

WYOMING

HISTORY

Native nations, fur trappers, pioneers, railroad builders and ranchers each helped build Wyoming.



The First Peoples

People have lived in Wyoming for more than 10,000 years. The Shoshone lived in the western mountains. The Crow lived in the north. The Lakota, Cheyenne and Arapaho hunted on the eastern plains. After horses arrived in the 1700s, hunters rode after bison. The nations traded with each other and fought over hunting grounds.



Mountain Men

In 1803, the United States bought part of Wyoming from France. John Colter explored the Yellowstone country around 1807. Fur trappers called mountain men came for beaver. Each summer, trappers and Native traders met at a **rendezvous**, a big trading fair. Many were held along the Green River. Fort Laramie began as a trading post in 1834. Jim Bridger built Fort Bridger in 1843.



Trails West

From the 1840s on, wagon trains crossed Wyoming on the Oregon, California and Mormon Trails. Most went over South Pass, a wide, gentle gap in the Rocky Mountains. In 1849, the Army bought Fort Laramie. In 1851, many plains nations signed a **treaty** near the fort. They agreed to borders for their hunting lands, and the United States promised goods each year.

Red Cloud's War

In the 1860s, travelers used the Bozeman Trail through Lakota hunting lands to reach Montana gold. The Army built forts along it. The Lakota leader Red Cloud and his Cheyenne and Arapaho allies attacked the forts and wagon trains. In 1866, warriors killed Captain William Fetterman and about 80 soldiers near Fort Phil Kearny. In an 1868 treaty, the Army agreed to close the forts. That year, Chief Washakie's Eastern Shoshone kept the Wind River **Reservation** by treaty. The Northern Arapaho moved there in 1878. Both tribes live there today.

Rails and a Territory

The Union Pacific Railroad was built across southern Wyoming in 1867 and 1868. Cheyenne, Laramie and Rock Springs grew up along the tracks. Coal mines near the tracks fueled the trains. Congress made Wyoming a **territory** in 1868. In 1869, it gave women the right to vote. In 1870, Esther Hobart Morris of South Pass City became one of the first women judges in the country.

Cattle and Statehood

In the 1870s, ranchers drove cattle north from Texas. Herds spread across the open grass. The hard winter of 1886 and 1887 killed many cattle. Wyoming became the 44th state on July 10, 1890. Cheyenne stayed its capital. Buffalo Bill Cody started the town of Cody in 1896. In the early 1900s, oil fields made Casper a busy oil town. Grand Teton National Park was created in 1929.

WYOMING THROUGH TIME



PEOPLE TO KNOW

Washakie	Eastern Shoshone chief at Wind River.
Jim Bridger	Mountain man who built Fort Bridger.
Esther Hobart Morris	Early woman judge at South Pass City.
Buffalo Bill Cody	Showman who started the town of Cody.
Jackson Pollock	Painter born in Cody.

WORDS TO KNOW

rendezvous	a yearly meeting where trappers traded furs
treaty	a written agreement between nations
reservation	land set aside for a Native nation
territory	land run by the United States that is not yet a state