BEYOND THE LITTLE COMMUNITY IN THE BIG WOODS: LOCATING COMMUNITY-FORESTRY

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The overall goal of my dissertation, and of the activities carried out under the Ford Foundation Community Forestry Graduate Research Fellowship is to help practitioners and researchers in the field of community forestry to reflect on the relationships between place and resource access.[1] Because these relationships are at the center of a dramatic and incompletely understood transformation of environmental politics in the United States, my analysis will help practitioners understand and respond to the conflicts that engulf their efforts and researchers to gain purchase on these complex and dynamic processes.

My dissertation examines two cases studies of community forestry in Northern California: the Quincy Library Group (QLG) and the Maidu Cultural and Development Group (MCDG). Both organizations are non-governmental coalitions attempting to increase their access to decision-making about management of federal forests in the area. Both the QLG and MCDG use the notion of "place" and place-based identities as central means to accomplish their goals, yet they define and use it very differently and with varying degrees of success. My analysis explores the similarities and differences between these cases, not as part of a normative comparison, but to illustrate the intricate patterns of place.

My research can be seen as grappling with two puzzles: Why has the QLG in its stated attempt to resolve regional timber conflicts, been embroiled in conflicts with many of the key players in these conflicts including the US Forest Service, Congress and national and regional environmental organizations? Why has the MCDG remained the only National Stewardship pilot to have its business plan remain unapproved by the local National forest leadership despite being ranked number one by the Washington (national) office? I argue that the logic behind these seeming contradictions is to be found in the roles which these two "place-based" efforts are playing (and being represented as playing) in a transformation of the ways that authority for national forest management is distributed. Place is no longer the table around which antagonists in resource conflicts can sit and join hands (if it ever was): As a marker of legitimacy in resource access, its meaning, its application and "ownership" (i.e., who gets to define and use it) are hotly contested grounds.

I hold that these puzzles and the cultural politics of place implicated in resource access cannot be understood unless a more complex definition of place and its relationships to resource access is employed. This begins with the generally accepted understanding of place as a strategy for increasing or defending resource access. However, my research on the QLG and MCDG also suggests that the relationships between place and resource access also include the following dynamics.
1. Place is constructed in reference to both time and space.
2. Place is not merely a local phenomenon set apart from non-local (or global) phenomena, but rather, place arises from the tensions between the local and the non-local.
3. Place can be an obstacle to resource access
4. Resource access can help produce definitions of place
5. Inadequate resource access can strain place-based identities

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[1] By "place" I mean ways of individual and collective identification in reference to a particular location. By "resource access" I mean inclusion in decision-making processes affecting certain resources.

6. Denial of resource access can also help produce certain place-based identities

This report will describe my research process (including the development of the research relationships and proposal, methods used, and the participatory process) and some key findings and analyses. It will also include the text of a presentation I made on my research as part of a panel at "Crossing Boundaries" the annual conference of the International Society for the Study of Common Property in Vancouver last June.

SETTING THE STAGE

Access to forests and forest resources has played a central role in the history of the Northern Sierra region in Northeastern California. The indigenous Maidu people, whose lands once spread for millions of acres across the region have been reduced to nearly landless status and a fraction of their original numbers through 150 years of hardship including genocide, land grabs by individuals, corporations and the government, and a lack of tribal recognition. Maidu now make up less than five percent of region's population. National Forests, administered by the US Forest Service and private timber lands cover roughly three quarters of the region's land base; timber sector jobs account for over 15% of employment in many communities. Falling harvest levels on the National Forests coupled with corporate timber consolidation has resulted in Forest Service down-sizing and numerous mill-closures in turn causing significant out-migration and leaving limited employment opportunities for those who remain. "Timber wars", heated conflicts over forest management, have until recently polarized communities between yellow-ribbon pro-logging and green-ribbon environmental factions.

The Quincy Library Group (QLG) is a consensus-based coalition of local elected officials, environmentalists, timber industry and labor union representatives, and other civic leaders. Their plan, called the Quincy Library Group Community Stability Proposal, combines a range of environmental protections with a more reliable supply of forest products through thinning and small group selection timber harvesting. The land-base for this Proposal is 2.5 million acres stretching over three National Forests. After three years of attempting to adopt their proposal administratively, they turned to legislation to mandate implementation. After two years of intense lobbying by supporters and opponents, The "Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery Act" was passed as a rider in the 1998 Omnibus Appropriations Bill.

The Maidu Cultural and Development Group (MCDG) is a coalition of Maidu Indians and others formed in 1995 committed to promoting local economic development and forest management that embodies and enhances Maidu culture. The MCDG seeks to reintroduce Maidu ecological knowledge and land ethics to the analysis, restoration and stewardship of lands on the Plumas and Lassen National forests. The MCDG, in partnership with the Plumas and Lassen National Forests, was recently recognized as one of 28 national pilot sites for vegetation management through stewardship and other alternative contract mechanisms.

RESEARCH PROCESS

As a participatory research process, my research began well before my field work (and the Ford Fellowship period) began. In the summer before beginning my doctoral program, I conducted research for the Sierra Nevada Ecosystem Project on a collaborative watershed effort called the Feather River Coordinated Resource Management (FR-CRM) group. This research introduced me to resource conflicts in the region and a number of key individuals involved in responding to these conflicts including Leah Wills, several members of the Quincy Library Group, the Forest Service, and other public agencies. During the course of my doctoral program, I stayed in touch with many of these individuals through my participation in SNEP, and later in the Lead Partnership Group, a network of bioregional and community-based organizations working on natural resource management issues in Northern California and Southern Oregon (including the QLG and Leah Wills as part of Plumas Corporation which coordinates the FR-CRM). During the summer and fall of 1996, I explored the possibilities for conducting my dissertation research with one of the Lead Partnership Group members (as well as several other organizations.) At that point, my research interest was the tensions for community-based organizations in maintaining a local focus while representing their community in regional and national-level negotiations. Based on this preliminary topic, it appeared that the QLG and the FR-CRM offered the best opportunity to explore these issues, and that this research would be of benefit to the organizations. After presenting my preliminary research proposal at organizations of both organizations in the fall, the group members approved my request to include them as case studies.

Over the course of the 1996-1997 academic year, I developed my research proposal. It was during this period that I experienced a tension in the need to produce an academically-sound proposal, and one that would meet the needs of the participating organizations. Even though my field site was only four hours (or a phone call) away being fully immersed in the theories and logics of "the literature" and feeling the pull to contribute a critical voice to that literature, I had difficulty remaining grounded in the needs and interests of my study organizations. As a result, I created a proposal that would ultimately be seen as less relevant than the organizations would have liked, and even as threatening: prompting me to reformulate my research mid-stream.

My original proposal sought to explore the relationships between place and resource access through an analysis of the impacts that the QLG's and CRM's definitions of place had on typically marginalized populations in the area (e.g., Maidu Indians and Latino forest workers). I hypothesized that the QLG and CRM's definitions of place might not help, and might even hinder the resource access of these groups. Several factors made this a problematic project. First, as previously mentioned, members of both organizations viewed this research as potentially threatening their legitimacy by casting them as not fully representing their community. At the same time, members felt this was not a fair standard given the enormity of their existing missions and the difficulties of representing these other groups. My own preliminary research phases suggested to me that because these study organizations had so little contact with the Maidu and Latino sectors that an analysis of their relationship would be rather thin. Furthermore, I observed that the

marginal status of these sectors has more to do with broader social, political and historical trends than with the specific definitions of place of the QLG and CRM, and that (especially in the case of the Latinos) "invisibility" in resource management, as in other affairs, was a purposeful tactic.

I then reformulated my research design in a way that maintained my focus on the relationships between place and resource access but framed it as a study of the roles that place plays in the resource access strategies of one study organization (the QLG) and one community sector (the MCDG). This entailed tightening the study by dropping the other study organization (the FR-CRM) and the other community sector (the Latinos) and broadening it to include the Forest Service and the national environmental movement as key actors in the place drama of the QLG and MCDG.[2] While this was somewhat stressful at the time, it has been a profound learning experience about the difficulties of university-based participatory research, and has forged a research framework that will be both useful to my study organizations and to the research community.

I have continued this participatory mode in several ways. I distributed my mid-term report to members of both groups for their comment and received a number of substantive responses. In June, I held a dinner gathering of the QLG at my house in which I described my revised study design, discussed some of my preliminary findings, and solicited their feedback on both the content of my findings and the framing of my analysis. My intention was to respond to Group priorities in my decisions on what elements of my data would be most relevant to their needs. The group's struggles with the national environmental movement and secondarily with the Forest Service were clear priorities for analysis. One interesting exchange arose with one Group member who disagreed with my solicitation of the Group's input into my research, perceiving this to be a compromise of my "scientific objectivity." He said I should do a careful and honest job and let the chips fall where they may. I found myself in the curious position of arguing for the need of research to be relevant to its subjects with a subject who rejected such obligations. I have made a similar but abbreviated presentation to the MCDG during one of their regular meetings. I plan to hold another round of such feedback meetings as I proceed with my writing. I also plan to hold similar gatherings with other community groups including the Board of Supervisors and a Healthy Start Social Service consortium. In addition to leaving copies of my dissertation in the community (in libraries, the county museums, the county office building, and with interviewees who have requested a copy), I plan to write shorter articles based on my research which present my findings in a more practically-oriented format for local consumption.

PARTICIPATION WHILE RESEARCHING

As part of "giving back" to the community I have engaged in a number of projects in service of the case study organizations and the broader communities of my research sites. These efforts have drawn on my capacities as a researcher, an educator, and non-profit

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[2] One additional result of reformulation was my inability to have asked the MCDG for permission to include them in my research before arriving on site (as I had with the QLG). Nonetheless, they graciously accepted my proposal.

director. In addition to a Maidu youth video project and my assistance to the MCDG (both described below), these have ranged from helping to index the QLG archives, reviewing proposals and offering insights into the grant seeking process to the QLG and other groups in the area, and producing a strategic plan for watershed education for Plumas County.

In the last case, the plan will be used by the Feather River Resource Conservation Service (RCD) to develop a funding campaign in support of watershed education activities. It will also be used by the FR-CRM in developing their own funding plans for local watershed education in anticipation of the "reinvestment" to be gained form downstream beneficiaries of the Feather River. I was asked by Leah Wills of the FR-CRM to coordinate the project based on my experience with environmental education, public schools, and program development. Leah also understood the project as a way for me to "trade" my skills and time for the time of the FR-CRM and QLG members who might otherwise be less enthusiastic about participating in my research project, and as an effective way to make initial connections with harder to reach population sectors such as the Maidu. The project has provided me with valuable participant observation opportunities with the Feather River Resource Conservation District, and a broad range of educational institutions in the county. My work has also been appreciated by a number of the QLG and FR-CRM members as reflective of my genuine desire to assist them in their efforts to integrate their activities with the broader community. I also have enjoyed the chance to interact with people in a mode of service instead of merely information extraction and to participate in the community as an involved resident.

RESEARCH METHODS

I have employed research methods that allowed me to combine an observation of the QLG and the MCDG in "real-time" with analyses extending backwards in time and outwards in space. This multiple method approach facilitated my ability to locate the QLG and MCDG both within their local and present context and within broader historical and political contexts.

The "real-time" methods included observation at organizational meetings and events, informal conversations with group members (both during these occasions and in other social settings), and inclusion on organizational mailing lists. With a few unavoidable exceptions, I attended every formal meeting of the QLG and the MCDG during my study period and attended many of the community events in which organization members attended.[3] These meetings were invaluable opportunities to observe the organizations'' formal processes as well as the informal processes that revealed themselves in *sotto voce* remarks, coffee break conversations, and spill-over conversations after the meetings. All

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[3] These included County Board of Supervisor meetings, Rotary Club meetings, meetings organized by the Forest Service on the Sierra Nevada Framework for Collaboration and Conservation, by CalFED on the Bay-Delta water redevelopment process, Lead Partnership Group meetings, and Resource Conservation District meetings.

of these contexts provided the chance to observe the group members enact the culture of their organizations.

My informal interactions with organization members was also increased (and complexified) by playing participant roles in each organization. In the case of the MCDG, the combination of their small size and informal structure and their needs for a range of assistance led to my being occasionally asked to draft meeting minutes and other organizational documents. Several times, I wrote my own field notes and distributed them to the group, especially on the meetings with Forest Service personnel in which my notes served as a kind of cultural/institutional translation. I also discussed my analysis of dynamics between the MCDG and the Forest Service with group members. These activities were useful as adding value to my presence in meetings and their time being interviewed by me, and for building relationships beyond that of "researcher-subject" that would in turn offer informal conversation opportunities. At the same time, this active participation led me to walk a fine line in guarding the confidentiality of my interviewees and contacts in the Forest Service. I had to be (and was) careful not to "leak" information from these interviews to the MCDG, even if it were to the Group's advantage and instead provided only my overall analysis of the agency's perspective on the Group. This "walking between worlds", which is a factor in any social research, was heightened by the tense relations between the MCDG and the Forest Service and my commitment to the Group based on my participatory research orientation. While I have attempted to prevent my research commitment to the Group to prejudice my observation and analysis of the Forest Service's interactions with the MCDG, I cannot pretend to stand outside the conflict that I an studying.

A related dynamic arose in relationship when, in January, I began to work part-time with Forest Community Research, a non-profit organization that provides support for community-based organizations including the Quincy Library Group.[4] The QLG is a member of the Lead Partnership Group which Forest Community Research coordinates, and is the recipient of funds raised by our organization. As in the case of my active participation with the MCDG, this hybrid role provided valuable opportunities for interaction with Group members that would have been difficult solely as a "researcher" but also complexified my research relationships. My dual role did lead me to question of how historical relationships between the Group and FCR and my current role in the organization might influence group members interactions with me.

Part of my research on the definitions of place among the QLG and the MCDG included exploring the definitions and expressions of place within the communities in which these organizations are embedded. In the case of the MCDG, I engaged in participant observation of a range of Maidu cultural events including the community pow-wow, a memorial foot race, several Bear Dance rituals, and several elders' lunches at the Indian community center. I also organized and facilitated a program for Maidu (and other Indian) youth in which they conceived and shot a video about Indian identity in the area. Youth shot and directed segments in which they interviewed an elder, the Indian

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[4] The fact that I selected this work out of economic necessity, not research utility does not alter the implications of my new role.

Education coordinator (who is non-Indian), and each other about challenges facing Indian youth and the Indian community as a whole in the area. In some particularly powerful scenes, youth discussed images of Indians in the area as they stood in front of paintings of Indian mascots on the school, drug-store wooden Indians, and "murals of traditional" Indians. This program drew on my professional experience in youth education through Community LORE[5] and provided unique opportunities to engage with Maidu youth as they explored and visually represented their sense of place. It also allowed me to give back to the community in a fashion directly in line with the phenomena I was studying. At the same time, it leads me to ponder the ethics of using the video and video club in my research and how to account for my own influence on the video as project coordinator.

Despite the numerous factions and sectors of the Maidu community, observing the MCDG's community context was much easier than that of the QLG because the latter is so much more diffuse given the relative social and geographic diversity of the membership. I focused my observation on community events including high school spaghetti suppers, parades, the county fair, concerts, county office candidate forums and other public meetings. My intention at these events (in addition to simple enjoyment) was to listen for ways that place was explicitly and implicitly defined. For example, at a voters' forum during the sherrif's election, I noted with interest how the candidates located problems such as guns, gangs and drugs as infiltrating from the "outside", and how the resolution of these problems was to prevent their entry. In my roles as neighbor and father, I also observed my interactions for indications of place-definition. One striking (but not surprising) observation was the significance that people put on our transience. When we moved into a neighborhood in the Bay Area, our neighbors would not think to ask if we were planning to stay long, whereas, this was a common question from most people with whom we came into contact. The fact that were not planning to stay long-term marked us as "different" more profoundly than issues of class or religion. I have found myself becoming quite apologetic and even a bit guilty in response, feeling myself to be somehow betraying the sense of place which most of our friends and neighbors have here.

In addition to this ethnographic participant observation, I engaged in a series of semi-structured interviews with a wide range of group members. While this involved a kind of staged abstraction from the individuals' "everyday practices", their one-on-one and confidential quality and their question-oriented format provided insights and information that would have been difficult solely through ethnographic observation. I interviewed every active member of the MCDG that would speak to me.[6] My QLG interviews included the three founders, and members of the key interests and institutions represented in the Group (e.g., environmentalists, organized labor, timber mills, loggers, county officials).

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[5] Community LORE, a non-profit educational organization of which I am co-founder, designs programs that help communities use local knowledge as a basis for planning and education. My work with Community LORE has focused on community-based cultural and environmental education programs.
[6] The one refusal was from an elder member who had been interviewed extensively by other researchers and journalists and had decided that he had done enough interviews in his lifetime. On the other hand, I engaged in extensive non-interview discussions with this member throughout the research period.

I also interviewed members of institutions that played key roles in the environmental politics which the QLG and the MCDG were helping to transform. These institutions included the US Forest Service (including staff from the local forests, the regional and national offices, and the Administration), the national environmental movement (including local, regional, and national-level activists), Congress (staffers from the key members of Congress involved in the QLG bill), donors (including those funding community-based groups and those who oppose them), organizations attempting to bridge competing
interests on forest management reform on the national level (e.g., American Forests). I also interviewed several key local members of the wise use movement who were opposed to the QLG.

I also coupled my ethnographic exploration of the community context of the QLG and MCDG with interviews on this theme. I scheduled the majority of these "community context" interviews in the beginning of my research period to inform myself of the key issues, players, and institutions that I ought to address in my research. I also used these interviews to gauge the perceptions of the QLG and MCDG within the community. Interviewees included newspaper staff, social service providers, county supervisors and teachers. After my research design reformulation, in which I shifted my Latino and FR-CRM sample from case study to background, interviews held with these members became part of my community context component. The FR-CRM interviews were very useful for their insights into local resource management issues and the Latino forest worker interviews expanded my understanding of the timber industry, labor relations, and overall notions of inclusion and exclusion in place-construction. I deemphasized this sample with great ambivalence because even though it did not fit easily into my new framework, the plight of this growing, underserved, and much maligned population is an important and unexamined part of the story of place and resource access in the region. It is therefore a project to which I plan to return in the future.

Finally, I examined the relationships between place and resource access through secondary and historical data. This included themes such as historical patterns of demographics (population trends, ethnicity, income, transience), employment patterns especially focused on the forest-product sector and land tenure patterns. I collected contemporary data for the region from local, state and national government sources (US Census, county business patterns, county economic development data). I also examined the policy history of forest management in the area, the social history of the timber wars, and conflicts over resource access more generally. I derived much of this information from current and archives newspapers.

I focused particular attention to the history of the Maidu's loss of land through government and non-governmental means. Much of this research occurred in the Western Regional National Archives in San Bruno and in the National Archives in Washington DC I spent most of my time examining "allotment" files relating to the Dawes Act and the Native Homestead Act which allotted lands to Indians if they would renounce tribal affiliation and life-ways and commit to farming and modernization. These files contain

correspondence relating to each allotment and provide a rich source of discourse on Indian identity, government relations, and the institutionalized robbery of Indian lands.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

My dissertation is structured around the following research questions and hypotheses.

1. How and why do the QLG and the MCDG define "place in the ways that they do?

I have hypothesized that both groups define place in ways that serve them as a strategy for legitimating and thus increasing their access to local natural resources. I further hypothesize that each group will construct their definition of place employing discourses that reflect both their own histories and identities and respond to current criteria for resource access.

2. Why have the QLG's and MCDG's use of place as a resource access strategy inspired dramatically varying responses from those involved in national forest management in the area?

I have hypothesized that the "sides" drawn up around both the QLG and the MCDG by the different levels of the Forest Service, members of the national, regional and local environmental movements, members of Congress and the timber industry can be explained not merely by the impact on the proximate ground covered by the groups' proposals, but by the broader implications these efforts may have on the distribution of authority for managing national forests as a whole.

Question One

As hypothesized to Question One, I interpret the definitions of place articulated by both the QLG and MCDG to function as resource access strategies. By "strategy" I do not imply that their definitions of place are not genuine, or that they are merely rhetoric. Rather this term affirms the insight by others that all identities (such as place) arise out of and are formed in reference to the conditions and needs of specific contexts and struggles.[7] The specific context and struggle of the QLG and MCDG is the attempt to gain increases access to the area's national forests and their definitions of place will therefore be constructed according to this logic. In particular, both groups define place in ways that serve to assert and defend the legitimacy of their claim to resource access in the face of heated opposition.

What is more compelling than these general and generally accepted points is the specific ways in which the QLG and MCDG construct and articulate their definitions of place. I

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[7] See, for example, critical human geographers such as Massey (1994). Space, Place and Gender. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. and the new cultural anthropologists such as L. Malkki, L. (1993). "National Geographic: The Rooting of People and the Territorialization of National Identity Among Scholars and Refugees." Cultural Anthropology **7**(1): 24-44.

have found that each group constructs their definition of place along axes of space and time with one of the dimensions forming a primary axis and the other dimension a secondary axis. The primary place axis of QLG is space and the secondary place axis is time: the primary place axis of the MCDG is time and the secondary axis is space.

The spatial focus of the QLG's place is seen in the inscription of a bounded and now legally binding "QLG Area" onto what previously was an unnamed expanse of 3 national forests, 8 counties and dozens of individual communities. This new territory has its own maps (now legalized in the QLG bill), its own "QLG forester" (a member of the group now funded by several of the "QLG counties" to represent the socio-economic concerns of the counties and to coordinate with private landowners in the region), and its own liaison from the three National Forests in the QLG area. If justified and selected through a NEPA process, the QLG proposal will become the "law of the land" as components of the Land Management Plans of the three National Forests. A proposed "working circle" mandating the local processing of locally harvested trees, dropped, at least temporarily from the Group's agenda, would have economically circumscribed the QLG Area.

The spatial quality of the QLG's place is also heard in the ways that the group argues for its right to play a substantive role in the management of the area forests. A major theme in these arguments is the group members' *proximity* to the forests, in the multiple senses of physical closeness, site-specific knowledge, investment of labor and capital, sacrifices of wealth and ease to live locally, local forest-oriented culture, and local impacts of forest management (jobs, fire risk, overall community well-being). As mentioned above, these articulations of place do not stand alone, but are referenced to, and are often in opposition to the place claims that would negate or supersede that of the QLG. The logic runs, for example, that because the QLG's knowledge is *more* site-specific than that of the transient Forest Service, urban environmentalists, or even abstract, model-based scientists, their Proposal ought to be seriously considered. Or, because QLG members (and the communities they claim to represent) will bear *disproportionate* impacts of forest fires and job loss due to Forest Service policies, that they are entitled to a voice in the formulation of those policies. Or , because the QLG has traveled more often to meet their environmental opponents on their turf in Sacramento or San Francisco and these opponents have not made the trek up to Quincy, that the opponents' claims of exclusion from the QLG are unfounded.

The place of the QLG is also based on time, albeit in a secondary role. The temporal component of the QLG's place is heard in the legitimation and defense of its right to have its proposal considered as Forest Service policy. Group members often refer to the tremendous investment of time and money that they have invested in and sacrificed to the effort. This is especially true of several of the environmental members of the Group who have fought for the "off-base" or wilderness areas of the Proposal for decades before the Library Group was even founded. Many group members also describe their long-term investment in the area and their hope that the Proposal will allow them to remain in place. (In the case of the timber company representatives, most of whom live outside of the QLG Area, they express their hope that their local facilities and labor forces will be able to persist over time.) Like the spatial arguments, these temporal arguments are also

comparative as in the instance of QLG members criticizing environmentalists, cattle ranchers, or other interests who want to change the Proposal but who have not done their time from the beginning. Embodied in the very notion of "community stability" is a particular relationship to time which casts the ideal social state as undisturbed by outside disruptions,
and therefore "timeless."

The temporal quality of the MCDG's place echoes that of the QLG but is spoken more as a primary language than a secondary dialect. The MCDG and other Maidu express their claims to resource access as grounded in their "aboriginal" inhabitation of the region, thus invoking a kind of "first in time, first in right" ethos. Many Maidu refer to the land and all its resources as being given to them by the Creator in the beginning of time.[8] On a more proximate time scale, I often heard Maidu contest the legitimacy of the Forest Service to "own" the National Forests or to deny the Maidu access to the forest by noting that the Maidu were burning or harvesting willow in a particular spot long before the creation of the agency or the birth of the staff member. Maidu sometimes refer to the Forest Service and Forest Service as "kids" who don't even realize their own ignorance in criticizing their "elders." Like members of the QLG, the Maidu often compare the superiority of their knowledge developed over time (in their case, centuries) with that of the Forest Service new-comers.

Maidu make temporal claims as they reference the history of genocide, land robbery, and ecological degradation that displaced them from their rightful place on the land as an intrusion that is illegal and immoral. Many Maidu perceive this intrusion as justifying a kind of compensation or reparation in the forms of land. While bemoaning the profound disruption of the their social order that has occurred in the last 150 years, many Maidu note that long after the last intruder has gone, they will remain in place. At the same time, some Maidu elders express concern that because few younger Maidu are knowledgeable or even interested in traditional Maidu language and life-ways, the Maidu may continue as a blood line, but not as a culture. Even accounting for the generic alarmist tendencies of elders in any culture, the fact that there are only two to three fluent speakers of Mountain Maidu alive (and both quite elderly) affirms this concern.[9]

Temporal place-claims are embodied in the MCDG's Maidu Stewardship Proposal which has recently been approved as one of 28 national stewardship pilot projects by the Forest Service. The details of this Plan will be described below in the section on spatial place claims. For current purposes, it is important to note that the MCDG often justifies the legitimacy of their Plan and the obligation of the Forest Service to accept their proposal as a recognition of both the Maidu's pre-historic aboriginal possession of the land and the

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[8] While archeologists date the Maidu habitation as being as recent as 400-1000 years ago (displacing earlier inhabitants) some Maidu dispute this scientific narrative by proposing that internal cultural change, not in-migration might have caused the changes in stone implements, and that even if there were earlier inhabitants in the region, interbreeding rendered this aboriginal birth-right to the current-day Maidu.
[9] There are three major Maidu dialects of which Mountain Maidu is the one spoken by the Maidu in the Northern Sierra region. The other two, Concow and Nisenan are spoken by the foot hill/Central Valley Maidu and the mid-Sierra/Central Valley Maidu respectively.

historic debts which white society owes to the Maidu for their depredations. Members of the MCDG speak of the Stewardship Plan as strengthening the Maidu's ability to remain in place over time as a distinct people.

The MCDG's place-definition also responds to problems of space within the Maidu community. Many Maidu explain the crisis of cultural continuity and the social crises of drug abuse and family violence as rooted in a lack of self-respect which is in turn arises from the lack of an accessible land base on which to enact their land-based culture. As a result, they explain, many Maidu have lost their sense of themselves as a people and therefore their self-respect The Maidu have no reservation, and the minor holdings of the few federally recognized Indian entities that include Maidu members (a fraction of which are in the original home-range of the Mountain Maidu) are too small to even host ceremonial dances, never mind support land-based lifeways. As a result, Maidu are reduced to sneaking onto Forest Service and private timber lands to collect medicinal or weaving materials and hoping (often in vain) that logging activities won't permanently destroy valuable gathering sites.

The MCDG has responded to the spatial problems of the Maidu through several spatial strategies. The first was called the Maidu Place Names project and involved the creation of a map of Indian valley (the site of the highest present concentration of Mountain Maidu) indicating the Maidu names for many of the prominent features and landmarks. While current names reflect the history of white settlement and conquest, the Maidu names evoke the mythic origins as well as the earlier uses and natural characteristics of these sites. They have taken further steps to have these names recognized by the Forest Service and the US Geological Survey on their official maps. This can be seen as a symbolic reclaiming of place, an attempt to relocate the area into the "Indian Country." The MCDG were offended, but had no recourse, when the USGS demanded that the Maidu ask the owners of the land permission, thus recognizing the tenure of conquest over that of (ab)original possession.

The MCDG's Maidu Stewardship proposal responds to the Maidu's spatial problems by seeking to allocate 2100 acres in the Plumas and Lassen National Forests as a co-management site on which the MCDG and other Maidu will collaborate with the Forest Service on project design, implementation and monitoring. The Stewardship Plan can be seen as a means to provide a "room of their own" for Maidu to produce or enact their culture and thus to persist as a people. This production ranges from management zones for the application of traditional land management techniques (including prescribed fire and understory vegetation manipulation), fields for Maidu youth to recreate with Indian games instead of the usual basketball and football, protection of sacred sites where Maidu shamans would receive their doctoring vision from logging and inappropriate recreation, grounds for dances and other ceremonies that will not double as a public campground, and
Maidu designed cultural educational center as an alternative to Maidu displays in the county museums.

The Stewardship area also provides the landless Maidu with a territorial grounding from which to develop broader resource access claims. Although it is explicitly not a goal of the MCDG to seek recognition as a tribe or a formal tribal land-base, the Stewardship area would could arguably provide other Maidu involved in such efforts with a way out of the conundrum in which the federal government demands a landbase as a criteria for landless Indian groups seeking federal recognition. Even if the Stewardship area per se cannot be used for this purpose, the precedent of Maidu direct involvement in land management may help (re)legitimate a *landed* identity for the Maidu and this way, materialize solely temporal claims to place into a spatial territory.

Question Two

As hypothesized in regards to Question Two, I have found that the struggles over the QLG's Community Stability Proposal and the MCDG's Maidu Stewardship Proposal are best understood as rooted in the precedent these organizations represent in the national redistribution of authority over national forests.

As mentioned above, despite being ranked number one among all stewardship pilot proposals nation-wide, the MCDG's business plan entitling them to their pilot funds ($15,000) has not been approved to date by the Plumas National Forest (PNF) leadership after five iterations. This leaves them as the only pilot in the country without an approved business plan. While the PNF claim that their withholding approval is based on the lack of detail and quality of the Plans, it seems clear that other factors are at work. My research has yielded the following findings.

The Maidu who formed the MCDG did so partially because, as non-federally recognized Indians, they lacked any other adequate institutional affiliations to pursue their goals.[10] Members of the PNF leadership have described the lack of the MCDG's recognized status as an indication of their lack of legitimacy as a full partner with the Forest Service and their inability to truly represent the Maidu community. The MCDG's insistence on playing a substantive role in the management of National Forest lands challenges the systematic limitations that federal Indian policy has used to divide Indians from within and control who is and who is not considered a real Indian. If the MCDG is granted status as a legitimate player, what systems can be used to stop any and all Indians from achieving this status and pressing their own claims?

The MCDG challenge a pattern of cultural politics that extends far beyond the Forest Service and the government as a whole when they attempt to emerge out of the backwaters of "traditional culture" onto the high ground of "science." To a certain extent, the local Forest Service leadership have responded positively to the MCDG's contribution of Maidu ecological knowledge and management expertise. However, a dividing line has been drawn in two places. First, the local Forest Service leadership have consistently tried to isolate the vegetation management components of the MCDG's Stewardship Plan from the "cultural components" (the living village, sacred site

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[10] The MCDG itself is not a tribal entity but is in the process of forming as a 501(c)3 non-profit.

protection and so on) arguing that these are not stewardship activities. The Maidu respond that stewardship is not simply land management, it is a way of life, a way of looking at the world and a way of seeing oneself and ones people in the world. In this way, the so called "cultural" elements of the plan are inseparable from the management elements. The local Forest Service leadership has also consistently asked the Maidu to specify the exact land management techniques to be used and the ecological knowledge underlying these techniques. The Maidu have equally consistently demurred rejecting the notion that their knowledge can be divorced from its cultural context and wishing to avoid the long history of having their knowledge appropriated without compensation or even used against them. In an ironic inversion, the local Forest Service leadership has also expressed hesitation in adopting the "non-traditional" Maidu land management techniques, thus placing the "tradition" of the Forest Service as the normative position.

Perhaps even more significant than these factors in explaining the ambivalence of the Forest Service is the MCDG's use of the discourse of "stewardship" to press its claims to place. More than a synonym for "caring for the land", stewardship is a coping strategy for an agency beset simultaneously by the constraints of downsizing, and the demands of a reorientation from forest management towards ecosystem management. To meet the demands of ecosystem management with a reduced workforce and to conform to the rising tide of government privatization the Forest Service is being forced to contract out many formerly internal functions. It is also forced to open itself to greater participation and collaboration with non-governmental entities to gain public support for its budgets. Stewardship is thus a new political space in which entities, including private industry, community groups and tribes, are able to stake claims to increased management authority. The MCDG's Maidu Stewardship Plan is one such effort with a special twist. If the MCDG is granted stewardship authorities to their proposed 2100 acres, what is to prevent the expansion of these claims to the entire region on which the National Forests now lie?

Given its larger scale and its force of law, the reactions of the State and other parties to the QLG and its Community Stability Proposal have been much more dramatic than to the MCDG. However, the reasons behind these reactions are similar. Like the MCDG, the QLG represents a significant challenge to the existing distribution of authority for management of national forests. Both their allies and opponents agree on the fact that the QLG has successfully disrupted (some would say jerked) the traditional "chain of command" within the Forest Service, and in so doing has transformed the relationships of other linked entities including the national environmental movement, Congress, and to a lesser extent, segments of the Wise Use Movement.

While some accounts describe the QLG a local phenomenon that "went national" only when they initiated their legislation in 1995, in reality, a national phase *preceded* the local phase. As some Group members recount, the first version of the QLG was to be a direct appeal to the Chief of the Forest Service to implement a proto-QLG compromise between the three founders (national players, all) by administrative fiat. This course of action was eventually rejected and the larger QLG formed. The QLG has consistently used its political connections spanning far beyond Quincy to go over the head of the local

forest leadership, first through negotiations with the regional and Washington offices and the Administration, and more recently in the legislative processes of its bill through Congress. Even before the bill, the QLG impinged upon the bureaucratic structure of the Forest Service by in bounding the QLG Area as a new administrative unit and influencing the flows of appropriations and special budget allocations for QLG-type activities in this region. The QLG has been consistent in its pressure on the local forests to account for the use of these funds, and despite some significant delays, has generally received answers from the agency. In this way, the QLG has inserted itself as a powerful, if vaguely defined, component of the administrative hierarchy. The shock at this insertion was dwarfed in 1995 with the introduction of the QLG's bill. This latter maneuver have been perceived as particularly threatening to the agency by exacerbating and even enflaming the chronic tension between legislative control and administrative autonomy. It is useful to note that this dynamic has much more to do with Constitutional separation of powers than it does about the QLG or the topic of community forestry. Even the issue of the QLG's administrative and budgetary power over the local forests can be seen as a generic issue of bureaucratic politics, not forest management *per se*.

In addition to these process issues, the QLG has also been controversial within the Forest Service because of the content of its Proposal. While it is clearly not a "logging" bill as its environmental opponents claim, it will increase the level of logging on the local forests from their present levels and will therefore breathe new life into the moribund timber departments in the agency. This is of course welcome news to the silviculturalists and "foresters' foresters" who have chaffed at the agency's turn away from timber management as a primary mission. It is this segment of the Forest Service which has been most enthusiastic about the QLG. However, to the specialists who remember all too well being berated for not being "team players" when they would question a timber sale, the QLG's resurrection of Paul Bunyon is most unwelcome.

For their part, many of the Republican supporters in Congress view the QLG and the broader community-based forestry movement as a way to assert control over the Forest Service and reemphasize commodity production as part of the agency's mission. Some Congressional republicans also seek to use community-based processes to reduce the power of other interests such as the national environmental movement to pull the agency in the other direction. Congressional Democrats supporting the bill appeared impressed both with the QLG's win-win consensus model, and the strong support of its organized labor , an important ally, behind the Group.

The reaction of the environmental movement has been the most vehement, and complex. On the most basic level, environmental organizations express concern about the potential environmental impacts of the Proposal on the landscape such as logging of old growth, the large size of the "small group" selection cuts (up to 2 acres), the potential for new roads and so on. While they may have some valid points, I argue that this is neither a battle over old growth and roads, nor the simple "turf battle" or clash of egos that some members of the QLG describe. Rather, beneath the proximate battle over the QLG and its bill rages the deeper question of "who may speak for the trees." As I understand it, the QLG is threatening to environmental organizations because it is both "too local" and "not

local enough." The QLG is too local in the sense that it localizes a great amount of forest management authority within a self-selected group and potentially withdraws this authority from the broader public spheres in which environmental organizations have come to hold more sway. Some environmental organization representatives have complained that they do not have the funds or staff to participate in the multitudes of local efforts, and that a localization of forest management will deprive them, and the broader public who they claim the represent, of an adequate voice in national forest management. The QLG rebuts this formulation by arguing that the environmental organizations are simply trying to maintain their monopoly on the "public" interest in national forests, and that the public interest can be served locally as well as nationally.

The QLG is also criticized by its environmental opponents as being not "local enough." This refers both to the physical size of the QLG area and their access to national level political power. National and regional environmental groups complain that the geographic scale of the QLG area is inappropriate for a community-based "pilot project." The QLG's strategic (and effective) use of regional and national political support to beat the environmentalists in their home court has been represented as the Group's unforgivable unwillingness to "stay in their place." Place, apparently, is an entitlement confined to a "local" scale of political behavior and resource access. Local environmental opponents within the QLG Area fear that they may be engulfed by the QLG as the sole voice for the community, while local environmentalists in other regions fear that they may be overwhelmed by timber industry interests in new QLG-type efforts in their area.

A late, but none-the-less vociferous opponent of the QLG and the QLG bill was the segment of the Wise Use movement associated with cattle ranching. Locally, several cattlemen with grazing allotments on the Lassen National Forest (including one of the original signatories of the QLG proposal) became extremely concerned about a clause in the bill that would apply riparian protection standards (the SAT guidelines from the Northwest Forest Plan), triggering the exclusion of cattle in QLG-based project sites. For reasons beyond the scope of this document, this clause was inserted into the bill while in process in Congress, and by the time it came to light, the QLG felt it too late to ask for a change in the language. This was interpreted as a betrayal of the original Proposal by the cattlemen, but the QLG has held firm that its intention was to resolve the timber industry-environmental gridlock, not the grazing or any other problem. Beyond the immediate financial impacts of this loss of water for their cattle, these cattlement were concerned that the QLG bill might serve as a rationale by the Forest Service to harass and eventually exclude cattlemen from the national forests as a whole. A number of Wise Use/private property rights organizations joined the fray on this issue both to protect the "multiple use" on public lands, and to counter what they saw as two dangerous trends: the non-recognition of grazing allotments as private property, and the potential for the QLG and other consensus organiztions to deflate the Wise Use movement by splitting the "cowboys and the loggers" and by de-demonizing environmentalists involved in such efforts (like those in the QLG). The greater emphasis placed on the implications of the QLG on the Wise Use Movement and its role in national environmental politics as opposed to the Group's local impacts further support my hypothesis.

REFLECTIONS ON THE FELLOWSHIP

The Ford Foundation Community Forestry Fellowship has been an immensely valuable part of my dissertation process and of my graduate education as a whole. While increasing the complexity of my research, engaging in participatory relationships with my research partners has greatly enriched my experience by providing an additional sense of purpose to my efforts namely, to help bridge the gaps between research and political practice and to engage the former in the latter. In so doing, it has raised the stakes for my research, adding the expectation that it actually "do something" to the traditional standards of contributing to the literature. The Fellowship and its explicit commitment to participatory research has expanded my accountability beyond my committee and other academic colleagues to my research communities, and to the larger circle of participants in the nascent community-forestry movement. Taking on participatory research and its radical democratic notions has

simultaneously drafted me into the battlefields of knowledge and stripped me of the scholars' traditional shield that protects and privileges our words as "truth." Despite the minor battle scars, I have experienced the past year as one of most meaningful and alive of my academic experience and a fitting rite of passage into what I envision will be a hybrid career of activist research and reflective activism.