to get direction on where, when, and how long to go.

Chief Mountain was identified as a powerful place to go to seek guidance. It is common knowledge that people go there to sweat, pray, and fast. They pray to the mountains and to the animals and spirits that live there. It is known to be occupied by powerful spirits and ancestors of those who have prayed there before. There is a place near Chief Mountain called Writing on the Wall where people would receive messages, where they could read omens of the future.

Some believe there is an old man's spirit living in Chief Mountain, that the spirit of the mountain is an old man. It is believed that the spirit of Thunder resides within the heart of the mountain. In the Blackfoot ceremonial life, when people talk about the Thunder Medicine Pipes, there is always reference made to Chief Mountain. A central story about the mountain is that of Brings Down the Sun and how he received his bundle here, which contained the power of Thunder.

Brings Down the Sun had a relationship with the Source of Life which allowed him to bring down the sun. The oral history states that Brings Down the Sun was at the base of Chief Mountain when he saw a mountain lion that ran into a hole on the top of the mountain. Brings Down the Sun began throwing rocks into the mountain to see if there was a bottom. Eventually he begins to travel down the side of the mountain when he looks back and sees a flash of light, Thunder. He went into a dream state and was in a teepee. The man and woman of the teepee were arguing about whether or not to kill him. The man turns to Brings Down the Sun and tells him that he is a disrespectful man, who almost hurt his children when he threw rocks into the mountain. Hanging above Brings Down the Sun were some bundles. The man told him to select one of them. After four times and help from the man's son, he selects a bundle. The man tells him that it is one of his most powerful bundles. The man taught him how to construct the bundle and the ceremony to perform. When he awoke, he constructed the bundle. Later, when his family was constructing a Sun Lodge, a storm moved in. Brings Down the Sun brought his bundle he received from Chief Mountain and performed the ceremony and sang the song. The storm separated and moved around the camp, coming together after it had moved past the area of the Sun Lodge.

This story explains how the power of Thunder was transferred to Brings Down the Sun from the spirit who makes his home in Chief Mountain. This is important because many things for the people come from thunder; it is important to the annual renewal of life, helping to bring new life every year and to continue the life we have. People reference this spirit in their daily lives; one interviewee spoke of always putting

tobacco in her pipe for the spirit that lives at Chief Mountain, asking him to watch over and protect the people.

Chief Mountain is a church and represents the holiest ground for the Blackfoot People. For some, this is where they will receive their purpose in life and be guided by the spirits who will stay with them always. The Creator put the mountain there so that the people could find their purpose in life. Many people have received their name from Chief Mountain. Whatever exposes itself to you there, animals, plants, water, it all has significance to your vision and to your life's purpose.

The water that flows through the area was identified as "holy water" because of the powerful spirits that reside in the area. It is used during the sweat lodge ceremony to purify and cleanse one-self. Historically moving water such as creeks and rivers had preference to standing water. Water is also a life giver. Some people gather water from Chief Mountain and bottle it to take with them.

The animals in the area play an important part in the spirituality of the Blackfoot. They all have the ability to offer assistance to the people through the transfer of their knowledge and power. Animals such as deer and antelope were important for survival. Talking to them in visions and dreams shows reverence and helps to maintain a relationship with the animals.

Informants identified two uses of plants in the area of Chief Mountain. They are spiritual and medicinal. Plants such as sweet grass, sage, and kinikinic are found and harvested there. These plants are utilized for purification purposes and in ceremonies. Some plants that were used for their medicine properties were identified to be exclusively located in the area; however, the informants declined to give their name or what they

were used for. It was also noted that, Berry Woman received her instruction in medicinal plants here. The spirits gave her songs that represent all of the grasses.

In summary, the entire environment around Chief Mountain plays an important part in the spirituality of the Blackfoot People. It is alive and everything there, whatever appears before you, is sacred. However, while the mountain contains wisdom and power, you may not experience it if you have not prepared properly through ritual and ceremony.

Prayer and Fasting

According to the interviews, the spiritual use of Chief Mountain and the surrounding area is common knowledge among Blackfoot People. Many of the interviewees had participated in a fast and prayer or what is known as a vision quest on the mountain or in the area. Those who had not participated had heard stories from several individuals who had.

Fasting and Prayer is a vehicle used by the Blackfoot People to obtain assistance from the spirits who reside in, around, or on the mountain. The fast is for 3 to 4 days, generally without food or water. During this time you would pray for a vision. It has been said you cannot become a man or a woman without a vision or you cannot become a warrior without a vision. Many people believe that this the main use of the mountain and it seems inappropriate to speak of going to the mountain for a hike or a casual visit such as a class field trip. This would be irreverent. During the period of fasting and prayer, silence, being able to view the physical landscape and a pure environment are required.

When asked to discuss specific areas where vision questing would occur, the informants all noted that it could be any where in the area. The ultimate place would be on the top of the mountain. However, histories and stories about the vision quest process

all contained different areas. These areas were from the base up the sides to cliff shelves to the top of Chief Mountain. Questions were also asked about the time of year people would go there.

Most of the informants believed it was impossible to define a definite time of the year people would go there, although spring and fall rituals are common. Chief Mountain is important in traditional ceremonies that are tied to the spring. For example, when the ice begins to break in the spring, the beaver bundles are opened in a ceremony. Shortly after the first sound of the thunder the Thunder Pipe Ceremonies are held. However, when a person goes, would be determined by the demands made upon them during the initial phase of the process, and why they are going.

When a person wants to go to seek power or assistance from the spirits, they begin by going through a transfer ceremony. This is a complex ceremony in which the power to animate the knowledge gifted to the person during their vision quest would be obtained. This is the time at which the person would be told where, when and how long to stay. The only people privileged to this information would be the people who were their support team during the duration of the quest. The correct preparation and transference of knowledge is critically important if one is to truly learn and be allowed to teach others. Knowledge transferred through ritual is more than just information or even wisdom; it is a transfer of spirit and power. The spiritual transfer process is interactive knowledge in a sense. It is always moving and can be used in different ways.

To do a vision quest properly, the Blackfoot way, you have to be prepared, both mentally and physically. It is not to be done casually and it takes proper focus. If you do not approach the mountain with reverence it is unlikely the spirits will talk to you. It is

not a question of just going up there; it is what you do to get there and what you collect along the way. It's the journey. The harshness of the mountain is also an important aspect. For some, this why it is used for ritual. Every part of a vision quest is difficult. It is a challenge to your humanness. The importance of vision quest is how a person overcomes the challenges that are put before them. You are tested here. You are tested with all of the elements and with your faith.

Offerings

People receive from Chief Mountain but they also give. When a person goes to the mountain for a vision or for guidance, cloth or other forms of offerings are left for the spirits who reside in, around, or on the mountain. Some of these offerings are given in appreciation and recognition of the help the spirits give to the Blackfoot People. Many of the interviewees spoke of leaving tobacco every time they pass the mountain. Others spoke of tying cloth to the trees. Offerings can be anything such as a pretty rock, tobacco, coins, or anything that held special significance to the person leaving it. The interviewed people differed on the duration of how long the offerings should be left alone. Some believed the sacred number of four days would be sufficient. While others believed that they should never be removed by human force; that they be left until nature deteriorated them.

Another type of offering identified in the interviews was ones that were left to shed back luck or illness. These offerings held the negative energy of the sickness or bad luck that was plaguing the person. By leaving the offering, the person was leaving the issue to the spirits to fix. It is believed that if a human being were to touch or move this type of offering they would be inflicted by the negative forces contained on the offering.

Desecration

Chief Mountain represents an important source of life and guidance for the Blackfoot People. The mountain and its resources, both at and around the mountain, help the people live and to prosper. Improper use of the mountain disrupts the ceremonies and brings disorder to the landscape. If the area is not respected and treated with dignity, then the life's balance will be altered and disrupted.

Unfortunately, more than one informant related a story of being interrupted by people who were utilizing the area for recreational purposes. One story that was told by Wilbert Fish held incredible detail. Wilbert had gone through weeks of preparation and physical cleansing to ensure his ability to have a "successful fast" when he was approaching the end of his spiritual quest, a tourist climbed upon the ledge on which was fasting and began to ask questions. Wilbert asked that she be quiet and leave the area. She refused, demanding to know what he was doing. After the confrontation, Wilbert had to again spiritually cleanse himself to prevent the altercation from affecting the outcome of his spiritual journey. Much to Wilbert's dismay, the cloth offerings he had tied to the trees as a gift to the spirits had been removed by the tourists to make flags.

Prayer and fasting on the mountain is a religious experience that should be honored and should not be interrupted. To disrupt ceremonial use of the mountain is like walking into a church assembly. It disrupts a person's connection with their creator. They need quiet and they need to have the offerings and the altars left alone. If offerings are taken or disturbed, the power of the ritual is interrupted. This is analogous to going into a church and blowing out or taking a candle that someone has lit. People should not do this.

Because knowledge and guidance is received from the mountain, it is important to the continuance of the Blackfoot way of life. Loss of relationship and desecration of the landscape are believed to cause death and sickness within the Blackfoot People.

During the interviews, several people told of a prophecy which had been passed on from previous generations. It was told that when the Blackfoot People and others disrespected the mountain and the spirit that lives there, the mountain would begin to disintegrate. According to this prophecy the Blackfoot People share an ongoing relationship with Chief Mountain in which their cultural survival depends upon respecting and protecting Chief Mountain. When the mountain is gone completely, so too, would be the Blackfoot People.

Resources Management and Education

During the interviews an urgent plea was made. Interviewees identified proper management as one of the most important issues concerning Chief Mountain. All of the participants believed that the Chief Mountain Area should be for spiritual use only. Most claimed that they believed the people using it for recreational purposes were disrespecting the mountain. They equated it with demolishing a church when the people were still inside praying. While acknowledging there are some in the tribe who advocate logging near Chief Mountain, none of the interviewees believe resource extraction of any kind should be allowed. However, most of the informants believed that the Blackfeet Tribe and Glacier National Park had similar mission statements of preserving the area for future generations.

Beginning in the late 1970s, Chief Mountain began experiencing land slides. These slides prompted the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council to pass a resolution in 1981

to protect the Chief Mountain Area. In this resolution, the mountain and buffer zone extending to one mile around its base was set aside for spiritual use.

Recreational use of the mountain is increasing, as is its use for rituals. Because they can no longer be prosecuted for practicing their ceremonies and teaching their beliefs, Chief Mountain is an important location for the Blackfoot People to renew their faith. To protect the mountain for traditional use, it was suggested that maybe it is time to consider requiring a permit for use of the mountain. Perhaps the use could be monitored through the Blackfeet Fish and Game Department.

Opinions were mixed about whether access to the mountain should be made easier. For some, the difficulties encountered in going to the mountain are an important part of the journey. For other, it would be nice if the roads were better, but they caution that this would require more oversight. Fencing is not thought to be a good idea because it defeats the purpose. People will just want to go there more.

One person suggested that we could initiate a common statement or agreement between the Blackfoot Confederacy and the two nations (United States and Canada) for how to manage Chief Mountain. This would acknowledge the cultural significance of the mountain and the importance of ritual use. Improper use of the mountain, for resource extraction, hiking, or other recreation use should be discouraged as much as possible.

Several interviewees mentioned the importance that education plays in gaining support for how the mountain is managed. People need to understand what the mountain means so that they will respect the Chief Mountain area. If people know that an item is left as an offering, maybe they will hesitate before they take it. But it was stressed that the messaging of any education needs to come from the Blackfoot. It is important to

explain what's there and why the Blackfoot People go there but also to not give too much away or to arouse too much curiosity.

CONCLUSION

Chief Mountain: Oral Documentation of Cultural Use by Blackfoot People is a project that will provide valuable information to Glacier National Park and the Blackfeet Tribe as they create management strategies for the Chief Mountain Area. The interviews done with cultural elders provide data on the spiritual significance this area holds to the Blackfoot People; however, these interviews have only begun to create a small ripple on the surface. Further investigations should include interviews with cultural elders to expand on the knowledge and provide a format that pass this knowledge to future generations. The Blackfoot People interviewed for this project all asserted that the People need to be informed of the Blackfoot connection to the mountain. Although other tribal groups were mentioned as using the area because of its power, the informants believe that Chief Mountain is “exclusive to the life, the breath, and the life blood of the Blackfoot Confederacy.”

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Questions

Please answer only the questions you feel comfortable sharing information about.

- Do you know about Chief Mountain and the surrounding area?
- When did you learn about this place?
- How did you learn about this place?
- Can you tell me a specific story about the area?

Can you tell me about the cultural importance of the area to the Blackfoot People?

Can you tell me if Blackfoot People used or use the area for spiritual reasons?

If you can, can you tell me where Blackfoot People would go in the area and at what time of the year they would go there?

Is Chief Mountain the home to any spirits? If it is, can you tell their names?

Are there specific animals that live there, which have spiritual significance?

Can you tell me if this area is associated with specific ceremonies?

If you can, are there specific areas in which the ceremonies have to be performed?

Can you tell me if the water in the area is utilized for a specific purpose?

Are there specific plants which the Blackfeet People collected or utilize that grow there?
If there are, do they grow elsewhere?

Is this area associated with any songs? Can you tell me about them?

Is Chief Mountain connected to any other of the mountains? If it is, can you tell me its relationship to the other mountains?

Have you ever gone there? Can you tell me about your experience?

Did you know that this area is managed by both the Blackfeet Tribe and Glacier National Park?

To your knowledge do the people who utilize the area for spiritual reasons find it difficult to access?

Do you have any suggestions about the management of the region which might make it easier for the Blackfeet People to access and use the area?

Do you believe selling/ceding the mountains had a cultural effect on the Blackfeet People?

Is there any information you gave during the interview, which you believe should **not** be made available to the general public? If there is, can you please identify it?

Are there parts of this interview that you believe are more important than others?

Appendix 2: Blackfeet Tribal Resolution

THE BLACKFEET TRIBE

OF THE BLACKFEET INDIAN RESERVATION

BROWNING, MONTANA 59417

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

EARL OLD PERSON, CHAIRMAN
DANIEL L. GILHAM SR., VICE CHAIRMAN
CHARLES CONNELLY #1, SECRETARY
ELOUISE C. COBELL, TREASURER

TRIBAL COUNCIL

EARL OLD PERSON
DANIEL L. GILHAM SR.
CHARLES CONNELLY #1
LELAND GROUND
ARCHIE ST. GODDARD
LEONARD MOUNTAIN CHIEF
GEORGE KICKING WOMAN
JERRY SHOW
PHILIP M. RATTLER JR.

RESOLUTION

NUMBER: 140-82

- WHEREAS: The Blackfeet Tribal Business Council is the duly constituted governing body within the exterior boundaries of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, and
- WHEREAS: The Blackfeet Tribal Business Council has been organized to represent, develop, protect and advance the views, interests, education and resources of the people of the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, and
- WHEREAS: The spiritual heritage of the Blackfeet (Pikuni) people is being threatened by incursions of non-tribal people into the Chief Mountain area, and
- WHEREAS: For the spiritual heritage of the Blackfeet People to continue unmolested, it has become imperative that restrictions must be placed upon the Chief Mountain Area, the restricted area to include the following described lands:

T. 37 N., R. 15 W.,
Sec. 20 SE $\frac{1}{4}$

T. 37 N., R. 15 W.,
Sec. 21 SW $\frac{1}{4}$

T. 37 N., R. 15 W.,
Sec. 28 W $\frac{1}{2}$

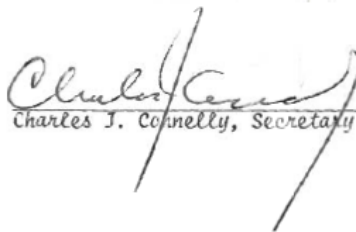
T. 37 N., R. 15 W.,
Sec. 33 NW $\frac{1}{4}$

T. 37 N., R. 15 W.,
Sec. 32 NE $\frac{1}{4}$

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council does hereby restrict the Chief Mountain area, said area to include these lands within a distance of one (1) mile from the base of Chief Mountain.

ATTEST:

THE BLACKFEET TRIBE OF THE BLACKFEET
INDIAN RESERVATION


Charles J. Connelly, Secretary

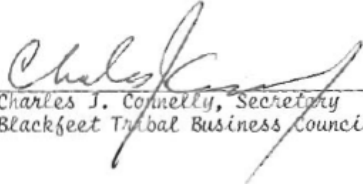

Earl Old Person, Chairman

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Blackfeet Resolution # 140-82

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was adopted by the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council during a duly called, noticed and convened Regular Session assembled for business the 3rd day of December, 1981 with Nine (9) members present to constitute a quorum.

[CORPORATE SEAL]



Charles J. Connelly, Secretary
Blackfeet Tribal Business Council

CHIEF MOUNTAIN AS AN HISTORICAL/CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUAL RETREAT AREA

From time immemorial the Blackfeet (Pikuni) have regarded Chief Mountain as a holy mountain. In the annals of the Blackfeet many stories can be found which delineate Chief Mountain as a mountain which was used by the Blackfeet and other neighboring tribes for spiritual questing purposes. Since the advent of written Blackfeet history (circa. 1850) numerous historians and ethnologists have recorded the use of Chief Mountain as a site where spiritual communication was sought.

The historical use of Chief Mountain as a spiritual-fasting site is well-documented. What is not documented is the fact that Chief Mountain is used by contemporary traditional Indian people for the same purpose it was used in the remote and recent past. Documentation of said use is readily available from Blackfeet, Cree and Blood Tribal members.

As in any instance of spiritual retreat, complete isolation is imperative during the time of the retreat. In several instances in the recent past, Indian people who have retreated to Chief Mountain for spiritual purposes have reported instances of being disturbed by tourists and other non-aligned curiosity seekers.

As such, Chief Mountain must be closed to all categories of people except those who use the mountain for spiritual retreat purposes. It is suggested that a buffer zone of one (1) mile be established as a boundary from the base of Chief Mountain. Within this one mile buffer zone no activity unrelated to spiritual questing activity will take place.

PRESERVATION OF ANTIQUITIES

Notice is hereby given that these lands form part of a federally owned or controlled Indian reservation. Any person or persons who damage or destroy, or, without specific authority from the Secretary of the Interior, excavate or appropriate any historic or prehistoric ruin, monument, cave, object of antiquity or other objects of historic or scientific interest, will be subject to arrest and punishment under the provisions of the Act for the Preservation of American Antiquities, approved June 8, 1906. (16 U.S.C. 431)

Applications for permits under the provisions of section 3 of the Act of June 8, 1906, from reputable museums, universities, colleges, or other recognized scientific institutions, or duly authorized agents, will be considered by the Department Consulting Archeologist, Department of the Interior, Washington D.C.

OVERVIEW OF STATUTORY AUTHORITY CONCERNING PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF
CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL HISTORIC SITES

American Indian Religious Freedom Act

Senate Joint Resolution 102

Public Law No. 95-341

August 11, 1978

Whereas the freedom of religion for all people is an inherent right, fundamental to the democratic structure of the United States and is guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution;

Whereas the United States has traditionally rejected the concept of a government denying individuals the right to practice their religion and, as a result, has benefitted from a rich variety of religious heritages in this country;

Whereas the religious practices of the American Indian (as well as Native Alaskan and Hawaiian) are an integral part of their culture, tradition and heritage, such practices forming the basis of Indian identity and value systems;

Whereas the traditional American Indian religions, as an integral part of Indian life, are indispensable and irreplaceable;

Whereas the lack of a clear, comprehensive, and consistent Federal policy has often resulted in the abridgement of religious freedom for traditional American Indians;

Whereas such religious infringements result from the lack of knowledge or the insensitive and inflexible enforcement of Federal policies and regulations premised on a variety of laws;

Whereas such laws were designed for such worthwhile purposes as conservation and preservation of natural species and resources but were never intended to relate to Indian religious practices and, therefore, were passed without consideration of their effect on traditional American Indian religions;

Whereas such laws and policies often deny American Indians access to sacred sites required in their religions, including cemeteries;

Whereas such laws at times prohibit the use and possession of sacred objects necessary to the exercise of religious rites and ceremonies;

Whereas traditional American Indian ceremonies have been intruded upon, interfered with, and in a few instances banned: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That henceforth it shall be the policy of the United States to protect and preserve for American Indians their inherent right of freedom to believe, express, and exercise the traditional religions of the American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut, and Native Hawaiians, including but not limited to access to sites, use and possession of sacred objects, and the freedom to worship through ceremonial and traditional rites.

Sec. 2. The President shall direct the various Federal departments, agencies, and other instrumentalities responsible for administering relevant laws to evaluate their policies and procedures in consultation with Native traditional religious leaders in order to determine appropriate changes necessary to protect and preserve Native American religious cultural rights and practices. Twelve months after approval of this resolution, the President shall report back to the Congress the results of his evaluation, including any changes which were made in administrative policies and procedures, and any recommendations he may have for legislative action.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

House Report No. 95-1308 accompanying H.J. Res. 738 (Comm. on Interior and Insular Affairs)

Senate Report No. 95-709 (Comm. on Indian Affairs)

Congressional Record Vol. 124 (1978)

April 3, considered and passed Senate

July 18, H.J. Res. 738 considered and passed House; proceedings vacated and

S. J. Res. 102, amended, passed in lieu.

July 27, Senate concurred in House amendment

PROTECTION OF CHIEF MOUNTAIN AS AN HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL SITES:

On September 1, 1977 the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council went on record to protect the Chief Mountain area from intrusion. Following is an excerpt from the minutes of the Blackfeet Tribal Business Council meeting of 9/1/77.

DUCK LAKE-- Bob Gervais made a motion by resolution that effective Sept. 6, 1977 the Duck Lake and Chief Mountain areas will be closed to all camping, fishing, & other recreational activities, excluding commercial, until further notice for studies and research to be conducted by the Blackfeet Tribe as follows:

1. Water quality studies
2. Social and cultural impact of anticipated subdivision by outside interest groups
3. Land use planning, preservation, and orderly development according to the tribe's lifestyle and timetables
4. Study and preservation of natural habitat for big game, fish and bird populations
5. Research and catalog the archeological and tribal ceremonial grounds in Duck Lake and Chief Mountain areas
6. Research treaties concerning Indian water flowing into Canada

Seconded by Leonard Mountainchief and carried. Phil Roy to draft.

Appendix 3: Pictures of Chief Mountain 1991

(Courtesy of Stewart Miller)



Appendix 4: Pictures of the Landslides at Chief Mountain 1991

(Courtesy of Stewart Miller)



