A Preliminary Analysis of Attachment to Special Places among Community Residents in Northern Michigan[1]

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Abstract

Many studies have taken place that seek to gain an understanding of the influences upon attachment to special places. These studies have been largely qualitative in nature and have succeeded in identifying quantifiable variables that can be useful in measuring basic levels of attachment to special places, e.g., length of time that one has been associated with special places and number of times per year that one visits his/her special places. While most studies have been predominately used to describe the importance of specific places to people who visit those places, this study seeks to identify the benefits that attachment to special places may have for residents at a community level.

A study of four different communities in the Michigan Upper Peninsula was conducted in the summer of 1999. Four hundred private property owners were randomly selected from each community and mailed an in-depth survey regarding their use of public and private lands, special place attachment, and satisfaction with community as a place to live. One purpose of this survey was to compare, between communities, the level of attachment to special places on public and private lands, the types of activities participated in on public and private lands, and the level of community satisfaction. Additionally, the relationship between the variables is to be compared between the four communities in order to examine the different roles that special places may play at the community level.

This paper presents a preliminary descriptive analysis of the four communities. Data to be presented include demographics, quantitative measures of special places (number of places, years visited, number of times per year visited) and satisfaction with community as a place to live. Differences between communities will also be discussed.

Introduction

In recent years the concept of place attachment has been the subject of several studies that describe reasons for psychological, emotional, and social connections between people and "special places" on public lands (Eisenhauer, Krannicj, & Blahna, in press; Schroeder, 1996; Brandenburg & Carroll, 1995; Mitchell, Force. Carroll, & McLaughlin, 1993; Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, & Watson, 1992; Altman, 1975). Contributing factors to place attachment have been brought to our attention by these studies, enabling us to better understand how attachment to special places on public lands develops and why these emotional bonds are important for land management planning and decision making.

A common theme in most studies of place attachment is the examination of *specific* places, such as descriptions of people who are emotionally attached to them, and the reasons the places are important. While valuable in helping us understand the concept of place attachment, we would like to extend these studies by investigating community level benefits of special places. Having special places may enhance residents' sense of stewardship and ownership of the public lands around them (O'Leary, 1976) and provide a feeling of enjoyment of the area where they live, which in turn may enhance community satisfaction. Thus, special places may be an important factor in residents' enjoyment of their community and ultimately their quality of life (Kemmis, 1990). This would indicate that special places are a particular form of community capital that is often ignored.

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Flora et al. (1992, p. 109) describe capital as "any resource capable of producing other resources" and describe four types of capital that are important to the health of communities: capital goods, land capital, financial capital, and human capital. They characterize land as an easy form of capital to understand because of its tangible properties such as timber, water, soil, and agriculture. It is our contention, however, that land capital can also provide critical intangible benefits that help define community character, such as ranching, timber, tourist, or "north woods" type communities. Thus, when describing public lands as a source of community capital, special places to which residents have an emotional attachment are also important, even if these places do not seem to produce tangible benefits, or if tangible benefits (e.g., fish) are secondary results of visiting special places.

Purpose of Study

This study seeks to: (1) describe the importance of special outdoor places that community residents may be attached to on public and private lands in their region, (2) investigate differences in special place attachment among residents of different types of communities, and (3) identify the general location of special places as being on public or private land. A different approach was taken with this study than with most other special place studies. Instead of investigating the level of attachment to one specific place in detail, we used an open-ended survey question allowing respondents to tell us where their special places were on public and private lands in the region. While this method cannot give us the level of detail that an in-depth qualitative study would, it does give us a broader view of the community benefits from attachment to special places in general and can give resource managers a better way of identifying the locations of specific special places on public lands. Responses were obtained by residents of four different types of communities—resource-dependent, tourist-dependent, urban, and rural—in an effort to understand how residents of many different types of communities may form attachments to special outdoor places.

This paper presents preliminary descriptive results of the study. It describes the four study communities and reports on the number of special places residents listed and two factors that past research has shown contribute to special place attachment: length of time associated with a place (Williams et al., 1992) and frequency of visits to a place (Brandenburg & Carroll, 1995). To provide a broad picture of the study communities, we also present respondent ratings of "community satisfaction," and "the importance of the surrounding natural environment to the quality of life in the community."

Methods

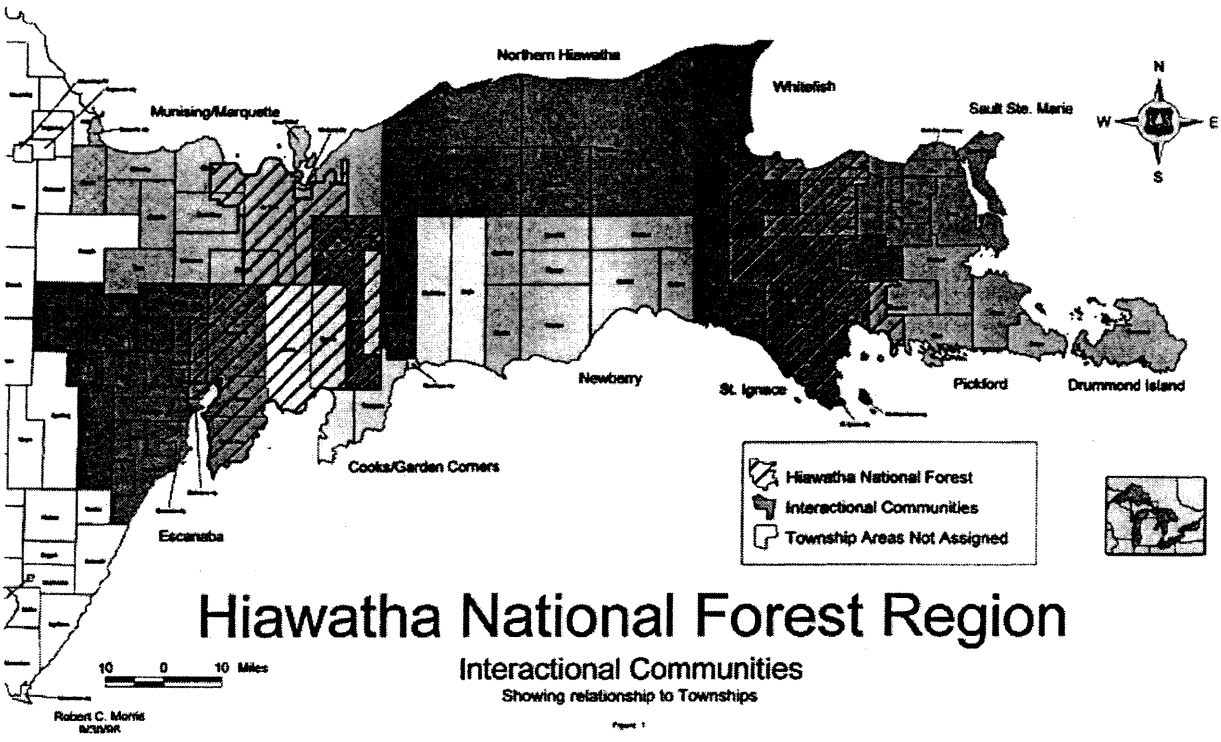
Study Area

The study region is the central and eastern portions of the Michigan Upper Peninsula (U.P.). The U.P. is a rural, low income, resource dependent region that has experienced several boom-bust cycles related to changes in the mining industry. There are a few pockets of agriculture, but most of the U.P. is forested, and both forest products and tourism are major industries. The economy has recently expanded due to a small boom in retirement/seasonal home building and several American Indian casinos and state prisons. The central U.P. tends to be more dependent on national and state forests for both economic development and resident lifestyles compared to the eastern U.P., which tends to be more dependent on tourism and commerce related to the Great Lakes (Blahna, Figueroa, Custer, Morris, & Carr, 1998). There are also several national and state parks in the study region, including Mackinac Island State Park and Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

In 1990, there were 134,139 persons and approximately 74 cities and towns in the study region. In previous research, Blahna et al. (1998) divided the population of the study region into ten community aggregates based on a key informant mapping process (Figure 1). These community aggregates were developed in order to understand community linkages with the Hiawatha National Forest (HNF). The study was sponsored by the North Central Forest Experiment Station in order to develop a manageable way to identify communities based on sociological information, rather than simply defaulting to political boundaries (city, county, or township) in

determining "communities."[2] This paper is based on the results of a detailed survey sent to the residents of four community aggregates which center on: Escanaba, St. Ignace, Sault Ste. Marie, and Newberry. These communities were chosen to allow a comparison between rural resource-dependent, urban resource-dependent, rural tourism-dependent, and urban tourism-dependent types of communities.

Figure 1. Key informant mapping process



Community Descriptions[3]

The Escanaba community area is in the south central region of the U.P., and has the largest population of all the community areas (33,090 persons in 1990) and the highest percentage of urban population (55.1%, based on the 1990 Census data). Fifty-seven percent of the population is 18–64 and those under 18 years comprise 27 percent of the population. Forest products are important to this region, especially timber. Mead Corporation, with 1,300 employees, is one of the largest employers in the region and tourism does play a small part in the economy but, compared to other communities in the HNF region, relatively few people in this community are employed in resource or service related occupations. Based on interviews with key stakeholders, Escanaba residents have many informal linkages with the HNF and a strong, vocal commitment to ensuring the health of the forest because it provides jobs, recreation opportunities, and due to the historical significance of the woods to the community. Based on this information, the Escanaba area is considered an urban resource-dependent community but, since it has a relatively diverse economy, it is not highly "resource dependent" in an economic sense.

2 The level of analysis for this study is the interactional community, which is a localized territory without fixed boundaries within which residents meet their daily needs (Wilkinson, 1991). Besides provision of basic goods and services, this territory includes the social organizations and infrastructure that provide opportunities for residents to interact, participate, and express issues of common concern. Data available for each community include population, number of seasonal housing units, occupation distributions, income distributions, length of residence distributions, age distributions, and percentage of people in each community living in urban versus rural areas.

3 The information in the community descriptions is based on the study *Identifying Local Communities for Social Assessment on the Hiawatha National Forest* (Blahna et al., 1998), which incorporated 1990 census data, 1995 forest use permits from the Hiawatha National Forest, and 1996 key informant interviews.

The St. Ignace community area is in the south eastern portion of the U.P. It is just across the Mackinaw Bridge from the Lower Peninsula, and stretches along the Lake Michigan and Lake Huron shoreline. In 1990, the St. Ignace area had the third largest population of the four study areas (7,146 persons), and 64 percent of the area was considered rural. St. Ignace has the highest percentage of individuals under the age of 18 (28.0%), and a relatively large portion of individuals over 65 (15.7%). The dependence of the community on natural resources is almost exclusively based on water-based tourism, and over 20 percent of the jobs are service-related positions. Individuals interviewed in the St. Ignace area claim no formal dependence on the Hiawatha, and most viewed the HNF as just something they passed through when traveling west. Based on this information, the St. Ignace community area is considered a rural tourist-dependent community.

The Sault Ste. Marie community area is in the north eastern portion of the U.P. It has the second largest population of the four communities in this study (28,269 persons in 1990) and 52 percent are classified as "urban" according to the 1990 U.S. Census. This community is noted for its tourist-based economy and outdoor recreation opportunities. People interviewed from this community say that the Soo (a local nickname for Sault Ste. Marie) is not dependent on the Hiawatha as a resource and that people draw more economic and emotional sustenance from the lakes than the forest. (The Soo locks, Lake Superior shore, and access to Canada are major tourist attractions in Sault Ste. Marie.) However, many respondents interviewed enjoyed hunting, camping, and the solitude that the forest affords them. Based on this information, the Sault Ste. Marie community area is considered an urban, tourist-dependent community.

The Newberry community area is located in the central portion of the HNF region. This area is 100 percent rural, has the lowest population of the four study areas (5,954 persons in 1990), and has the highest portion of the population in farming, fishery, and forestry-related occupations (8.7%). The area provides many outdoor recreation opportunities, especially hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, and cross-country skiing, many people have hunting "camps" in the area, and the Lake Michigan shoreline is relatively undeveloped. The Newberry community area has the highest percentage of seasonal residences (43.2%) and housing units that use wood as the primary heating fuel (38.2%) among the four study community areas. Based on this information, the Newberry community area is considered a rural resource-dependent community.

Survey Sample and Response

Four hundred households were randomly selected from each community aggregate from a current list of private property owners from county tax equalization offices. Many people own seasonal homes in the U.P., and although this method does not include residents of rental properties, it does include seasonal home owners. To randomize within households, the survey instructions requested that the adult resident (18 or older) who had the most recent birthday should complete the questionnaire. Three additional reminder mailings were sent to encourage survey response.

From the Escanaba community area, 155 surveys were returned and 15 were undeliverable, for a response rate of 40 percent. In the St. Ignace community area, 151 surveys were returned and 52 were undeliverable for a response rate of 43 percent. In the Sault Ste. Marie community area, 126 surveys were returned and 80 were undeliverable for a response rate of 39 percent. In the Newberry community area, 173 surveys were returned and 24 were undeliverable for a response rate of 46 percent. The undeliverable rate was different across communities, reflecting different schedules used by tax assessors offices for updating databases.

A brief overview of the characteristics of respondents is shown in Table 1. Due to the low response rates, a nonresponse bias check was conducted by comparing our sample characteristics to 1990 U.S. Census data in all four communities and a follow-up telephone survey in one of the communities. The response bias checks indicate that older (over 65), high income, high education, and part-time residents are overrepresented in the sample. While these biases are generally consistent across all community areas, males are slightly overrepresented in two areas: Newberry (67%) and Escanaba (65%). The character and consistency of these response patterns suggest two factors contributed to the sample bias: the typical response bias found in survey research and a likely overrepresentation of residents who are interested in outdoor activities and natural resource issues. Differences between the sample and Census may also be due to demographic changes in the U.P. between 1990 and 1999.

Table 1. Community demographic comparisons between survey data and 1990 Census data (%)

		Communities[4]								
		Escanaba			St. Ignace		Sault Ste. Marie		Newberry	
	Demographics	R[1]	C[2]	T[3]	R	C	R	C	R	C
Residency status	Permanent	73.4	85.8	84.0	57.9	72.1	82.4	86.3	40.9	56.8
	Seasonal	26.6	14.2	16.0	42.1	27.9	17.6	13.7	59.1	43.2
Age (years)	18–24	0.0	11.3	0.0	0.7	10.0	0.8	19.6	0.0	7.6
	25–44	23.3	40.2	23.1	27.3	40.7	25.0	45.7	23.6	35.5
	45–64	48.0	26.7	53.8	44.8	27.6	51.7	20.0	50.9	33.2
	> 64 years	28.7	21.7	23.1	27.3	21.8	22.5	14.6	25.5	23.6
Income	<$20,000	18.5	45.6	17.6[5]	15.8	50.1	17.6	44.4	12.9	52.1
	$20,000– $39,999	30.3	32.3	47.0	21.0	32.0	23.6	35.4	21.3	32.7
	$40,000– $59,999	28.9	15.3	35.3	29.3	12.9	30.7	13.8	27.7	11.4
	$60,000 and higher	22.3	6.7	0.0	33.8	5.2	28.1	6.4	38.1	3.8
Education	< high school diploma	7.8	23.9	7.7	7.4	29.0	4.8	25.4	4.6	31.9
	Completed high school or GED	33.1	38.4	38.5	28.9	39.3	29.6	36.6	28.3	41.8
	Some college or 2 year degree	38.3	26.0	23.1	31.5	20.5	32.0	27.0	29.5	17.6
	Four-year college degree	8.4	8.0	11.5	8.1	7.5	12.0	7.3	16.2	5.9
	Some graduate work or completed graduate degree	12.3	3.7	19.2	24.2	3.8	21.6	3.8	21.4	2.8

[1] "R" refers to mail survey data.
[2] "C" refers to 1990 Census data.
[3] "T" refers to follow-up telephone survey data (conducted only in Escanaba).
[4] Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.
[5] Only 17 (65%) of the 26 telephone survey respondents answered this question.

Due to the low response rates, we cannot say that our data can be generalized to the study community areas. Since the response biases are generally similar across the study communities, however, comparisons of the study variables can be made among communities as long as the sample biases are kept in mind; that is, the results represent a relatively high socioeconomic and outdoor oriented group of U.P. residents.

Results

In general, the majority of survey respondents are very satisfied with their communities as places to live and they highly value the surrounding natural environment as being important to the quality of their lives. On a scale of 1–7 where 1 = very dissatisfied and 7 = very satisfied, mean scores for all communities ranged from 5.46 to 5.97. A Tukey HSD mean comparison analysis indicated that there was a small statistically significant difference at the .003 level between the mean community satisfaction scores in Escanaba (5.97) and Newberry (5.46). The rating of the "importance of the surrounding natural environment to the quality of life" was even stronger and more consistent across communities. On a scale of 1–7 where 1 = very unimportant and 7 = very important, mean scores for each community ranged from 6.44 to 6.61, and there were no statistically significant differences between communities.

Special places

Respondents were given a definition of special places[4] that was used in past studies (Eisenhauer et al., in press; Sullivan, Blahna, Brunswick, & Sharrow, 1999) and asked to identify up to three places located on public or private lands in the U.P. that had special personal meaning and importance to them. Space for only three places was provided because we felt this would result in some diversity in the types of special places without overburdening the respondents. For each place, respondents were asked to identify: (1) the name and location of the place, (2) whether the land was public or private, (3) the number of years they had been visiting the place, (4) the number of times per year that they visited the place, (5) the things that they did there and, (6) the reason that the place had special meaning to them.

A total of 1,182 special places were listed by the 603 survey respondents. Over 80 percent listed at least one special place, ranging from 85.8 percent in the Sault Ste. Marie community area to 78.6 percent in the Escanaba

4 The following definition was given to respondents: *People often develop strong feelings about certain outdoor places that have special meaning and importance to them. Sometimes these are areas where a person has spent time doing enjoyable activities. For others, such places have special meaning because of the scenery, historical or cultural importance, economic importance, or any number of other personal reasons* (Eisenhauer et al., in press; Sullivan et al., 1999).

Table 2. Number of special places listed by respondents in each community

	Communities			
Number of places listed	Escanaba	St. Ignace	Sault Ste. Marie	Newberry
None listed	21.4%	16.0%	14.3%	16.8%
	n=3	n=24	n=18	n=29
One	18.2%	9.3%	17.5%	16.8%
	n=28	n=14	n=22	n=29
Two	20.1%	19.3%	29.4%	18.5%
	n=31	n=29	n=37	n=32
Three	40.3%	55.3%	38.9%	48.0%
	n=62	n=83	n=49	n=83
Total respondents with one or more special places	78.6%	83.9%	85.8%	83.3%
	n=121	n=126	n=108	n=144

Table 3. Number of special places on public vs. private land

	Communities			
Land Ownership	Escanaba	St. Ignace	Sault Ste. Marie	Newberry
Public Land	70.3%	67.0%	71.2%	71.6%
	n=194	n=215	n=173	n=245
Private Land	24.3%	19.6%	25.1%	18.1%
	n=67	n=63	n=61	n=62
Both	5.4%	8.7%	1.6%	7.6%
	n=15	n=28	n=4	n=26
"Don't know" or missing	0.0%	4.7%	2.1%	2.6%
	n=0	n=15	n=5	n=9
[1]Total number of special places listed	276	321	243	342
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.9%

[1] Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

area (Table 2). Most respondents in all four communities described three special places. Of these special places, the majority (70%) were on public lands, and the percentages were very similar across communities (Table 3).

Special Place Attachment

Two measures of the number of years visiting special places were used: the means for the number of years respondents visited all their special places listed, and the means for just the number of years visiting the longest visited special place for each respondent. For example, if a respondent listed three special places and listed that s/he had visited the first one for 20 years, the second one for 15 years, and the third one for two years, we would record 20 years to calculate the second mean. The second mean was included because of the potential dilution factor in averaging the years visiting all special places. Someone who had visited one special place for 20 years and another for two would average the same number of years as someone visiting one special place for 10 years, and we wanted a more complete representation of the length of time respondents were associated with special places in the U.P.

Newberry had the highest percentage of respondents visiting at least one of their special places for more than 20 years (69.1%) (Table 4). Escanaba had the lowest percentage of respondents visiting at least one of their special places for more than 20 years, still more than half of the respondents with special places in Escanaba (59.5%). When we examined the mean number of years visiting all special places, Newberry still had the highest percentage of respondents averaging more than 20 years (61.0%), and Escanaba still had the lowest percentage of respondents visiting their special places, on average, more than 20 years (55.0%) (Table 4). The means only drop between four and five years in each community when the *average* number of years visiting special places is used instead of the number of years visiting the *longest visited* special place. There were no statistically significant differences in the community means for either of these measures.

Because we wanted to determine the role that the respondents' age played in the number of years they had been visiting special places, we compared these two variables by community. As expected, in each community the mean number of the years visiting the longest visited special place got higher as the respondents got older with fairly consistent numbers across communities (Table 5), but even respondents in the 25–44 age category had means above 20 years in all study communities.

Table 4. Length of time visiting special places

Years visiting	Number of years respondents have been visiting their *longest visited* special place Communities Escanaba	St. Ignace	Sault Ste. Marie	Newberry
0–5	6.3% n=7	3.4% n=4	6.0% n=6	5.1% n=7
6–10	13.5% n=15	15.5% n=18	9.0% n=9	8.8% n=12
11–20	20.7% n=23	16.4% n=19	21.0% n=21	16.9% n=23
More than 20 years	59.5% n=66	64.7% n=75	64.0% n=64	69.1% n=94
Community mean	29.9	29.6	30.0	30.5
Mean number of years visiting	Mean number of years respondents have been visiting *all* their special places Communities Escanaba	St. Ignace	Sault Ste. Marie	Newberry
0–5	7.2% n=8	6.9% n=8	7.0% n=7	5.9% n=8
6–10	14.4% n=16	14.7% n=17	9.0% n=9	8.8% n=12
11–20	23.4% n=26	21.6% n=25	27.0% n=27	24.3% n=33
More than 20 years	55.0% n=61	56.9% n=66	57.0% n=57	61.0% n=83
Community mean	24.8	24.2	25.1	25.7

Table 5. Mean number of years visiting the longest visited special place by age

Age (in years)	Respondents' mean number of years visiting by community Escanaba	St. Ignace	Sault Ste. Marie	Newberry
25–44	20.6 n=26	24.2 n=30	22.5 n=25	24.1 n=32
45–64	28.6 n=53	27.0 n=55	29.7 n=49	29.3 n=65
Over 64 years	40.7 n=29	39.5 n=27	40.5 n=21	38.4 n=34

For the average number of times per year respondents visit special places, two means were calculated that mirrored the number of years visited: one based on the number of times they visit all special places listed, and another for the just the most often visited places. The highest percentage of respondents in each community visited their most often visited special place between one and five times per year. Percentages ranged from 44.5 percent in St. Ignace to 54 percent in Newberry. Escanaba had the highest number of respondents visiting their most often visited special place more than 24 times per year (26.2%), while Newberry had the lowest percentage visiting that often (9.5%). Accordingly, the highest mean number of times per year respondents visit their most often visited special place was in Escanaba (33.4), which was almost 12 years higher than in Newberry (21.8) (Table 6). While there were no statistically significant differences between the means in each community, these findings correspond with the data showing that Newberry has the largest percentage of seasonal residents among its respondents.

When the average number of times per year that special places are visited is used, the mean drops dramatically in each community. However, Escanaba respondents still had the highest average number of times per year visiting special places (9.1) and Newberry still had the lowest (5.5). The majority of respondents from each community visit their special places, on average, between one and five times per year (ranging from 55.5% in St. Ignace to 71.4% in Newberry), and these averages are higher than when just the most often visited special place was used (Table 6). A Tukey HSD mean comparison test indicated that there is a statistically significant difference at the .05 level between the means for number of times per year visiting special places in Escanaba and Newberry. This also corresponds with the data showing that Newberry has the largest percentage of seasonal residents among its respondents.

Because it was possible that residency status (permanent versus seasonal) would influence the number of times per year residents visited their special places in the U.P., this variable was compared to the mean number of

Table 6. Number of times per year visiting special places

Number of times per year respondents visit their *most often visited* special place

Times (per year)	Communities			
	Escanaba	St. Ignace	Sault Ste. Marie	Newberry
1–5	53.4%	44.5%	47.9%	54.0%
	n=55	n=49	n=45	n=68
6–12	11.7%	30.0%	26.6%	29.4%
	n=12	n=33	n=25	n=37
13–24	8.7%	9.1%	6.4%	7.1%
	n=9	n=10	n=6	n=9
More than 24 times per year	26.2%	16.4%	19.1%	9.5%
	n=27	n=18	n=18	n=12
Community mean	33.4	24.2	30.4	21.8

Mean number of times per year respondents visit *all* of their special places

Mean number of times (per year)	Communities			
	Escanaba	St. Ignace	Sault Ste. Marie	Newberry
1–5	61.2%	55.5%	58.5%	71.4%
	n=63	n=61	n=55	n=90
6–12	11.7%	28.2%	22.3%	19.0%
	n=12	n=31	n=21	n=24
13–24	13.6%	10.0%	9.6%	6.3%
	n=14	n=11	n=9	n=8
More than 24 times per year	13.6%	6.4%	9.6%	3.2%
	n=14	n=7	n=9	n=4
Community mean	9.1*	7.8	8.3	5.5*

* Differences between these means were statistically significant at the .05 level (Tukey HSD multiple comparison analysis).

times special places are visited. When using the mean number of times per year that respondents visit their most often visited special place, permanent residents have a much higher mean than seasonal residents. In Newberry, permanent residents visit their most often visited special place, on average, 43.7 times per year. The lowest number of times per year was in St. Ignace (34.9). Seasonal residents had much lower means, with a low of 4.7 times per year in Sault Ste. Marie and a high of 10.3 times per year in St. Ignace. This same pattern is found, although on a much smaller scale, when the mean number of times per year respondents visit all of their special places is used. In each community, seasonal residents visited their special places, on average, less than permanent residents. Newberry permanent residents had the lowest average number of visits per year (7.0), while Escanaba permanent residents had the highest average number of visits per year (10.3). Sault Ste. Marie seasonal residents had the lowest average number of visits per year (3.8), while Escanaba seasonal residents had the highest average number of visits per year (6.0) (Table 7).

Discussion

While we cannot generalize these results to the populations of the study communities, we can say there is a large segment of each community that has an emotional bond with one or more special places on public lands. Additionally, while the results are more reflective of residents that are active and care about natural resource issues,

Table 7. Number of times per year respondents visit special places by residency status

Mean number of times per year respondents visit their *most often visited* special place by residency status

Residency Status	Mean number of times per year			
	Escanaba	St. Ignace	Sault Ste. Marie	Newberry
Permanent residents	42.1	36.1	34.9	43.7
	n=76	n=59	n=80	n=52
Seasonal residents	8.9	10.3	4.7	6.6
	n=27	n=47	n=14	n=73

Mean number of times per year respondents visit *all* of their special places by residency status

Residency Status	Mean number of times per year			
	Escanaba	St. Ignace	Sault Ste. Marie	Newberry
Permanent residents	10.3	9.1	9.1	7.0
	n=76	n=59	n=80	n=52
Seasonal residents	6.0	6.4	3.8	4.5
	n=27	n=47	n=14	n=73

these are the people that will be affected most by land management decisions, so it is important to understand their relationship with public lands in their community.

According to our results, community satisfaction is high in each sample community, as is the importance of the surrounding natural environment to the quality of life. Decisions affecting the surrounding natural environment may indeed affect community residents' satisfaction with their community life. Quite overwhelming was the number of survey respondents who listed special places, and especially special places on *public lands.* This is particularly important for resource managers to recognize, and supports the argument for including special places on public lands as a specific category of "land capital" as described by Flora et al. (1992).

The majority of respondents had visited at least one of their special places for more than 20 years, which, based on results of Williams et al. (1992), indicates a high degree of place attachment. Resource managers should assume that if there are long term residents in a region, there is long term attachment to special places as well. This is not to say that people who have only been visiting their special places for a few years do not have a strong level of attachment; many people listed places that were visited for less than five years, but most respondents had at least one place that they had been visiting for well over five years. This is also probably related to the age of our respondents; most are old enough to have been visiting special places for more than 20 years, and the data show that as the respondents' age increases, so does the average number years they have been visiting their special places. What is important is these are places that they began visiting long ago and have *continued to visit throughout their lives.* The life changes that may occur with changes in management of these places could have a considerable affect on the people who use them.

People do not, however, visit their special places very many times per year. In fact, the majority of respondents in each community visited their special places, on average, only 1–5 times per year. Even when the most often visited special place is analyzed, at least 45 percent of the respondents in each community visit that place only 1–5 times per year. This suggests that the number of times one visits a special place is not as important for estimating place attachment as the number of years one has been visiting a place. It also indicates that resource managers cannot determine the importance of a place based solely on the number of visitor days. The quality of the relationship with a place may be more important than the quantity of visits to a place. This suggests more importance needs to be placed on combining the experienced-based management approach with the benefits-based management approach to recreation, where the "flow of benefits to individuals, groups, communities, and society in general" is important for resource managers to identify (Borrie & Roggenbuck, 1995, p. 160). These findings also correspond with results of Eisenhauer et al. (in press) who found that resource based factors were not as important as family traditions and the history of use in determining the factors that form attachments to special places. Additionally, in areas with many seasonal residences, like the U.P., the number of visits per year can be expected to be somewhat low, but that does not necessarily diminish the emotional bond people may have with special places, and the broader implications for community satisfaction.

Future analyses of this data set will investigate correlations between community satisfaction and measures of special place attachment. Furthermore, outdoor activities have been shown to be important in the creation of special places (Eisenhauer et al., in press), and we intend to further examine the relationship between outdoor recreation participation and the quantitative measures of place attachment. An interesting finding in the analyses to date are the *similarities* across communities. These are different types of communities and community differences were expected. Additional multivariate analyses will help further identify if community differences exist, or if the commonalities in the character and importance of special places are consistent despite the economic base or "ruralness" of a community.

Conclusion

The recent shift in natural resource management toward ecosystem management has brought about a new perspective on just how much public values and needs should be incorporated into public land management (Phillips & Randolph, 1998). "[T]hose who manage our public lands have the responsibility to ensure that their management policies do not obstruct or degrade the public's deep-seated need for psychological and spiritual connection to...the land" (Roberts, 1996, p. 74). Managing for emotional attachments has presented new

challenges for land managers (Mitchell et al., 1993), and part of what this study seeks to accomplish is a greater understanding of the extensive connection that community residents *from all types of communities* can have with special places on public lands. What these preliminary results seem to demonstrate is that it doesn't matter what "type" of community residents live in, whether it be resource dependent or tourist dependent, rural or urban, emotional bonds exist across communities and should be managed as an important element of community land capital.

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