



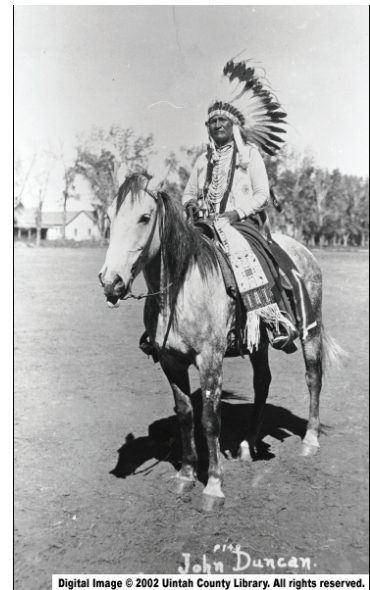
UTE PEOPLE

HISTORY

The Ute People are called Noochewoo, which means “the People.” The State of Utah was named after the Ute People. The Uintah and Ouray Reservation is located 150 miles east of Salt Lake City, Utah. The Utes own 1.5 million acres of trust land. They call the land their “Mother Earth,” because everything comes from the earth. It is said that Ute lands were smooth until Senavahf (the creator) shot an arrow; it made the valleys, deep gorges, canyons, and plowed through the mountains, making them into hills.

Horses and Trading

The Utes were one of the first tribes to acquire the horse from the Spaniards. They developed a rich horse culture and were excellent horsemen. The horse changed the way of life for the Utes. The newly acquired horses enabled the Utes to hunt the bigger bison and a way to expand their territories for trading and hunting. The Utes traded many good with the Pueblos (like their vegetables in exchange for soft and much-sought-after Ute cured deer hides). Other trade goods were tanned elk, the mountain sheep, beaver, otter, and buffalo. The Utes loved to barter and trade; this is why, when traders came into their lands, they were looked on as just another group of people to trade and do business with. The Utes were described as “the most valiant Indians that have been encountered” by the Spaniards.



Bands

In the beginning there were 12 bands of Utes in the states of Utah and Colorado. There are three Ute tribes: the Northern Utes, who are located in the State of Utah; the Southern Utes, located in Ignacio, Colorado; and the Ute Mountain Utes, located in Towaoc, Colorado. There are only six Ute

bands left. The Northern Utes have three bands, Uncompahgre, Whiteriver, and Uintah. The Southern Utes have two bands, Kapota and Moache. The Ute Mountain Utes have only one band, Weemeenoch. The Uncompahgre Utes and Whiteriver Utes were removed from their beloved sacred mountains in Colorado when gold was found at Pike’s Peak, and also due to an unfortunate incident. The three Ute tribes share the same customs, dances, songs, and language.





A Rich Land

Brigham Young sent a survey party to the Uintah Basin and deemed it as “one vast contiguity of waste, and measurably valueless.” Today it is described as a virtual storehouse of Mesozoic wealth. Hydrocarbons in a multitude of forms that have been trapped beneath the surface for millions of years are now being mined. Oil and gas, tar sands, and oil shale are now being managed by the newly formed Ute Energy of the Ute Tribe. What Brigham Young deemed as unfit wasteland, the Ute Tribe has found rich with resources. To the south, 89,000 acres were returned back to the Utes. This land is also rich with ore.

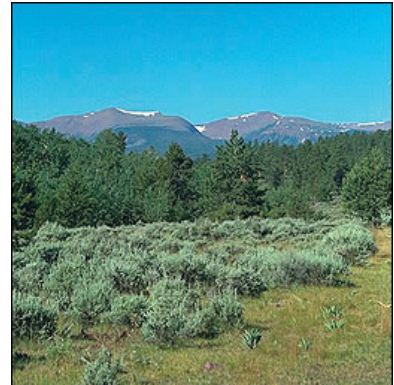


CULTURE AND TRADITIONS



The Ute Bear Dance is the traditional dance of the Ute people. This is their way of celebrating all things that are new and reborn on earth each year. The ceremonies of the Bear Dance and Sun Dance are still practiced. The Utes still love to play the traditional handgame, including singing handgame songs.

The Utes believe that when you take your first drink of water, someone, somewhere, has already prayed for the water. Water is the most powerful force on earth. The water is calm and humble and seeks the lowest points on earth, but can kill people when it rages. Water can never be held; it always seeps.



The Utes still believe in recognizing their Creator each morning, asking for blessings and thanking him for all the good things that day.

